



Young People's Views about Opportunities, Barriers and Supports to Recreation and Leisure

Research Commissioned by the National Children's Office

December 2005

Áine de Róiste (Dr.) and Joan Dinneen

Department of Social and General Studies

Cork Institute of Technology

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors wish to thank:

All the young people who completed the survey, participated in the focus groups and those who assisted us in the pilot study.

The school principals, centre managers, teachers and staff who facilitated us to carry out the survey and focus groups

The members of the Cork branch of Muscular Dystrophy Ireland.

Our colleagues in the Department of Social and General Studies, Cork Institute of Technology for their assistance and support. In particular Jim Walsh, Head of Department and John O'Connor for the translation of the questionnaire and related materials into Irish.

Dr. John Murphy in the Dept. of Business Studies, CIT for his statistical advice.

Siobhán O'Sullivan of the Cork Association of the Deaf.

The staff at the National Children's Office for their direction and guidance.

Jennifer Flack, Sinead Finn, Sinead Wilson and Oonagh McGrath for their assistance with the survey, interviews and focus groups.

Also, Anna O'Donovan, Maeve Martin, Martina Sandilands, Berni Carroll, Claire Quinn, Jean O'Shea, Danielle Griffin, Anne Lee, Noel Collins and Eddie Fitzgerald for their assistance and support.

Go raibh maith agaibh go léir.

Table of Contents

.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.	
Acknowledgements.....		2
List of Tables.....		5
List of Figures.....		7
CHAPTER 1:INTRODUCTION.....		1
Adolescence.....		2
Adolescence and Leisure.....		4
Types of Leisure.....		7
Leisure and Adolescence: Influential factors.....		8
Youth Policy and Recreation and Leisure.....		9
Young people, physical activity and health.....		11
Rationale.....		12
CHAPTER 2: METHOD.....		13
Method.....		14
CHAPTER 3: GENERAL FREE-TIME ACTIVITIES.....		20
Key Findings.....		21
Introduction.....		22
Discussion.....		39
CHAPTER 4: HOBBIES.....		53
Key Findings.....		54
Introduction.....		55
Discussion.....		59
CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY/CHARITY GROUPS.....		63
Key Findings.....		64
Introduction.....		65
Discussion.....		69
CHAPTER 6: SPORTS.....		73
Key Findings.....		74
Sports Participation.....		75
Gender and Sport.....		77
Sport and Age.....		78
Discussion.....		85
CHAPTER 7: BARRIERS AND SUPPORTS.....		89
Key Findings.....		90
Introduction.....		92
Intrapersonal Constraints.....		93
Interpersonal Constraints.....		100
Structural Barriers.....		106
CHAPTER 8: DROP-OUT.....		115
Key Findings.....		116
Introduction.....		117
Gender and Drop-out.....		117

Age and Drop-Out.....	118
Reasons for Drop-Out.....	118
CHAPTER 9: LIKE-TO-JOIN	121
Key Findings.....	122
Introduction.....	123
Like-to-Join Activities by Gender	124
Like-to-Join Activities and Age.....	125
Like-to-Join Activities and Home Location	126
Like-to-Join and Parental Occupation	126
Barriers to Joining.....	127
CHAPTER 10: YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS.....	131
Key-Findings.....	132
Introduction.....	133
Social Exclusion and Discrimination.....	133
Structural Barriers and Supports.....	135
Interpersonal Barriers and Supports.....	136
Lack of Integration with Other Young People in Leisure.....	137
Leisure Choice	138
Cultural Mores	138
CHAPTER 11: THE FREE TIME MOTIVATION SCALE.....	140
Key Findings.....	141
Theoretical Background and Development	142
FTMS Results	143
CHAPTER 12: OVERALL DISCUSSION.....	148
What do Irish young people do in their free time?	149
Age features	149
Gender features	150
SES features.....	150
Barriers and Supports.....	151
Motivation.....	152
What do young people drop out of and why?	153
What would young people like to do in their free time?.....	153
Strengths and Limitations of the Research Study	154
..... Error! Bookmark not defined.	
Recommendations for Future Research.....	156
REFERENCES	157
APPENDICES	180
Lists of Hobbies and Community/Charity Groups	192
List of Sports.....	194
Hobbies Poster	195
Sports Poster	195
Community/Charity Groups Poster.....	195
No. of Community/Charity Groups Participated in by Parental Occupation.....	196
No. of Sports Participated in by Parental Occupation	196

List of Tables

Table 1: Gender by Age	15
Table 2: Parental Occupation by Gender	15
Table 3: Mobile Phone Ownership	22
Table 4: Mobile phone use.....	23
Table 5: Television Viewing.....	23
Table 6: Computer Games by Age and Gender	24
Table 7: Computer Games by Parental Occupation.....	25
Table 8: Reading Frequency	28
Table 9: Reading Frequency by Parental Occupation.....	29
Table 10: Listening to Music	31
Table 11: Hanging-Around Outside by Age and Gender	33
Table 12: Hanging-Around Outside by Parental Occupation	33
Table 13: Looking at Shops	34
Table 14: Looking at Shops	34
Table 15: Going to Discos by Age and Gender	35
Table 16: Discos by Parental Occupation.....	36
Table 17: Frequency of Going to Discos	36
Table 18: Cinema Attendance.....	36
Table 19: Cinema Attendance: Urban Vs Rural	37
Table 20: Part-Time Work	38
Table 21: Part-Time Work by Parental Occupation	39
Table 22: Part-Time Work: Urban Vs Rural.....	39
Table 23: Number of Hobbies Reported.....	55
Table 24: Overall Participation in Hobbies	55
Table 25: Participation in Hobbies by Parental Occupation.....	56
Table 26: Most Popular Hobbies by Gender	56
Table 27: Most Popular Hobbies by Age and Gender	57
Table 28: Number of Groups Reported	65
Table 29: Overall Participation in Groups	66
Table 30: Participation in Groups: Urban Vs Rural.....	66
Table 31: Most Popular Groups.....	66
Table 32: Type of Groups by Age and Gender.....	67
Table 33 Sports' Participation by Gender.....	75
Table 34: Sport by gender.....	75
Table 35: Sports' Participation by Age and Gender	78
Table 36: Most Popular Sports by Age and Gender	79
Table 37: Comparison of Adolescent & Adult Most Popular Sports	80
Table 38: Walking for Leisure.....	84
Table 39: Intrapersonal Barriers and Supports to Leisure Participation.....	93
Table 40: Enjoy Joining New Clubs by Gender	93
Table 41: Enjoy Joining New Clubs by Parental Occupation.....	95
Table 42: Enjoy Competition by Gender	96
Table 43: 'I'm happy with the way I look' by Gender	97
Table 44: 'I'm happy with the way I look' by Age and Gender.....	99
Table 45: Money as a Barrier by Gender	107
Table 46: Money as a Barrier by Age & Gender	107
Table 47: 'I don't have the money to join new activities' by Parental Occupation...	108

Table 48: Time as a Barrier by Gender.....	108
Table 49: Time as a Barrier by Age.....	109
Table 50: Homework as a Time Barrier by Gender.....	110
Table 51: ‘Most of my free-time is spent doing homework’	110
Table 52: Transport Difficulties as a Barrier to Leisure	111
Table 53: Transport Difficulties by Age.....	111
Table 54:Feeling Safe Going To and From Activities in the Evening	112
Table 55: ‘Very little leisure provision in my area’ by Gender.....	113
Table 56: ‘Very little leisure provision in my area’ by Homeplace	113
Table 57: Weather as a Barrier to Outdoor Activities by Gender.....	114
Table 58: Weather as a Barrier to Outdoor Activities by Homeplace	114
Table 59: Activities & Drop-out rate	117
Table 60: Top Ten Reasons for Drop- Out	118
Table 61: Reasons for Drop-Out by Activity.....	119
Table 62: Like-to-Join Activities	123
Table 63: Top Ten Like-to-Join Activities by Gender.....	125
Table 64: Like-to-Join Activities by Age	125
Table 65: Like-to-Join Activities by Home Location	126
Table 66: Like-to-Join by Parental Occupation	127
Table 67: Top Ten Barriers to Joining a New Activity	128
Table 68: Barriers to Joining by Activity	128
Table 69: Leisure Amotivated Respondents by Age and Gender.....	144
Table 70: Leisure Motivated Respondents by Age & Gender.....	144
Table 71: Participation Levels: Leisure Amotivated Vs Rest of Sample	145
Table 72: Participation Levels: Intrinsic High Vs Low Respondents.....	145
Table 73: Participation Levels: Extrinsic High Vs Low Respondents	145
Table 74: Free Time Motivation Scale Items	146
Table 75: FTMS Subscale Correlatations	196

List of Figures

Figure 1: Frequency of Watching TV	24
Figure 2: Computer Games Female Frequency	25
Figure 3: Computer Games Male Frequency	25
Figure 4: Reading Frequency by Gender	28
Figure 5: Reading Frequency by Age	29
Figure 6: Listening to Music	30
Figure 7: Hanging Around Outside: Less Often or Never	31
Figure 8: Hanging-Around Outside by Age and Gender	32
Figure 9: Frequency of Attendance at Discos	35
Figure 10: Cinema Attendance	37
Figure 11: Frequency of Part-Time Work	37
Figure 12: Frequency of Part-Time Work by Age	38
Figure 13: Participation in Hobbies By Age and Gender	55
Figure 14: Participation in Groups by Age and Gender	65
Figure 15: Sport by Gender	76
Figure 16: Team Sports by Gender	77
Figure 17: Individual Sports by Gender	77
Figure 18: Involvement in Individual and Team Sport by Gender	78
Figure 19: Sports Involvement by Age and Gender	79
Figure 20: Frequency of Participation in Soccer by Gender	81
Figure 22: Frequency of Participation in Basketball by Gender	82
Figure 23: Frequency of Participation in Swimming by Gender	82
Figure 24: Female Participation in Sport	83
Figure 25: Male Participation in Sport	83
Figure 26: 'Walking for Leisure' by Gender	84
Figure 27: Enjoy Joining New Clubs by Gender	94
Figure 28: Enjoy Joining New Clubs by Age	94
Figure 29: Enjoy Joining New Clubs	95
Figure 30: Enjoyment of Competition by Gender	96
Figure 31: 'I only do activities that I'm good at' by Gender	97
Figure 32: 'I'm happy with the way I look' by Gender	98
Figure 33: Female Body Image by Home Place	99
Figure 34: Shyness of Low Leisure Motivated Group (Amotivated) vis-à-vis the Rest of the Sample	100
Figure 35: Interpersonal Barriers and Supports to Leisure Participation.	100
Figure 36: Like Hanging-Out with Friends by Gender	101
Figure 37: 'I prefer activities with boys and girls together'	102
Figure 38: Preference of Mixed Gender Activities by Age and Gender	102
Figure 39: Preference of Mixed Gender Activities, Males by School Type	103
Figure 40: Preference of Mixed Gender Activities, Females by School Type	103
Figure 41: 'My parents don't allow me to do activities that I would like to do'	104
Figure 42: 'My family encourage me to join clubs and groups'	104
Figure 43: Family Support by Age	105
Figure 44: Preference of Activities with an Instructor by Gender	106
Figure 45: Preference of Activities with an Instructor by Gender	106
Figure 46: Structural Barriers and Supports to Leisure Participation	106
Figure 47: Time as a Barrier by Age	109
Figure 48: Homework as a Time Barrier by Gender	110

Figure 49: Age Profile of Those Who Don't Feel Safe.	112
Figure 50: Weather as a Barrier to Outdoor Activities by Gender	114
Figure 51: Gender & Drop-Out.....	118
Figure 52: Like-to-Join Activities by Gender	124
Figure 53: Leisure Amotivated Vs Intrinsically Motivated Respondents by Age.....	144

CHAPTER 1:INTRODUCTION

Adolescence

Adolescence as a formative, transitional period from childhood to adulthood involves *'biological, cognitive and psychological changes that lead young people to reappraise themselves and their relationships to their families and communities'* (Hamburg & Takanishi, 1989, p826). It is a time of identity formation, individuation and major adjustment by young people to changes within themselves and in society in relation to the altered expectations placed on them. It is a very affiliative period with great importance attached to the peer group and cliques *'almost always held together by shared interests, tastes, activities and/or hobbies'* (Thurlow, 2002, p346). Adolescence is a period of exploratory self-analysis and self-evaluation ideally culminating in the establishment of a cohesive and integrative sense of self or identity (Erikson, 1968). This process involves the exploration and testing of alternative ideas, beliefs, and behaviours. Grotevant and colleagues (1982) argue that identity is not restricted solely to ideological components or to the domains of occupation, religion, and politics. They contend that adolescence is a time of exploring and making commitments in interpersonal relationships in four domains: friendship, dating, sex roles, and recreation. They state that such interpersonal explorations and commitments are important aspects of identity development, serving as precursors to truly intimate relationships (in the Eriksonian sense of intimacy). It is a period in which risk-taking and rebellion are considered normative (Arnett, 1999) which can put many young people at-risk for social and psychological problems.

Most young people negotiate their adolescence successfully without undue hardship (Gullotta et al., 1999; Santrock, 2000). For some however it is a time of what Rutter and colleagues (1976) termed *'inner turmoil'* (feelings of misery and self depreciation). Recent Irish research with 12-15 year olds reported that nearly a fifth of their sample were at-risk for mental health problems (Lynch et al., 2004).

Coleman and Hendry (1999) have proposed that various *'relational'* issues come into focus sequentially across the adolescent years and decline as the young person develops the psychosocial skills to resolve them. Usually teenagers cope with these issues or *'crises'* one at a time. If a young person has to deal with more than one issue at once, they are more likely to encounter adjustment problems. Initially concern about gender roles and relationships with the opposite sex peaks at 13 years and then declines afterwards. Acceptance by (or rejection from) peers peaks at about 15 years and independence from parents peaks at 16 years and then declines (Coleman & Hendry, 1999). Socio-economic status and broader social and cultural factors also impact on this and attention needs to be paid to these in any interpretation of focal theory (Coffield et al., 1986).

Across adolescence *'identity versus role confusion'* takes place (Erikson, 1968). Shifts occur in the adolescent attachment system (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978) with separation from the parents towards the peers. Through this, the adolescent achieves identity and thus *"self-definition is achieved, paradoxically by group membership"* (Tanner, 1973, p147). If social integration is hampered however, the distress of being *'left-out'* or not feeling *'a sense of peer belonging'* may be particularly acute, leading to loneliness (ibid.).

Early adolescence has been reported to be the most strained period in adolescent-parent relationships but such temporary perturbations in relations tend to be resolved by mid-late adolescence through the process of individuation and a renegotiation of the family system (Minuchin, 1985).

Others have argued that adolescents and adults remain attached to their parents throughout their lives and that the formation of a peer attachment in adolescence does not mean the termination of attachment to parents (Ainsworth, 1990). Across the adolescent years greater attention is given to peers over parents for companionship, support, advice and as models of behaviour (Hendry et al., 1993). Parent and peer related loneliness tend to peak in early adolescence and then to decrease (de Róiste, 2000) as in early adolescence a trade-off occurs between parental closeness and increased peer orientation, particularly where parental power and restrictiveness are perceived as high (Fuligni & Eccles, 1993).

The importance of non-parental adults is likely to increase during adolescence because of the young person's need to differentiate themselves from their parents and because of their widening social contacts (Galbo, 1986). However it should be noted that across adolescence young people still perceive their parents as the most important people in their lives.

Recent Irish research with 172 young people has illuminated that parents are a key source of social support and that working with the parents, and possibly extended family, of adolescents is important to consider in enhancing teenage social support (Dolan, 2005). In addition, as siblings were reported to be poorest providers of support, building sibling support for adolescents may be also worth considering (ibid).

Being with peers is also favourable, via positive task engagement, conflict resolution and relationship management (Hartup, 1996; Larson & Verma, 1999). However time spent with 'troubled' peers may contribute to a young person being exposed to deviant behaviour leading to, for example, delinquency or substance abuse (Duncan et al., 2000; Patterson et al., 2000).

Lerner et al. identified five key attributes of positive youth development (1999). These 'five C's' of positive youth development are competence, confidence, character, connection and caring/compassion. Lerner and Thompson (2002) claim that effective youth programmes according are those where the focus is on positive development promotion and not merely problem reduction or problem prevention. According to the authors effective youth programmes are;

1. Predicated on a vision of positive youth development and have clear goals
2. Focus on the participation of youth at every stage – design, delivery and evaluation
3. Pay attention to individual, family, community and cultural contexts
4. Ensure that the activity is safe and accessible.
5. Recognise the importance of adult-youth relationships to healthy adolescent behaviour, and, therefore, provide training to adult leaders
6. Emphasise the development of life skills - the 5C's of positive youth development
7. Have a commitment to evaluation

8. Advocate for youth; positive programmes should be used to influence policy makers about the importance of investing in positive youth development

As a period of particular vulnerability, adolescence is characterised by experimentation that while developmentally appropriate and socially adaptive for most, may be harmful and detrimental to others. While the adolescent years are formative ones of increased vulnerability and potential risk, they also constitute special opportunities for preventive interventions.

Adolescence and Leisure

Leisure time activities comprise between 40-50% of an adolescents life (Caldwell et al., 1992). According to Driver (1992), leisure has important individual benefits in at least six areas, including physiological aspects (reduced incidence of disease and increased sense of wellness); psychophysiological aspects (reduction of tension and anxiety, improved sense of well-being); psychological aspects (improved sense of self-esteem, freedom and independence, improved problem-solving capabilities, and enhanced perception of quality of life); social/cultural aspects (pride in one's community, cultural and historical awareness, and increased family bonds); environmental aspects (awareness of the need to protect the environment, to maintain outdoor recreational sites as well as protecting cultural, historic and heritage sites); and economic aspects (opportunities for employment in the leisure industry, which is one of the biggest industries in the world in terms of employment and income generation).

In studying adolescence, leisure has been identified as one of the key foci of interest in that it reveals specific and applied issues relating to adolescent social worlds (what Eckert (1999) termed 'communities of practice'), social contexts and support/coping mechanisms (Thurlow, 2004).

Research in the past has identified four distinct types of youth lifestyle (Hendry et al. 1993; Roberts & Parsell, 1994; Glendinning et al 1995; Young et al., 2001): Commercialised leisure (shopping, listening to music, going to discos), conventional (adult-approved) activities (e.g. art, playing a musical instrument, scouts, youth clubs), sports/games-oriented activities (playing/watching sports, playing computer games) and street-based peer-oriented activity (hanging around outside). Some of these show a social class association with conventional activities common in middle class youth and street-based activity more prevalent in working class youth (Karvonen et al., 2001). These lifestyles have also been found to be associated with the health-damaging behaviours of drinking, smoking and drug-taking in both Scottish and Finnish youth. Street-based and commercial leisure orientations have been found to increase rates of these behaviours whereas sports-oriented activities reduced them (Karvonen et al, 2001). This study highlighted '*the much greater importance of lifestyles for health behaviours as compared with (social) class*' (Karvonen et al., 2001, p409).

Leisure activities influence the adaptational process of adolescence (Piko & Vazsonyi, 2004) and adolescent problem behaviours are often construed as reflecting youth maladaptation (Furlong & Cartmel, 1997). Commercial and street-based leisure (e.g.

cinema and hanging-out) are associated with deviance and higher levels of health compromising behaviour whereas structured activities (e.g. sports activities or groups such as scouts/guides) and free time spent with one's family has the opposite effect (Piko & Vazsonyi, 2004; Osgood et al., 1996; Vazsonyi et al., 2002; Ary et al., 1999; Karvonen et al., 2001). The apparent 'protective' aspect of the latter may operate via facilitating parent or other adult monitoring practices (Piko & Fitzpatrick, 2002). Scottish youth have been reported to be more likely to participate in commercialised leisure than Finnish youth. 32% of Scottish 15 year olds attended discos on a weekly basis compared to 10% of Finnish 15 year olds (Karvonen et al., 2001).

Hobbies, sports, clubs and cultural pursuits have all been identified as spare time activities that may be helpful to young people in enhancing their resilience by nurturing their sense of self-worth, self-efficacy and providing a positive developmental social context (Gilligan, 2000). Research in Northern Ireland found sports participation to be associated with a higher sense of self-worth (Trew, 1997), though which causes which is contentious.

Youth activities are argued to be contexts in which adolescents are particularly likely to be producers of their own development (Larson, 2000). Leisure activities, according to Dworkin and colleagues (2003), facilitate a number of developmental processes in adolescence. Firstly, identity work, self-concept and what Dworkin and colleagues (2003) termed 'self-knowledge'. Waterman (1984) proposed that identification of talents and abilities is a key means through which identity is discovered while Youniss and colleagues (1999) contend that participation in service activities can provide "*reflective material*" that adolescents use in their process of identity exploration and development. The deliberate use of youth activities for identity work (in therapeutic recreation) is suggested by findings that many adolescents mention their involvement in sports or another youth activity when they are asked to describe their personal strengths (Benson, 1991; Williams and McGee, 1991). While participation in some types of leisure outside of school is associated with enhanced self-concept as well as higher educational attainment and aspirations (Barber et al., 1999; Marsh, 1992), it should be noted that *some* studies have also reported that participation in sports is linked with higher levels of risk behaviour such as alcohol and drug use (Barber et al., 2001; Eccles & Barber, 1999).

Secondly, the development of initiative '*the capacity to direct attention and effort over time toward a challenging goal*' (Dworkin et al., 2003 p24). Learning to set realistic goals and working towards these, time management and taking responsibility are seen to fall in under this (Dworkin et al., 2003).

Thirdly, the development of emotional competencies, including emotional self-regulation, stress management and relaxation. Hobbies, sports, clubs and cultural pursuits have all been identified as spare time activities that may be helpful to young people in enhancing their resilience by nurturing their sense of self-worth, self-efficacy and providing a positive developmental social context (Gilligan, 2000).

Forming new connections with and knowledge of peers is another developmental process. When a young person joins a team, club, or activity group, other participants often become part of that person's social network (Brown, 1990). Research by Patrick and colleagues (1999) found that over half young people they interviewed reported

making new friends as a consequence of participation in a youth activity. Youth activities appear to be a context for young people to meet and learn about peers who are different from them in ethnicity, race, and social class (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2000). During adolescence friendship is often established on the basis of common interests and shared activities (Tesch, 1983)

Yet another process is the development of social skills and competencies such as communication skills, learning to work with others and leadership skills (Catalano et al., 1999; Dubas & Snider, 1993). Rogoff and colleagues (2001) propose that learning occurs through collaborative participation in activities of shared interest. Learning cooperation and teamwork has been described as part of the 'hidden curriculum' of youth activities (Jarrett, 1998). Through uniting around achievement of a goal, it is believed that youth learn to work with each other, handle each other's emotions, divide responsibilities, and give and take feedback. This assists in turn in social skills development and confidence in relating to peers (Patrick et al., 1999).

Finally, a sixth developmental process that has been attributed to youth activities is acquiring 'social capital' i.e. the formation of valuable relationships with adult leaders and others in the community (Dworkin et al., 2003). Participation in community activities may assist young people to forge a strong connection to and embeddedness in their local community that may become a source of social and emotional support to them.

Kleiber and colleagues' (1986) notion of transitional and relaxed leisure suggests that when a developmental imperative is achieved a leisure activity may be dropped. Similarly, Kelly (1987) proposed that individuals have 'core' leisure behaviours in which they engage in throughout their lives and 'balance' leisure activities that meet specific developmental needs at a given point or stage of their lives.

Participation in some types of leisure outside of school is associated with enhanced self-concept as well as higher educational attainment and aspirations (Barber et al., 1999; Marsh, 1992) though participation in sports, in some studies, has been linked with higher levels of alcohol and drug use (Barber et al., 2001; Eccles & Barber, 1999). For adolescents at-risk for anti-social behaviour, participation in structured after-school activities reduces the probability of criminal arrests and school drop-out (Mahoney, 2000; Mahoney & Cairns, 1997). Low structured activities are characterised by deviant peer relations, poor parent-child relations and low support from activity leaders (Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). In the United States, Coley and colleagues (2004) found that consistent monitoring from parents (i.e. their knowledge of and influence over adolescent activities) and active engagement by members of the community might be particularly protective for young adolescents who spend significant amounts of free time in out-of-home settings.

According to Pettit and colleagues (1999) unsupervised peer contact, low parental monitoring and low neighbourhood safety had a cumulative effect in predicting behavioural problems over time and thus are important factors to be attended to in any consideration of adolescent leisure.

Early adolescence, according to Lawson and Kleiber (1993), is a critical period where the young person learns to focus their attention and leisure activities, which facilitate

self-controlled actions (rather than other-directed via a leader or parents), which are important for boredom reduction. Some adolescents are seen to need assistance with focusing and channelling their attention but if this assistance is too directed (e.g. where leisure activities are too structured or other-directed), boredom is more likely to be experienced by the adolescent. This is consistent with the theory that intrinsic motivation and self-determination are antithetical to the experience of boredom and highlights the significance of autonomy and choice in adolescent leisure (Caldwell & Darling, 1999; Caldwell et al., 1999).

Leisure involvement also alters across the adolescent years. Time-use researchers have found that over the course of adolescence unstructured socialising activities begin to take the place of specific free-time activities in the lives of youth (Richards & Larson, 1989).

Research (Larson & Verma, 1999; McHale et al., 2004) has found that female time spent on structured leisure activities declines in middle adolescence, whereas time spent socialising (i.e., talking on the phone) increases. These declines may reflect barriers and opportunities in the larger social environment. As Jacobs and colleagues (2002) found, age-related declines in self-perceptions of competence may be connected to such barriers and play an important role in activity involvement. Finally, as highlighted by McHale and colleagues (2004) an increasing interest in the peer social world, along with the significance of intimacy and self-disclosure in girls' close relationships, may underpin a shift from involvement in specific activities to socialising.

Types of Leisure

York, Vandercook, and Stave (1990) reported that, for adolescents, the favourite independent activities were watching television and reading, while the favourite activities with peers were shopping and going to the cinema. The favourite family activity was eating out, while the favourite school activity was talking, and the favourite community activity was sports. The most frequently identified activity categories were physical activities (i.e., sports) and using audiovisual and electronic equipment (e.g. radios, stereos, and computers). Agnew and Petersen (1989) reported in their study of 600 high school students that the most popular leisure activities were non-competitive sports, followed by passive entertainment and competitive sports. The least popular leisure activities were housework, organised activities, hanging out, music and games.

Gender exerts a very strong influence on leisure involvement in both childhood and adolescence. Research by Stiles and colleagues (1993) for example, found that Dutch adolescent (14 & 15 year old) girls reported dancing/discos, swimming, holidays, tennis and listening to music as their most popular leisure activities. For adolescent boys of the same age, it was television, tennis, soccer, going to films and listening to music. Similar aged American girls reported swimming, shopping, dancing/discos, going to films, partying and for American boys it was softball/baseball, swimming, television, soccer and sex. Commonalities were clearly evident across the two cultures and as was found with Scottish youth by Smith (1987), males reported more organised sports and girls reported more dancing and swimming.

Interestingly females have been found to report more sex-typed leisure activities from early to mid adolescence (McHale et al., 2004) supporting a gender intensification hypothesis via the processes of parent and peer pressure and the desire to attract boys (Burn et al., 1996). However other research on preferences for free-time activities has suggested that females become less sex-typed across adolescence (Katz & Ksansnak, 1994). This is in keeping with a cognitive developmental model that predicts a decrease in sex-typing from childhood through adolescence because of increasing cognitive sophistication (McHale et al., 2004).

Gender was also a factor in an Australian study (Garton & Pratt, 1991) involving a large sample of high school students, with sports preferred by young men, while young women tended to choose activities such as reading, playing musical instruments, visiting museums, and social activities. The study also found differences in the outdoor and social activities chosen by students based on whether they attended urban or rural schools.

Gender and culture also interact and research has reported how in some cultures girls are not encouraged and are even discouraged, from participating in leisure (Caldwell et al, 2002) reinforcing deep cultural norms.

Leisure and Adolescence: Influential factors

Leisure involvement in adolescence has also been found to be dependent upon other factors such as culture, location (e.g. urban/rural), disability/health needs and individual differences. Research undertaken by Karvonen and colleagues (2001) for example, illuminated how ‘local peculiarities’ may impact on leisure patterns and yet be masked when attention is only paid to the broader picture. Influence of the local milieu and social context thus need to be acknowledged in considering leisure patterns.

In relation to this, Sampson and colleagues (1997) coined the term ‘*collective efficacy*’ to refer to the extent to which the local community provides social cohesion, control and shared values i.e. community level processes similar to parental supervision and support.

The ‘cultural choices available to young people are invariably influenced and constrained by the ideological positions and material conditions of their immediate environment- most notably of the school itself’ (Thurlow, 2002, p347).

Individual differences and needs also play a key role. For example young people with high ADHD tend to spend more of their free time in ‘entertaining’ and ‘non-productive’ pursuits such as watching television and game playing and less time in other activities (Whalen et al., 2002).

In addition recreation and leisure greatly influences quality of life, including that of people with disabilities. Young people with particular needs such as those with visual and hearing impairments or learning disabilities may have very different leisure experiences to other young people. Leisure is one context in which people with disabilities have experienced a lack of social acceptance and inclusion (Devine, 1997; Sable, 1995). This in turn has negatively influenced the leisure lifestyle of people with disabilities (Barnes, 1990; Shank, Coyle, Boyd, & Kinney, 1996).

Leisure situations often reflect society at large in that disability appears to have a more negative meaning in less structured (i.e., leisure) contexts than in more structured (i.e., work, academia) contexts (Devine, 2004). As noted by Devine (2004) leisure tends to be a microcosm of society, reflecting dominant values, norms and standards. It can provide opportunities for self-expression, freedom and enjoyment but can also play a role in challenging norms and standards, particularly those relating to disability. In relation to this, Place and Hodge (2001) reported that youth with and without disability interact infrequently with each other in the context of competitive sport training. Youth with disability interact to a greater degree with each other than with those without disability (ibid).

Research undertaken by Devine (2004, p9) suggests that *‘inclusive leisure activities facilitate social acceptance and definitions of disability were given new meaning; adaptive equipment meant independence, executing recreation skills in a non-traditional way meant uniqueness, and encouragement meant acceptance. Others felt traditional definitions of disability were revealed during leisure. In these cases, a disability was a devalued role; a hierarchy of disability meant some disabilities were more acceptable than others; and inclusive participation meant overprotection. Leisure contexts, thus, can challenge traditional meanings of disability, skill, and ability as well as perpetuate negative meanings’*.

With respect to young people with visual impairment a number of barriers to leisure exist including a lack of organised sports programmes, a lack of opportunity to participate in some community based leisure and a lack of accessible facilities (Kennedy et al., 1991; Sherrill et al., 1984). However organisations such as the National Council for the Blind of Ireland (NCBI) and Irish Blind Sports have encouraged and facilitated the greater participation of children, young people and adults with visual impairment in recreation in Ireland.

Youth Policy and Recreation and Leisure

Statistics for 2002 show that there were 358,381 young people in the 12-17 age group living in Ireland. This group accounts for just fewer than 10% of the population (Central Statistics Office in NCO, 2005).

The following is a synopsis of the key Government policy statements and strategies that apply to, or impact on young people’s recreation and leisure.

Our Children – Their Lives; National Children’s Strategy

The National Children’s Strategy (2000) sets out a series of policy objectives to guide children’s policy into the future. The policy adopts a ‘whole-child’ perspective and is anchored in six operational principles to guide all actions. These guiding principles are that all actions taken will be; child centred, family oriented, equitable; inclusive; action oriented; and integrated.

Objective D of the National Children’s Strategy states that *‘children will have access to play, sport, recreation and cultural activities to enrich their experience of childhood’* (p57). The strategy highlights the need for research in the area of

'children's participation in recreational and cultural activities outside of the education system' (p57).

'Sport for Life'; Irish Sport's Council Statement of Strategy 2003-2005

This is the second strategy document of the Irish Sports Council (ISC). In it, the ISC highlight the challenge of *'doing more to get young people excited by, and involved in sport'* (p18). The first two overall objectives of the strategy are

- *to influence the critical need for physical education in Ireland so that future generations understand the importance of physical activity and have the basic skills to participate*
- *to increase opportunities to participate in sport at local level and particularly for school-aged children in the sport of their choice at a level at which they feel comfortable.* (p18)

The strategy also highlights the importance of a partnership approach, particularly in relation to the objectives that relate to children. They identify the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Health and Children, and all of the agencies under the aegis of these two government departments, as organisations of particular importance in achieving the objectives above.

The National Health Promotion Strategy 2000-2005

This is the second national health promotion strategy. One of the strategic aims of the strategy is *'to maintain health and support the development of healthy lifestyle choices for young people'* (p41). As many of the determinants of health are outside the scope of the Department of Health and Children the importance of a partnership approach is mentioned throughout the strategy. Particular mention is made of the *'high prevalence of smoking and low levels of physical activity amongst young girls'* and the *'increase in young male suicide'* (p41). The youth sector and schools and colleges are identified as key settings for health promotion.

The Youth Work Act & the National Youth Work Development Plan

The Department of Education and Science has driven the enactment of the Youth Work Act (2001), the establishment of a National Youth Work Advisory Committee (2002) and the publication of the National Youth Work Development Plan (2003). These provide, for the first time, a legal framework for the provision of youth work programmes and services by the Department of Education and Science through the administrative structures of the Vocational Education Committees (VEC).

Under the act "*'Youth Work' means a planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young person's through their voluntary participation, and which is – a) complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training; and b) provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations'*" (Youth Work Act, 2001).

The primary focus of Youth Work then is with the *education* of young people in non-formal settings. These settings as identified in the National Youth Work Development Plan (2003) include, inter alia; recreational, sporting, cultural, creative, artistic, spiritual, uniformed and non-uniformed programmes. Owing to the informal

nature of youth work and the range of settings identified above, it is likely that many young people in our study reported youth work programmes as leisure time activities.

Arts Plan 2002-2006

The Arts Council launched its third Arts Plan in 2002. One of the main objectives of the plan is to broaden and enrich participation in the arts. An objective of the plan is *'to extend and enhance the arts experience of young people in the formal and informal education sector'* (p14).

In response to the objectives and actions outlined in the arts plan the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) published 'Arts in Their Lives; A policy on young people and the arts' (2003) and the National Youth Arts Programme Strategic Plan 2003-2006. The National Youth Arts Programme is an initiative of the National Youth Council of Ireland and is supported by The Arts Council and the Department of Education and Science (Youth Affairs Section). This Strategic Plan identifies specific strategic priorities to advance best practice in youth arts, broaden youth participation in the arts and promote and advocate the contribution made by young people to the arts.

International Youth Policy

In terms of international policy, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1990 (Article 31) states that *'State Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity'*.

Young people, physical activity and health

The evidence for the health benefits from regular physical activity is over-whelming and undisputed (US Dept. of Health, 1996; Department of Health and Children, 1999). The internationally recognised recommendation is that all young people between 5 and 18 years participate in physical activity for at least an hour per day in order to maintain healthy body weight and reduce the risk of developing cardiovascular disease, diabetes, some cancers, osteoporosis and other non-communicable diseases later in life (National Heart Alliance, 2001). Regular physical activity is also associated with greater feelings of self-worth and self-esteem and reduced incidence of depression (ibid).

It is of enormous concern that increasingly large numbers of young people do not participate in enough physical activity to bestow the above health benefits. Participation rates amongst Irish adolescents are decreasing steadily, particularly for girls and young women (Health Promotion Unit, 2002).

A recent study estimates that one in 20 Irish children are obese and that one in 5 are overweight (Woods, 2004). In a Cork based study 15.5% of parents' of eight-year-old children described their child as 'fat' or 'very fat' (Foley-Nolan et al., 2005). This is worrying when research shows that about half of obese children become obese adults and 80% of obese adolescents remain obese into adulthood (Nieman, 1998). Regular

physical activity is second only to diet in the prevention and treatment of overweight and obesity.

There is evidence to suggest that many physically active children carry the habit of regular physical activity into adolescence and adulthood (Sallis et al., 1992).

Rationale

This study was commissioned in the context of policy development in the field of youth and recreation and leisure. It set-out to determine:

- What do Irish young people do in their free time?
- What are the barriers and supports they experience?
- What are their aspirations with regard to recreation and leisure?

CHAPTER 2: METHOD

Séan is 14 and lives in a village in the countryside. He has asthma but that hasn't restricted him at all in his leisure. Séan plays soccer, Gaelic and hurling with his friends outside after school. He also plays Gaelic with the local GAA club and hopes to make it onto the under 15s team soon. If he doesn't he might give it up as he's never been picked for the team and doesn't like the coach much. Instead Séan might take up rugby or boxing though he's unsure how to join either of these and even if they are available nearby or not. In his free time Séan also enjoys playing computer games and loves the ones with cars. He doesn't like reading a lot as he feels he has enough reading to do for his homework.

Method

Sampling Procedure

The sampling frame for this study was a list of Irish second level schools downloaded from the Department of Education and Science (DES) website in July 2004 (www.des.ie). The total number of schools in the sampling frame was 747. A total of sixty schools were required for the sample, ten from Dublin and two each from the other twenty-six counties. Every 12th school was taken until all of the clusters were filled.

A review of the sixty schools selected highlighted a shortage of urban schools outside of Dublin, to balance this the sampling frame was revisited to select an urban school in Cork, Waterford and Galway. At this stage also, in consultation with the National Children's Office five schools were culled from the sample, three from Dublin and one each from Mayo and Wicklow.

When contacted five schools declined to partake in the research. Three cited other research projects as their reason for not participating; one principal thought that gaining parental consent would be 'too much hassle' while another principal simply declined without offering a reason. There were two other schools from which no data were collected. In both instances agreement had been reached with the principal but subsequent attempts to arrange a research visit failed.

One further school in Dublin city was selected for the sample resulting in a total of fifty-one schools from which data were collected.

After piloting in a Cork County school and with a Scout group in Dublin, data collection began on November 4th with both researchers jointly visiting four Dublin schools over two days. Data from 49 schools were collected across a 6week period from November to mid December. In February, data was collected from the final two schools with specific ages targeted given their low representation in the overall sample.

Sample Characteristics

Of the 51 schools that have participated, 38 are coeducational, 7 are single sex male and 6 are single sex female. Twenty of these schools were town based, 20 were rural and 11 were urban based.

The total sample was 2260 (1125m, 1134f, 1 missing value on gender). In percentage terms 49.8% were male and 50.2% were female. Just over three-quarters of the sample, 75.9% (901m, 815f, 1 missing value), attended coeducational schools, 9.9% (n=224) attended an all male school and 14.1% (n=319) attended an all female school.

As can be seen in Table 1 below, the majority of the sample (22.8%) was aged 14 and 13 (18.8%). The next most frequent age groups were 15 and 16 (16.6% each) followed by 17 year olds (12.9%), 12 year olds (8.6%) and 18 year olds (3.6%).

Table 1: Gender by Age

	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total
Male	100	207	231	210	199	140	38	1125
Female	95	218	284	166	176	151	44	1134
Total	195	425	515	376	375	291	82	2260*

* 1 missing variable on gender

Of the sample 93% are Irish (n=2101; 1055m, 1045f; 1 missing value on gender), 3.5% from the United Kingdom (n=80; 33m, 47f), 1.1% African (n=24; 9m, 15f), 0.7% from the European Union (n=17; 10m,7f), 0.6% American (n=13; 8m, 5f), 0.5% non-EU European (n=11; 6m,5f), 0.3% Asian (n=7; 2m,5f) and 0.2% other (n=5; 1m,4f). There were 2 missing values on nationality.

The modal number of siblings of the sample was 2 (min.=0, max. =13). Over three-quarters of the sample (76.5%; n=14726) had 3 or fewer siblings and 3.9% of these (n=89) were 'only children'.

The majority of the sample are from Dublin (12.9%; n=291;67m; 224f), followed by Galway (7%; n=158; 83m,75f), Monaghan (6.3%;n=143; 78m,65f), Carlow (5.9%; n=134; 69m, 65f), Waterford (5.6%; n=127; m f) and Cork (5.2%; n=118; 94m, 24f).

Table 2: Parental Occupation by Gender

	Male	Female	Total
Professional	53	66	119
Managerial/Technical	200	216	416
Non-manual/Farmer	258	320	578
Skilled-manual	261	250	511
Semi-skilled	128	107	235
Unskilled	73	66	139
Social welfare	23	31	54
Total	996	1056	2052

There was missing data for 9.2% of the sample (n=208) on parental occupation.

Illness and Disability

Of the 2250 respondents (99.5%; 1118m, 1132f) who answered this question, 8.2% (n=185; 101m, 84f) reported an illness or disability. The most frequent illness or disability cited was asthma (n= 105; 54m, 51f) followed by musculo-skeletal disabilities (n=13; 8m, 5f), sensory deficits (n=9; 6m, 3f) and dyslexia or literacy disabilities (n= 7; 4m, 3f).

Of the 185 who reported an illness or disability, 180 indicated whether it restricted their leisure or not. Of these, nearly a third (32.2%; n=58) reported that their

illness/disability did *not* restrict their leisure at all while over half (57.8%; n=104) reported that it restricted their leisure *a little*. Only 10% (n=18) of these reported that it restricted their leisure *a lot*.

Looking at asthma in particular, over half (63.8%; n=67) of the respondents with asthma reported that it restricted their leisure a little while just over a quarter (27.8%; n=29) reported that it did not restrict their leisure at all and 7.9% reported it restricted their leisure a lot.

Post-Survey Focus Groups

Focus groups were undertaken with young people in schools across Cork (city and county) to explore prominent themes from the survey data (see appendix). The duration of the focus groups ranged from 45-60 minutes.

School 1

Three focus groups were undertaken with young people from the third year (average age = 15; range 14-16) of a mixed secondary school.

Group A: 12 females

Group B: 12 males

Group C: 6 male and 6 female

School 2

One focus group was undertaken with 10 males from the transition year (average age = 16; range 15-17) of an all male secondary school.

School 3

One focus group was undertaken with 8 females from the transition year (average age = 16; range 15-16).

Young People with Additional Needs

The authors wish to highlight that the sub-samples of young people with additional needs should not be taken as representative in the way that the main sample is. The research undertaken in these sub-studies was designed to broaden the sample such that minority groups were assured a voice. The findings from these sub-studies are presented in Chapter 10 and may serve as signposts for future research.

Focus groups and interviews were undertaken with young people from minority groups. These included young people not attending school, young Travellers and young people with aural and visual impairment, special needs and physical disabilities. These were drawn from centres and schools in Cork, Kerry and Dublin. The duration of the focus groups and interviews ranged from 45-60 minutes.

Young Deaf People

Twenty (12 female; 8 male) young deaf people completed the survey. The average age of this sub-sample was 13.5 (range=12-16). All attended the two State schools for the deaf. All were Irish except for one. The parental occupation of the majority was semi-skilled (n=6) and skilled (n=4) categories. Twelve wore hearing aids and five had a cochlear implant, three did not answer this question.

Young People with Visual Impairment

Eight young people with visual impairment (4 male and 4 female; mean age =16) were interviewed. These all attended the integrated State school for the visually impaired in which there are 32 young people with visual impairment. The eight that participated were among 10 approached by the resource teacher, who had completed and returned consent forms before the visit of the researcher. The resource teacher had been asked to approach a cross-section of the young people with a visual impairment.

Two of the eight were boarders at the school. The types of visual impairments the young people experienced included myopia, detached retina, astigmatism and ocular albinism. The interview schedule followed the format of the questionnaire.

Young People with Special Needs

Six young people (all male) with autism spectrum disorders (age range 15-17; mean age =16) participated in the focus group. They all attend a special co-educational school for children and young people who experience multiple disabilities.

Young People with Physical Disabilities

Three members of the Cork branch of Muscular Dystrophy Ireland were interviewed.

Early School Leavers

Thirty-six young people not attending school but attending Youthreach centres (see appendices) in Cork (city and county) and Kerry participated in focus-groups.

Youthreach Centre 1

Two focus groups were undertaken with males and females

Group A: Eight young people (5 male & 3 female) aged 15-17 (average =16)

Group B: Five young people (3 male & 2 female) aged 12-13 (average =12.8)

Youthreach Centre 2

Group A: 4 males aged 12-13 years (average = 12.5)

Group B: 5 males aged 16-18 years (average =17)

Group C: 4 females aged 14-18 years (average =16)

Youthreach Centre 3

One focus group was undertaken with 10 young people (4 male & 6 female) aged 16-19 years (average =17.5).

Young People from the Traveller Community

Two focus groups were undertaken with young people, all of who were members of the Traveller Community in Dublin.

Group A: 5 females aged 12-13 years

Group B: 5 males all aged 17 years

Materials

A questionnaire was specifically developed for this study based on past research, theory and pilot focus groups. In addition, the Free Time Motivation Scale (Baldwin & Caldwell, 2003) was used to assess young people's motivation type with respect to free-time use. A copy of the questionnaire is contained in the Appendices.

The questionnaire consists of six sections:

1. Demographic information (11 items).
2. Leisure time-use inventory (24 items). This section lists 12 general free-time activities on which respondents rated their frequency of participation from 'every-day' to 'never'. This was followed by the 4 categories of leisure time activities of 'sports', 'hobbies', 'community/charity groups' and 'others'. For each of these respondents could list up to 3 activities they participated in along with their frequency of participation from 'every-day' to 'less often'. Posters were used to illustrate what was meant by 'sports', 'hobbies' and 'community/charity groups' (see appendix).
3. Barriers and Supports (20 items). This section was used to measure experience of intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural barriers and supports to leisure time-use. Respondents rated each of the barriers and supports on a 5-point Likert scale anchored from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.
4. The Free Time Motivation Scale (FTMS) (20 items). This is a self-report measure developed by Baldwin and Caldwell (2003) that examines reasons for engaging in free time activities. Motivation is measured at a contextual level rather than on specific free time activities with respondents rating their level of agreement with various reasons for what young people do in their free time. Agreement is indicated using a 5-point Likert scale anchored from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.
5. Drop-out and Barriers to Drop-out. In this section respondents were asked to recall a leisure time activity that they had withdrawn from and to indicate, by ticking, the reasons for their cessation from a list of 16 potential reasons. Respondents could also write a reason if appropriate.
6. Like to Join and Barriers to Joining. In this section respondents were asked to identify any one leisure activity they would like to participate in and to select, by ticking, the reasons why they do not participate in it. Respondents could also write a reason if appropriate.

Section 5 and 6 above were adapted from research on leisure constraints in early adolescence by Hultsman (1992).

This questionnaire, along with the explanatory letter to the school and parents as well as the consent form, was translated into Irish for use in the Gaeltacht. It was completed in Irish by those who chose to do so.

For young deaf people the same questionnaire was used but with 2 additional demographic items relating to their impairment.

The focus groups were facilitated using a focus group schedule based on the questionnaire and the main themes found from the survey (see appendix).

The interviews with young people with visual impairment were semi-structured based on the questionnaire. The interviewer completed the questionnaire for the interviewee.

Procedure

Permission to conduct the research in each school/centre was obtained from the school principal/director. In addition, parental/guardian and participant consent was obtained in writing for each participant. It is impossible to quantify the exact number of young people who did not take part in the study due to an absence of parental consent. It is estimated however that 12% of potential participants were lost to the study due to non-return of consent forms. In the vast majority of cases this was due to the student forgetting to bring back the form. From what was said to teachers and to the researchers, an estimate was reached that 0.5% of potential participants either refused to participate or were refused parental consent.

The questionnaire was administered during a normal class period in the schools visited, typically 35-40 minutes. In almost all of the schools, the respondents were seated in conventional classrooms, facing the front of the classroom. The researcher first introduced herself, outlined and explained the purpose of the study and assured participants of confidentiality. Respondents were discouraged from discussing the questionnaire with each other and were encouraged to ask questions of the researchers if they had a query. Finally, the importance of honesty in completing the questionnaire was highlighted to all. Completion times of the questionnaire ranged from 20-40 minutes with younger participants generally taking longer to complete it.

Focus groups were undertaken with groups of 4-10 young people across a number of schools and centres. Permission was again obtained from the centre director and parental/guardian as well as participant consent were obtained in writing. Each focus group was held in the school/centre and facilitated by two researchers, each of whom took notes and took turns leading the discussion. At the beginning of each group the researchers introduced themselves, explained the purpose of the study and assured participants of confidentiality. They were encouraged to show respect for each other and for any differences in answers that might be given. Using a schedule of questions and probes that were drawn up based on the questionnaire and the main themes found from the survey, the researchers facilitated discussions on these as well as on any issues pertinent to leisure raised by the group. At the end of each group the key points were read back for validation from the group.

In undertaking the research Cork Institute of Technology Research Ethics Policy and procedures were adhered to. All schools and centres that participated in the study will receive debriefing letters summarising the main findings of the study to pass onto the young people who participated in the study.

Data Analysis

The data was analysed using SPSS- version 12.

CHAPTER 3: GENERAL FREE-TIME ACTIVITIES

Sorcha is 17 years of age and lives in a city. For Sorcha, most of her free-time is spent chatting and texting on her mobile phone, playing the violin, listening to music, doing her homework/study and her part-time job in a shop nearby. With this being the year of her leaving certificate, Sorcha also feels under pressure time wise. She goes swimming once a week or so and goes to the cinema weekly or fortnightly with her friends. She'd like to join a youth club but feels too old for any of the clubs near her. She'd also like to be able to go more often to discos but she's either too young or too old for them. There doesn't seem to be one for her age group.

Key Findings

Mobile Phone Ownership and Usage

94.7% of the sample own a mobile phone

- More frequent use of mobile phones by females
- Rise in mobile phone ownership from 12-18 years

Television

- The majority watch TV every day
- No gender or age or SES differences

Computer Games

- Over one third play games every day or most days
- Males play computer games more than females
- No age or SES differences

Reading

- Over half read in their free time every day or most days
- Females read significantly more than males
- Greater reading frequency in the higher SES groups

Listening to music

- Four-fifths listen to music every day or most days
- Increase in listnership from 12-18 year
- Females listen to music more frequently than males

Hanging-around

- Over half hang-around every day or most days
- Hanging-around declines in frequency (espec. in females) from 12-18 years

Looking at shops

- On average females look at shops weekly while males look at shops less often
- Little change from 12-18 years

Cinema

- 92.7% of the sample go to the cinema weekly or less often
- Young people attending rural as compared to urban schools go to the cinema less often

Discos

- On average young people go to discos less often than weekly
- Rise in attendance at discos from 12-18 years
- Young people attending rural schools go to discos more frequently than those attending city schools

Part-Time Work

- Over a third worked part-time weekly or more often
- Rise in the number working part-time from 12–18 years
- Males worked part-time more frequently than females
- Slightly more young people in the lower SES groups worked part-time
- Young people attending rural schools worked part-time more often

Introduction

For the purposes of this study general free-time activities are defined as those leisure time activities that are very common among the target population, Irish adolescents. They include the passive leisure activities of television viewing, listening to music, playing computer games, hanging around, using the telephone and reading. They also include two social leisure activities; looking around the shops and going to discos. Finally part time work and walking for leisure are included in this section.

Mobile Phone Ownership and Usage

Of the sample, 2,247 (1073m, 1093f) answered this question with 94.7% (n=2130; 1034m, 1096f) indicating that they owned a mobile phone and only 5.2% (n=117; 84m, 33f) indicated that they did not. This concurs with research in the UK that estimates that 9 in 10 secondary school students have a mobile phone (Selwyn, 2003). Little difference was found in mobile phone ownership between the various parental occupation groups suggesting that socio-economic status (SES) does not have a major impact on young people's mobile phone ownership.

Table 3: Mobile Phone Ownership

	12		13		14		15		16		17		18		Total
	<i>m</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>f</i>	
Yes	83	85	186	209	216	271	189	164	190	172	132	151	38	44	2130
No	17	8	19	7	13	12	20	2	8	4	7	0	0	0	117
Total	100	93	205	216	229	283	209	166	198	176	139	151	38	44	2247

From 12 to 18 years of age, there was a clear rise in the number who owned mobile phones from 87% of the 12 year olds to 97.5% of the 17 year olds to 100% ownership in the 18 year olds.

Looking at mobile phone usage, the vast majority of the total sample, male and female, use a mobile phone to talk or text 'every day' (60.4%) or 'most days' (25.3%) with little difference across the age-span.

In comparison to 79.6% (n=887) of the males, a greater proportion of the females, 91.7% (n=1034), use a mobile phone 'every day' or 'most days', implying more frequent usage by females.

Looking at this data from another standpoint, 9.8% of the males reported using a mobile phone 'less often' than weekly in contrast to 3.2% of the females. A small minority, 2% of the sample reported 'never' using a mobile phone. This is understandable given that 5.2% of the sample reported not owning a mobile phone.

Table 4: Mobile phone use

		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total	
Male	every day	32	87	112	102	115	81	27	556	49.7%
	most days	35	65	71	56	59	34	11	331	29.7%
	weekly	14	15	14	18	10	8	0	79	7.0%
	less often	8	29	27	24	12	10	0	110	9.8%
	never	9	8	5	7	2	6	0	37	3.3%
Total		98	204	229	207	198	139	38	1113	
Female	every day	52	141	200	122	139	113	31	798	70.8%
	most days	27	55	57	32	27	30	8	236	20.9%
	weekly	3	13	10	3	6	7	2	44	3.9%
	less often	11	5	11	3	3	1	3	37	3.2%
	never	1	2	5	3	1	0	0	12	1%
Total		94	216	283	163	176	151	44	1127	

From the focus groups it was clear that the main functions of a mobile phone were calling and texting to ‘keep in touch’ with friends and family, ‘chatting’, ‘arranging to meet’, ‘gossip’, exchanging ‘secrets’, ‘sharing pictures’, ‘recording songs’ and reported by males only ‘playing games’ such as pool on the phone.

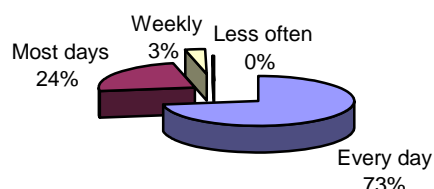
Television Viewing

The majority of the sample (70.9%), male and female, watch television ‘every day’ (modal and median average) with a further 23.2% watching television ‘most days’. Thus, 94% of the sample watch television ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ with little variation over the age-span. A tiny minority, 0.3%, report that they ‘never’ watch television. No change in pattern was evident across the age span and little difference was found in frequency of TV watching between young people attending urban and rural schools. No difference was evident between males and females.

Table 5: Television Viewing

Age		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total	
Male	every day	65	146	160	149	144	91	26	781	69.9%
	most days	29	48	54	47	40	35	8	261	23.3%
	weekly	3	7	6	6	9	4	3	38	3.4%
	less often	2	5	9	3	5	7	1	32	2.8%
	never	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	4	0.3%
Total		99	207	230	205	199	138	38	1116	
Female	every day	53	149	211	119	124	113	34	803	71.6%
	most days	33	55	55	36	42	30	7	258	23.0%
	weekly	4	7	8	4	4	5	2	34	3%
	less often	4	3	6	5	3	1	1	23	2%
	never	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0.1%
Total		94	214	282	164	173	149	44	1120	

Figure 1: Frequency of Watching TV



Computer Games

Across the sample as a whole over a third (36.9%) reported playing computer games ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ and only 2.1% report ‘never’ playing. These figures contrast with those of Connor (2003) who found that only a fifth, 21%, play ‘every day’ or ‘often’ and 11% reported ‘never’ playing.

Our findings may represent greater popularity of these games, perhaps greater availability of computer games or may be due to sampling differences between the studies. Little difference was found in game playing between young people in the different parental occupation SES groups.

In our study, a clear trend is evident in the use of computer games with males reporting significantly more frequent use of computer games in their free time with little change in this pattern over the age-span. In contrast to 60.8% of males who indicated that they played computer games ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ only 13.1% of females reported this frequency.

Looking at this from a different standpoint, the majority of females (42.4%) indicated that they only played computer games ‘less often’ than on weekly whereas only 15.1% of the males indicated this. The gender difference is even more evident in the percentages who reported that they ‘never’ played computer games, 31.5% of the females as compared to 6.1% of the males.

Table 6: Computer Games by Age and Gender

Age		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total
Male	every day	19	59	65	62	52	26	10	293 26.3%
	most days	45	73	84	71	63	43	6	385 34.5%
	weekly	20	30	33	38	41	29	7	198 17.7%
	less often	10	30	34	26	30	28	11	169 16.9%

	never	5	14	12	10	12	13	3	69	6.1%
	Total	99	206	228	207	198	139	37	1114	
Female	every day	6	9	11	5	3	7	0	41	3.6%
	most days	14	30	24	16	15	4	4	107	9.5%
	weekly	16	41	37	17	20	10	3	144	12.8%
	less often	42	90	128	63	78	58	17	476	42.4%
	never	17	44	80	65	59	70	19	354	31.5%
	Total	95	214	280	166	175	149	43	1122	

Figure 2: Computer Games Female Frequency

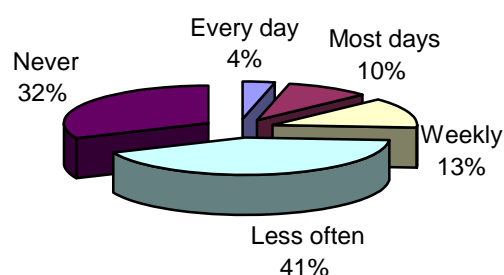


Figure 3: Computer Games Male Frequency

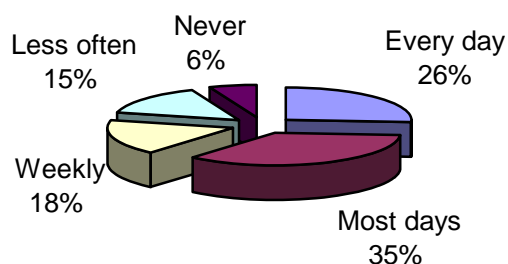


Table 7: Computer Games by Parental Occupation

	Prof/Managerial N= 534	Farm/Non-Man n=575	Skilled/Semi Skilled n=743	Manual/Welfare n=192
Every day/Most days	33.8% n=181	32.2% n=185	40% n=296	37.8% n=72
Weekly	14.7% n=79	16% n=92	15% n=111	16.3% n=31
Less often/Never	51.3% n=274	51.7% n= 297	44.9% n=332	45.7% n=87

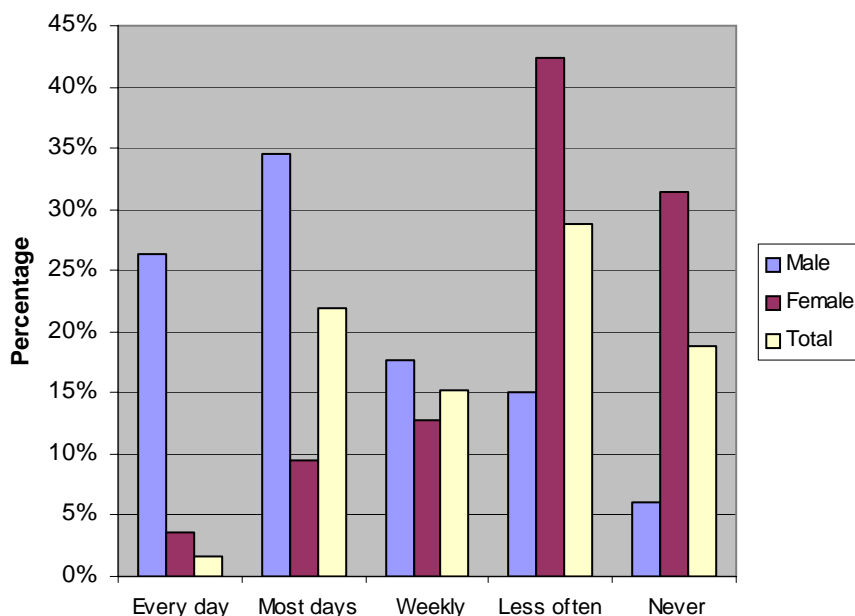
The overall impression on computer games, from the focus groups, was a high level of interest among males in contrast to little interest among females. Greater interest was apparent among males in secondary schools as compared to males in the Youthreach centres visited.

Focus group participants were asked to explain the gender difference in computer game use. According to females, computer games aren't popular with them because *'most of them are, like, wrestling and stuff'*, *'most games are car racing and are targeted at lads'*, *'they (the games) are very competitive, playing against each other and we wouldn't be bothered with that'*. Several females spoke of *'having better things to be doing with our time than playing computer games'* though a minority indicated that *'if there was nothing else to do we'd play'*.

According to males, computer games are less popular with females because *'games don't have girl's interests like ponies and flowers and stuff'* and because *'the games are more action oriented, you know, for boys like'*. Reasons given by the males for enjoying computer games included that they are *'cool'*, *'entertaining'* and *'challenging and competitive'*. With respect to the latter, the challenge posed by any given game seemed to be a very salient feature and relates to how much the game is valued by the players. As one participant said *'some games really catch you out, they challenge you and it can take a year to pass so you get really hooked on them. Others are too easy and boring'*. Another reason given for the popularity of computer games was that with many of them you can play against or with another person on the same game.

Popular types of games include those related to fantasy and linked to role-play computer games (RPGs). Reasons for their popularity include *'they are an escape from reality'*, *'make you fantasise about being a different person'* and *'they're good when you want to get away from everything'*. Another popular type of game are based on motor-sport *'the car racing is great, like fast driving'* (computer games such as *'need for speed'*), general sport (such as NHL-ice hockey, American football and pre-revolution soccer and wrestling) and weaponry/ war and crime games (such as Grand Theft Auto, Sonic Heroes, Super Mario) *'the shooting is fun'*, *'there's all the action with the weapons and fighting others'*. Problems mentioned about computer games included *'games crashing'* and *'being stopped using them a lot by my parents'*.

Reading



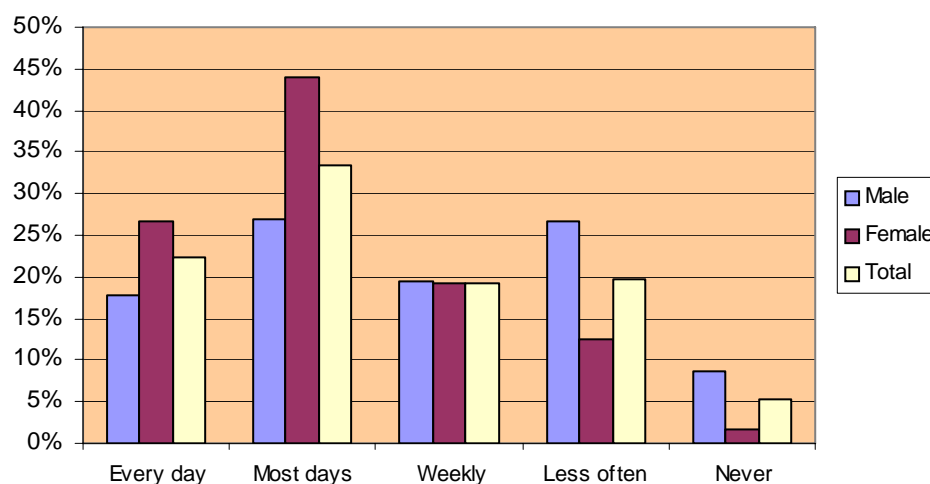
Across the sample as a whole, over half reported reading ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ (22.2% and 33.2% respectively) with just under a fifth indicating that they read ‘weekly’ or ‘less often’ (19.2% and 19.5%) and a small minority, 5.2% reporting that they ‘never’ read in their free time. Little change is evident across the age-span other than a drop in reading frequency in the 18-year-old group, which may be due to the relatively small number in that age group.

A striking finding from the study is that females report significantly more frequent reading as a leisure time activity than males, with a modal average of ‘most days’ compared to the male modal average of ‘less often’. Over 70% of the females reported reading ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ in their free time compared to 50% of the males.

Table 8: Reading Frequency

		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	<i>Total</i>	
Male	every day	18	38	37	36	32	28	11	200	17.9%
	most days	30	46	59	61	51	45	10	302	27%
	weekly	20	44	34	32	50	29	8	217	19.4%
	less often	22	58	76	56	49	30	8	299	26.7%
	never	8	20	23	24	16	6	1	98	8.7%
Total		98	206	229	209	198	138	38	1116	
Female	every day	21	61	75	38	50	41	16	302	26.7%
	most days	33	88	114	63	69	61	20	448	39.7%
	weekly	29	35	51	37	31	33	2	218	19.3%
	less often	9	26	35	25	25	16	5	141	12.5%
	never	3	6	8	2	0	0	0	19	1.6%
Total		95	216	283	165	175	151	43	1128	

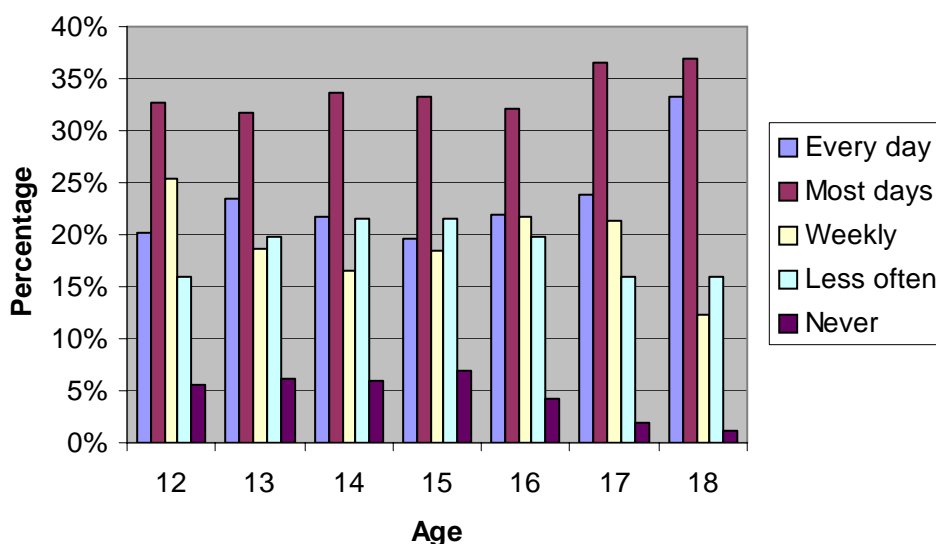
Figure 4: Reading Frequency by Gender



Nearly half (46.1%) of males responded that they read in their free time ‘weekly’ (19.4%) or ‘less often’ (26.7%) compared to just under a third, 31.8%, of females (19.3% weekly & 12.5% less often). The gender difference was also apparent in the percentage that reported ‘never’ reading in their free time, 8.7% of the males (n=98) in contrast to 1.6% (n=19) of the females.

Taking ‘every day’ and ‘most days’ together, a slight, but non significant, increase in reading frequency is evident over age from 52.8% (20.2 & 32.6%) in 12 year olds to 60.8% in the 17 year olds (23.8 & 37%) and to 70.3% (33.3 & 37%) in the 18 year olds. Caution needs to be exercised however in interpreting this given the low number of 18 year olds.

Figure 5: Reading Frequency by Age



Interestingly, parental occupation has a significant effect (Chi-Sq.= 48.392, df=6, $p \leq 0.001$) on reading frequency. From the table below a drop in reading frequency is evident across the parental occupation groups, from Professional and Managerial to Manual and Welfare.

Table 9: Reading Frequency by Parental Occupation

	Professional/ Manag. n=534	Farmer/Non- Manual n=575	Skilled/Semi Skilled n=743	Manual/ Welfare n=192
Every day/Most days	64.1% n=340	57% n=328	52.3% n=389	50% n=96
Weekly	19.6% n=105	19.4% n=112	20.9% n=156	16.1% n=31
Less often/Never	16.8% n=90	23% n=135	26.6% n=198	33.8% n=65

The focus groups with females identified ‘*gossip*’ and ‘*fashion*’ magazines as very popular reading material and the reasons given for reading included ‘*there’s not much else to do*’, ‘*its easier to get a magazine than play sport*’ ‘*it’s nice to do after homework*’, ‘*it’s a change from the TV*’, ‘*it’s fun and you can talk about what you read with your friends*’. Reading books was only indicated by a minority in the focus groups however, participants in one of the focus groups, all 3rd year junior certificate students, spoke of having too much school related reading to do which they felt impinged on other ‘book’ reading.

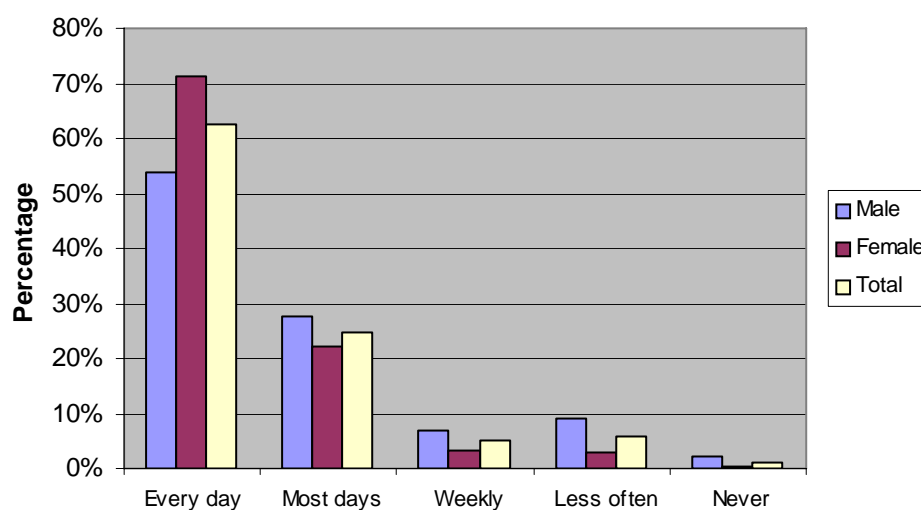
From the focus groups with males, it was reported that reading was experienced as ‘*boring*’ and ‘*relaxing*’. The majority did however read the ‘*newspapers*’ though for some of these it was only the ‘*sports pages*’. Some participants highlighted a lack of availability of suitable reading material ‘*there’s loads of reading available for girls but little for boys*’ while others highlighted that reading was down the ladder in terms of male leisure priorities ‘*boys are more likely to be out training*’. Interestingly one

participant referred to his *'parent's lack of reading'* as a reason for reading not being a leisure activity of his.

Listening to Music

Across the sample as a whole over four-fifths (87.7%; n= 1975) reported listening to music 'every day' or 'most days'. Just under two-thirds (62.58%) reported listening to music 'every day' and 24.5% 'most days'. Only 1.2% (n=28) reported 'never' listening to music in their free time.

Figure 6: Listening to Music



Across the age-span, a significant rise in frequency of music listening was evident (Chi-Sq.=78.1, df= 6, p<0.001) from 80.3 % of 12 year olds to 93.7 % of 17 year olds listening to music 'every day' or 'most days' indicating a rise in frequency.

A gender difference was also evident in the data with females reporting significantly more frequent music listening (Wilcoxon 1146942.5, z =9.5, p.001). Just over half, 53.9 %, of the males and approaching three-quarters, 71.4%, of the females sampled listened to music 'every day' and a further 27.7% (male) and 22.1% (female) listened 'most days'. Looking at this from another standpoint, as few as 3.1% of females reported listening to music 'less often' or 'never' in contrast to 11.4% of the males sampled.

Table 10: Listening to Music

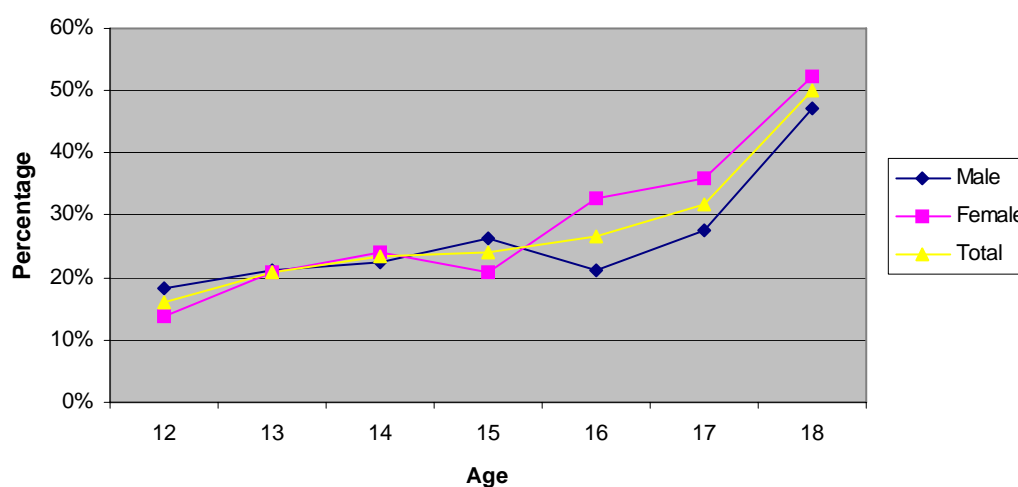
		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	<i>Total</i>	
Male	every day	39	82	105	132	131	89	26	604	53.9%
	most days	31	70	76	47	42	38	7	311	27.7%
	weekly	9	24	15	11	9	6	3	77	6.8%
	less often	18	22	27	15	15	4	2	103	9.2%
	never	1	8	7	4	2	2	0	24	2.1%
	Total	98	206	230	209	199	139	38	1119	
Female	every day	52	140	205	124	147	110	30	808	71.4%
	most days	33	55	60	35	24	35	9	251	22.1%
	weekly	2	13	10	1	4	3	3	36	3.1%
	less often	6	9	7	5	0	3	2	32	2.8%
	never	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	4	0.3%
	Total	95	217	284	165	175	151	44	1131	

The focus groups with females highlighted the popularity of ‘dance’, ‘R & B’, ‘pop’ and ‘reggae’ music and reasons cited for listening to music related to affect and escapism and an alternative to television ‘it puts you in a good mood’, ‘its good and you can listen to it anywhere’, ‘you don’t have to bother thinking about anything else’, ‘it makes you happy’, ‘it’s better than watching TV all the time’. A minority of females also mentioned enjoying karaoke machines in their free-time.

Hanging-Around Outside

Over half of the sample (60.9%; n= 1366) reported hanging around outside ‘every day’ or ‘most days’, the latter being the modal average. Interestingly 5.5% (n=125) reported ‘never’ hanging around outside and the majority of these were 15 year olds.

Figure 7: Hanging Around Outside: Less Often or Never



Across the age-span there is a decline in the frequency of hanging around outside as evident in the increased percentage of those reporting that they hang around ‘less often’ or ‘never’ from 16.2% of 12 year olds to 31.9% of 17 year olds and 50% of the

18 year olds sampled. Females show a slightly greater drop-off in frequency of hanging around showing an increase in ‘less often’ or ‘never’ responses from 13.9% at age 12 to 36% at age 17 and 52% at 18. For males the comparative percentages were 18.3% at 12 to 27.5% at 17 and 47.3% at 18.

From a different standpoint the decline in frequency of hanging around outside is evident in the declining percentage of those reporting that they hang around outside ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ from 76.4% of 12 year olds to 51% of 17 year olds and 37.8% of the 18 year olds.

Females show a slightly greater drop-off in frequency responses of ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ from 82.7% at age 12 to 44% at age 17 and 38.6% at 18. For males the comparative percentages are 70.4% at 12 to 58.6% at 17 and 36.8% at 18 years of age.

Figure 8: Hanging-Around Outside by Age and Gender

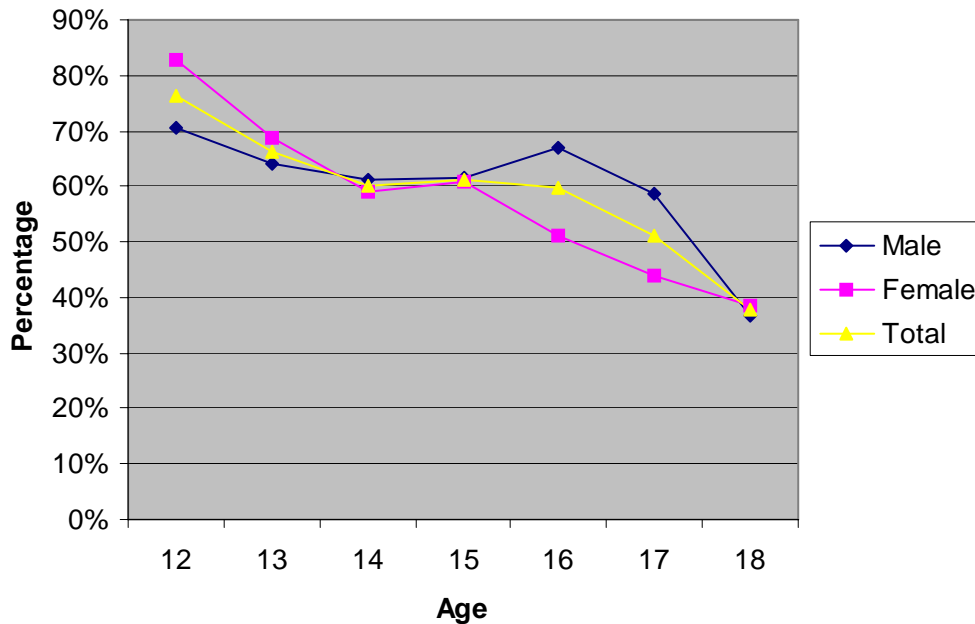


Table 11: Hanging-Around Outside by Age and Gender

		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total	
Male	every day	28	73	73	58	64	44	6	346	30.9%
	most days	41	59	68	71	69	37	8	353	31.6%
	weekly	11	30	37	25	23	19	6	151	13.5%
	less often	16	35	37	42	34	26	14	204	18.2%
	never	2	9	15	13	8	12	4	63	5.6%
Total		98	206	230	209	198	138	38	1117	
Female	every day	38	60	80	52	44	24	6	304	26.9%
	most days	39	89	87	49	45	42	11	362	32.1%
	weekly	3	23	47	30	28	30	4	165	14.6%
	less often	9	34	57	27	47	42	17	233	20.6%
	never	4	11	11	8	10	12	6	62	5.5%
Total		93	217	282	166	174	150	44	1126	

In comparing hanging around outside by parental occupation groups a significant difference is found (chi sq= 24.006, df= 6, p<0.001) in frequency of hanging around. In contrast to other groups, slightly more young people whose parents were in the higher SES (professional/managerial) groups reported less frequent hanging-around (i.e. ‘less often’ or ‘never’ responses).

Table 12: Hanging-Around Outside by Parental Occupation

	Professional/ Manager. n=534	Farmer/Non- Manual n=415	Skilled/Semi Skilled n=741	Unskilled/ Welfare n=193
Every day/Most days	57.6% n=308	57.7% n=331	64.1% n=475	67.8% n=181
Weekly	15.7% n=84	12.9% n=74	14.8% n=110	15% n=29
Less often/Never	26.5% n=142	29.3% n=168	21% n=156	17% n=33

In hanging-around, the focus groups highlighted that this involves ‘chatting’, ‘walking around and seeing people’, ‘being with your gang of pals’, ‘having a laugh’, ‘messing’, ‘fooling around and ‘smoking’ and, by females only, ‘listening to music’ and ‘clothes, hair and beauty’. Hanging-around outside was seen by some as better than inside as ‘you can hang around with more people outside than in’ and ‘you can do what you want more outside’. The vast majority of the focus groups reported wanting to hang-around *more* if they could.

Locations identified for hanging-around tended to be outdoor for males and indoor for females, in agreement with past research (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; James, 1998). Examples of outdoor locations mentioned in the focus groups include ‘in the estate’, ‘behind the church’, ‘in the park’, ‘in the woods’, ‘at the (village) square’, ‘around the shops’, ‘doing laps of the town’, ‘in the alleys (in the city)’ and by the females only ‘in pals’ bedrooms’.

Gender differences in hanging-around seem obvious to young people in the focus groups, in the words of one female ‘they (the males) do their thing and we do our thing’.

Typically males reported hanging around in groups of 10 or more (usually more at the weekends) whereas female participants spoke of hanging-around in smaller groups of 3-4. Older participants (15+ years) often spoke of hanging-around in mixed gender groups.

Looking at Shops

A clear gender difference is evident in the frequency with which males and females look at shops in their free time. Over half of the females (50.1%) look at shops on a ‘weekly’ basis compared to 31.6% of the males. Nearly a quarter of the females, 24.3%, look at shops ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ compared to 14.8% of the males. Little change is evident over the age span.

Table 13: Looking at Shops

		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total	
Male	every day	4	5	4	7	6	3	2	31	2.7%
	most days	7	23	26	23	24	25	6	134	12%
	weekly	30	72	71	56	72	41	10	353	31.6%
	less often	46	86	103	96	77	61	16	485	43.5%
	never	11	19	23	27	19	9	4	112	10%
Total		98	205	227	209	198	139	38	1114	
Female	every day	3	9	13	2	9	3	2	41	3.6%
	most days	26	40	68	31	32	27	9	233	20.7%
	weekly	42	107	139	89	93	72	22	564	50.1%
	less often	22	54	56	39	40	45	10	266	23.6%
	never	1	3	6	4	2	4	1	21	1.8%
Total		94	213	282	165	176	151	44	1125	

Females on average (modal) look at shops ‘weekly’ while males look ‘less often’. A sharp contrast was also apparent between the percentage of males (10%) and females (1.8%) who indicated that they ‘never’ look at shops in their free time. Looking at shops was valued by the young females for a number of reasons, such as ‘its great to see new clothes’, ‘we like thinking about how to spend money’, ‘its fun with your friends’ and because ‘it’s in the city’.

Interestingly a significant difference (Chi Sq.= 67.8, df=2, p<0.001) was also found in frequency of looking at shops between urban (city), urban (town) and rurally located school samples with more of those in rural schools reporting looking at shops ‘less often’ or ‘never’.

Table 14: Looking at Shops

	Urban (city) n=499	Urban (town) n=950	Rural n=791
Every day /Most days	28.4% n=142	20.5% n=195	12.8% n=102
Weekly	45.6% n=228	38.5% n=366	40.7% n=322
Less often/Never	25.8% n=129	40.9% n=389	46.3% n=367

Discos

Over the sample as a whole, on average (median and mode) young people go to discos on a ‘less often’ than weekly basis with no difference between males and females in this response. Nearly half (49% n=1097) of the sample reported going to discos ‘less often’ and just over a quarter (26.4% n=589) report going on a ‘weekly’ basis. Little difference is evident between males and females.

A fifth of the sample (21.8%) indicate that they ‘never’ go to discos and nearly two-thirds of these are aged under 15.

Young people are less likely to report ‘never’ going discos as they age. For example nearly a third of 12 year olds report ‘never’ going to discos compared to only 16% of 16 year olds. An increase is also evident in the number who report going ‘weekly’ with age.

Figure 9: Frequency of Attendance at Discos

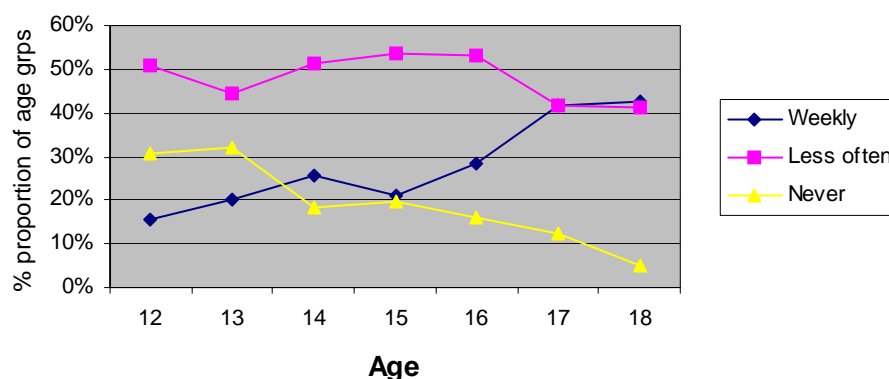


Table 15: Going to Discos by Age and Gender

		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total	
Male	weekly	12	40	54	42	59	51	18	276	26%
	less often	52	92	111	104	97	57	17	530	50%
	never	32	60	48	53	37	22	2	254	24%
Total		96	192	213	199	193	130	37	1060	
Female	weekly	18	44	77	36	47	69	22	313	28.7%
	less often	47	95	149	95	101	64	16	567	52.2%
	never	28	74	45	21	23	15	2	208	19.1%
Total		93	213	271	152	171	148	40	1088	

Comparing young people’s responses according to their parent’s occupation, a significant difference was found between these groups in the frequency of attendance at discos (Chi. Sq.= 18.4, df=6, p≤0.005).

Table 16: Discos by Parental Occupation

	Prof./Managerial n=516	Farm/Non-Manual n=561	Skilled/Semi skilled n=621	Unskilled/Welfare n=177
Weekly	26.5% n=137	27.8% n=156	17.7% n=110	29.5% n=52
Less often	53.9% n=278	48.7% n=273	59% n=366	52.5% n=93
Never	19.6% n=101	23.5% n=132	23.3% n=145	18% n=32

Interestingly a significant difference (Chi Sq.= 38.8, df=2, p≤0.001) was also found in frequency of attending discos between urban (city), urban (town) and rural schools, with those in rural schools reporting more frequent attendance at discos.

Table 17: Frequency of Going to Discos

	Urban (city) n=478	Urban (town) n=909	Rural n=762
Weekly	19.9% n=95	27.3% n=249	32 % n=245
Less often	49.3% n=236	50.7% n=461	52.5% n=400
Never	30.8% n=147	22% n=199	15.5 % n=117

From the focus groups it was apparent that a lot of young people feel there are not enough discos for older adolescents (15-18 year old). Being under 18 they cannot get into adult clubs and many feel the discos that are available are ‘too young’ for them. Some of the males in the focus groups reported enjoying ‘the scenery’ (i.e. the girls), ‘meeting friends’, ‘meeting-up with a girl’, ‘getting drunk’ and ‘fighting outside’ at discos while most of the females reported enjoying ‘getting dressed-up’, ‘meeting friends and new people’ and ‘dancing’. Females spoke more of dancing at discos than males who spoke more of hanging around.

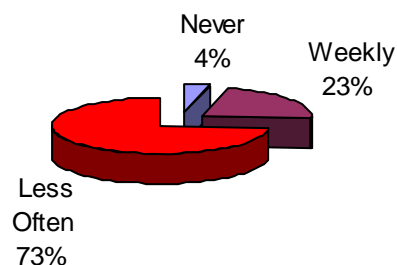
Going to the Cinema

Over the sample as a whole, an overwhelming 92.7% report going to the cinema on a ‘weekly’ or ‘less often’ basis with over a fifth (22%) of the sample reporting that they go weekly. A very small proportion of the sample, 4% ‘never’ go to the cinema in their free time. Very little difference is present between males and females or between the age groups with a consistent pattern of high cinema attendance on a ‘weekly’ or ‘less often’ basis across the age-span.

Table 18: Cinema Attendance

		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total
Male	weekly	15	41	52	30	34	27	6	205 19%
	less often	75	148	157	154	154	97	24	809 75%
	never	5	11	10	14	8	10	6	64 5.9%
	Total	95	200	219	198	196	134	36	1078
Female	weekly	29	62	79	38	44	27	9	288 26.5%
	less often	56	136	184	117	126	120	32	771 71%
	never	2	7	8	4	2	3	0	26 2.3%
	Total	87	205	271	159	172	150	41	1085

Figure 10: Cinema Attendance



Interestingly a significant difference (Chi Sq.= 56.1, df=2, p<0.001) was also found in frequency of going to the cinema between urban (city), urban (town) and rural school samples with those in rural schools reporting less frequent visits to the cinema.

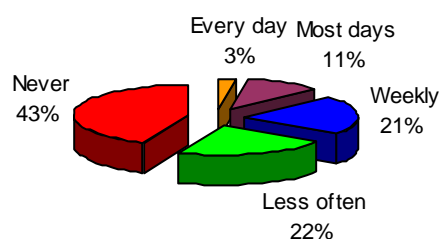
Table 19: Cinema Attendance: Urban Vs Rural

	Urban (city) n=473	Urban (town) n=925	Rural n=766
Weekly	34.5% n=163	21.5% n=199	17.2% n=132
Less often	62.8% n=297	73.7% n=682	78.5% n=601
Never	2.7% n=13	4.8% n=44	4.3% n=33

Part-Time Work

Part-time work was defined for participants as any paid employment, including baby-sitting. Over the sample as a whole, young people report that they work, on average, ‘less often’ (median) or ‘never’ (mode) and no difference was found between males and females in their average response. Just over a third (34.9% n=774) report working part-time on a ‘weekly’ or more frequent basis. Of these, 13.3% report working part-time ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ with a further 21.4% working part-time on a ‘weekly’ basis. In addition a fifth (21.7%) of the sample report working part-time ‘less often’ than weekly. Overall, nearly half (43 %) of the sample report *never* undertaking part-time work.

Figure 11: Frequency of Part-Time Work

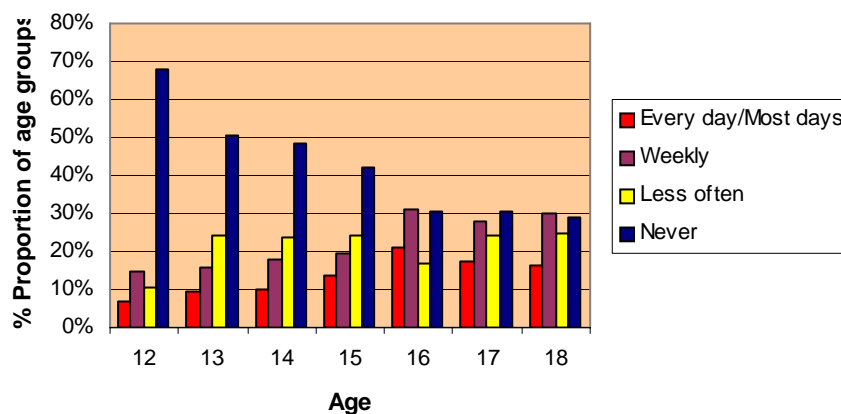


A clear rise is evident in the proportion of those working part time (every day, most days and weekly) from just over a fifth (21.4%) of 12 year olds to over a quarter (27.7%) of 14 year olds to over half (52.5%) of 16 year olds. A drop is evident though from 16 to 17 and 18 year olds (45.2% & 46.2% respectively) which may be due to the small sample number of 18 year olds (n=80) or to other factors such as state examinations. Figure 13 illustrates the frequency of part-time work across the age-span.

Table 20: Part-Time Work

		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	<i>Total</i>	
Male	every day	4	8	12	9	6	6	0	45	4%
	most days	6	22	26	32	39	24	8	157	14.1%
	weekly	19	28	41	35	60	41	8	232	20.9%
	less often	7	55	57	52	36	31	12	250	22.6%
	never	60	90	92	79	55	36	10	422	38.1%
Total		96	203	228	207	196	138	38	1106	
Female	every day	0	1	2	2	4	3	1	13	1.1%
	most days	3	8	10	9	30	17	4	81	7.2%
	weekly	9	38	50	38	56	39	16	246	21.9%
	less often	13	46	63	39	27	39	8	235	21%
	never	68	121	155	78	58	51	13	544	48.6%
Total		93	214	280	166	175	149	42	1119	

Figure 12: Frequency of Part-Time Work by Age



Comparing males and females on this, just over a third (38.1%) of the males and nearly half (48.6%) of the females report never engaging in part-time work. Males report more frequent part-time work (every day, most days & weekly) than females (39.2% of males versus 30.3% of females) especially in the younger age groups of 12 to 14 year olds. Interestingly, McCoy and Smyth (2004) found that if informal part-time work (e.g. babysitting) was excluded, males reported more part-time work and tended to work in part-time jobs demanding more commitment and weekday work than females.

In comparing part time work by parental occupation, a slight but non-significant difference is evident between socio-economic groups. As illustrated below fewer of the professional /managerial group report working part-time ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ in contrast to the skilled/semi-skilled or unskilled/welfare groups. In addition, slightly more of the Professional/Managerial group report working ‘less often’ or ‘never’.

Table 21: Part-Time Work by Parental Occupation

	Professional/ Managerial n=532		Farmer/Non- Manual n=569		Skilled/Semi Skilled n=736		Unskilled/ Welfare n=191	
Every day /Most days	10.3%	n=55	12.6%	n=72	14.8%	n=109	14.6%	n=28
Weekly	20.3%	n=108	21%	n=120	22.8%	n=168	21.4%	n=41
Less often/Never	69.3%	n=369	66.2%	n=377	62.3%	n=459	63.8%	n=122

Interestingly in our study a significant difference (Chi Sq.= 34.83 df=2, $p \leq 0.001$) was found in frequency of part-time work between urban (city), urban (town) and rural school samples with those in rural schools reporting more regular work. As many of these come from a farming background, it is likely that some of this part-time work is farm related.

Table 22: Part-Time Work: Urban Vs Rural

	Urban (city) n=483		Urban (town) n=945		Rural n=788	
Every day /Most days	14.2%	n=69	11.7%	n=111	14.7%	n=116
Weekly	15.5%	n=75	21.4%	n=203	25.3%	n=200
Less often/Never	72.2%	n=349	66.7%	n=631	59.8%	n=472

Discussion

Mobile Phone Ownership and Use

In line with European trends, the most striking finding on mobile phones was the overwhelming number of the sample, approx. 95%, who own a mobile phone, indicating how normative it is for young people in contemporary Ireland. This is consistent with the findings of the Internet Advisory Board (2004) that 96% of 10-14 year olds in Ireland have their own mobile phone. This finding also concurs with research in the UK that estimates 9 in 10 secondary school students have a mobile phone (Selwyn, 2003). Research by Davie et al. (2004) with preadolescents in the UK found that nearly 45% owned a mobile phone; this suggests that mobile phone ownership, by younger adolescents at least, might be higher in Ireland than in the UK. It seems likely that owning a mobile phone has become a feature of the transition from primary to secondary school.

Previous research with adults by Leung and Wei (1999) found significant differences between users and non-users of mobile phones with users being younger, wealthier, and better educated than non-users. These findings are not supported by the current research.

The second most interesting finding to emerge was that females reported using the mobile more frequently, (92% compared to 80% of the males) in terms of ‘every day’ or ‘most days’. Looking at this data from another standpoint, as few as 3.2% of the females report using a mobile phone ‘less often’ in contrast to 9.8% of the males. This is in keeping with other research which has shown that females spend more time in less ‘structured’ activities such as conversing on the phone with friends (Larson & Kleiber, 1991; Raffaelli & Richards, 1989).

Another key finding is the increase in mobile phone ownership from 12 to 18 years, from 87% of the 12 year olds to 97.5% of the 17 year olds and 100% in the 18-year-old group. Previous research with adults by Leung and Wei (1999) found significant differences between users and non-users of mobile phones with users being younger, wealthier, and better educated than non-users. Our research with young people did not find such differences. Looking at the benefits for young people of having a mobile phone, Leung and Wei (2000) identified seven primary benefits: fashion/status, affection/sociability, relaxation, mobility, immediate access, instrumentality and reassurance. The latter of which is linked to use in emergencies where contact with another party (e.g. family, emergency services) is vital (Katz, 1997).

Research by Davie and colleagues (2004) has indicated that nearly half of adolescent calls are made to chat with family or friends; a quarter to let their parents know their whereabouts and approximately a fifth of calls are ‘convenience’ calls, i.e. to ask to for a lift home and such. Interestingly, two fifths of their sample reported that they had made an ‘emergency’ call and approx. 17% had received ‘frightening’ calls (Davie et al., 2004).

The mobile, through text messaging, has also been shown to have enabled new modes of communication ‘*more than mere talk or chitchat to cement their social relationships*’ (Taylor & Harper, 2003, p. 268). Taylor and Harper claim that text messages have become ‘gifts’ whereby teenagers value some text messages as symbols of affection. Text messages can be stored within the phone’s memory as a visual aid for recalling past thoughts, feelings and knowledge that your friendship is cherished by someone else (Davie et al., 2004). Text messaging may also encourage imagination, thereby enhancing literacy although with ‘text abbreviations’ there may be an adverse effect on language and spelling (Ananova, 2001).

Interestingly, the mobile phone has also been contended to alter the power relations between parents and young people as the latter can develop and maintain social contacts outside of parents’ control via mobile phones (Ling, 2000; Wilska, 2003).

In terms of 'risk', mobile phones have been linked to bullying, theft and physical attacks (Harrington & Mayhew, 2001; National Opinion Poll Survey 2001b) and concern over the position of young people who do not have mobile phone and thus may be disadvantaged and socially excluded (Charlton et al., 2002; Ling, 2000; Leung & Wei, 1999; Pavis et al., 2001; Davie et al., 2004).

Ongoing debate persists about possible health risks related to radio frequency (RF) radiations from mobile phones (Hocking, 1998; Johansen et al., 2001; Sandstrom et al., 2001).

Television viewing

The fact that the majority of the sample (70%), male and female, watch television 'every day' with just under a quarter (23%) watching television 'most days' is not surprising. Watching TV has been found to be one of the most frequently reported leisure activities of adolescents (male and female) across a variety of studies (Bartko & Eccles, 2003; Raymore et al., 1999). In terms of frequency, (along with hanging-out with friends) it has been found to differ little between subgroups or clusters of adolescents (Bartko & Eccles, 2003). Research with young people in the UK found that watching TV was the most popular leisure time activity closely followed by listening to music and hanging out with friends (Child Accident Prevention Trust, 2002).

The findings in our study suggest more frequent television viewing than those of Connor (2003) in his study with adolescents in Waterford. Over three-quarters (77%) of his sample watched TV often or every day while only 4 % watched TV occasionally, very seldom or never. It is worth noting that in our study we did not separate video/DVD viewing from television viewing and when asked instructed respondents that TV viewing included the latter except for video/DVD games which were to be considered computer games.

Recent research, using a sample of 10 Cork city primary schools, found that 18% had only one TV in their home, over a third had two TVs while 28% had three TVs. One third (32%) of the children had a TV in their bedroom. Over a fifth (22%) of the young children reported watching TV for 3 hours or more per weekday and over half the sample watched 3 hours or more on weekend days (Dept. of Public Health- Health Service Executive Southern Area, 2005). This same study found that over a third of families eat weekday meals while watching TV. All of these findings further illuminate how much children, and probably young people, are facilitated in viewing TV.

Research with primary school age children in Dublin found that about a third of children watch less than an hour of television per day. However, over half watch between one and three hours and 16% watch more than three hours per day. Older children appeared to watch more television as the number watching less than an hour of television per day goes down from 45% to 27% while the number watching between two and three hours a day increases from 7% to 16%. (INTO, 2005). Our research with an older sample of 12-18 year olds found little difference across the age-span.

Other research studies have shown strong associations between teenagers' and parents' rates of TV use (Larson et al., 2001) and that adolescents who watch more TV spend more time with their families (Larson et al., 1989). Interestingly, in America entry into adolescence is associated with a decline in TV viewing with family and a rise in solitary viewing (Roberts, 2000). Television has also been reported to be one of the most common topics of conversation for adolescents (Leyser & Cole, 2004) indicating its contribution to social interaction

In terms of how adolescents report experiencing TV watching, research has found that they experience states of detachment and vegetativeness rather than those of involvement and enjoyment typical of other activities (Larson et al., 1989). During TV viewing adolescents report lower than average challenge, worry and paying attention and higher than average choice, calm and relaxation suggesting that TV viewing for adolescents is '*a relaxed antidote to the stresses of the day that they share with their families*' (Verma & Larson, 2002, p177). Another perspective is that the role of television may simply be to fill time (Larson & Richards, 1994; Shaw et al., 1995). Research with adults has found that the main reasons for TV watching include: entertainment and escapism, real life issues, social network, education and simply because it's part of daily life (Argyle, 1991).

Health concerns also prevail regarding the amount of television watching across childhood and adolescence. Research with children has found that greater time spent in sedentary activities is related to greater body weight for all children, regardless of age or gender (Vandewater et al., 2004). Some, though not all studies, have reported that overweight youth tend to be less active than their normal weight peers (Eck et al., 1992). In a large epidemiological sample of adolescents in America, Dietz and Gortmaker (1985) reported that the prevalence of obesity increased by 2% for each additional hour of TV watched though this has not been replicated since. Other studies (McMurray et al., 2000) report no association between TV or video game use and being overweight.

Computer Games

Quite a large proportion of the sample, just over a third (37%) report playing computer games such as play stations 'every day' or 'most days' and as few as 2% report 'never' playing. These figures are similar to those reported by Sweeting and West (2000) in a study of over 2,300 Scottish 11-16 year olds. Over 40% of their sample reported playing computer games every day or most days. By contrast, Connor's (2003) study with young people in Waterford found that only a fifth, 21%, play 'every day' or 'often' and 11% reported 'never' playing. Our contrast in findings to the latter study may represent greater popularity of these games, perhaps an increase in availability of computer games or may be due to sampling differences such as time of data collection (1997 in Connor's study and 2004 in our study).

Interestingly, research with primary school pupils in Dublin found that almost a quarter of their sample spend over two hours per day playing computer games and that this increases with age.

Six percent of children in 4th class play between two and three hours a day compared to thirteen percent of pupils in 6th class (INTO, 2005). This suggests that an interest in computer games is inculcated in the childhood years and, from our research, that the interest in these games is maintained across adolescence.

In relation to this, using an online survey with American adolescents, Griffiths and colleagues (2004) found that the average adolescent computer game playing time was as high as 26.5 hours per week. This high frequency may have been biased by the sampling technique.

Another major finding is the significant gender difference with males reporting more frequent use of computer games in their free time, and little change in this pattern over the age-span. For example, in contrast to 60% of males who indicate that they play computer games 'every day' or 'most days' only 13% of females report this frequency of use. Similarly, Sweeting and West (2000) found that 71% of the males in their sample played computer games 'most days' in contrast to 14% of females. Looking at this from a different standpoint, the majority of females (42%) indicate that they only play computer games 'less often' than weekly whereas only 15% of the males indicated this. The gender difference is even more evident in the percentages who report that they 'never' play computer games, 31% of the females as compared to 6% of the males.

These findings are also in agreement with other studies which have found that adolescent males play more computer games than adolescent females (Griffiths et al., 2004; Griffith & Hunt, 1998; Ho & McLee, 2001; Leyser & Cole, 2004; van Mierlo & den Bulck, 2004). In a study with 2,389 American young people, McMurray and colleagues (2000) found only half the females sampled played computer games compared to 80% of the males and that of those who played games, females spent less time playing than males. This pattern appears to continue into early adulthood. Buckworth and Nigg (2004) for example found that males reported more hours per week spent watching television and/or videos and using the computer more compared with females in a college student sample.

The findings are also consistent with general computer use. Young males generally have been found to be more interested in computers than females, and are more confident and less anxious than girls about using them (Jackson et al., 2001; Shashaani, 1997). This may be because they have interiorised a stereotyped view that men are more able than women in technological and scientific areas (Shashaani, 1997). Adolescent males have also been found to see the computers more 'as a toy' using it for entertainment and diversion, i.e. to download software, to obtain information and to play. Females on the other hand, are reported to see the computer more 'as a tool' using it more to communicate, i.e. to send and receive e-mail than to play games (Boneva, Kraut, & Frohlich, 2001; Jackson, Ervin, Gardner, & Schmitt, 2001; King et al., 2002; Wolfradt & Doll, 2001).

A minor finding from the focus groups undertaken was the popularity of violence in computer games for adolescent males. This has been reported previously and debate persists over the effects of such violence (Griffiths et al., 2004). In addition it was clear from the focus groups that many of the males would prefer playing computer games to watching TV.

A lot of research interest has also been shown into the general effects of frequent computer game playing. Past research has also found that approximately a fifth of adolescents sampled reported sacrificing most their education/work (22%), sleep (19%) or another hobby (19%) in order to play computer games (Griffiths et al., 2004). However this research was confined to quite a small (n=88) and restricted sample. Debate persists over the association (or lack of) between computer game playing and obesity (McMurray et al., 2000; Vandewater et al., 2004).

In contrast to other research no SES differences were found in the frequency of computer game playing or TV watching. Research by McMurray and colleagues (2000), amongst others, have found that adolescents from lower SES homes viewed more television and played more computer games than those from moderate and high SES families. However, our study did not ask for the number of hours spent playing games or watching TV which has been used as an index for SES comparisons in such research.

Reading

Over half of the sample report reading ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ (22% and 33% respectively) indicating the popularity of reading as a free time activity, especially for females. A striking gender difference was present in the data with females reporting significantly more frequent reading than males. For example, over 70% of the females reported reading ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ in their free time compared to 44.9% of the males.

This gender difference is in agreement with past research (Bartko & Eccles, 2003; McHale et al., 2001) and, again in agreement with research with 11-16 year olds in Scotland reporting that girls were more likely to read books than boys (Sweeting & West, 2000). The finding is also consistent with other research which has shown that for males there appears to be something ‘uncool’ about reading (Sanderson, 1995). Research by Martino (2001) with 15-year-old Australian males identified 3 categories of response with respect to reading: (1) Males who rejected reading, claimed it was boring and preferred other activities e.g. watching TV or playing sport (n=18; 42.8%). (2) Males who did not refer to reading as boring but preferred to read only certain kinds of text, particularly action, fantasy, science fiction, horror and humour (n=12; 28.6%). And, (3) Males who enjoyed reading and/or saw it as an escape (n=12; 28.6%).

According to Martino (2001, p68) adolescent male reading is caught in a ‘*dualistic gender bind*’. The male rejection of reading in the first group may be linked to gender socialisation whereby more masculine and active activities such as sport are valued over more passive and feminised activities such as reading (Millard, 1997). However, many males did not reject reading outright rather they may have rejected literacy practices and texts sanctioned by schools. Several of those interviewed by Martino (2001) for example made reference to reading pornography. Usually males report a preference for reading non-fiction over fiction while the converse is often reported for females (Nicholls, 1994). Compared to females, males have been found in previous studies to be more interested in reading comic books and newspapers (possibly concentrating on the comics and sports sections). Females on the other hand were more interested in reading books of fiction (Sweeting & West, 2000; Leyser & Cole, 2004).

Little change is evident across the age-span other than a drop in reading frequency in the 18-year-old group, which may be due to the relatively small number in that age group. Yet other research has shown diminished leisure time reading across adolescence. Dutch research found that young people report less reading across age, a drop from, on average, 2.5 hours per week to 0.5 hours per week from grades 7-9 though with females this decline is less significant (van Schooten et al., 2004). According to van Schooten and colleagues (2004), young people do however like to read, think they should read and report plenty of opportunity to read. They also found that reading promotion programmes reduce the decline in reading attitude and behaviour over adolescence.

Interestingly, our study also found that parental occupation has a significant effect on reading frequency. Reading behaviour has been found to be associated with parental educational level, which is linked to parental occupation (Verbood, 2003; van Schooten et al., 2004). In addition, reading is enhanced by a positive reading attitude, positive parental reading, socialisation and the cultural level of the home environment (van Schooten & de Glopper, 2003; Verbood, 2003). In terms of the effects of reading frequency much research has explored its impact on educational attainment and linguistic abilities. For example, reading is associated with academic achievement in children (Allen et al., 1992; McHale et al., 2001). A positive correlation has also been shown between vocabulary size and reading attitude and behaviour, particularly before 15 years of age (van Schooten et al., 2004). However the direction of these relationships is not clear.

It should be noted that other individual factors also influence reading behaviour. Research with young people with ADHD for example has indicated that those with high ADHD classifications were only a third as likely as their low ADHD counterparts to be involved in reading or writing in their everyday life (Whalen et al., 2002).

Listening to Music

Our study shows how popular music listening is for young people in their free time. Over four-fifths (80%) report listening to music ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ while only 1% report ‘never’ listening to music in their free time. This is consistent with Scottish research which found that just over 90% of 11-16 year olds sampled listened to music every day or most days and nearly 95% of the sample had some sort of a music system in their bedroom (Sweeting & West, 2000).

The finding is also in agreement with Connor’s (2003) study, which found listening to music to be the most frequently reported hobby in his study with young people in Waterford. In the UK research by the Child Accident Prevention Trust (2002), with a sample of 2000 young people, found that ‘listening to music’ was the second most popular leisure activity (TV being the first). Equally, past research with adolescents found that ‘listening to music’ was one of the most popular leisure activities identified by both Dutch and American young people though for the Americans it was not as popular as other activities (Stiles et al., 1993). This suggests cultural differences in this leisure activity. The finding is also in agreement with research by Morgan (2000) who found that ‘CDs and music’ were major items of expenditure by young people with their part-time work earnings in Dublin.

A shared taste in music is one of the most common shared features of adolescent friendship groups (Thurlow, 2002) and repeated exposure to music is also argued to cultivate existing personal attributes, individuation and may influence their level of self-awareness (Hansen & Hansen, 1990; Larson, 1995; Steele & Browne, 1995). Adolescent music listening is often related to developmental issues such as autonomy, identity, love, and sexuality (Avery, 1979; Larson, 1995; Larson & Kubey, 1983; Mainprize, 1985; Schwartz & Fouts, 1998). Teenagers, for example, who have few friends, prefer music with themes of loneliness and independence (Burke & Grinder, 1966). The energy and content of music, according to Larson and Kleiber (1992, p139) *'may provide raw materials for work on the issue of autonomy and on other given and self-defined developmental tasks'*.

According to the uses and gratifications approach (Arnett, 1995; Arnett et al., 1995; Gantz et al., 1978; Larson, 1995; Rubin, 1994), individuals make different media choices depending on personal characteristics. Thus, music listeners gravitate to particular kinds of music because of certain personality characteristics, issues, and/or needs that are either reflected in the music they choose or that the music satisfies. Relating to this, Steele and Browne's (1995) "media practice model" for adolescents incorporates identity, music selection, and social interaction to describe the nature of their involvement with media that, in turn, shapes their sense of themselves. *'Young people'*, according to Lull (1927) *'use music to resist authority at all levels, assert their personalities, develop peer relationships and romantic entanglements, and learn about things that their parents and the schools aren't telling them'* (p152).

Past research has shown that female adolescents listen to and prefer light music qualities more than males (Thompson, 1990) possibly because such music reflects their socialisation themes (e.g., emotional expressiveness, relationships; Christenson & Peterson, 1988). Males prefer heavy music qualities more since it reflects their socialisation (e.g., themes of independence and dominance; Herberger, 1987). Older adolescents tend to prefer light qualities in music compared to younger adolescents (e.g. Roberts & Henrickson, 1990), since, according to Schwartz and Fouts (2003) the former are dealing with more relationship and intimacy issues and have resolved many of the issues surrounding identity and rebellion. Conversely, younger adolescents tend to prefer heavy qualities (Roberts & Henricksen, 1990). Possibly, this is because the former are likely to be struggling with issues of separation and rebellion and experiencing negative emotions that are common lyrical and musical themes in such music (Schwartz & Fouts, 2003).

Interestingly, females report significantly more frequent music listening than males with nearly three-quarters (71%) of the females compared to just over half (54%) of the males listening 'every day'. This gender difference was also reported by Sweeting and West's (2000) study with Scottish 11-16 year olds. A slight rise in frequency of music listening (every day/most days) was also found from 80% of 12 year olds to 93 % of 17 and 87% of 18 year olds.

Reasons for these gender and age differences are unclear. In her research on the bedroom as a leisure site for adolescent girls, James (2001) reported that music listening was a frequent activity and that being able to control both choice and volume of music was a positive feature of listening to music in their own bedroom.

Hanging-Around Outside

The popularity of hanging-around outside is clearly evident from the data. Over half of the sample (61%) report hanging around outside ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ with as few as 5.5% reporting ‘never’ hanging around outside, the majority of these being 15 year olds. This reflects how much of young people’s leisure time is spent ‘*not doing*’ any particular structured activity. This is in agreement with past research which has identified hanging out with friends to be one of the most prevalent activities of older children and young people (Child Accident Prevention Trust, 2002; Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1992; Hendry et al., 1993; Medrich et al., 1982; Verma & Lawson, 2003; Zarbatany et al., 1990).

Hanging-around is a normal feature of young people’s social worlds. As a social context, hanging-around may fulfil important developmental functions such as group membership and role negotiation within groups (Van Vliet in Hendry et al., 1993). Young people enjoy simply being in each other’s company free of the constraints of structured activities. Friends are a very important part of young people’s lives and the adolescent years are a time when young people orientate more towards their peers exemplified often in young people hanging-around together (Thurlow, 2002; Verma & Lawson, 2003).

In the U.K. research carried-out with 2000 young people at school found that hanging-out with friends was the third most popular leisure activity, after TV and listening to music (Child Accident Prevention Trust, 2002).

Research by Csikzentmihalyi and colleagues (1977) cited in Coleman and Hendry (1999), spoke of how ‘*fooling around*’, ‘*having a chat*’ and ‘*having a laugh*’ are perceived by young people as among their most fulfilling activities. Connor (2003) also reported that hanging around is a major feature of the lifestyle of the adolescents he interviewed. In some instances this involved ‘*going around in a group looking for excitement*’ or ‘*annoying the neighbours*’ (Connor, 2003 p163).

Our finding on the frequency of hanging-around outside was higher than Sweeting and West’s (2000) Scottish data (just under 40% hung around the street every/most days) though differences in sample age range (11-16 years in contrast to 12-18) and methodology may contribute to this.

Another interesting finding in relation to hanging-around is that it declines in frequency across the age-span. Hanging-around ‘every day’ or ‘most days’ declines from 76% at age 12 to 51% at age 17 to 37% at age 18. A gender difference was also evident in this with females showing a slightly greater drop-off in frequency of hanging-around. This finding of a decline in hanging-around across adolescence was previously found in the UK by Hendry and colleagues (1993). They found hanging around to peak at 13/14 years of age with a subsequent decline.

In comparing parental occupation groups a significant difference was found in frequency of hanging around. In contrast to other groups, young people whose parents are in the higher SES (professional/managerial) groups report less frequent hanging-around outside (i.e. ‘less often’ or ‘never’ responses). This finding is the same with Scottish 11-16 year olds (Sweeting and West, 2000).

The locations for hanging-around identified in the focus groups were similar to those identified in past research such as friends' homes (females primarily), local streets, parks and shops/shopping centres (Child Accident Prevention Trust, 2002).

Young people hanging-around has been an issue of concern given the relationship between unstructured and unsupervised activities with deviance and school drop out (Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1992; Ogood et al., 1996; Vazsonyi et al., 2002) Participation in activities, on the other hand is argued to contribute to tackling the risks and harm associated with a sedentary lifestyles (WHO, 2003) including teenage binge drinking which is of particular concern in Ireland (ESPAD, 2003; Strategic Task Force on Alcohol, 2004).

It is probable that the 'hanging-around outside' reported in our study may have incorporated imbibing alcohol, smoking or drug-taking but these were not examined in this study. Research in Scotland with 11-16 year olds found smoking, drinking and taking drugs were strongly associated with hanging about the street (or going to discos) and that while girls are more likely to smoke, boys are more likely to drink or to take drugs (Sweeting & West, 2000).

However this ignores the normality of hanging-around in young people's lives and the importance of time and space for being with friends, chatting and doing nothing in particular in an unsupervised, 'adult-free' space (Pavis & Cunningham-Burley, 1999). The vast majority of young people in our focus groups reported enjoying hanging-around, the fun and greater freedom they experience in doing this is in contrast to structured activities or supervised places.

Katz (1998) amongst others has highlighted how children and young people are faced with lessening choice and fewer opportunities of where they can go without adult interference and voiced concern over the increasing elimination of public environments for outdoor play or 'hanging out'. Research has illuminated how young people frequently experience being viewed as 'a problem', 'unwelcome' or 'out-of-place' for simply hanging-around outdoors (Tucker & Matthews, 2001; Percy-Smith, 1999). While our research did not explore young people's experiences of hanging-around outside, this represents an interesting topic for future Irish research.

Looking at Shops

On 'looking at shops' the main finding is that females engage in this leisure activity significantly more frequently than males with little change over the age-span. Nearly a quarter of females, (24%), look at shops 'every day' or 'most days' compared to 14% of males. In addition, over half of females (50%) look at shops on a 'weekly' basis compared to just under a third (32%) of males. Looking at this from a different standpoint, the percentage of males who 'never' look at shops (10%) is much higher than the comparative female percentage (1.8%).

This gender difference is in keeping with similar research in other cultures, for example with Scottish, British and American adolescents (Leyser & Cole, 2004; Stiles et al., 1993; Sweeting & West, 2000; Zabatany et al., 1990). In relation to this, female youth have been found by Thurlow (2002) to strongly '*peer orientate*' or to form and maintain friendship groups or cliques on the basis of a shared appreciation of clothes (as well as music and personal qualities) which may be one factor in

explaining the high frequency in this activity. Male youth on the other hand '*peer orientate*' primarily on the basis of a shared interest in sport and/or computers (Thurlow, 2002; Youniss et al., 1994). Gender socialisation, marketing influences and cultural mores probably also contribute to this finding.

A significant difference in frequency of 'looking at shops' is found between young people who attend urban and rural schools. Young people at rural schools are more likely to report that they look at shops 'less often' (than weekly) or 'never'. This is understandable given the relative lack of clothing, music or technology shops in rural compared to urban Ireland.

Cinema

Over the sample as a whole, an overwhelming 92.7% report going to the cinema on a 'weekly' or 'less often' basis with over a fifth (22%) of the sample reporting that they go weekly. A very small proportion of the sample (4%) 'never' go to the cinema in their free time.

The popularity of the cinema for young people was also highlighted by research in the Netherlands with 75% attending the cinema (Zeijl et al., 2003). The findings also correspond with research undertaken with primary school children in Cork city. Going to the cinema was the 'family activity' young children reported as enjoying the most (Dept. of Public Health- Health Service Executive Southern Area, 2005).

In addition, research with a Dublin sample has shown that the single greatest item of expenditure of their part-time earnings by young people was '*entertainment and going-out*' (Morgan, 2000).

Understandably, given the relative lack of cinemas in rural areas, young people attending rural schools report significantly less frequent attendance at cinemas. Going to the cinema was also reported by Connor (2003) to be a popular teenage activity. Figures for the general population reveal that cinema attendance in Dublin is the highest in Europe per head of population. Throughout the Republic of Ireland, admissions stand at 4.4% per capita compared to 2.2% across Europe and 2.9% in Britain. Cinema admissions for 2003 in the Republic of Ireland, up to the end of November, were 15,802,105, a slight increase of 0.2% over 2002. In the 10-year period to the end of 2002, admissions in Ireland climbed by a staggering 108% (Irish Examiner, 07/01/2004).

Part-Time Work

The first key finding on this is that over a third of the sample (35%) report working part-time on a 'weekly' or more frequent basis. Of these, 13% report working part-time 'every day' or 'most days' with a further 21.4% working part-time on a 'weekly' basis. In addition a fifth (21%) of the sample report working part-time 'less often' than weekly. Overall nearly half (43%) of the sample report *never* undertaking part-time work. Research with over 1,000 young people in Dublin schools found that over a third (37%) did not work part-time during weekdays and a quarter (26%) didn't work during weekends. A sixth of the people worked for more than 20 hours per week with those attending disadvantaged schools working the greater number of hours.

Shops, restaurants, pubs/off-licences and baby-sitting were the primary sources of employment (Morgan, 2000).

Our findings seem to suggest less frequent part-time work than Morgan's (2000) study or that of Stack and colleagues (2001), though this may be due to sampling differences. Our study was nationwide with a large proportion of the sample living in rural areas. In contrast Morgan's (2000) sample was solely drawn from Dublin while Stack and colleague's (2001) sample of 300 were all from 3 urban schools. Unpaid work, such as helping out on the family farm/business and unpaid babysitting were not looked at in our study but have been estimated to be undertaken by approximately 12 % of young people, with many of those who have paid jobs also doing this (McCoy & Smyth, 2004).

Secondly, a clear rise in the proportion of those working part time across the adolescent years is evident from our data. Over a fifth (21%) of 12 year olds to over a quarter (27%) of 14 year olds to over half (52%) of the 16 year olds engage in part-time work. A drop is evident though from 16 to 17 and 18 year olds (45% & 46% respectively) which may be due to the small sample number of 18 year olds (n=80) or to other factors such as state examinations. This pattern is in agreement with research by McCoy and Smyth (2004) and Morgan (2000).

Using a number of different surveys from 1991-2002 with Irish second level students, McCoy and Smyth (2004) also found that participation in part-time work increased across the adolescent years reaching a peak in transition year (approx. 15-16 years). Our findings correspond with this pattern which probably also reflect legal constraints on employment of young people. While this study did not look at reasons for undertaking part-time work, according to McCoy and Smyth (2004, p105) '*part-time jobs are largely undertaken to finance a 'lifestyle' rather than because of financial difficulty, to finance short-term consumption rather than to enhance capital investments*'. Morgan (2000) found that a very large majority (90%) of those who worked said it gave them strong feelings of independence suggesting that a key factor for young people undertaking part-time work is their eagerness for independence.

Males engage in more work than females. Over a third (38%) of the males and nearly half (48%) of the females report never engaging in part-time work. Males report more frequent part-time work (every day, most days & weekly) than females (39% of males vs. 30% of females) especially in the younger age groups of 12 to 14 year olds. Morgan (2000) also reported this gender difference in his study of adolescent part-time work in Dublin. In addition, McCoy and Smyth (2004) found that if informal part-time work (e.g. babysitting) was excluded, males reported more part-time work and tended to work in part-time jobs demanding more commitment and weekday work than females.

A slight but non-significant difference is found in the frequency of part-time work reported by young people in the different socio-economic groups. Fewer of the professional /managerial group report working part-time 'every day' or 'most days' in contrast to the skilled/semi-skilled or unskilled/welfare groups. In addition, slightly more of the professional/managerial group report working 'less often' or 'never'.

This corresponds with research by McCoy and Smyth (2004) who found that social class had little or no influence on part-time employment in junior cycle secondary school students (12-15 years). However *'in the leaving certificate cycle, those from a higher professional background were much less likely to have a part-time job'* (McCoy & Smyth, p32). They also found evidence to support the proposition that relative deprivation is often an obstacle to, rather than a facilitator of, paid work for school age children (Mizen et al., 1999). Research with over 2,300 Scottish 11-16 year olds found that teenagers from 'better-off' areas were more likely to have paid jobs (Sweeting & West, 2000).

Young people attending rural schools report significantly more frequent part-time work. Although McCoy and Smyth (2004) did not compare on these indices they did find greater employment of students attending schools in the East as compared to the West of the Country. As the Western seaboard is traditionally viewed as more rural than urban this might be interpreted as implying less part-time work in rural areas. Thus our study may be in contrast to McCoy and Smyth (2004) on this.

These findings that a third of the sample work part-time, weekly or more often, that older adolescents report more frequent part-time work and that there is a link, albeit weak, with socio-economic group are all in agreement with previous research. Connor (2003, p112) reported a third of his sample worked, these were *'predominantly from the senior cycle of the secondary school system and were predominantly from working class areas'*.

With respect to the impact of part-time work on their leisure, McCoy and Smyth (2004) concluded from their surveys and database analysis that there was no significant difference between young people who had part-time work and those who did not with regard to extracurricular activities. However, young people who have a part-time job tend to have 'a more active social life' in terms of, for example, cinema and disco attendance. According to Morgan (2000) over a third of young people perceived a likely consequence of working to be little time for games and hobbies.

Ongoing debate persists over the impact of part-time work on academic performance, and school drop out. McCoy and Smyth's (2004) study concluded that part-time work has a negative effect on educational participation and achievement. However, whether underperformance contributes to involvement in part-time work or vice-versa is difficult to discern. Several studies have reported that working long hours in a part-time job is negatively associated with school retention and academic performance (Oetinger, 1999; Payne, 2001; Robinson, 1999) however other studies found no impact (D'Amico, 1984). Some studies suggest that part-time work may in fact be beneficial, for example by assisting young people's entry into the labour market (Robinson, 1999). In trying to assess the impact of part-time work, attention also needs to be paid to such features as type and quality of work, hours of work and motivations for working (McCoy & Smyth, 2004).

Discos

On average, young people go to discos on a 'less often' than weekly basis and interestingly a fifth of the sample (21%) indicate that they 'never' go to discos.

Nearly two-thirds of these are aged under 15 highlighting the influence of age on this leisure activity. Across the adolescent years, young people are less likely to report 'never' going to discos with a corresponding increase in the number who reported going 'weekly'.

A surprising finding is that young people attending rural schools are more likely than their urban counterparts to attend discos frequently. Reasons for this are not known. It may be because more discos are held in rural areas, because parents are more cautious about young people attending discos in urban areas or because there are more alternative things to do in urban areas. Discos are frequently held through the auspices of youth clubs/groups, community or sporting associations, schools and churches. Discos are a social outlet, they represent a forum for young people to dress-up, dance, listen to music, chat, hang-out and socialise with their peers. They are also strongly associated with smoking, drinking and drug taking (Sweeting & West, 2000).

CHAPTER 4: HOBBIES

Mary is 14 years of age and has a visual impairment. Mary plays the piano and goes running with her school athletics club. She also goes to a local youth club twice a week which she feels has helped her get to know other young people in her area. Overall she feels her visual impairment doesn't restrict her leisure. In her own words '*I just do everything whether I can or not. Just try your best. If you fall just get back up again and do it. There'll always be barriers out there but you can't let that stop you*'.

Key Findings

- Nearly two-thirds report one or more hobbies
- Females report more hobbies than males
- Young people low in leisure motivation are less likely than the rest of the sample to report a hobby
- Young people in the higher SES groups report more hobbies
- There is a drop in participation in hobbies from 12 –18 years of age
- The most popular hobbies are ‘playing a musical instrument’, ‘looking after pets’ and ‘art’.
- For males the most popular hobbies are ‘playing a musical instrument’, ‘looking after pets’ and ‘pool/snooker’
- For females the most popular hobbies are ‘dance’, playing a musical instrument’ and ‘art’.

Introduction

For the purpose of this study hobbies are defined as activities pursued in one’s leisure time excluding the general free time activities presented in the previous chapter. A list of hobbies, used on posters during the study, can be found in the appendices.

Over the sample as a whole nearly two-thirds (65.2%; n=1475) report one or more hobbies. Over two-thirds of the females (71.8%) and over half (58.6%) of the males report one or more hobbies. This striking pattern of significantly greater female participation in hobbies (Mann-Whitney U = 490996.5, $p \leq 0.000$) is illustrated in the table and figure below. Looking at participation in two or more hobbies, the females again show greater involvement with just under half of females (45.4%) reporting a second hobby and a fifth (21.6%) reporting a third hobby. For males the corresponding percentages are 26.9 % and 7.2%.

Figure 13: Participation in Hobbies By Age and Gender

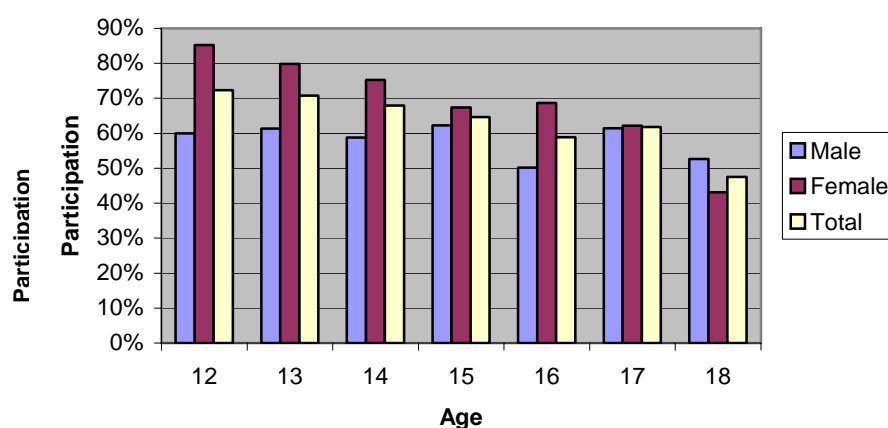


Table 23: Number of Hobbies Reported

Hobbies	Males	Females	Total Sample
One	58.6% n= 660	71.8% n=815	65.2% n=1475
Two	26.9% n=303	45.4% n=515	36.2% n=818
Three	7.2% n=81	21.6% n=245	14.4% n=326

Table 24: Overall Participation in Hobbies

	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total
Male	60%	61.3%	58.8%	62.3%	50.2%	61.4%	52.6%	58.6% n=660
Female	85.2%	79.8%	75.3%	67.4%	68.7%	62.2%	43.1%	71.8% n=815
Total	72.3%	70.8%	67.9%	64.6%	58.9%	61.8%	47.5%	65.2% n=1475

There is a slight trend of a diminishing rate of participation in hobbies from 12 to 18 years of age, especially for the females. Comparing respondents who attended rural, urban-town and urban-city schools, little difference is evident in the number of hobbies reported.

A significant difference is found between parental occupation groups and number of hobbies reported (Chi Sq.= 32.54, df=6, p<0.001) with young people in the higher SES groups reporting more hobbies than those in the lower SES groups.

Table 25: Participation in Hobbies by Parental Occupation

Hobbies	Prof/Managerial	NonMan/Farmer	Skilled/Semi	Unskilled/Welfare
0	29.8% n=160	34.6% n=200	31.3% n=234	40.9% n=79
1	26.1% n=140	29.7% n=172	32% n=239	31.6% n=61
2	23.5% n=126	20% n=116	23.9% n=179	22% n=43
3	20.5% n=110	15.5% n=90	12.6% n=94	5.1% n=10

Looking at the type of hobbies reported, ‘playing music’, ‘looking after pets’ and ‘art’ are very popular for both males and females across the age-span. Interestingly, ‘pool/snooker’ and ‘technology’ (excl. computer games) are reported frequently by males but little by females whereas ‘dance’ (all types) and ‘cooking’ are reported frequently by females but little by males.

Table 26: Most Popular Hobbies by Gender

	Total n=1475	Male n=660	Female n=815
1 st	Play music 30.7% n=454	Play music 28.7% n=190	Dance 34.9% n=285
2 nd	Pets 21.5% n=318	Pets 19.2% n=127	Play music 32.3% n=264
3 rd	Art 21.4% n=317	Pool/Snooker 16.5% n=109	Art 26.9% n=220
4 th	Dance 20.3% n=300	Technology 15% n=99	Pets 23.8% n=191
5 th	Cooking 10.4% n=148	Art 14% n=97	Cooking 16% n=131

Table 27: Most Popular Hobbies by Age and Gender

		12 n=60m/81f	13 n=127m/174f	14 n=136m/214f	15 n=131m/112f	16 n=100m/121f	17 n=86m/94f	18 n=20m/19f
Male	1 st	Pets 30%	Pets 22%	Play music 33%	Play music 35.1%	Play music 30%	Play music 24.4%	Pool/Snook 40%
	2 nd	Board Games 28.3%	Play music 22%	Pets 31.6%	Art 20.6%	Pool/Snooker 22%	Pool/Snooker 19.7%	Play music 20%
	3 rd	Play music 26.6%	Art 18.8%	Technology 16.1%	Technology 19%	Pets 15%	Technology 18.6%	Driving 15%
	4 th	Technology 16.6%	Board Games 17.3%	Board Games 13.9%	Pool/Snooker 19%	Art 13%	Fishing 10.4%	<i>Other*</i>
	4 th	Art 15	Pool/Snooker 13.3%	Art 13.2% Pool/Snooker 11%	Pets 14.5%	Technology 9%	Driving 9.3%	<i>Other*</i>
Female	1 st	Art 37%	Dance 40.8%	Dance 41.1%	Play music 33.9%	Play music 32.2%	Play music 29.7%	Play music 36.8%
	2 nd	Play music 30.8%	Play music 36.7%	Art 31.3%	Art 33%	Dance 30.5%	Art 28.7%	Dance 31.5%
	3 rd	Dance 30.8%	Art 30.4%	Play music 29.4%	Dance 31.2%	Cooking 24.7%	Dance 24.4%	Art 31.5%
	4 th	Singing 24.6%	Pets 28.7%	Pets 24.2%	Pets 26.7%	Pets 23.9%	Pets 11.7%	Singing 21%
	5 th	Pets 23.4%	Cooking 21.8%	Cooking 17.2%	Cooking 17.8%	Art 22.3%	Drama 7.4%	Pets 15.7%
			Drama 15.5%	Singing 16.8%	Drama 14.2%			

It should be noted that the high number of females reporting hobbies has had an impact on the overall list of most popular hobbies with 'dance' and 'cooking' being included in the top 5. There is very little difference with regard to hobbies between those in urban-rural schools or between parental occupation groups.

The average frequency that hobbies are engaged in varies depending on the hobby. 'Playing a musical instrument' is, on average, engaged in by nearly half of those who reported it (48%) 'every day' (modal average) and a further quarter (27%) report playing 'most days'. 'Looking after pets' is undertaken by over three-quarters (79%) of those who reported it 'every day' (modal average) while art, pool/snooker and technology are engaged in on average, (modal) 'most days' (50%, 44% & 43% of each respectively). Dance is engaged in 'most days' or 'weekly' by an equal proportion of those who identified it (35% each) while 'cooking' is undertaken, on average (modal) on a 'weekly' basis (35% of respondents).

Some other interesting hobbies reported include 'farming', 'motor sports', 'writing' and 'carpentry/woodwork' by males and 'hair/beauty', 'making jewellery' and 'public speaking' by females (see appendices for a full listing of hobbies).

Focus-Group Findings

With respect to dance, females gave reasons for its popularity that were linked to sociability such as *'its an enjoyable way to meet new friends'*, *'you can still talk together with your friends when you're dancing'*, pleasure e.g. *'its fun'*, *'enjoyable'*, *'makes you feel good'*, escapism e.g. *'takes your mind off things'*, health/fitness e.g. *'keeps you fit'* and relaxation *'it's relaxing'*. Interestingly some females spoke of dancing being *'competitive'* as a positive reason for doing it while others spoke of it as simply being *'something to do'* when there wasn't anything else. None of the males in any of the focus groups talked about dancing. For young females from the Traveller Community, dance is a very popular activity typically engaged in with their youth group or simply with friends in an informal basis or in discos.

Pets mentioned in the focus groups include dogs, cats, hamsters, goats, rabbits and fish. Reasons given for the popularity of looking after pets were related to affect e.g. *'they're loveable'*, *'they make you feel happy'*, *'you can't fight with them'*, pleasure e.g. *'its fun'*, *'you get something out of it'* and attachment e.g. *'you get attached to them'*, *'because of bonding'* and *'they're cute and loyal'*. One male spoke of his enjoyment in *'going hunting rabbits with his brother and pet lurcher in the fields'*. Others mentioned that maybe looking after pets is very popular *'because there's nothing else to do'*.

Focus groups with males identified a number of interesting reasons for the popularity of pool and snooker this centred on pleasure e.g. *'it's fun'* *'a good laugh'*, ease e.g. *'it's easy to play'*, *'it doesn't require a lot of effort'*, competition e.g. *'you can have great competitions'*, gambling *'you can make a bit of money, gambling on a game'*, interest in the opposite sex *'the girls do be in there too...some of them play'* and being with a friend or a social group e.g. *'it's a good thing to do with the lads'* and *'you can have 5 or 6 playing with a game like killer'*. A number complained about a lack of pool/snooker facilities in their locality, having to be over 18 for some places and having to go into pubs or into the city to play, although this appeared to add to its

enjoyment ‘*its great going into the pub and playing there*’ ‘*places in town like the *** and **** are great but we can’t go in there all the time*’. The reported cost for a game of pool/snooker was 3.50-4.50 euro per half-hour, some venues also require a one euro entry fee. None of the females in any of the focus groups played snooker or pool.

Looking in particular at the young people who show low levels of leisure motivation (assessed using the FTMS amotivation dimension), these respondents are significantly *less* likely to report hobbies (Chi Sq.= 8.79, df=3, $p \leq 0.03$) than the rest of the sample (n=2020). Just under half of these respondents (45.4%) report no hobbies compared to a third (33.%) of the rest of the sample.

Discussion

A high frequency of hobbies was reported with nearly two-thirds of the sample reporting one or more hobbies. These were in addition to general free time activities such as reading, watching TV and so on, outlined in the previous chapter. Overall this high prevalence of hobbies presents a positive picture of young people’s use of their free time.

The higher frequencies of leisure activities identified in this study compared to that of Connor (2003) might be due to differences in methodology. In the current study young people could list any three hobbies in addition to the more general hobbies of listening to music, reading, television, computer games, walking for leisure, part-time work, looking at shops, going to discos and going to the cinema that were listed separately. In addition, posters were used to illustrate hobbies, sports and groups and although these posters had a combination of common and not so common sports, hobbies and groups, they may have led young people to identify sports, hobbies or groups that they do not frequently engage in.

Sweeting and West’s (2000) research with over 2,300 Scottish 11-16 year olds found that over half reported engaging in at least one hobby (other than general free time activities such as reading) every/most days or weekly.

In terms of number of hobbies reported four key findings emerged.

Females report more hobbies than males. The greater female frequency is in keeping with past research showing that females report more hobbies whereas males report more sports (Eccles & Barber, 1999; O’Connor, 2003; Passmore & French, 2001; Zarbatany et al., 1990). Gender was also a factor in an Australian study (Garton & Pratt, 1991) with sports preferred by males and activities such as reading, playing musical instruments, visiting museums, and social activities preferred by females.

Young people low in leisure motivation are less likely than the rest of the sample to report a hobby. This is understandable in that low levels of leisure motivation (what Caldwell terms ‘amotivation’) is associated with feelings of apathy and a lack of initiative and effort (Caldwell et al., 2004). These young people can’t be bothered, don’t care and appear to be low on what Nix and colleagues (1999) term ‘subjective vitality’ which is linked to perceived autonomy. Low levels of leisure motivation has also been negatively linked with optimal leisure experience and substance abuse though the direction of causation is unclear (Kowal & Fortier, 1999).

Young people in the higher SES groups report more hobbies. This may reflect greater disposable income, greater free time, differing values and/or greater encouragement and support towards engaging in hobbies. A number of the key findings reported by Connor (2003) were in relation to socio-economic status and leisure participation. In his study, the higher an adolescent's social grouping, the more likely they were *'to be physically active and in a greater variety of activities than an adolescent from a lower social class grouping'* (p174). He also reported that social class grouping gave an indication of the likelihood of an individual participating in physical activity/sport and also of the activities in which they are likely to be active. In addition, he reported that *'there appears to be a clear association of leisure pursuits with school discipline which appears to alienate many pupils from school sport'* (p174). However, no statistical information was given on these associations nor on the numbers within the social class groupings thus comparisons are hard to make between the studies.

Poor town planning, with an inappropriate matching of leisure facilities to different socio-economic areas resulting in facilities that don't satisfy the needs or wishes of the local population is also worth noting (Hendry et al., 1993; Connor, 2003). It could be proposed that no difference in number of hobbies participated in between the various socio-economic groups would arise if appropriate leisure provision was made in the community taking on board SES differences in leisure preferences.

Fewer hobbies are reported by the older, as compared to younger adolescents.

Previous studies have reported a diminishing rate of participation in sports and hobbies across adolescence. Time-use researchers argue that over the course of adolescence unstructured socialising activities begin to take the place of specific free-time activities such as hobbies and sports for young people (Richards & Larson, 1989).

Research by Larson and Verma, (1999) and McHale and colleagues (2004) found that female time spent on structured leisure activities declines in middle adolescence, whereas time spent socialising increases. Such declines may reflect barriers and opportunities in the larger social environment. Jacobs et al. (2002) found that age-related declines in youth's self-perceptions of competence may be connected to such barriers and play an important role in activity involvement. Finally, as highlighted by research undertaken by McHale et al (2004), an increasing interest in the peer social world, along with an increasing significance of intimacy and self-disclosure (in girls' close relationships), may underpin a shift from involvement in specific activities to socialising.

Looking at type of hobbies, the most popular hobbies for the sample as a whole are 'playing a musical instrument', 'looking after pets' and 'art'. A clear gender difference is present with the most popular hobbies for males being: 'playing a musical instrument', 'looking after pets' and 'pool/snooker' while for females they are 'dance', 'playing a musical instrument' and 'art'.

The popularity of 'playing a musical instrument' may however be artificially high. In their study with American adolescents for example, Passmore and French (2001) found that 15.2% played a musical instrument or engaged in other expressive activities such as dancing or painting.

Connor (2003) with young people from Waterford found that as few as 8% 'played music'. Sampling and methodological differences may also contribute to the differences between such research studies and our study.

As 'listening to music' was asked about earlier in the questionnaire, young people were instructed to only indicate playing a musical instrument as a hobby as opposed to playing or listening to music. However, it is likely that some proportion of the sample who indicated 'playing music' meant listening to it as opposed to playing an instrument.

The high frequency of playing a musical instrument may also be due to music being taken as a subject in a State examination. One young person with visual impairment mentioned that she '*had no interest in playing the tin whistle*' and was '*keeping it up just for the Leaving Cert music exam*'.

'Pool or snooker' was reported by Connor (2003) to be a popular male activity (4% of the sample). He also found 'art' (5% of sample) and 'looking after pets' (2%) were popular leisure activities for both males and females. In a study with American young people 'playing with pets' was also frequently cited as leisure activity (Zarbatany et al., 1990).

Pets have been proposed to be sources of pleasure, fun, security, exercise and protection and may help impart a sense of responsibility and respect for life (Ottney Cain, 1985; Miller Covert et al., 1985) though empirical support for these findings is lacking. Pet ownership and care has been identified as a way of nurturing autonomy and self-esteem in young people (van Houtte & Jarvis, 1995). Pets can contribute to making adolescents feel good or satisfied with themselves (Juhasz, 1985) and may act as a source of support (Hagerty Davis & McCreary Juhasz, 1985). With respect to children in care, Gilligan (2000) identified how a very troubled boy in care benefited greatly from caring for a neighbour's horse. Another boy in care who did not have many friends or interests was encouraged by his foster parents to develop his interest in tropical fish. This in turn helped him to forge new friendships.

Turning to the popularity of 'dance' for adolescent females this is in agreement with many research studies (Dowda et al., 2004; Hendry et al., 1993; Passmore & French, 2001). Stiles and colleagues (1993) found it to be very popular with Dutch and American female teenagers (14 & 15 year olds) and Smith (1987) found it to be very popular with Scottish adolescents. Research with approximately 1,300 American young people also found that both 'dance classes' and general 'dance' as well as 'orchestra/band' and other 'performing arts' were more frequently reported by females than males. In contrast males reported more sports than hobbies (Eccles & Barber, 1999).

With a sample of adolescents in Waterford, Connor (2003) found dance to be a popular activity for females but not males. In his study 3% of the females identified 'dance' and an additional '2%' identified 'Irish dance' as leisure activities they participated in. The higher rate in our study may be due to the fact that participants were instructed to identify any hobbies they participated in, whether structured or not.

Thus with respect to dance it may be that participants listed dance if they went to dance lessons, enjoyed dancing with friends or simply enjoyed dancing on their own without any formal instruction.

Dance has been proposed to enhance self-mastery through being in charge of the body and this can contribute to positive self-perception, body image and esteem (Hanna, 1988). Research with 7-8 year old children has identified that dance enhances children's social skills (von Rossberg-Gempton et al., 1999) though the extent to which these findings are generalisable to all types of dance and age groups is questionable.

Interestingly, the Daghda dance company in conjunction with Limerick Youth Services established the Limerick Youth Dance Company to meet the need for creative dance expression by young people in the city. The group, all female aged 12-16, was primarily recruited via youth clubs and projects throughout the city and its suburbs. According to the liaison officer, Ms Barrett, *'Dance is a great leveller, people of all ages and backgrounds have the ability to dance once they are nurtured and given the opportunity...we are now particularly encouraging boys or people who have been excluded from dance because of financial or other constraints'* (www.youth.ie/arts/in2). Additionally, the Firkin Crane Youthstart project 'Youth Moves to Dance', based in Cork, have explored the introduction of arts-based activities to Youthreach environments. (Youthreach, 2000).

Following research by Marzin (2003) commissioned by the Arts Council of Ireland, the latter proposed a prevocational (12-15 years) and vocational (15-18 years) model of dance education and training which might capture and take young people who have a very strong leisure interest in dance further.

With respect to the arts in general, the National Youth Council of Ireland in its Arts plan 2002-2006 has set out a number of objectives and a system of supports to facilitate young people's participation in the arts. According to their policy 'Art in their lives' (2002, p11) *'The arts are often identified as 'a way of working' within the language of youth work, a methodology used in the personal and social development of the young person. We must identify that the arts are more than just a methodology; that we also have a responsibility to the cultural and artistic development of the young person'*.

Our research identifies a very high level of interest and participation in the arts, especially by females, across the adolescent years.

The popularity of 'pool/snooker' or 'technology' for males and 'dance' for females may be related to gender intensification across adolescence (Hill & Lynch, 1983). Female interest in sex-typed leisure activities has been reported to increase over the adolescent years though interest overall in structured leisure declines across adolescence while time spent socialising rises (McHale et al., 2004). In our study 'dance' however may be construed to both a sex typed activity as well as a social activity. In completing the questionnaire, young people were instructed to indicate any hobbies they do in their free time whether structured, for example dance classes or unstructured, for example dancing with friends in their homes or other locations.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY/CHARITY GROUPS

Cian is 16 and lives in small town. He no longer attends school and instead goes to a Youthreach centre. In his free-time, Cian enjoys playing pool but now that he and his friends are barred from the pool hall, he's bored and spends most of his time hanging around outside with 8-9 other lads he is friendly with. He enjoys kicking a ball around with them too but wouldn't be bothered joining a soccer club and he has no interest in any other sports. Some of his friends are into messing around with cars in a field so he might give that a go.

Key Findings

- Nearly one-third of the sample participate in one or more groups
- Females report greater participation in community/charity groups than males
- Young people low in leisure motivation are less likely to report involvement in a community/charity group
- Young people attending urban schools participate more in community/charity groups than those attending rural schools
- There is a drop in participation in community/charity groups from 12-18 years
- The most popular groups are youth clubs/groups, choirs/folk groups and voluntary work
- For males the most popular groups are youth clubs/groups, scouts and voluntary work
- For females the most popular groups are youth clubs/groups, choirs/folk groups and voluntary work

Introduction

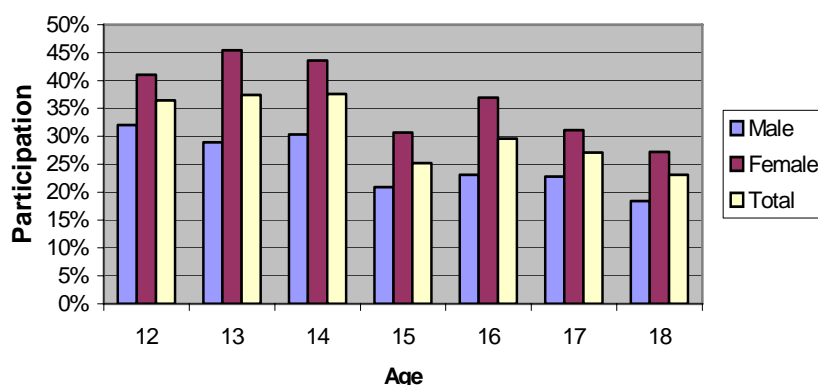
For the purposes of this study community/charity groups are defined as any club/group for which membership is required outside of sports/hobby clubs. A list of community/charity groups, used on posters during the study, can be found in the appendices.

Nearly a third of the sample (32.2%) report participating in one or more groups. Over a third (38.5%) of all the females in the sample participate in one or more groups in contrast to a quarter (25.8%) of the males. Looking at participation in two or more groups, the females again display higher involvement (13.4%; 10% & 2.7% respectively) compared to 7.8% of the males (2.9% & 1.2% respectively).

Table 28: Number of Groups Reported

Groups	Males	Females	Total Sample
One	25.8% n=291	38.5% n=437	32.2% n=728
Two	26.9% n=74	45.4% n=121	36.2% n=195
Three	7.2% n=14	21.6% n=31	14.4% n=45

Figure 14: Participation in Groups by Age and Gender



Females report more participation in social groups than males. Interestingly the reasons given for greater female involvement in groups by females in the focus groups included ‘*girls are more responsible and caring*’, ‘*girls are better at organizing things*’ ‘*boys just want to be outside the whole time*’ and ‘*boys are more into sports*’. Reasons for non-participation given by both males and females included ‘*couldn’t be bothered*’, ‘*not interested*’, ‘*not for me*’ ‘*don’t have the time for it*’. One female spoke of being expelled from a choir for inappropriate behaviour. When asked why they don’t have time for groups, young people often spoke of just ‘*being with friends*’ or ‘*at home*’ as what was keeping them busy.

Across the age-span a drop in participation rates is evident from 12 (36%) to 17 (27.1%) and 18 (23.1%) years.

Youth clubs/groups (inc. Foróige) are the most popular type of social group reported by both males and females and by all of the age groups. Scouts/Guides, voluntary work (inc. St. Vincent de Paul) and choirs/musical groups (excl. bands) are also very popular. A high number of females in particular report participating in choirs/musical groups with a smaller, though sizable, number of males participating in such a group.

Table 29: Overall Participation in Groups

	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total
Male	32%	28.9%	30.3%	20.9%	23.1%	22.8%	18.4%	25.8% n=291
Female	41%	45.4%	43.6%	30.7%	36.9%	31.1%	27.2%	38.5% n=437
Total	36.4%	37.4%	37.6%	25.2%	29.6%	27.1%	23.1%	32.2% n=728

On average (modal), young people report that they participate in youth clubs/groups, choirs and scouts/guides on a ‘weekly’ basis. Voluntary work is participated in, on average (modal) ‘less often’ than weekly.

A statistically significant difference is found between young people attending rural, urban-city and urban-town schools (Chi Sq. = 38.9, df=2, p<0.000). Young people attending urban schools report participating in fewer community/charity groups than young people attending rural schools.

Table 30: Participation in Groups: Urban Vs Rural

Groups	Urban-City	Urban-Town	Rural
None	72.4% n=365	71.9% n=687	59.5% n=477
1	20.6% n=104	21.3% n=204	28.5% n=229
2	5.1% n=26	4.8% n=46	9.9% n=80
3	1.7% n=9	1.8% n=18	1.8% n=15

Table 31: Most Popular Groups

	Total	n=728	Male	n=291	Female	n=437
1 st	Youth Clubs/Grps	58.7% n=428	Youth Clubs/Grps	68% n=198	Youth Clubs/Grps	52.6% n=230
2 nd	Choir/Folk Grp	25.9% n=189	Scouts/Guides	11.3% n=33	Choir/Folk Grp	37.5% n=164
3 rd	Voluntary Work	11.2% n=82	Voluntary Work	9.2% n=28	Voluntary Work	12.3% n=54
4 th	Scouts/Guides	10.3% n=75	Choir/Folk Grp	8.5% n=25	Scouts/Guides	9.6% n=42

Groups less frequently reported include the President’s Award (Gaisce), self-defence, civil defence, Macra na Feirme and the FCA. A very small number of the sample report participating in ‘self-help’, ‘environmental’ and ‘animal rescue’ groups.

Table 32: Type of Groups by Age and Gender

		12 n=32/39	13 n=60/99	14 n=70/124	15 n=44/51	16 n=46/65	17 n=32/47	18 n=7/12
M A L E	1 st	Yth Club/Grp 87.5%	Yth Club/Grp 86.6%	Yth Club/Grp 75.7%	Yth Club/Grp 52.2%	Yth Club/Grp 45.6%	Yth Club/Grp 53.1%	Yth Club/Grp 57.1%
	2 nd	Scouts 12.5%	Choir 10%	Scouts 12.8%	Pres. Award 15.9%	Pres. Award 21.7%	Vol. Wrk 18.7%	Vol. Wrk 42.8%
	3 rd	Vol. Wrk 6.2%	Scouts 5%	Choir 10%	Scouts 13.6%	Scouts 15.2% Choir 15.2	Scouts 9.3%	Fund-raising 28.5%
F E M A L E	1 st	Choir 56.4%	Yth Club/Grp 52.5%	Yth Club/Grp 61.2%	Yth Club/Grp 50.9%	Yth Club/Grp 52.3%	Yth Club/Grp 46.8%	Yth Club/Grp 33.3%
	2 nd	Yth Club/Grp 41%	Choir 38.3%	Choir 32.2%	Choir 31.3%	Choir 44.6%	Choir 31.9%	Choir 33.3%
	3 rd	Scout/Guides 23%	Scout/Guides 15.1%	Vol. Wrk 14.5%	Vol. Wrk 17.6%	Scout/Guides 10.7%	Vol. Wrk 14.8%	Vol. Wrk 25%
T O T A L	1 st	Yth Club/Grp 58.7%	Yth Club/Grp 65.1%	Yth Club/Grp 65.6%	Yth Club/Grp 51%	Yth Club/Grp 48%	Yth Club/Grp 49.3%	Yth Club/Grp 42%
	2 nd	Choir 25.9%	Choir 28.8%	Choir 24.8%	Choir 19.1%	Choir 34.6%	Choir 22.7%	Vol. Wrk 36.8%
	3 rd	Vol. Work 11.1% Scout/Guides 10.3%	Scout/Guides 10.7%	Vol. Work 12.1%	Vol. Work 14.8%	Scout/Guides 16.3%	Vol. Work 18.9%	Choir 15.7%

* Choir included all folk and music groups other than bands

Young people low on leisure motivation (i.e. those who score high on the FTMS amotivation dimension) are significantly less likely (Chi Sq. =13.024, df=3 p≤.005) than all other respondents to be involved in groups. Of these 121 young people, 81.8% are *not* involved in groups compared to 66.8% of the rest of the sample (n=2020).

In the school-based focus groups young people were presented with scenarios of different types of youth clubs, as outlined below. The advantages and disadvantages they identify give some insight into their likes and dislikes with regard to youth clubs.

Club 1

- Open 1 or 2 nights per week
- Same leader(s) every night
- Different activities sometimes sport, drama, group challenges
- Join the club each year and attend as often as you like
- Strict rules around behaviour in the club

The advantages of this club, according to the young people, are that it has *'a variety of activities'*, *'you can make a lot of new friends'*, *'you could experience new talents'*, *'it's a good place to get away from home pressures, to cool off'*, *'it's open regularly'*, *'it keeps you off the streets, out of trouble'* and *'you don't have to go every night'*.

The disadvantages identified were *'the rules are too strict'*, *'you might not like the leader and you are stuck with her/him every week'*, *'same leaders every night'* and *'its not open long enough'*.

Club 2

- Open 4-5 nights per week
- Specific activity on specific nights e.g. Drama- Monday, Basketball-Tuesday; Film club- Wednesday
- Join the activity you want
- Specialist group leader(s) for each activity
- Strict rules around behaviour in the club

The advantages of this club, according to the young people, are *'there's a lot of activities to choose from'*, *'its open more nights in the week'*, *'every night there is something different to do'*, and *'you can choose what night you want to go'*

The disadvantages identified are *'you wouldn't get to know the leaders so well'*, *'most people would come the same night'*, *'too many rules'* and *'sounds boring'*.

Club 3

- Open most evenings and weekends
- Very little organised activities, mostly just a safe space to hang-out
- Leaders are there to supervise the space rather than 'lead'
- Strict rules around behaviour in the club

The advantages, according to the young people, are *'its safe'*, *'you get to hang around with your friends'*, *'its fun'*, and *'you're not forced to do sports you don't want to do'*.

The disadvantages identified are *'too many rules'*, *'you've to pay to sit and talk when you can do the same thing at home for free'*, *'if it's only attended by people who do team sports then only team sports would be played'*, *'there is very little organisation'*, *'it is an open club so rough people can come in'* and *'it gets boring'*.

Overall no distinct preference for any one type of club emerged. Some of the primary issues raised by young people are *'being able to relax and hang-out with friends (and away from family) in a safe place'*, *'having a choice over what to do'*, there *not* being *'too many rules'* and *'liking the leaders and the others there'*. Many of the males mentioned that they'd *'like the club to have pool/snooker tables'* and a small number mentioned the cost of joining a youth club as a concern. A minority also expressed apathy about youth clubs indicating that *'they all get boring after a while'*, this may reflect low leisure motivation or depression.

Discussion

A number of interesting findings can be seen from the data collected on community/charity groups.

Nearly one-third of the sample report participation in one, or more, community/charity group. This is similar to the findings of Connor (2003) who reported that only 35% young people in Waterford were involved in a group. In contrast membership of sports clubs tends to be higher, particularly for males (McGee et al., 2005; Pate et al., 2000; Zeijl et al. 2003). Research by others with children, young people and adults has shown a variety of factors that influence participation in clubs and groups such as preadolescent participation, SES, family values, self-efficacy and peer attachment (Chan & Elder, 2001; Hart & Fegley, 1995; Larson, 1994; McGee et al., 2005)

Participation in clubs and groups is contended to widen an individual's 'social convey' (Kahn & Antonucci, 1989), thereby possibly enhancing their 'social capital' and their socio-emotional development, social skills, and relationships. According to McGee and colleagues (2005, in press) *'Membership might facilitate social development by increasing friendships within groups; linking like-minded peers; strengthening the relationship between individual and family; exposure to other world views and enabling young people to develop skills such as acting co-operatively and taking different perspectives...membership might also be seen as a dynamic process linking the adolescent to larger social forces within the community'*.

Research that has attempted to explore the impact of participation in extracurricular groups and activities and self-esteem and other indices cannot disentangle the causal direction of the relationship (Hart & Fegly, 1995; Marsh, 1993; Rosenberg, 1965; Yates, 1999). However, participation in extracurricular activities, often linked to the school, has been found to reduce school drop-out, particularly among those at risk of early school leaving (Mahoney & Cairns, 1997).

Females report more participation in groups than males. This is in agreement with the findings of Eccles and Barber (1999). In research with American young people, they found that females participated more than males in church and volunteer activities while males participated more in scout clubs.

Similar findings were also reported by McGee and colleagues (2005), Zeijl and colleagues (2003), Connor (2003), Silva (1989) and by Leyser and Cole, (2004). Gender socialisation into the caring field may contribute to this. Females are over represented in the caring professions and in training courses in social care/social work/nursing and various therapies. As noted by Connor (2003), McPearson et al. (1989) found that parents may also be more protective of their daughters and prefer them, more so than their sons, to be involved in structured organisations such as St Vincent de Paul and the Red Cross. In contrast to females, males are more likely to be members of sporting clubs and associations (McGee et al., 2005).

Relating to this finding is Buhrmester's (1996) contention that females are more likely to participate in activities that support communal awards (e.g. interpersonal connection) whereas males are more likely to engage in activities where agentic awards (e.g. personal achievement, recognition and power) are sought via sports and competitive games.

In keeping with the pattern found in sports and hobbies, young people low in leisure motivation are less likely to report participating a community or charity group. This again probably reflects the feelings of apathy, lack of effort and initiative associated with amotivation (Caldwell et al., 2004). This subgroup of the sample will be discussed further later in the report.

As with sports and hobbies, a diminishing rate of participation is evident across the adolescent years, from 45% participation at age 12 to 34% at age 17 to 34% at 18 years. A similar decline has also been reported by McGee and colleagues (2005), Zeijl and colleagues (2003), Pate and colleagues (2000), Connor (2003), Hendry and colleagues, (1993). Equally, the Child Accident Prevention Trust (2002) in the UK reported that adolescents are more likely to be members of youth clubs/groups in their early years at secondary school with a pattern of increased drop out evident across the rest of adolescence.

With respect to youth clubs/groups this is also in keeping with current trends. Ógra Chorcaí for example have reported that for 2004 in the 10-14 year old age group they had 1,710 males and 2,189 females attending their 87 youth groups across Cork city and county while for the 15-19 year old age group the corresponding numbers were 862 and 930. The principle objective of Ógra Chorcaí is to '*engage young people in development and educational opportunities in order that they may more fully participate in their community and society*'. Ógra Chorcaí works with and for young people in three ways: through adult volunteers and leaders, through community based special intervention projects and through training for prospective youth workers. Similar organisations operate throughout the country.

The Irish Girl Guides also report a similar decline across age. Currently there are 131 Guide Units for 10-15 year olds and 13 Ranger Units for 15-21 year olds. In 2004, 1,578 girls attended these, over two-thirds (67.3% n=1062) were aged 12-13, a fifth (21% n=343) were aged 14-15 and 10.9% (n=173) were aged 16-18 (Irish Girl Guides, 2005).

Another example of youth groups are those run by Foróige, who have over 45 active youth groups across Ireland. Foróige clubs are purposively structured youth development groups made up of young people from the local community. These are

usually groups of less than 30 young people, aged 12-18 years, and voluntary adult leaders, in a ratio of approximately 10 to 1. They enable young people to experience democracy by electing their own club committee and managing and operating the club in co-operation with their adult leaders. Foróige clubs plan and carry out activities designed to meet the interests and needs of members and to assist in this regard, Foróige has developed eight education programmes: Leadership, Culture, Youth Co-operative Education, Family and Lifeskills, Science, Health, Agriculture/Horticulture and Citizenship

In 2004, 14,110 young people were members of Foróige groups, 54.1% of these were female and 48.2% were male. The majority of their members, over two-thirds (70%) are rural dwellers. In contrast to other youth clubs and associations, figures from Foróige do not show a steep decline in participation rates over the adolescent years. 51.5% of their members were aged 12-14 years and 48.2 % were aged 15-18 years with the national average being 14.6 years (Foróige, 2005).

According to Hendry et al. (1993) close links between such clubs and the school's organisational structure, the location of the club in the school building or strict rules or discipline may contribute to drop out. With age, adolescents move from structured to casual leisure and thus may reject the disciplined and structured nature of such clubs in favour of hanging-around and non-formal groups (Coleman & Hendry, 1999).

With respect to policy, the National Youth Development Plan (2003-2007, p11) identifies as a challenge for youth work *'attracting and sustaining the interest and involvement of young people, especially 'older young people''*.

The most popular groups are youth clubs/groups, choirs/folk groups and voluntary work.

A slight gender difference is apparent as for males the most popular groups are youth clubs/groups, scouts and voluntary work while for females the most popular groups are youth clubs/groups, choirs/folk groups and voluntary work

Youth clubs/groups and scouts/guides are amongst the most popular groups mentioned, similar to Connor's (2003) research other comparisons (e.g. on choirs) are difficult to make due to methodological differences between the studies. Youth clubs and groups clearly play a significant role in young people's lives, particularly in the younger adolescent years (12-15 years). National youth organisations such as the National Youth Federation and Foróige incorporate an extensive number of clubs in both urban and rural locations throughout Ireland. In addition a number of schools have an after-school youth club, this is most prevalent in areas of socio-economic disadvantage.

The popularity of voluntary and charity work may reflect the impact of the transition year school programme, this often introduces young people to voluntary work. In addition, fund-raising in schools also acts as a mechanism to introduce young people to charity and voluntary work. Gaisce - The President's Award was cited by a small number, Gaisce is a formal means of encouraging young people to undertake community and voluntary work. The Irish White Paper on Voluntary activity (2000)

and the National Youth Development Plan (2003-2007) identify the value of volunteering and the community/voluntary sector.

In the UK there has been increased interest in encouraging and formalising volunteering through schemes such as Millennium Volunteers (Edwards & Hatch, 2003 p56). According to these authors *'volunteering has many potential benefits, both for young people and those they are helping. They are likely to develop new skills and an increased sense of responsibility and understanding. They may mix with new people they might not normally encounter and strengthen links between generations within a community. Volunteering can empower young people and demonstrate to them and others that they can make a difference'*.

While sampling and methodological differences have to be acknowledged as compromising comparisons with various other research studies, our study appears to suggest greater participation by Irish young people in youth clubs and other groups such as Scouts and Guides. In the UK, 17% of young people are reported to be in a youth club and 7% in Scouts or Guides (Child Accident Prevention Trust, 2002). In the Netherlands research has found that 11% of young people are members of a youth club, 11% of a drama or singing club and 6% members of a hobby club (Zeijl et al., 2003).

Young people attending rural schools participate more in community/charity groups than those attending urban schools (towns and cities). This may be because of the greater variety of leisure activities available in urban areas. Research in Australia has similarly found differences in the number and type of social and outdoor activities participated in by young people based on whether they attended urban or rural schools (Garton & Pratt, 1991). As noted by Thurlow (2002), the leisure and cultural choices available to young people are invariably influenced and constrained by the ideological positions and material conditions of their immediate environment-most notably of the school itself.

CHAPTER 6: SPORTS

Noel is a 16 year old member of the Traveller Community. He is always on the go and has no time for hanging around doing nothing. Being a champion boxer, Noel spends a lot of his free time at the boxing club or gym but he also often helps his dad and uncle out at work. Riding his older brother's motorbike in the fields nearby is another favourite activity of Noel's. His older brother taught him a couple of years ago and now he is teaching their younger brother to ride. Outside of all of this Noel enjoys '*kicking a ball around outside playing soccer with the other lads on the site*'.

Key Findings

- 88% of the sample report playing at least one sport.
- 91% of males and 86% of females play sport.
- Soccer, Gaelic football and hurling are the most popular sports for males
- Basketball, Gaelic football and swimming are the most popular sports for females
- Individual sports are significantly more popular with females.
- Sports participation declines for both sexes across the age span of adolescence, this decline is more marked for females
- The average frequency for female participation in sport is weekly, the average for males is most days
- Frequency of participation declines for both sexes with age
- 32% of males and 10% of females report that they never walk for leisure

Sports Participation

For the purpose of this research sport is defined as any sports activity undertaken either competitively or recreationally in either formal or informal settings. A list of sports, used on posters during the study, can be found in the appendices.

An overwhelming 88% (n=1993) of respondents report involvement in at least one sport, excluding walking. 91% (n=1022) of males and 86% (n=971) of females report that they play at least one sport.

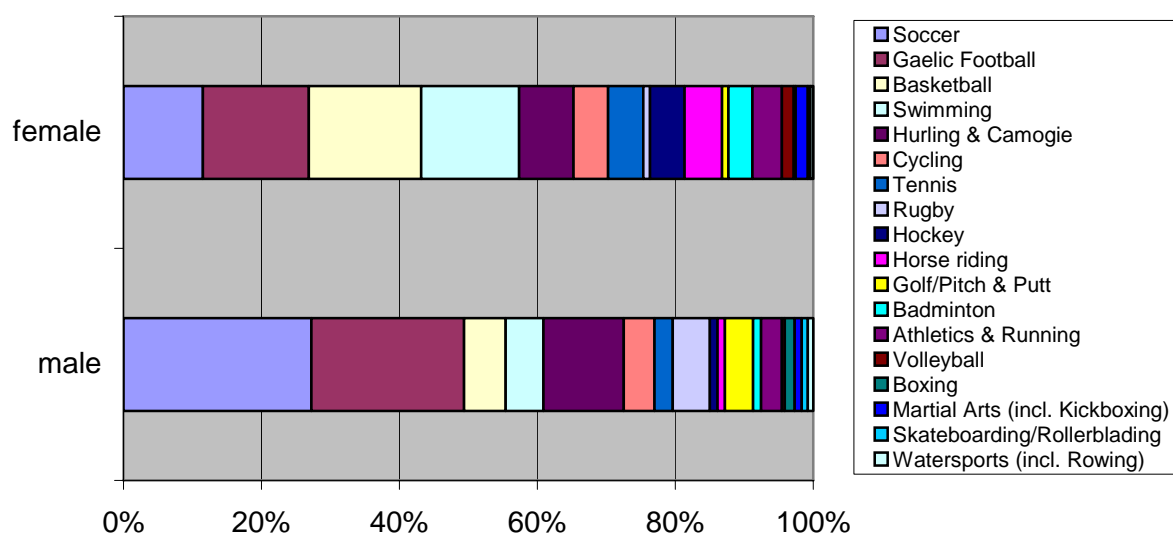
Table 33 Sports' Participation by Gender

Sex	Play sport		Play no sport		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Male	1022	91%	103	9%	1125	50%
Female	971	86%	163	14%	1134	50%
Total	1993	88%	266	12%	2259	100%

There is a range of almost forty different sports cited in the study, for a full list of sports cited see the appendices. There is a significant difference between male (n=1022; 91%) and female (n=971; 86%) involvement in sport.

Table 34: Sport by gender

Sport	Male	Female	Total
Soccer	711	262	973
Gaelic football	577	351	928
Basketball	158	371	529
Hurling/Camogie	303	180	483
Swimming	143	314	457
Cycling	117	115	232
Athletics (incl. Running)	78	97	175
Tennis	59	116	175
Rugby	140	22	162
Horse riding	28	124	152
Hockey	29	114	143
Golf & Pitch and Putt	106	22	128
Badminton	31	79	110
Martial Arts (incl. Kickboxing)	27	40	67
Volleyball	11	39	50
Boxing	38	7	45
Water sports (incl. Rowing & surfing)	21	10	31
Skateboarding & Rollerblading	23	8	31

Figure 15: Sport by Gender

Participants could list up to three sports on Section 2 of the questionnaire. Male sport is hugely dominated by soccer (n=711; 70%) and Gaelic football (n=577; 56%), together these sports account for almost 50% of all male sports participation in the study.

For females there is a greater range of activities dominating the top of the table. Basketball is the most popular sport (n=371; 38%) followed by Gaelic football (n=351; 36%) and swimming (n=314; 32%).

In the focus groups non-participation in sport was accounted for by laziness, apathy – ‘some people just couldn’t be bothered’ and not being the sporty type – ‘if people aren’t sporty they’re not going to do it like’.

The young people in the school-based focus groups believe that there should be exposure to a greater range of sports. One group mentioned the ‘dominance of the GAA games’ and another suggested ‘having tasters of different...unusual sports like water sports and American football’. One young male was of the opinion that you end up playing what the others in your area play ‘I play soccer and so do all the lads in my area, my cousin plays nothing but hurling ‘cause that’s what they all play near him’.

Of the young people who took part in the Youthreach focus groups only one was a member of a sports club (16 year old male). In one centre some of the young people continued to use a local gym facility having been first introduced to it through Youthreach. This facility was available on a pay-and-play basis and was used by 50% of the young people (3 male and 3 female). Most of the males in the Youthreach groups were involved in informal street soccer. None of the females were involved although the males reported that ‘biores (girls) would sometimes join in for the laugh’.

Gender and Sport

Figure 16: Team Sports by Gender

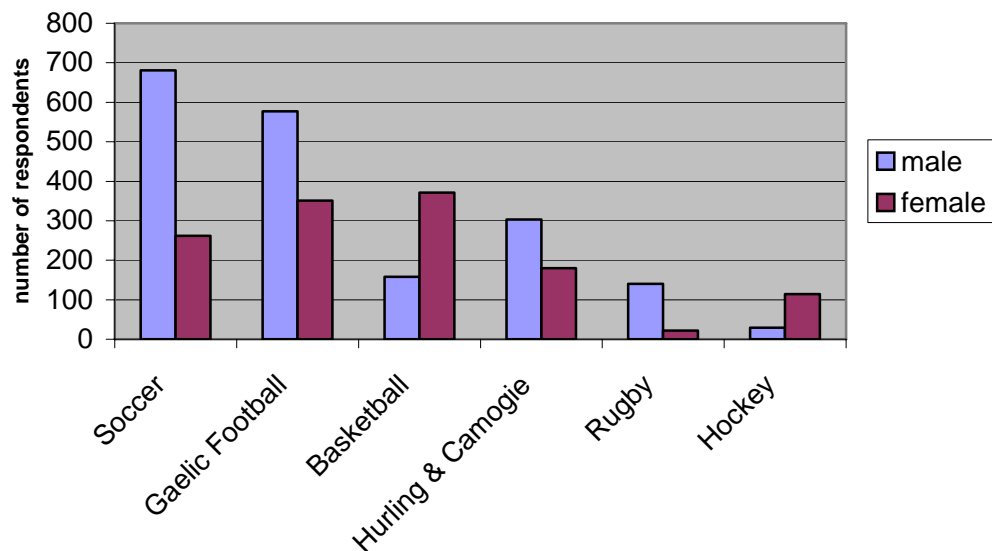
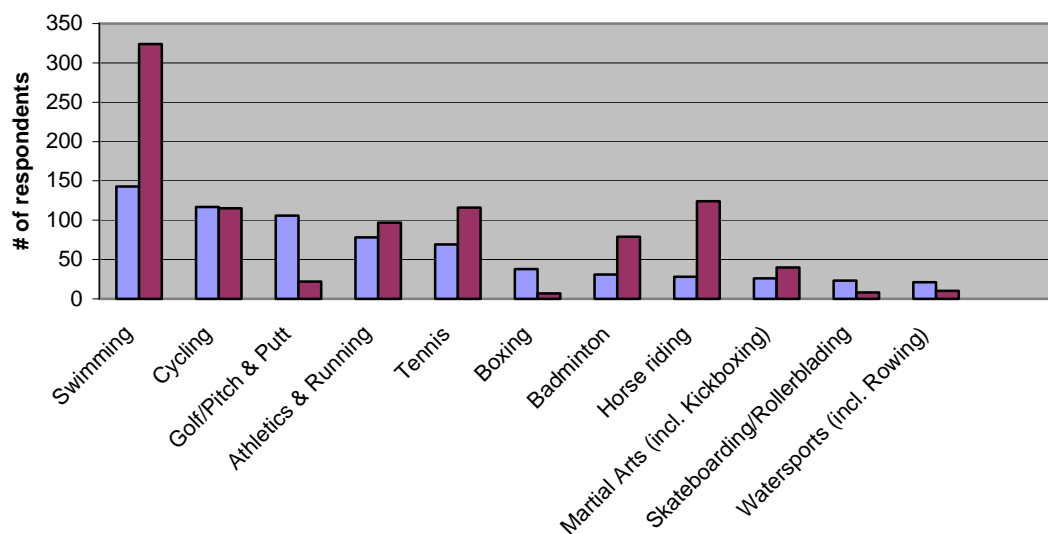
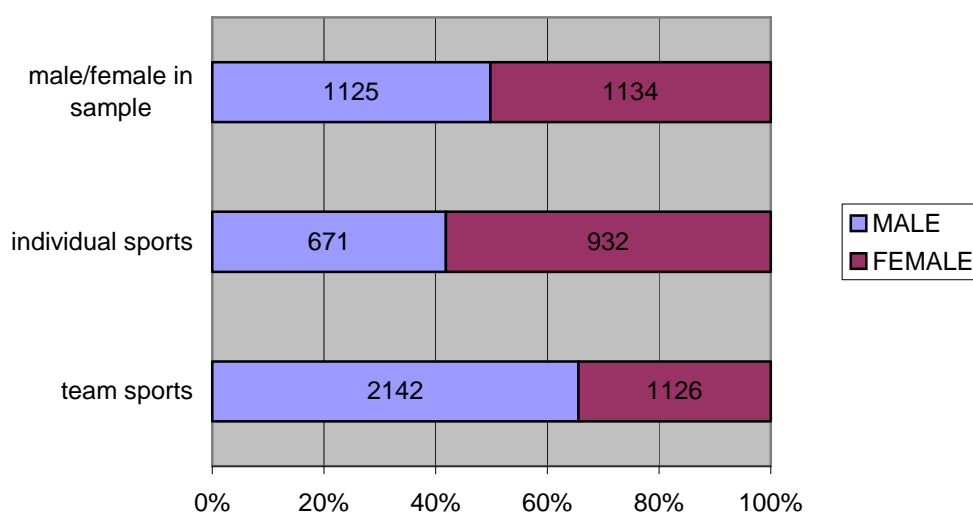


Figure 17: Individual Sports by Gender



The numbers participating in individual sports are significantly lower than for team sports. There were 3,268 citations of involvement in team sports in the study as compared to 1,603 cases of individual sports, this is almost exactly a 2:1 ratio.

Figure 18: Involvement in Individual and Team Sport by Gender

Males are twice as likely as females to be involved in team sports (66%*m*; 34%*f*), while females dominate individual sports participation (42%*m*; 58%*f*).

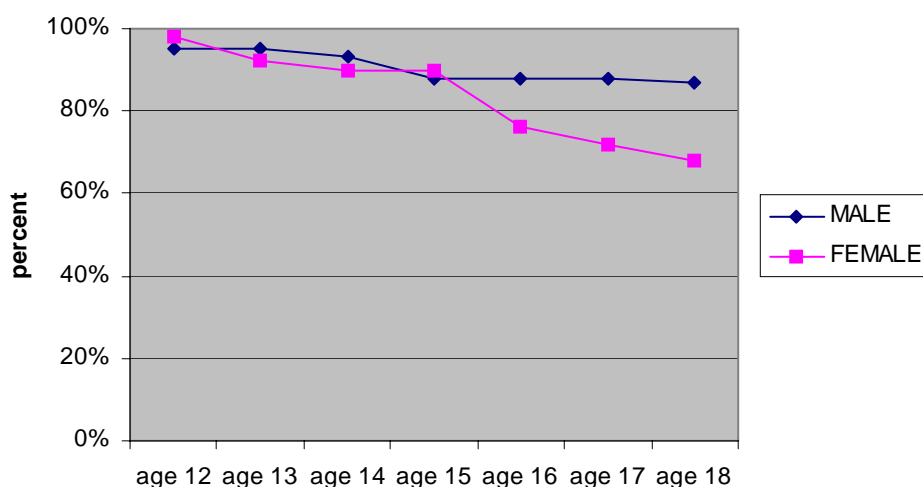
The focus groups yielded some interesting observations on the reasons why females are less involved in sport than males. The most common suggestions were that *'girls are less competitive than boys'* and also that *'girls are afraid of getting hurt'*. Other suggested reasons such as *'girls are more into their looks'*, *'girls don't like getting dirty'*, *'boys get more encouragement to play sport'*, *'there are more sports for boys'* and from one young woman the suggestion that *'boys prefer to be out playing sport rather than doing their homework'* unfortunately the authors didn't probe to discern if she believed the converse to be true.

Sport and Age

Notwithstanding the large numbers who play sport, there is a decline in participation over the age-span with involvement falling from 96% of 12 year olds to 77% of 18 year olds. The drop is most evident in adolescent girls with a sharp decline in involvement in sport at around age fifteen to sixteen

Table 35: Sports' Participation by Age and Gender

AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
12	95% (n= 95)	98% (n= 93)	96% (n=188)
13	95% (n=196)	92% (n=200)	93% (n=396)
14	93% (n=215)	90% (n=257)	92% (n=472)
15	88% (n=184)	90% (n=149)	89% (n=334)
16	88% (n=176)	76% (n=133)	82% (n=309)
17	88% (n=123)	72% (n=109)	80% (n=232)
18	87% (n= 33)	68% (n= 30)	77% (n=63)
TOTAL	91% (n=1022)	86% (n=971)	88% (n=1994)

Figure 19: Sports Involvement by Age and Gender

The table below illustrates the most popular sports for males and females by age group. Soccer is the most popular sport for males across almost all age groups. Soccer, along with Gaelic football and hurling completely dominate the top of the table for males. Swimming, basketball and Gaelic football all feature highly for females.

Table 36: Most Popular Sports by Age and Gender

		12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Male	1 st	Soccer 68%	Soccer 69%	Soccer 56%	Soccer 59%	Soccer 69%	Soccer 66%	Gaelic Football 73%
	2 nd	Gaelic Football 64%	Gaelic Football 67%	Gaelic Football 52%	Gaelic Football 38%	Gaelic Football 49%	Gaelic Football 58%	Soccer 70%
	3 rd	Hurling 39%	Hurling 29%	Hurling 28%	Hurling 26%	Hurling 27%	Hurling 25%	Hurling 30%
	4 th	Rugby 16%	Cycling 14%	Swimming 17%	Rugby 16%	Basketball 18%	Basketball 20%	Rugby 21%
	5 th	Basketball 14%	Basketball 13%	Cycling 15%	Basketball 16%	Rugby 13%	Swimming 14%	Basketball 12%
Female	1 st	Swimming 44%	Gaelic Football 41%	Basketball 49%	Basketball 43%	Gaelic Football 35%	Gaelic Football 36%	Basketball 47%
	2 nd	Basketball 41%	Basketball 41%	Gaelic Football 41%	Gaelic Football 35%	Basketball 35%	Swimming 33%	Gaelic Football 37%
	3 rd	Gaelic Football 34%	Soccer 34%	Swimming 35%	Soccer 32%	Swimming 30%	Basketball 29%	Swimming 37%
	4 th	Soccer 33%	Swimming 33%	Soccer 31%	Swimming 31%	Soccer 23%	Soccer 17%	Camogie 23%
	5 th	Camogie 22%	Camogie 17%	Camogie 24%	Hockey 29%	Camogie 18%	Camogie 16%	Tennis 23%

Table 37: Comparison of Adolescent & Adult Most Popular Sports
(excl. walking)

	Adult male	12-18 male	Adult female	12-18 female
1 st	Golf 17%	Soccer 70%	Swimming 17%	Basketball 38%
2 nd	Soccer 13%	Gaelic Football 56%	Aerobics/ keep fit 10%	Gaelic Football 36%
3 rd	Swimming 12%	Hurling 30%	Cycling 3%	Swimming 33%
4 th	Gaelic football 8%	Basketball 15%	Golf 3%	Soccer 27%
5 th	Billiards/ snooker 6%	Swimming 14%	Tennis 3%	Camogie 19%

Adult data from Fahey et al (2004)

The issue of why girls and young women drop out of sport was discussed in the two all-female focus groups. One of the Youthreach groups (4 young women aged 15-16) had all ceased participation in sport at about age 13. The reasons proffered were simply that they had '*got sick of sport*' and that they had '*got into other things*' such as discos and hanging around.

The secondary school girls and young women (mean age 15) were more talkative on the issue of sport cessation. They cited '*starting to smoke and drink*', '*people you hang out with don't like sport and that has an influence on you*', '*you start college and then you're too busy*' and '*just growing out of it*' as reasons why girls and young women drop out of sport.

Respondents were asked to give the frequency of their involvement in the activity on a scale of 'everyday', 'most days', 'weekly', 'less often' and 'never'. The tables below show the frequencies (in percentages) of male and female involvement in the four most popular sports. Over two-thirds (70%) of males who participate in soccer and Gaelic football do so everyday or most days, compared to just over a third (38%) of females.

Even in sports that are more popular with females the frequency of male participation is higher. In basketball 45% of males participate everyday or most days compared to only 26% of females.

Figure 20: Frequency of Participation in Soccer by Gender

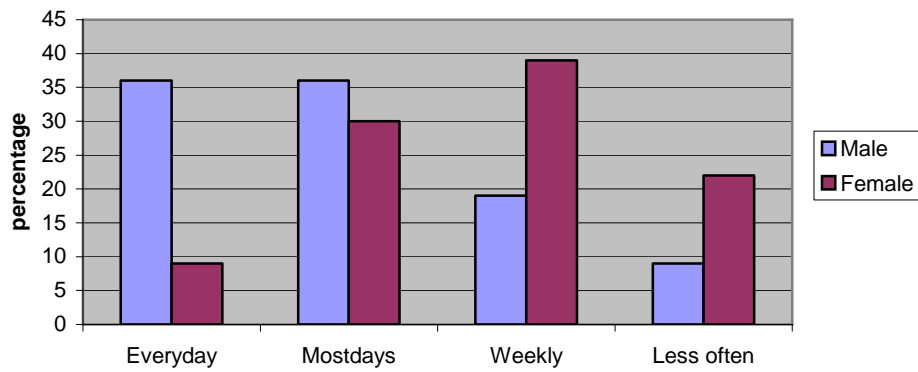


Figure 21: Frequency of Participation in Gaelic football by Gender

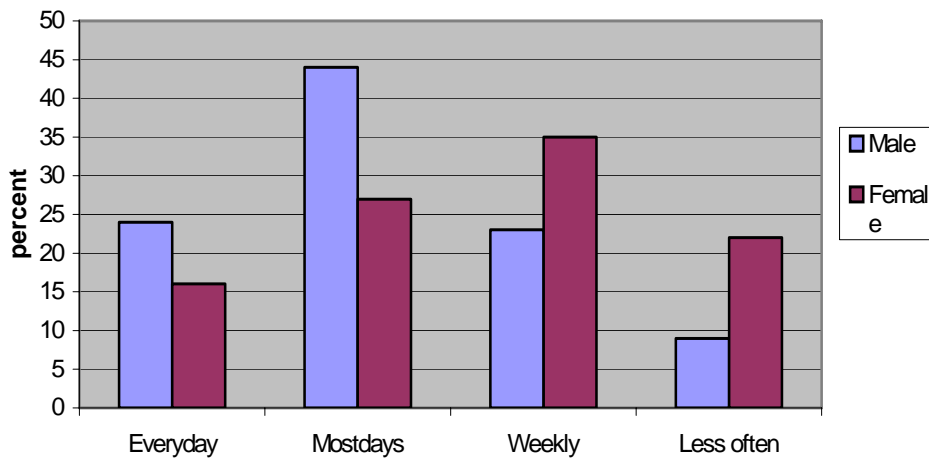
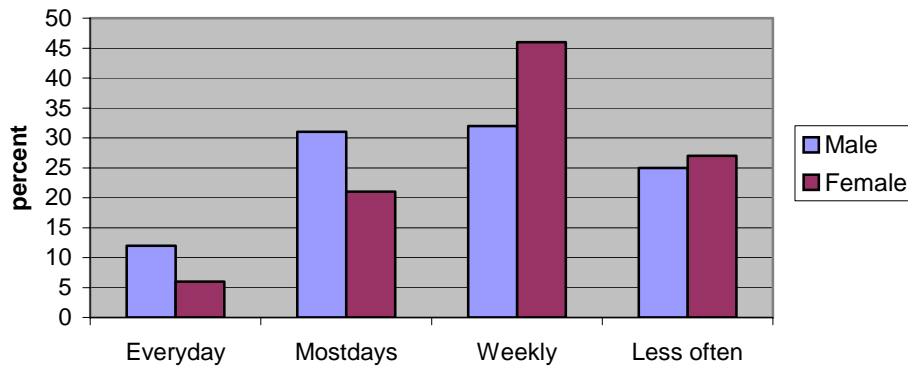
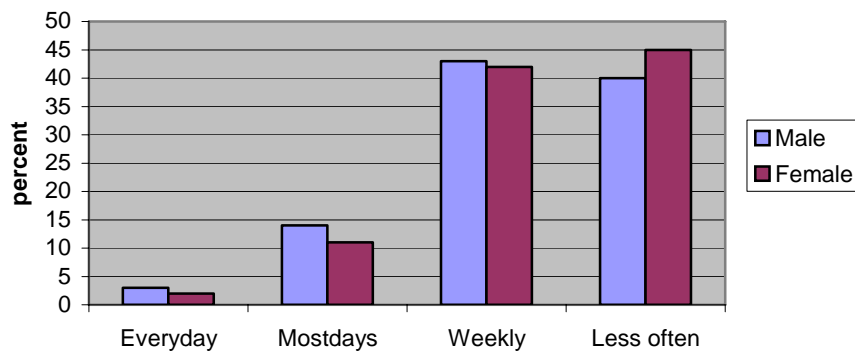


Figure 22: Frequency of Participation in Basketball by Gender**Figure 23: Frequency of Participation in Swimming by Gender**

Participation rates in swimming reflect the fact that it is difficult to casually engage in this activity. For most individuals swimming involves travelling some distance from school or home and payment to use the facility, whereas soccer, Gaelic football and basketball can be engaged in casually in the schoolyard, in open space or on the street. Over three-quarters (80%) of those who participate in swimming do so weekly or less often than that, this is true for both males and females.

In terms of frequency of participation the average (median and mode) for female participation in sport is 'weekly'. While for boys it is an average (median and mode) of most days for their first two sports and weekly for their third sport (where a third was mentioned).

There is also a difference in frequency of participation in sport by age, 12 and 13 year olds play their number one sport most days while 16, 17 and 18 year olds play on average once a week.

Figure 24: Female Participation in Sport

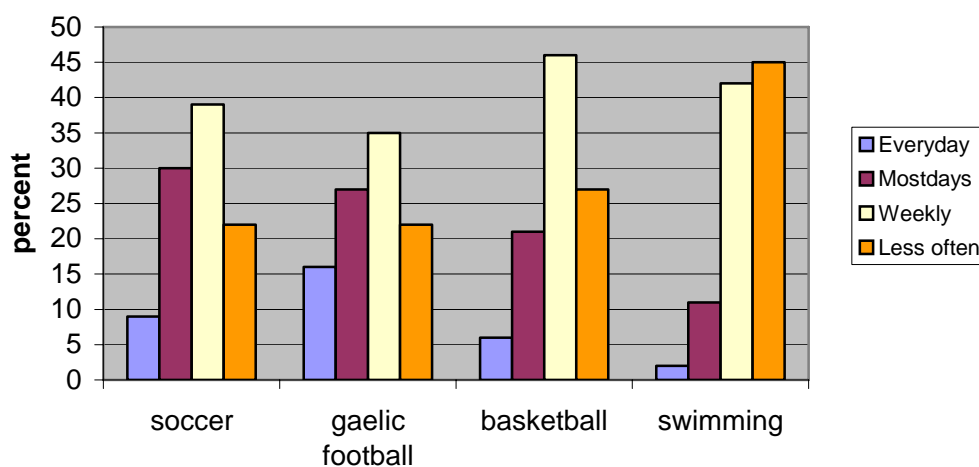


Figure 25: Male Participation in Sport

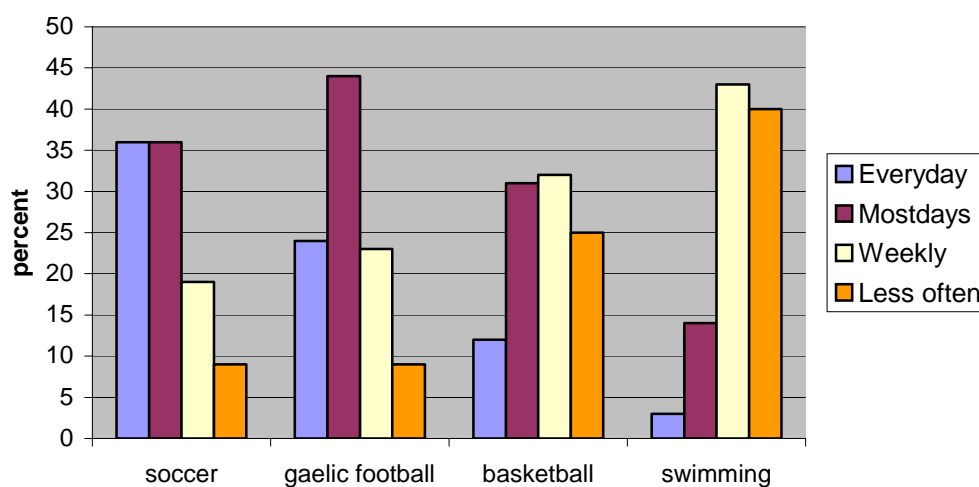
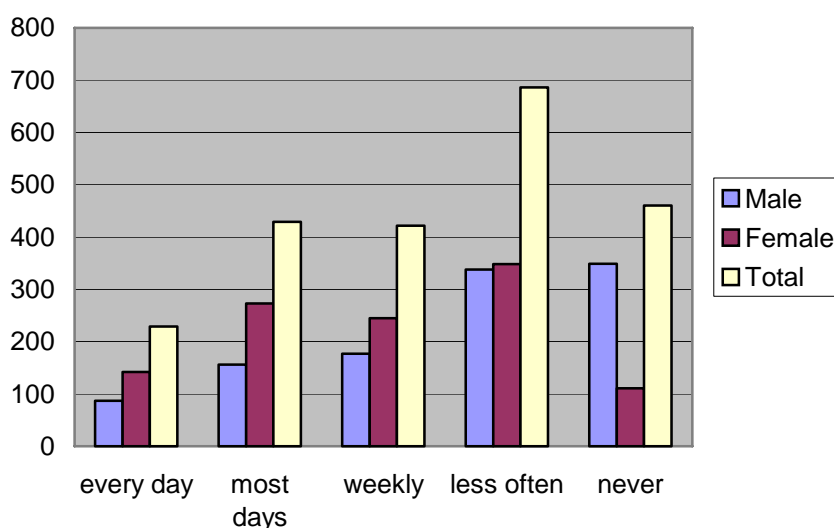


Table 38: Walking for Leisure

		12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total
Male	every day	5	17	16	15	14	15	5	87
	most days	9	30	33	25	21	32	6	156
	weekly	18	39	42	33	25	16	4	177
	less often	39	61	67	63	61	39	8	338
	never	25	55	67	73	78	37	14	349
Total		96	202	225	209	199	139	37	1107
Female	every day	17	32	28	21	22	15	7	142
	most days	24	52	67	39	47	34	11	273
	weekly	21	42	64	38	34	39	7	245
	less often	25	64	91	48	54	53	14	348
	never	6	24	31	18	17	11	4	111
Total		93	214	281	164	174	151	43	1120

For the purposes of this study 'walk for leisure' was defined as taking a walk for pleasure rather than by necessity. Walking for leisure does not appear to be a popular leisure time activity with young people. Of the sample, nearly a third of males (32%; n=349) but only 10% of females (n=111) report that they *never* walk for leisure. A further 31% of both males and females say they walk for leisure less often than once per week. At the other extreme only 8% of males (n=87) and 13% of females (n=142) walk for leisure every day. In contrast, walking is by far the most popular leisure time physical activity in the Irish adult population (Fahey et al, 2004), 59% of Irish men and 68% of women report that they walk for leisure.

Figure 26: 'Walking for Leisure' by Gender

Discussion

Our study highlights the importance of sport in the lives of Irish adolescents with an over-whelming 88% of the sample reporting participation in at least one sport. Evidence from other countries suggests that this high involvement by adolescents in sport is international (Sport England, 2003; SPARC, 2005; Zeijl et al, 2002, Sweeting & West, 2000).

It should be noted though that this study did not differentiate between competitive sports involvement and recreational involvement. An Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) study on young people and sport, due for publication later this year, is likely to provide greater clarity on the nature of Irish adolescent sports participation.

Sport, Physical Activity and Health

The drop off in sports participation evident in this study and the huge decline in sport and physical activity participation from adolescence to adulthood (Fahey et al., 2004; Health Promotion Unit, 2002) suggests that adherence to physical activity cannot be easily predicted and is a complex, multi-variant issue. A Dutch study of 2628 pairs of twins concluded that environmental factors shared by family members determine sports participation in young adolescence but cease to be of importance in adulthood, when individual differences in sports participation are largely due to genetic variation (Stubbe, et al., 2005). Such individual differences may include intrinsic motivation level, personal interests and interpersonal factors (Caldwell et al., 2004). Intrinsic motivation is explored later in the report.

There would appear to be a need for targeted physical activity promotion during adolescence and, in particular, in the transition from adolescence to early adulthood. Given the decline in participation in team sports during this transitional period, we would support the recommendations of Aaron and colleagues (2002) that more emphasis be placed on providing opportunities for adolescents to develop the skills necessary to participate in individual sports. Individual sports are more likely to be maintained into adulthood (Fahey et al., 2004).

Numbers Playing Sport

A large majority, 88% of the young people in this study report involvement in at least one sport. Connor, in a study of similar scope but limited geographically to the adolescent population of Waterford city, found sports participation rates of 73% (2003).

The very high response rate in our study in relation to sport might be explained by the fact that the respondents were not asked to differentiate between recreational participation and competitive participation in sport. The instruction to the respondents was to list any sports that they were involved in during leisure time. Leisure time was broadly defined as time outside of school time, particularly evenings, weekends and holidays.

International comparison shows similarly high participation levels to those found in our study. Recent statistics from New Zealand show participation rates of 93% for 13-15 year olds dropping to 80% for 16-17 year olds (SPARC, 2005). In a research study

published by Sport England (2003) participation in sport (excluding walking) outside of school physical education classes was 97% amongst 11-16 year olds. In the Netherlands 89% of 6 to 18 year olds play sport (Zeijl et al, 2002). In Scotland 95% of fifteen year-old boys take part in sport in contrast to 82% of girls (Sweeting & West, 2000).

The numbers participating in individual sports are significantly lower than for team sports. In total sport was cited 4,871 times in our study, the ratio of team to individual sports is almost exactly 2:1 (3,268 team sports; 1,603 individual sports). This is in line with other sports research (Connor, 2003; Aaron, et al, 2002; Sport England 2003) and is in contrast with the sporting patterns of Irish adults (Fahey et al, 2004).

Some of the large governing bodies of sport were contacted in an effort to quantify adolescent involvement in organised, competitive sport. This quantification is practically impossible however given the huge numbers involved and the differences in methods of registering membership across the governing bodies. The GAA in 2004 had 8,891 and 5,431 registered underage teams for Gaelic football and hurling respectively. Taking even a conservative average of 18 players per team this equates to 257,796 individuals involved in Gaelic games. Even allowing for the fact that many young people play on more than one team, these numbers are impressive (GAA, 2005). The IRFU website reports a total of 2,134 mini/youth and schools' teams for the 2003-2004 season. Using the same average number of 18 per team this equates to 38,412 young people registered as rugby players (IRFU, 2005). The schools division of Basketball Ireland report that approximately 40,000 children and young people play basketball (Basketball Ireland, 2005). Finally, Swim Ireland have 5,250 registered underage swimmers (Swim Ireland, 2005).

Gender and Sport

Hendry and colleagues (1993, p66) noted that '*young women are less likely than young men to be competitors and are more likely either to play sport for fun or not at all*'. Our study found a significant difference between male (91%) and female (86%) involvement in sport. Sport England (2003) found that 98% of males and 97% of females in the 7-17 age bracket participate in at least one sport outside of school lessons. Statistics from New Zealand show that 93% of males and 92% of females aged 5-17 take part in at least one sport (SPARC, 2005).

The top three most popular sports for males, soccer, Gaelic football and hurling, are the same in our study as in Connor's (2003) study of adolescents in Waterford city. Basketball (34%) and swimming (23%) are the top two reported sports for females in the Waterford study. Interestingly Gaelic football, the second most popular sport for females in our study (at 36%), does not even feature in the top ten sports for females in the Waterford study (5%). This may be explained by the fact that the Waterford study included predominantly urban respondents from a limited geographical area or it may reflect an increase in the popularity of Gaelic football amongst females in the seven years since the data for the Waterford study was collected in 1997.

Females are significantly more likely to participate in individual sports than males. In the international context, Aaron and colleagues (2002) in a longitudinal study of adolescents (n=782) in Pittsburgh, USA found that females were more likely to report individual activities, while males were more likely to report team sports.

Sport England report that males (94%) are more likely to participate in team sports than females (88%) and less likely to participate in swimming (male 77%; female 83%) and dance and ice-skating (male 25%; female 52%) (Sport England, 2003).

In addition, the predominance of individual and non-competitive sports in adult participation in Ireland (Fahey et al, 2004) could be further used as an argument for encouraging young people to participate in more individual and recreational activities.

In terms of frequency of participation the average (median and mode) female participation in sport is 'weekly'. While for males it is an average (median and mode) of 'most days' for their first two sports and 'weekly' for their third sport (where a third was mentioned). These results are in line with, although not directly comparable to other research into gender differences in participation rates in adolescent sport (Connor, 2003; Aaron et al, 2002; Hendry, et al., 1993). The National Health and Lifestyle Surveys 1998 and 2002 asked children (age 9-17) to recall the frequency with which they exercised, outside of school, so much that they got out of breath or sweated. Overall, figures for 1998 show 53% of children exercising four or more times per week, this figure drops to 48% in 2002, a notable 5% drop in just 4 years. In 1998, 5% of boys and 7% of girls were exercising less often than once per week. These figures have risen to 8% of boys and 14% of girls by 2002 (Health Promotion Unit 1998, 2002).

Age and Sport

There is a decline in sports participation across the age span of adolescence. In our study participation in sport declined from 96% at age twelve to 80% at age seventeen and 77% at eighteen. The Young People's Leisure and Lifestyle Project (Hendry et al., 1993) in the United Kingdom found somewhat comparable results with 96% of males and 87% of females aged 13-14 involved weekly in sport; 89% and 77% (respectively) at age 15-16 and 77% and 52% at age 17-18. In Scotland, a longitudinal study showed a decline in participation in all sports, except running/jogging between the ages of 13 and 15 years (Sweeting & West, 2000)

The most striking drop-off in sports involvement occurs for females between the ages of fifteen and sixteen. In our study there is a massive 14% drop-off between fifteen and sixteen year olds. This trend for young women to drop out of sports participation in the middle adolescent years is international and has been well documented. In Ireland recent research indicates a decline in exercise participation across the age span. In 1998 the number of adolescents partaking in moderate exercise at least four times per week was 63% of 10-11 year olds decreasing to 40% of 15-17 year olds. In 2002 these figures had decreased to 57% and 35% respectively. The decrease in participation is present for both genders but is particularly noticeable for girls, dropping from 55% of 10-11 year olds to 25% of 15-17 year olds in the 2002 survey (Health Promotion Unit 1998 & 2002). In Scotland only 2.6% of 11 year olds report low involvement in sport or exercise outside of school, this figure rises to 10% for 15 year olds. Furthermore this 'low sports group' were four times more likely to be girls than boys (West & Sweeting, 2002).

There is a difference in frequency of participation in sport by age. Twelve and thirteen year olds play their number one sport 'most days' while 16, 17 and 18 year olds play on average once a week. Again, these results are similar to the data from other research (Aaron et al, 2002).

The public health implications of this decline in adolescent involvement in physical activity will be enormous. As highlighted earlier an individual's risk for all causes of mortality and in particular for premature death and/or morbidity from non-communicable diseases is significantly increased by having a sedentary lifestyle.

CHAPTER 7: BARRIERS AND SUPPORTS

Didier is a 15 year old boy who was born in Sierra Leone. He moved to Dublin with his family four years ago and for the first year or so had difficulty adjusting to his new life. Didier's difficulties adjusting were compounded by his deafness. At the moment he wears a hearing aid but is on a waiting list for a cochlear implant. He enjoys playing soccer with his friends but he hasn't been able to join a competitive team due to his impairment. Along with many others of his deaf friends, Didier is a Scout. He enjoys the weekly meetings and has gathered quite a few badges. Didier also enjoys playing computer games and watching sport on the television.

Key Findings

Intrapersonal Barriers and Supports

- 59% enjoy joining new clubs and groups
- 76% enjoy competition
- Males (85%) are significantly more likely than females (67%) to enjoy competition
- 71% of females in single sex schools enjoy competition as compared to 65% of females in co-educational settings
- 77% of males are happy with the way they look as compared to only 53% of females
- There is a strong link between shyness and low leisure motivation

Interpersonal Barriers and Supports

- 93% like hanging out with their friends in their free time
- Females and older adolescents are more likely to enjoy mixed-sex leisure activities
- Parental support for the young peoples leisure time choices is high, 86% disagree with the statement '*My parents don't allow me to do activities that I would like to do*'
- 61% agree that their family encourages them to join new clubs and groups. This support declines with age and socio-economic status.
- Just under half, 48% prefer activities where there is an instructor or leader

Structural Barriers and Supports

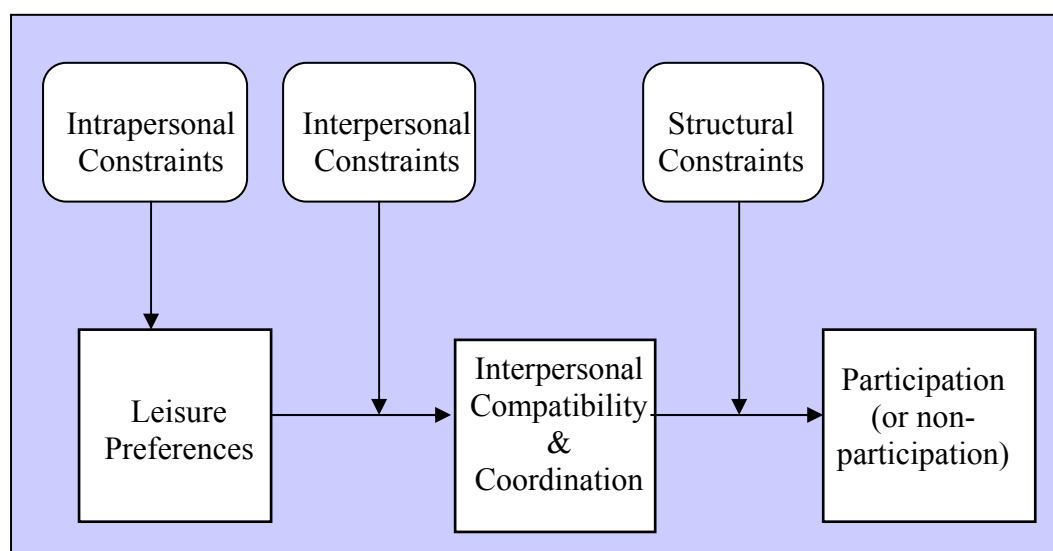
- 15% don't have the money to join clubs and activities, those in the older age groups and the lower socio-economic groups are more likely to experience financial barriers to participation
- Time as a barrier to participation in leisure activities increases dramatically with age from 31% for 12 year olds to 71% for eighteen year olds
- 43.2% of females agree that most of their free time is spent doing homework and studying as compared to only 29.3% of males
- Older adolescents and those in rural areas are more likely to experience difficulties with transport

- 15% of young people do not feel safe going to and from activities in the evening, this sub-group are most likely to be female and urban dwellers
- 59% believe that there is very little leisure provision for adolescents in their locality, rural dwellers are strongest in this belief
- 20% feel that the weather is a barrier to their participation in outdoor activities

Introduction

This study attempts to provide insight into not only what Irish young people do in their leisure time, but also to consider what are the opportunities, barriers and supports that they experience with regard to leisure time. In order to begin to examine barriers and supports to leisure time use it is important to build an organising structure within which it will be possible to examine them. Raymore proposes that *‘in order to fully understand leisure involvement we need to understand both facilitators and constraints, and how they work together to produce participation and non-participation’* (2002, p37). Buckworth and Dishman (2002) in a paper on physical activity, highlight the fact that independent variables interact dynamically to influence behaviour and that this interaction between variables changes over time in addition to changes in type and strength of influence.

Crawford, Jackson and Godbey (1991) propose that three types of constraints on leisure exist; intrapersonal, interpersonal and structural (defined below). The research tool for our study takes cognisance of these three types of constraint on leisure and attempts to measure aspects of each one independently and ecologically. The Crawford, Jackson and Godbey (1991) model of leisure constraints outlines a hierarchy of constraints beginning with those that affect preferences and leading to those that affect participation (or non-participation).



Ref: Crawford et al. (1991, p312)

Jackson and Rucks (1995) warn against simplistic assumptions that an identified constraint on leisure participation will result in non-participation. They propose and confirm that some people *‘negotiate through constraints’* and succeed in initiating or continuing leisure participation.

Raymore and colleagues (1993) suggest that any research into barriers to leisure must study all three categories concurrently if the depiction of barriers is to be accurate.

Intrapersonal Constraints

Intrapersonal constraints are proposed to be those individual characteristics, traits and beliefs that enable or promote the formation of leisure preferences and that encourage or enhance participation in leisure (Crawford et al., 1991). In our study six statements in Section 3 relate to intrapersonal barriers and supports to leisure participation.

If cognisance of the existence of intrapersonal constraints is taken by policy makers, community leaders and leisure activity providers, then interventions designed to enable adolescents to overcome this first set of barriers may be planned for and delivered. If no cognisance is taken of intrapersonal barriers to participation then the sub-group of the population who cannot negotiate through them, may, without intervention fall into the category of non-participants.

Table 39: Intrapersonal Barriers and Supports to Leisure Participation

<i>Statements that assess intrapersonal barriers and supports</i>
I enjoy joining new clubs and groups
I enjoy competition
I only do activities that I'm good at
I am happy with the way I look
I am a shy person
I would only join a new club or activity if my friends were joining too

The following section presents the findings from Section 3 of the questionnaire on intrapersonal barriers.

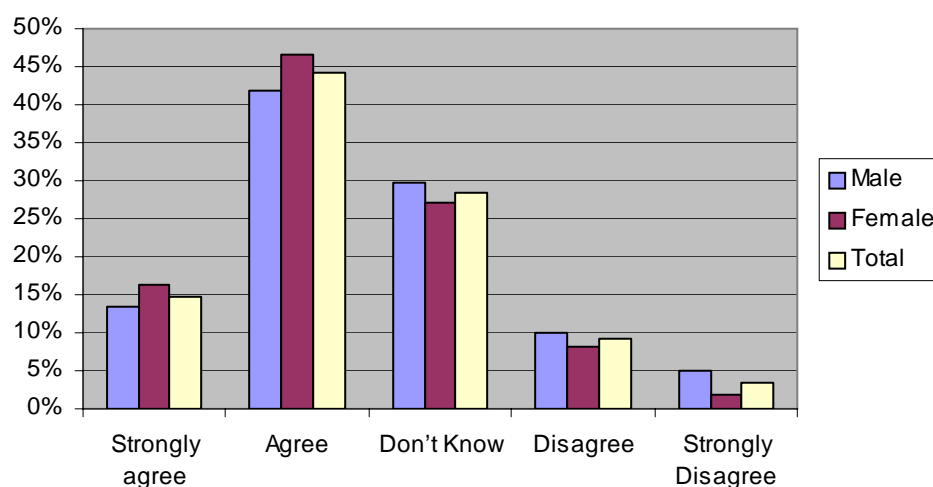
Enjoyment

Enjoyment has been identified as a key motivator to positive leisure time use for all populations (Shinew et al, 1997; Dishman et al , 1988; Biddle and Muttrie, 2001) and specifically for young people (National Heart Alliance, 2001; Department of Victorian Communities, 2003; Christchurch City Council, 2001). The young people in our sample were asked to respond to the statement '*I enjoy joining new clubs and groups*'. Over half (59%; n=1,318) of the sample report that they enjoy joining new clubs and groups. Interestingly, females (62.8%; n=705) are significantly more likely to enjoy joining new clubs and groups than males (55.1%; n=613; Wilcoxon = 1193317, Z= 4.216, p≤0.001).

Table 40: Enjoy Joining New Clubs by Gender

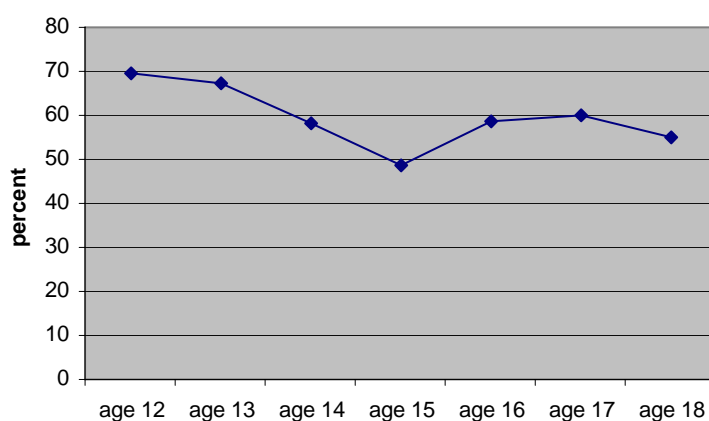
	Male	Female	Total
Strongly agree	13.3%	16.3%	14.8%
Agree	41.8%	46.5%	44.2%
Don't Know	29.8%	27.2%	28.5%
Disagree	10.0%	8.1%	9.1%
Strongly Disagree	5.1%	1.9%	3.5%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Figure 27: Enjoy Joining New Clubs by Gender



Those in the younger age groups are more likely to enjoy joining new clubs and groups than those in late adolescence. Over two-thirds (68%; n=417) of twelve and thirteen year olds enjoy joining new clubs and groups as compared to over half (57%; n=379) of sixteen and seventeen year olds. This supports the model of adolescent leisure participation put forward by Hendry and colleagues (1993) that during adolescence there is a transition from adult-organised clubs and activities in the younger years through casual leisure pursuits in the middle years to commercially organised leisure in late adolescence.

Figure 28: Enjoy Joining New Clubs by Age



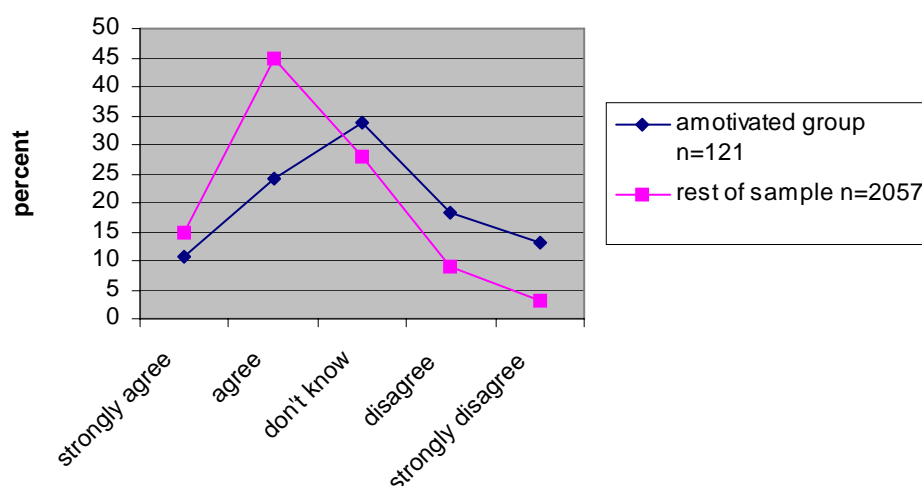
Young people from families in the higher socio-economic groups show a slightly higher level of enjoyment in joining new clubs and groups. Just under two-thirds (63.9%; n=330) of young people from professional, managerial and technical backgrounds enjoy joining new clubs and groups as compared with over half (58.6%; n=107) of those from unskilled or welfare backgrounds.

Table 41: Enjoy Joining New Clubs by Parental Occupation

Socio-economic Group	Professional/ Managerial & Technical (n=532)	Unskilled and Welfare (n=191)
Strongly agree	17.3%	13.6%
Agree	46.6%	45.0%
Don't know	26.1%	30.9%
Disagree	8.8%	10.5%
Strongly disagree	3.0%	2.6%

When the group who are classified as low in leisure motivation (using the Free Time Motivation Scale amotivation dimension) are compared with the rest of the sample a clear difference emerges. Only one third (34.7%; n=42) of the young people low in leisure motivation report enjoying joining new clubs and groups compared to 60% (n=1,237) of the rest of the sample. This illustrates the link here between low leisure motivation and an inability to negotiate intrapersonal barriers.

Figure 29: Enjoy Joining New Clubs



Competition

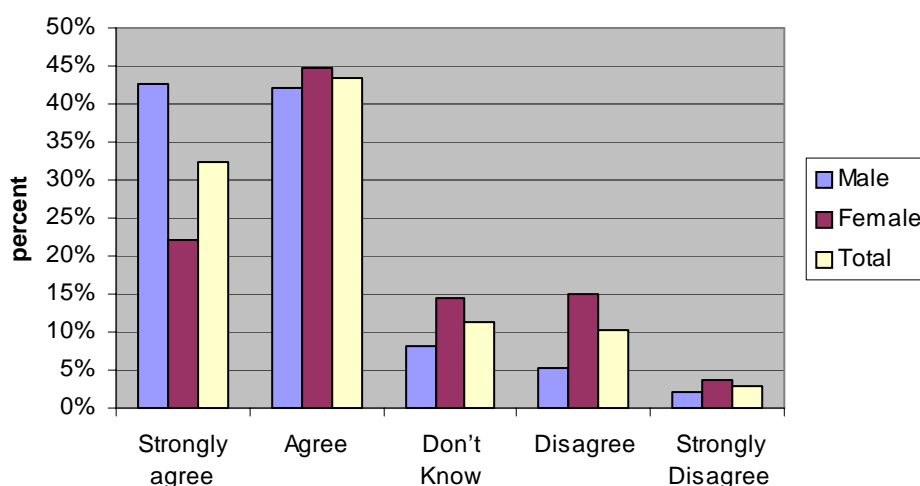
Competition is often perceived as both a motivator and a barrier depending on the individual's personality profile. Many studies recommend minimising the importance of winning in order to maximise enjoyment and finding a balance between intense competition and an enjoyable amount of competition (National Heart Alliance, 2001; Department of Victorian Communities, 2003; Christchurch City Council, 2001).

Table 42: Enjoy Competition by Gender

	Male	Female	Total
Strongly Agree	42.6%	22.2%	32.4%
Agree	42.0%	44.7%	43.4%
Don't Know	8.2%	14.5%	11.3%
Disagree	5.2%	15.1%	10.2%
Strongly Disagree	2.0%	3.6%	2.8%

In our study three-quarters of the sample (75.8%; n=1,692) enjoy competition. Males (43%; n=474) are twice as likely as females (22%; n=249) to strongly agree with the statement and this difference is significant (Wilcoxon = 1070360, Z= 12.113, p< 0.001). Females (19%; n=209) are almost three times more likely to disagree with the statement than males (7%; n=80). This gender difference in the enjoyment of competition is significant (Wilcoxon 1070360.0, z=12.113, p.<001). Type of school attended makes no difference to males' enjoyment of competition. For females however, there is a significant difference between the responses of those who attend co-educational schools vis-à-vis those who attend all-female schools. 71.4% (n=227) of females in single-sex education enjoy competition as compared to only 65.1% (n=523) of girls in co-educational settings.

Figure 30: Enjoyment of Competition by Gender

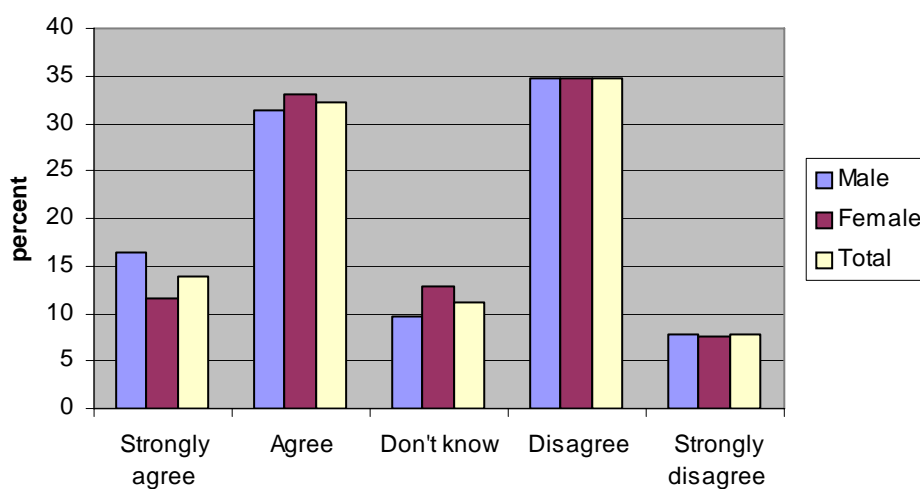


Enjoyment of competition does not change significantly with age.

Self-Confidence

Involvement in leisure time activities is linked to self-confidence and self-efficacy (Gilligan, 2000; Marsh 1992; Barber et al., 1999). The sample was asked to respond to the statement *'I only do activities that I'm good at'*. There is very little gender difference in the responses to this statement. Respondents, both male and female are almost equally likely to agree (46.2%; n= 1037) as to disagree (42.5%; n=953) with the statement.

Figure 31: 'I only do activities that I'm good at' by Gender

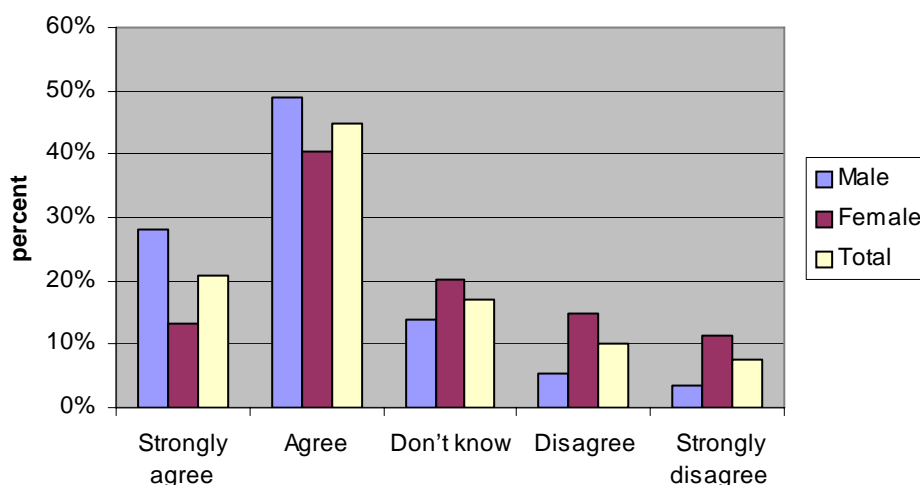


Body Image

The young people in the sample were asked to respond to the statement *'I am happy with the way I look'*. Over 65% of the sample are happy with the way they look, however significant gender differences are evident in the responses, over three-quarters (77.3%; n= 860) of the males are happy with the way they look while only over half (53.5%; n=600) of the females are happy with their looks (Wilcoxon = 1052779, Z= 4.216, p<0.001).

Table 43: 'I'm happy with the way I look' by Gender

	Male	Female	Total
Strongly agree	28.2%	13.2%	20.7%
Agree	49.1%	40.3%	44.7%
Don't know	13.8%	20.2%	17.0%
Disagree	5.5%	14.8%	10.2%
Strongly disagree	3.4%	11.5%	7.5%

Figure 32: 'I'm happy with the way I look' by Gender

This gender difference with regard to body image is statistically significant. Males are significantly more likely than females to be happy with the way they look (Wilcoxon 1052779, $z = 13.239$, $p \leq 0.001$). A study of 12-16 year olds found that females are more likely to be dissatisfied with their bodies and are also influenced to a greater degree by the media with respect to their appearance (Tiggerman, 2001). A study of over 2,000 Irish 15-19 year olds in 1991 found similar gender differences with regard to body image (Jones et al., 1991). In the study by Jones and colleagues, 52.5% of the females and 83% of the males were happy with their weight and shape. Although direct comparison is not possible, the results from our study suggest that while female body image has remained constant there has been a 6% decrease in male body image, in this age group, since 1991.

Research has also shown that body image and ideal body size can act as strong motivators for girls and young women to exercise, in particular in late adolescence (Ingledeu & Sullivan, 2002; Tiggerman, 2001). Other research has found negative body image to be a recreation barrier for females (Hendry, et al., 1988). A North Western Health Board study highlights the complexity of this issue, particularly in relation to girls and young women; *'You need confidence to go out and do activity, so that you're not worried about what people are thinking of you and how you are going to look. You think to yourself 'I can't wear that until I lose some weight', but you won't lose it if you don't do any activity'* (North Western Health Board, 2004, p.14). Females with high levels of body dissatisfaction are more likely to exercise in private settings and are less likely to play team sports (Kowalski et al., 2000).

A strange finding is that females who live in cities are more likely to have a positive body image than females from towns, villages or rural areas. 60.3% (n=129) of females who live in cities are happy with the way they look as compared to 51.9% (n=245) of females who live in the countryside. Reasons for this are unclear.

Figure 33: Female Body Image by Home Place

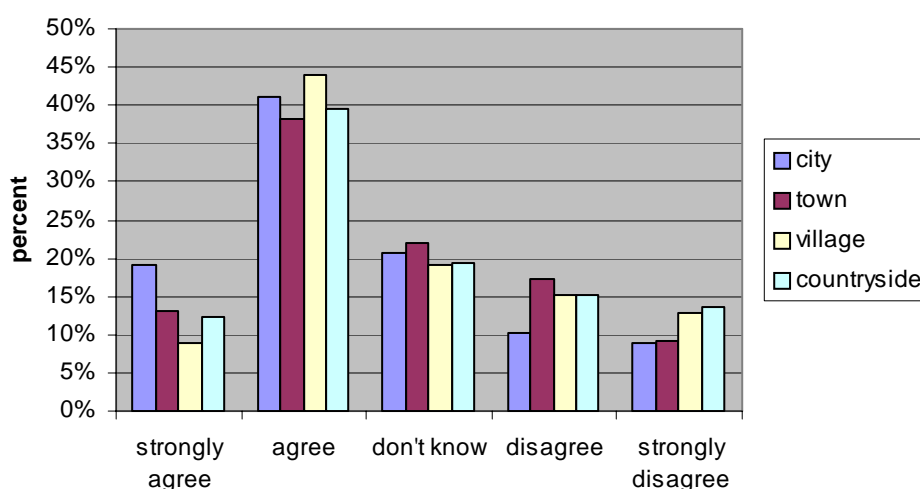


Table 44: 'I'm happy with the way I look' by Age and Gender

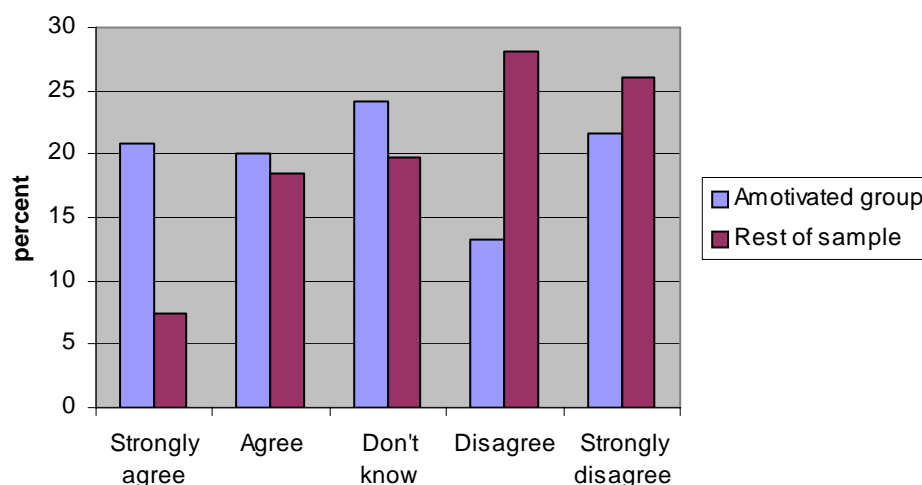
	12 year old Males	12 year old Females	17 year old Males	17 year old Females
strongly agree	28.9%	22.1%	27.9%	10.7%
agree	49.5%	40.0%	57.1%	44.0%
don't know	14.4%	18.9%	7.9%	15.3%
disagree	4.1%	8.4%	4.3%	18.0%
strongly disagree	3.1%	10.5%	2.9%	12.0%

There is a positive change across the adolescent years in males' body image, 78.4% (n=76) of twelve year old males are happy with the way they look compared to 85% (n=119) of seventeen year olds. For females there is a negative trend with regard to body image, 62.1% (n=59) of twelve-year-old girls are happy with the way they look compared to only 54.7% (n=82) of seventeen year olds. Research with Scottish 11-16 year-olds showed low self esteem (Sweeting & West, 2000).

Shyness

The sample was asked to respond to the statement 'I am a shy person'. Just over one quarter (26.9%; n=601) of the sample agreed with the statement. There is almost no gender difference in the response to this statement. In our study interestingly, shyness increases with age. One fifth (21.4%; n=132) of twelve and thirteen year olds agree with the statement while 28.9% (n=191) of sixteen and seventeen year olds agree.

Figure 34: Shyness of Low Leisure Motivated Group (Amotivated) vis-à-vis the Rest of the Sample



There is an association between shyness and low levels of leisure motivation. The profile of the relatively small low leisure motivated group (n=121) with regard to shyness is quite different to that of the rest of the sample (n=2,011). 41% (n=49) of those low in leisure motivation describe themselves as shy while only 26% (n=524) of the rest of the sample consider themselves shy.

Friends

Respondents were asked to respond to the statement ‘*I would only join a new activity if my friends were joining too*’. Almost 20% (n=414) of respondents chose the response of ‘*don't know*’, an indication that the sample were unsure of what this statement meant or felt that ‘*it depended*’ on the situation. There was almost 50% (n=1,091) agreement with the statement while 33% (n=737) disagreed.

Interpersonal Constraints

Interpersonal barriers are the result of interpersonal interaction. For example, a person who cannot find a partner or group of friends to engage in a desired leisure activity with or someone who receives no familial/peer support for their leisure.

Figure 35: Interpersonal Barriers and Supports to Leisure Participation.

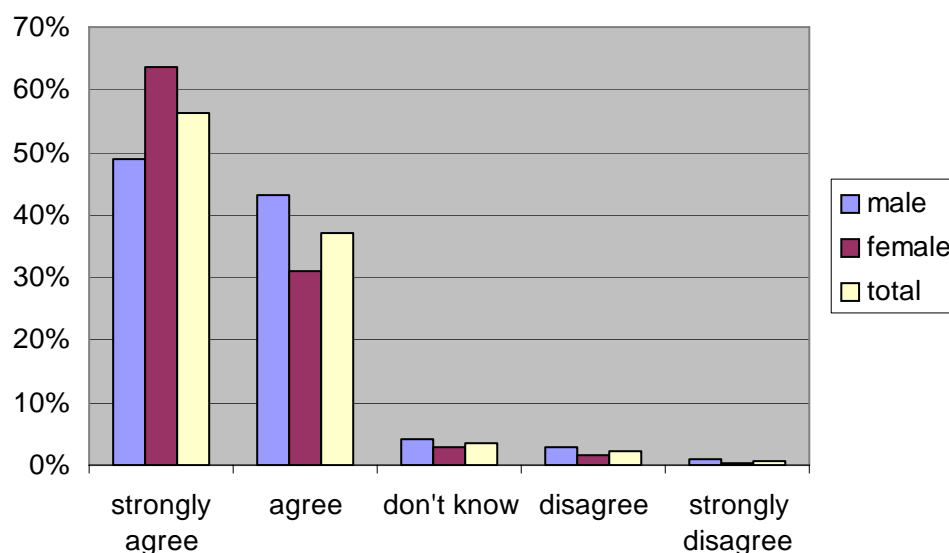
<i>Statements that assess interpersonal barriers and supports</i>
I like hanging out with my friends in my free time
My friends don't have the time, money, transport, etc. to do activities with me
I prefer activities with boys and girls together
My parents don't allow me to do activities that I would like to do
My family encourage me to join new clubs and groups
I like activities where there is an instructor/leader

The following section presents the findings from Section 3 of the questionnaire on interpersonal constraints

Hanging-Out with Friends

Not surprisingly, an overwhelming majority of the sample, 93.4% (n=2,086) like hanging out with friends in their free time. There is a gender difference in the level of agreement with the statement with females significantly more likely to strongly agree with the statement (63.7%; n=716) than males (48.8%; n=541). Less than 3% (n=65) of the sample disagree with the statement

Figure 36: Like Hanging-Out with Friends by Gender



There is no significant trend across the age span with regard to hanging out with friends, over 90% of respondents in all age groups state that they enjoy this.

Friends Lack of Resources

When asked to respond to the statement *'My friends don't have the time, money, transport, etc. to do activities with me'* 20% (n=440) of the sample responded that they did not know. Nearly a quarter, (23.4%; n=523) agreed with the statement while over half (57%; n=1276) disagreed. This suggests that while the majority of young people did not feel constrained in their leisure by their friends' lack of resources or capacity to undertake activities with them, nearly a quarter did experience this as a barrier to their own leisure. The high proportion who answered 'don't know' may experience it depending on particular circumstances or may have found the item difficult to interpret.

Single-Sex Vs Mixed Gender Activities

Respondents were also asked if they preferred activities with boys and girls together. Overall, more than two-thirds (70%; n=1,598) of the sample agree that they prefer activities with both sexes together. There are though some interesting gender differences in the response to this statement with 25% (n=280) of males unsure of their response. Less than 10% (n=221) prefer single sex activities. Overall, females are more likely to prefer activities with both sexes mixed.

Figure 37: 'I prefer activities with boys and girls together'

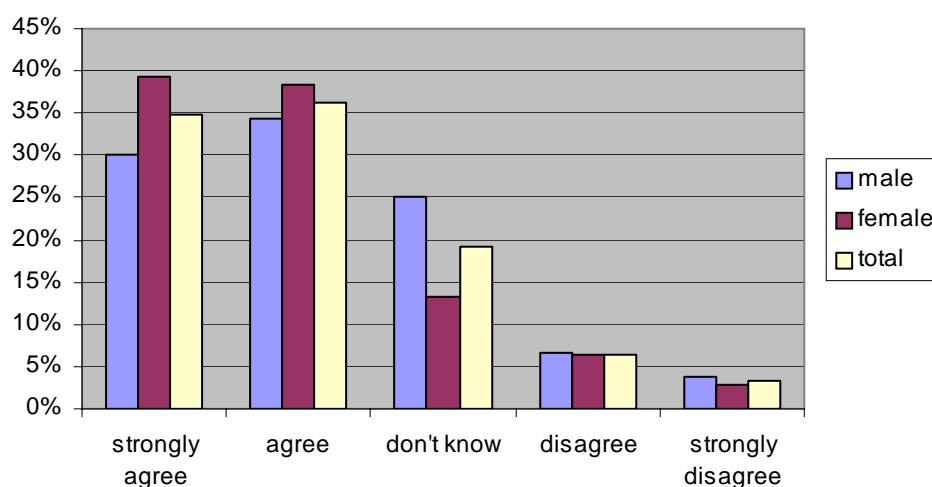
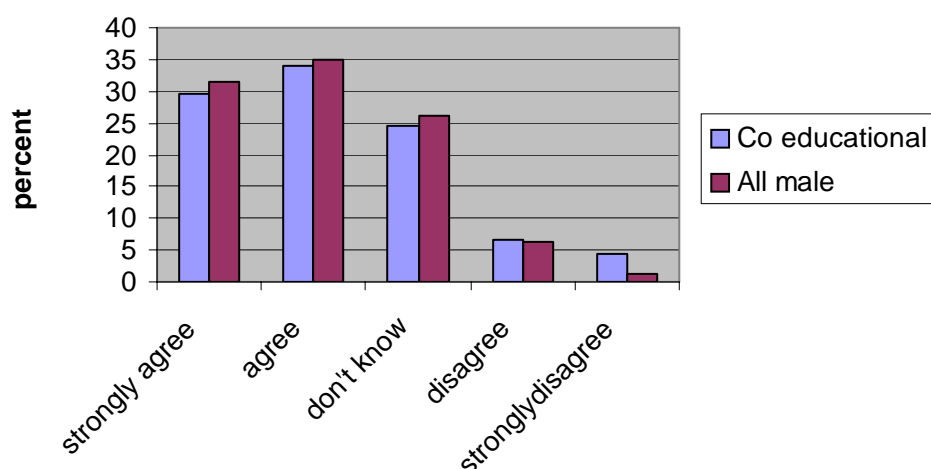


Figure 38: Preference of Mixed Gender Activities by Age and Gender

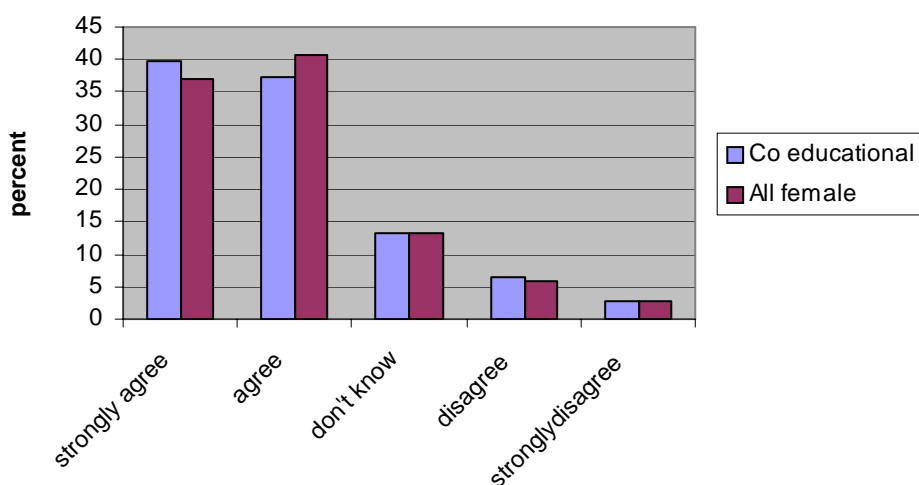
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Don't Know		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Male	Female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female
12/13 years	22.5% n=69	36.7% n=115	29.6% n=91	36.1% n=113	32.6% n=100	17.2% n=54	10.1% n=31	5.7% n=18	4.2% n=13	3.8% n=12
14/15 years	30.8% n=136	37.8% n=177	38.1% n=168	35.6% n=166	22.0% n=97	13.8% n=62	4.8% n=21	6.7% n=30	3.6% n=16	3.1% n=14
16/17/18 years	35.0% n=132	41.0% n=152	33.2% n=125	41.5% n=154	22.0% n=83	9.4% n=35	5.8% n=22	6.2% n=23	3.7% n=14	1.9% n=7

Figure 39: Preference of Mixed Gender Activities, Males by School Type



Slightly more males in all-boys schools than co-educational schools, are likely to prefer activities with boys and girls together (66.4%; n= 148 vs 63.5%; n=573).

Figure 40: Preference of Mixed Gender Activities, Females by School Type



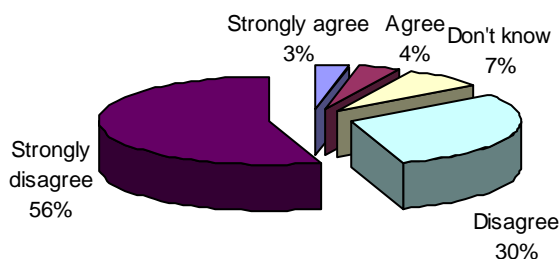
Over three-quarters (77%) of females in both single-sex and in co-educational settings prefer activities with boys and girls together. Those in co-educational settings are more likely to strongly agree with the statement (39.9%; n=325) than those in single-sex schools (37%; n=119) but, the difference is marginal.

Parental Permission

Parental support, in terms of permission, for the young peoples' leisure time choices is high suggesting that the vast majority do not experience barriers related to parental permission. Over three-quarters (86%; n=1,901) disagree with the statement that their parents don't allow them to do the leisure time activities that they would like to do.

There is no significant difference with regard to gender or age in the responses to this statement.

Figure 41: 'My parents don't allow me to do activities that I would like to do'



Family Encouragement

Looking in broader terms at familial encouragement, 61% (n=1356) agree that their family encourages them to join new clubs and groups. Research by others has highlighted the importance of the family and interestingly, the father in particular, for involvement in leisure (Lewko & Greendorfer, 1998). There is no significant gender difference in this, however an interesting trend emerges when familial support is cross-tabulated with age.

Figure 42: 'My family encourage me to join clubs and groups'

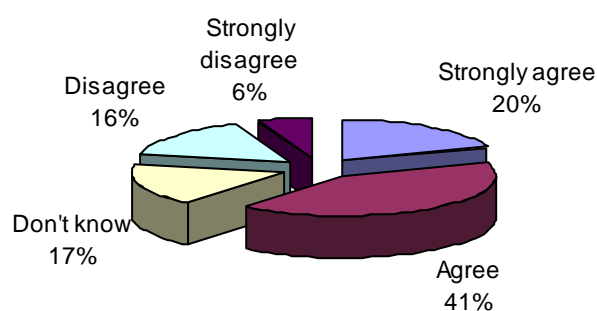
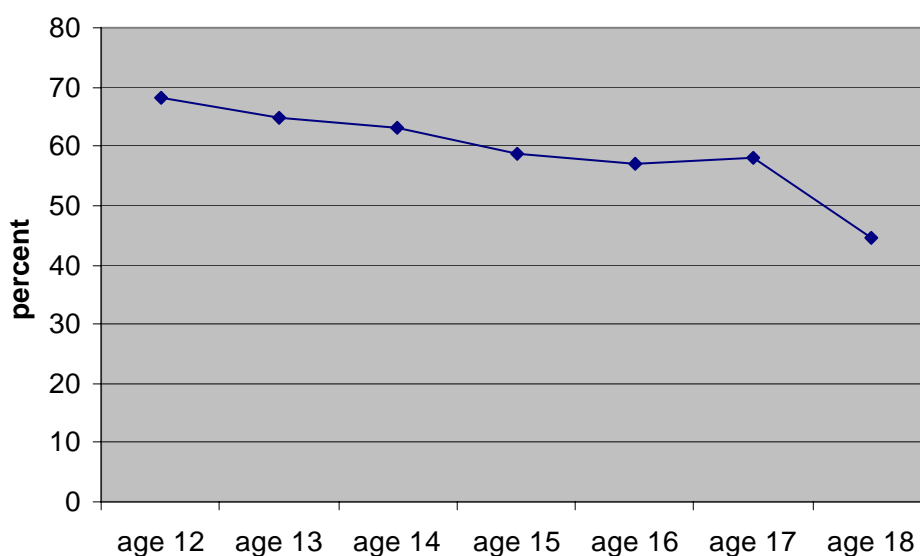


Figure 43: Family Support by Age



Over two-thirds (68%; n=131) of twelve year olds report that their family encourage them to join new clubs and groups while only 58% (n=168) of seventeen year olds report familial encouragement.

Interestingly, young people whose parental occupation is professional or managerial are more likely to report familial encouragement (66.9%; n=354) than those whose parents are unskilled or on welfare (57.8%; n=111).

Leaders and role models are very important in the lives of many adolescents. The young people in this study were asked to respond to the statement *'I like activities where there is a leader/instructor'*. Quite a large number, almost one third (32.1%; n=720) chose the 'don't know'. The reasons for such a high response may be neutrality to the statement; that is that the young person is not sure, has never really thought about it and/or wasn't given enough time to think about it. It could also indicate a 'middle ground response' based on some positive and some negative experiences with leaders. It could of course also be a statement of disinterest.

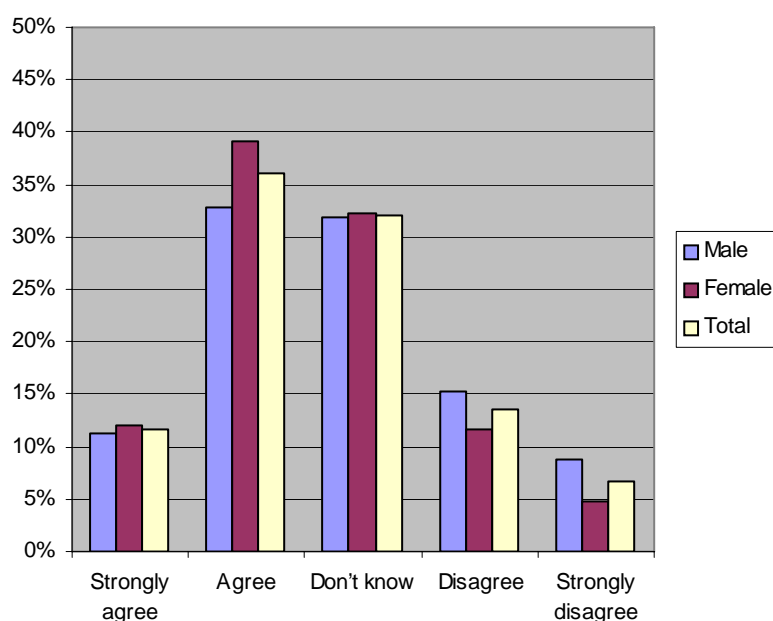
Activities with a Leader/Instructor

Notwithstanding the high neutral response to this statement over two-thirds of the sample did offer a definite opinion on leaders or instructors as motivators or barriers to leisure participation. Almost half of the respondents (47.8%; n= 1072) prefer activities where there is a leader or instructor. Females (51.3%; n=580) interestingly, are more likely to agree with the statement than males (44.1%; n=492).

Figure 44: Preference of Activities with an Instructor by Gender

	Male	Female	Total
Strongly agree	11.2%	12.1%	11.7%
Agree	32.9%	39.2%	36.1%
Don't know	31.8%	32.3%	32.1%
Disagree	15.3%	11.6%	13.5%
Strongly disagree	8.7%	4.8%	6.7%

Figure 45: Preference of Activities with an Instructor by Gender



There are subtle changes to the sample's views on activity leaders across the age-span. Sixteen and seventeen year olds are less likely to choose the 'don't know' response (30.5%; n=203) than twelve and thirteen year olds (34.8%; n=214).

Structural Barriers

Structural barriers are physical or material barriers such as finance, time, transport and weather.

Figure 46: Structural Barriers and Supports to Leisure Participation

Statements that assess structural barriers and supports

- I don't have the money to join**
- I don't have enough time to try new activities**
- Most of my free time is spent doing homework and studying**
- I have transport difficulties getting to and from places**
- I feel safe going to and from activities in the evenings**
- Where I live there is very little for people my age to do in leisure time**
- I don't know what activities there are where I live**
- Because of the weather I don't like outdoor activities**

Financial Barriers

Respondents were asked for their response to the statement '*I don't have the money to join*'. Notwithstanding the broad socio-economic spread of the sample there seems to be little evidence of money acting as a barrier to participation in leisure time activities. Well over two-thirds (70%; n=1,614) of respondents disagreed with the statement while only 15% (n=344) felt that money was a constraint. There is no significant difference between males and females.

Table 45: Money as a Barrier by Gender

	Male	Female	Total
Strongly agree	5.9%	5.9%	5.9%
Agree	8.0%	11%	9.5%
Don't know	12.2%	12.5%	12.3%
Disagree	42.1%	46.0%	44.0%
Strongly disagree	31.8%	24.7%	28.2%

Those in the older age groups were significantly more likely to identify money as a constraint, 18% of 17-18 year olds as compared to 10% of 12-13 year olds. This probably reflects the trend towards more commercial recreation as the individual progresses through adolescence (Hendry et al., 1993).

Table 46: Money as a Barrier by Age & Gender

Age	12 & 13 male (n=302)	12 & 13 female (n=311)	17 & 18 male (n=338)	17 & 18 female (n=325)
Strongly agree	5%	4%	5%	8%
Agree	6%	6%	9%	13%
Don't know	16%	13%	8%	14%
Disagree	40%	46%	48%	47%
Strongly disagree	33%	31%	30%	18%

There is a link between socio-economic group and the likelihood of money being a constraint to joining leisure activities. Only 13% (n=68) of young people whose parental occupation is classified as professional or managerial identify lack of money as a constraint to joining new activities, while over a fifth (21%; n=40) of those whose parents are on welfare or in unskilled employment report that they don't have the money to join new activities. Although those in the lower socio-economic groups are more likely to experience financial constraints, even in this group, the majority (63%; n=119) do not. This difference between the socio-economic groups is statistically significant (Chi Sq.= 25.08, df=6, p<0.001). Other research has identified the cost of joining fees, equipment and travel as barriers to young people's participation in leisure (Christchurch City Council, 2001; Connor, 2003).

Table 47: ‘I don’t have the money to join new activities’ by Parental Occupation

Socio-economic group	Professional/ Manag. & Technical (n=532)	Farmer & Non-manual (n=577)	Skilled & Semi-skilled (n=737)	Unskilled & Welfare (n=189)
Strongly agree	4%	7%	6%	7%
Agree	9%	9%	9%	14%
Don’t know	10%	13%	11%	16%
Disagree	45%	44%	48%	40%
Strongly disagree	32%	27%	26%	23%

The study also examined the issue of financial constraints with regard to the respondents’ reasons for dropping-out of an activity and their reasons for not joining a new activity. 17% (n=21) of respondents from the unskilled and welfare socio-economic groups reported that they didn’t join an activity because of cost while only 11% (n=43) of the professional and managerial socio-economic groups gave this as a reason not to join.

Similarly with drop-out, 9% (n=12) of those from the lower socio-economic groups cited cost as a reason for dropping out of an activity while only 6% (n=25) of the professional and managerial socio-economic groups gave cost as a reason.

Time

Time is often cited as a constraint to adult and adolescent leisure time use (Crawford et al., 1992; Christchurch City Council, 2001). The young people in this study vary in their reporting of time as a constraint.

There is an interesting gender difference with girls and young women (49%; n=555) more likely to experience time constraints than boys and young men (42%; n=470).

Table 48: Time as a Barrier by Gender

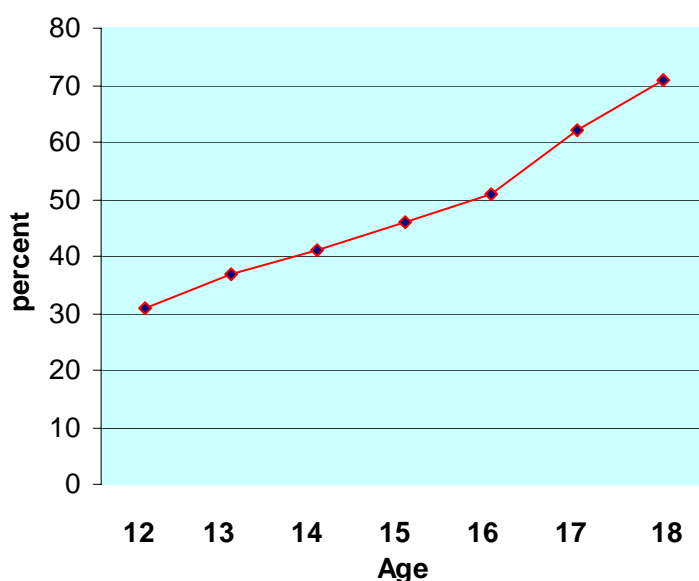
	Male	Female	Total
Strongly agree	12.1%	14.3%	13.2%
Agree	30.1%	35.0%	32.6%
Don’t know	14.6%	15.3%	14.9%
Disagree	33.7%	29.3%	31.5%
Strongly disagree	9.5%	6.0%	7.8%

A strikingly clear trend is evident when time as a constraint is examined across the age span. Only one quarter of twelve year olds (n=50) experience time constraints while 62% (n=179) of seventeen year olds and 71% (n=57) of eighteen year olds are constrained by time.

Table 49: Time as a Barrier by Age

AGE	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Strongly agree	8.8%	12.7%	11.9%	13.4%	10.7%	18.6%	26.3%
Agree	22.3%	23.9%	29.5%	32.8%	40.6%	43.1%	45.0%
Don't know	20.2%	17.2%	15.8%	14.5%	14.2%	10.0%	7.5%
Disagree	34.7%	37.3%	34.0%	30.1%	30.7%	23.1%	17.5%
Strongly disagree	14.0%	8.9%	8.8%	9.1%	3.7%	5.2%	3.8%

Figure 47: Time as a Barrier by Age



Homework

Two of the most common determinants of adolescent free time are the amount of time spent doing homework and in part-time employment. Respondents in this study were asked to report the frequency (if any) that they worked part-time. Part-time work was defined as including any casual work for which the individual received payment. 13.3% of the sample report undertaking part-time work most days or everyday while 43.4% never work part-time. Interestingly, when part time work is cross tabulated with time as a barrier, the respondents' likelihood of experiencing time constraints does *not* increase if s/he works part time. This suggests that young people who work part-time do not experience time constraints with respect to their leisure. This is in contrast to research in Dublin, by Morgan (2000), where over one third of his sample perceived a likely consequence of working to be less time for leisure.

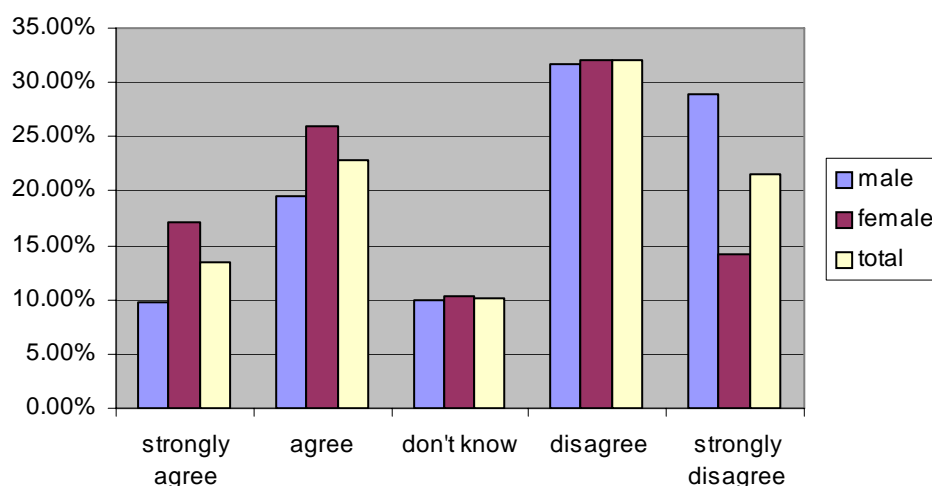
There is a significant gender difference in the amount of time spent doing homework and studying (Wilcoxon 1127019.5, $z=8.938$, $p\leq 0.001$). Approaching half (43.2%) of girls agree that most of their free time is spent doing homework and studying while only less than one third (29.3%) of boys agree. This finding supports recent reports on gender differences in academic achievement in State examinations with girls

significantly out-performing boys in the Junior and Leaving Certificate examinations (State Examinations Commission, 2003)

Table 50: Homework as a Time Barrier by Gender

	Male	Female
Strongly agree	9.7%	17.2%
Agree	19.6%	26.0%
Don't know	10.0%	10.4%
Disagree	31.7%	32.1%
Strongly disagree	28.9%	14.2%

Figure 48: Homework as a Time Barrier by Gender



Focusing on the two years that culminate with State examinations; 3rd year and 6th year, the gender differences in time spent doing homework and studying is even more noticeable. In their Leaving Certificate year, well over half (60%; n=128) of the young women sampled agree that most of their free time is spent studying while for young men only over a quarter (28%; n=46) agree with the statement. The differences are not so stark in the Junior Certificate year but still girls are still 50% more likely than boys to report that most of their free time is spent studying.

Table 51: 'Most of my free-time is spent doing homework'

		Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly disagree
3 rd year	Male	10.1%	19.8%	11.0%	24.2%	34.8%
	Female	15.4%	21.9%	13.2%	31.6%	18.0%
6 th year	Male	8.0%	20.4%	10.5%	31.5%	29.6%
	Female	28.5%	31.3%	4.7%	29.0%	6.5%

Transport

Over a quarter (28.7%; n=658) have difficulty with transport. The majority of the sample (59.4%; n=1343) do not report transport difficulties getting to and from

places. There is a smaller than expected urban/rural divide in relation to young peoples' experience of transport difficulties; even amongst those who live in the countryside over half (57%; n=579) do not report difficulties.

Table 52: Transport Difficulties as a Barrier to Leisure

	CITY	TOWN	VILLAGE	COUNTRY SIDE
Strongly agree	9.7%	9.4%	10.5%	13.2%
Agree	11.4%	18.3%	17.1%	19.4%
Don't know	13.1%	11.9%	12.6%	10.4%
Disagree	37.2%	34.9%	37.4%	33.3%
Strongly disagree	28.6%	25.5%	22.5%	23.7%

Table 53: Transport Difficulties by Age

-	Age						
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Strongly agree	10	38	52	57	33	49	16
% within age	5.2%	9.0%	10.2%	15.3%	8.8%	16.8%	19.8%
Agree	27	61	93	65	73	56	18
% within age	14.0%	14.4%	18.2%	17.4%	19.5%	19.2%	22.2%
Don't know	25	48	72	36	37	35	5
% within age	13.0%	11.3%	14.1%	9.7%	9.9%	12.0%	6.2%
Disagree	71	156	167	129	145	92	26
% within age	36.8%	36.8%	32.6%	34.6%	38.7%	31.6%	32.1%
Strongly disagree	60	121	128	86	87	59	16
% within age	31.1%	28.5%	25.0%	23.1%	23.2%	20.3%	19.8%

Those in the older age groups are significantly more likely to report difficulties with transport, 36% (n=105) of seventeen year olds as compared with 19% (n=27) of twelve year olds agree with the statement that they have transport difficulties. This is likely to reflect the broadening horizons of the late-adolescents' recreational sphere. Seventeen and eighteen year olds are likely to want to travel further from home for recreation and also they are likely to want to be out later at night.

Other research has highlighted the difficulties experienced by young people with regard to transport to and from leisure activities (Storey & Brannen, 2000; Little & Leyshon, 1998). Factors such as two-car households, the recent economic upturn and improved rural transport networks may have reduced transport difficulties for some young people.

Safety

Allied to the issue of transport as a structural barrier, is the issue of safety (or perceived risk) while travelling to and from recreational activities. The sample were asked to respond to the statement '*I feel safe going to and from activities in the evening*'. Of the total sample, two-thirds (65.7%; n=1484) feel safe going to and from

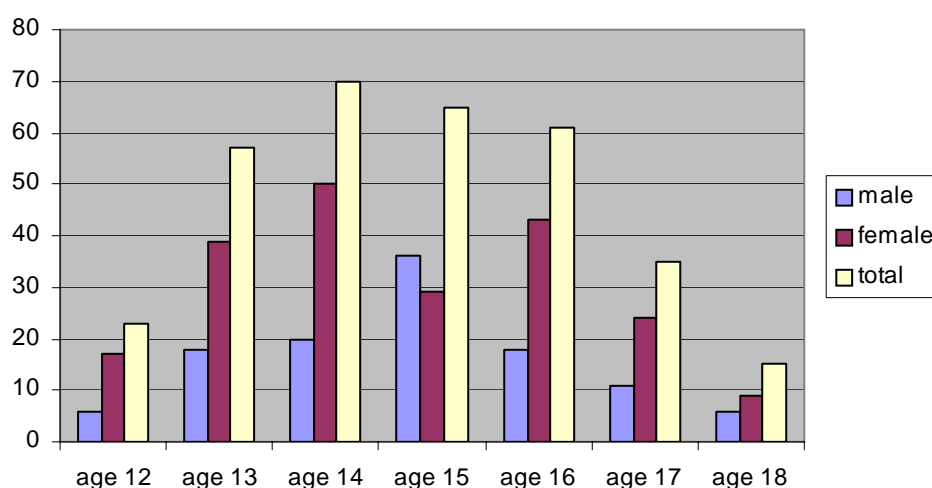
activities, 19.3% (n=436) ‘don’t know’ and 14.4% (n=326) say that they do not feel safe.

Table 54: Feeling Safe Going To and From Activities in the Evening

Feeling Safe	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	49	21.7%
Agree	994	44.0%
Don’t know	436	19.3%
Disagree	213	9.4%
Strongly Disagree	113	5.0%
Total	2246	100%

It is worth looking at the profile of the 15% (n=326) young people who do not feel safe going to and from activities in the evening. Two-thirds of this group (65%; n=211) are female, one third (35%; n=115) are male. This represents a significant gender difference (Wilcoxon 1136883.5, z=8.168, p≤0.001).

Figure 49: Age Profile of Those Who Don’t Feel Safe.



Fourteen year olds are most likely to feel unsafe going to and from activities (21.5%; n=70). Interestingly, twelve year olds and seventeen and eighteen year olds are least likely to feel unsafe. This seems to indicate that perceived safety threats are greatest in the middle years of adolescence.

Young people from Dublin are much more likely to feel unsafe than young people from any other county. Of the 15% of the sample who reported feeling unsafe 20% (n=64) are from Dublin. The other 80% of those who feel unsafe are spread around the country with Wexford next (7.8%; n=25), then Cork (5.8%; n=19) and Carlow (5.5%; n=18).

Perception of Local Recreation Provision

Two statements on the questionnaire pertain to young peoples’ perception of recreation provision in their area. The first asked for the young person’s response to the statement ‘Where I live there is very little for people my age to do in leisure time’

and the second asked for a response to ‘*I don’t know what activities there are where I live*’. The former is an attempt to measure the structural barrier of poor provision while the latter, although on the same theme, is a measure of the young person’s knowledge of what is available. This latter statement measures the interpersonal constraint of information dissemination.

Overall, a majority of the sample feel that there is not much leisure provision where they live. Of the total sample, over half (59.1%; n=1335) believe that there is very little leisure provision in their area while under a third (31.9%; n=722), the remainder of the sample were undecided on the issue. Females report less leisure provision in their area than males (63.6% vs 55.5%).

Table 55: ‘Very little leisure provision in my area’ by Gender

	Male	Female
Strongly agree	33.2%	41.2%
Agree	22.3%	22.4%
Don’t know	9.2%	7.4%
Disagree	21.6%	18.7%
Strongly disagree	13.7%	10.3%
Total	100%	100%

Not surprisingly, there is an urban-rural divide in terms of the young peoples’ perception of leisure provision in their area. Less than half (45.5%) of city dwellers compared to over two-thirds (68.1%) of those who live in the countryside experience this structural barrier. It was also found that young people from lower socio-economic groups report this barrier significantly more than those of the higher groups (Chi Sq. = 17.1, df=6, p<0.001).

Table 56: ‘Very little leisure provision in my area’ by Homeplace

	City	Town	Village	Countryside
Strongly agree	25.0%	35.2%	36.8%	42.7%
Agree	20.5%	18.6%	20.7%	25.4%
Don’t know	10.7%	9.1%	10.5%	6.4%
Disagree	25.0%	22.3%	20.1%	17.2%
Strongly disagree	18.8%	14.8%	12.0%	8.3%

Weather Conditions

Ireland has a temperate maritime climate. The west of Ireland is significantly wetter than the east with counties along the Atlantic seaboard averaging 225 wet days per year compared to 150 days in eastern counties (Met Eireann, 2005). While we don’t experience climatic extremes such as heavy winter snowfalls or soaring summer temperatures the weather is often cited as a barrier to outdoor recreation activities.

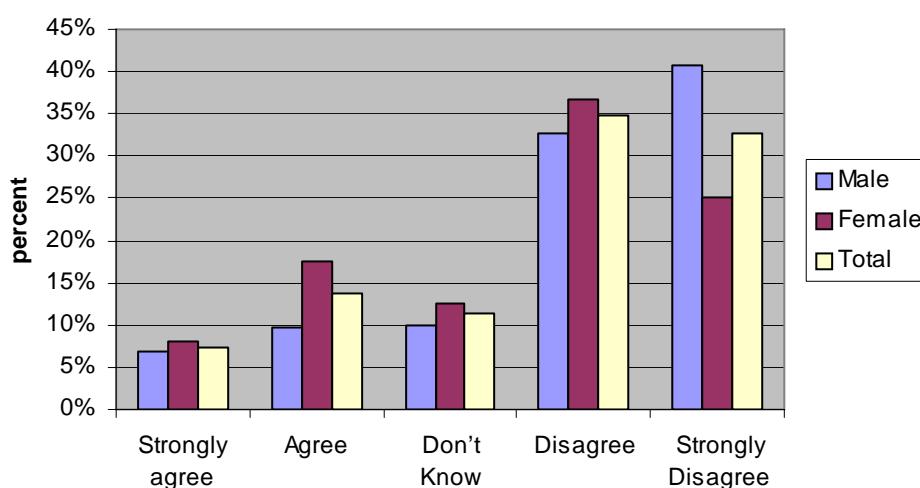
Young people in this study were asked to respond to the statement ‘*Because of the weather I don’t like outdoor activities*’. Over two-thirds of the sample (67.5%; n=1511) disagreed with the statement.

Males were less likely to cite weather conditions as a constraint than females, only 16.4% (n=185) of males agreed with the statement compared to 25.6% (n=288) of females.

Table 57: Weather as a Barrier to Outdoor Activities by Gender

	Male	Female	Total
Strongly agree	6.8%	8.0%	7.4%
Agree	9.8%	17.6%	13.7%
Don't know	10.0%	12.6%	11.3%
Disagree	32.7%	36.8%	34.7%
Strongly disagree	40.7%	25.0%	32.8%

Figure 50: Weather as a Barrier to Outdoor Activities by Gender



Comparing respondents from western seaboard counties (Donegal, Sligo, Mayo, Galway, Clare and Kerry) to those from eastern seaboard counties (Louth, Meath, Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford) shows very little difference between the attitudes of the two sub-groups to weather as a constraint to leisure.

Table 58: Weather as a Barrier to Outdoor Activities by Homeplace

	West coast	East coast
Strongly agree	8.0%	5.7%
Agree	13.5%	15.5%
Don't know	11.8%	12.2%
Disagree	33.6%	35.4%
Strongly disagree	33.0%	31.1%

CHAPTER 8: DROP-OUT

Cormac got the best Junior Cert. results in his school last year. This year he got a great buzz from entering an individual project to the Young Scientist competition; his project was *'Highly Commended'*. For this, Cormac spent a lot of his free-time at the library and on the internet, downloading relevant material. Cormac is very proficient with the computer and playing computer games is one of his favourite leisure time activities. He and a friend are at the moment designing their own game. Cormac describes himself as *'not being the sporty type'*. He would like to join a chess-club but there isn't one attached to his school or in his locality.

Key Findings

- 73% report that they had dropped out of a leisure activity
- Females are significantly more likely than males to report dropping out of an activity
- The most common activities that females drop out of are dance (predominantly Irish dance), drama, basketball and music.
- The most common activities that males drop out of are soccer, martial arts and swimming.
- Losing interest is the most commonly reported reason for drop out, 55% reported losing interest as a reason.
- Other reasons cited for dropping out are, in order of importance; time, not liking the leader, skill level, peer drop-out, rules, age and cost.
- The reasons given for drop out differ significantly for different activities.

Introduction

This study investigates adolescent drop out with a view to illuminating, from this perspective, the opportunities, barriers and supports that young people experience in leisure. That most young people drop out of activities as they move through adolescence is completely natural and predictable. Research has shown that young people are likely to drop particular leisure activities as particular developmental needs are fulfilled (Kleiber, et al., 1986; Kelly, 1987).

Of the total sample 73% (n=1,642) reported that they had dropped out of or given up an activity. It must be noted that the young people were asked to report just one activity that they dropped out of. It should also be noted that this is unlikely to accurately reflect the rate of drop out in the adolescent population as the researchers believe that fatigue with the questionnaire may have affected the response rate for sections 5 and 6 in some instances.

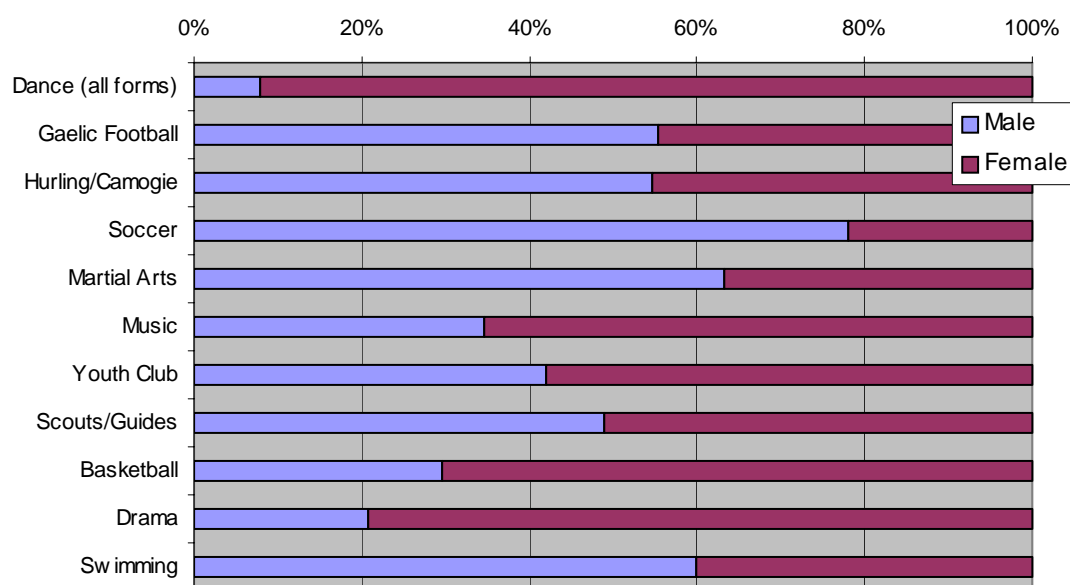
Table 59: Activities & Drop-out rate

Activity	number	% drop out
Dance (all forms)	256	16%
Gaelic Football	189	12%
Hurling/Camogie	128	8%
Soccer	127	8%
Martial Arts	106	6%
Music	101	6%
Youth Club	101	6%
Scouts/Guides	98	6%
Basketball	78	5%
Drama	72	4%
Swimming	70	4%
Other	316	19%
TOTAL	1642	100%

Gender and Drop-out

Females are significantly more likely than males to report dropping out of a leisure time activity. 38% of males report never having dropped out of an activity as compared to only 17% of females. There are predictable gender differences in the activities that males and females drop out of. Females are much more likely to have dropped out of dance (predominantly Irish dance), drama, basketball and music than males, but apart from music they are much more likely to have joined these activities in the first place. Gender-neutral activities in terms of drop out include scouts/guides, Gaelic football and hurling/camogie. Males are more likely to have dropped out of soccer, martial arts and swimming.

Figure 51: Gender & Drop-Out



Age and Drop-Out

There is no particular trend evident with regard to the reporting of drop out across the age groups. Fifteen year olds are most likely to report drop out with 78% reporting that they dropped out of an activity. The other age groups were all close to 70% reporting drop out. Understandably, the chances are higher that the older the respondent, the more time they would have had to drop-out of an activity. However, young people were instructed to identify any activity that they had dropped out of in recent years.

Reasons for Drop-Out

Respondents were asked to identify their reasons for dropping out. The table below gives the top ten reasons for drop-out cited by the sample

Table 60: Top Ten Reasons for Drop- Out

Reasons for drop out	Frequency of reason cited	% Sample citing reason (n=1642)	% Total reasons (n=3864)
I lost interest in the activity	901	54.8%	23.3%
The times of the activity didn't suit me	561	34.1%	14.5%
I didn't like the activity leader(s)	438	26.6%	11.3%
My skill level wasn't good enough	338	20.6%	8.7%
My friends dropped out	268	16.3%	6.9%
I didn't like the rules	208	12.6%	5.4%
I felt I was too old	168	10.2%	4.3%
It cost too much	119	7.2%	3.1%
The activity was no longer offered	113	6.9%	2.9%
We moved house	93	5.7%	2.4%

The table below presents the activities most commonly dropped-out of and the reasons given for drop out. The percentages represent the number of people within each activity who gave that reason for drop out, as respondents could choose up to 7 reasons for drop out the sum of the percentages is not meaningful. It should be noted that unlike the samples reporting of involvement in sports and hobbies where they are likely to have reported casual, recreational and non-formal participation, here it is likely that the young person was a member of a club, group or organisation.

Table 61: Reasons for Drop-Out by Activity

	Dance	Gaelic Football	Soccer	Youth Club	Music	Scouts/ Guides	Swimming	Martial Arts
Lost interest	57%	44%	50%	60%	65%	68%	36%	65%
Times didn't suit	33%	27%	36%	25%	38%	26%	43%	34%
Didn't like the leader	31%	29%	29%	17%	32%	39%	16%	28%
Skill level not good enough	14%	32%	27%	7%	24%	6%	17%	12%
Friends dropped out	18%	8%	9%	34%	8%	29%	16%	16%
No way to get there	9%	13%	11%	14%	3%	5%	24%	8%
Didn't like the rules	10%	8%	9%	16%	10%	17%	6%	15%
Felt I was too old	13%	2%	6%	2%	14%	29%	10%	6%
Felt I was too young	2%	4%	5%	4%	3%	3%	3%	5%
Cost too much	11%	2%	6%	9%	9%	7%	10%	9%
Bullying	0%	5%	5%	4%	1%	2%	0%	3%
Health/injury	2%	5%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Felt I was the wrong sex	2%	3%	2%	5%	1%	4%	4%	4%

Losing interest is by far the most common reason for drop out, 55% (n=901) of those who dropped out of an activity cited losing interest as a reason. This is not surprising as adolescence is a time of transition during which the individual may be exposed to a broad spectrum of activities and will enter adulthood having ceased involvement in all but a few of these. Young people are less likely to lose interest in sports than clubs, with 68% (n=67) reporting that they lost interest in scouts or guides as compared with only 36% (n=25) in swimming and 44% (n=83) in Gaelic football.

Time is a reason for drop out for 34% (n=561) of the sample. Of the activities in the table above, young people cite time as a reason for drop out from swimming more than other activity. This may be accounted for by the huge time commitment, including early morning sessions, that competitive swimmers give to their sport. Elsewhere in this study nearly half (46%; n=1025) of the sample reported that time was a constraint on their leisure time use.

Over a quarter (27%; n=438) of young people cite not liking the leader as a reason for drop-out. An interesting result here is the difference between the response for youth clubs/groups and scouts/guides. Only 17% (n=17) of young people who dropped-out of youth club/group cited not liking the leader as a reason for drop-out, while 39% (n=38) of young people who dropped out of scouts/guides gave this reason.

Not having a good enough skill level is cited as a reason for drop-out in 21% (n=338) of cases. Not surprisingly this reason for drop-out is highest in sport where skill level is closely associated with both success and enjoyment. Nearly one third (32%; n=58) of those who dropped-out with this as a reason did so out of Gaelic football. Additionally, over a quarter (27%;n=34) of those who dropped out of soccer cited skill level as a reason for drop out. The numbers citing skill level as a reason for drop-out from youth club and scouts/guides are understandably very low, 7% (n=7) and 6% (n=6) respectively.

The influence of peers is the fifth most likely reason for young people to drop out of an activity. 16% (n=268) report that they dropped out of an activity because their friends did. This reason is more commonly cited with regard to clubs and groups than with sports or music. Over a third (34%; n=34) of those who dropped out of youth clubs/groups were influenced by the fact that their friends had dropped-out, compared to only 8% (n=15) of those who dropped-out of Gaelic football with this as a reason.

A problem with transport was the next most popular reason for dropping out of an activity. 13% (n=208) of the sample cited transport difficulties as a reason for drop-out. This reason was cited most often for swimming (24%;n=17). Relating to this is the finding earlier in the study when young people were asked to respond to the statement '*I have transport difficulties getting to and from activities*' as 29% (n=658) agreed with this statement.

CHAPTER 9: LIKE-TO-JOIN

Caoimhe is 15 years of age and lives in a large Irish town. She used to play basketball with the school but dropped-out last year because she lost interest and because her pals dropped-out too. Caoimhe enjoys dancing with her friends and would love to join hip-hop or modern dance classes but they've only Irish dance classes in her town. In her free-time, Caoimhe reads magazines a lot, watches TV and chats and texts her friends a lot on her mobile phone. Recently she also has begun to listen to a lot more music CDs and once a week Caoimhe goes to the local youth group with her friends.

Key Findings

- 72% express a desire to join a new leisure activity
- Seventy five different activities were cited in this section
- Fourteen of the top 18 activities cited are sports and in total, sport makes-up 65% of the 75 activities cited.
- There are significant urban/rural differences in terms of what the respondents would like-to-join.
- The unsuitable location of the activity is the most commonly cited barrier to participation with regard to joining a new activity
- Other barriers include; not knowing anyone else, transport, not knowing how to join, programming, time, skills, cost and parental influence.

Introduction

This section was included in the questionnaire to better inform our understanding of the complex opportunities, barriers and supports that young people encounter with regard to leisure. In this section respondents were given a free reign and encouraged to include any leisure time activity that they would like to join or would have liked to join in the past.

Of the total sample 72% (n=1635) expressed a desire to join a leisure activity. It should be noted that the young people often reported that they were involved in a particular activity in Section 2 and yet wanted to join that same activity in Section 6. The researchers believe that in Section 2 the respondent reports that s/he spends some of their leisure time involved in, for example dance, and then in Section 6 expresses an interest in joining a structured dance class or group.

Table 62: Like-to-Join Activities

	Count	% total like to join
Soccer	162	10%
Dance (all forms)	149	9%
Rugby	118	7%
Boxing	89	5%
Swimming	84	5%
Hurling/Camogie	78	5%
Gaelic Football	71	4%
Drama	65	4%
Youth Club	60	4%
Music	57	3%
Basketball	51	3%
Martial Arts	50	3%
Horse riding	49	3%
Kick boxing	48	3%
Tennis	38	2%
Motorsport	36	2%
Gymnastics	32	2%
Watersports	29	2%
Other	369	22%
TOTAL	1635	100%

There is a huge spread in the range of activities that the young people express a desire to join. The table above gives the top 18 activities cited by respondents, but there is an amazing 57 other activities which 1% or less of the sample expressed a desire to join. This brings to 75 the total number of activities mentioned in this section of the questionnaire, it should be noted that each respondent could only list one activity in this section of the questionnaire.

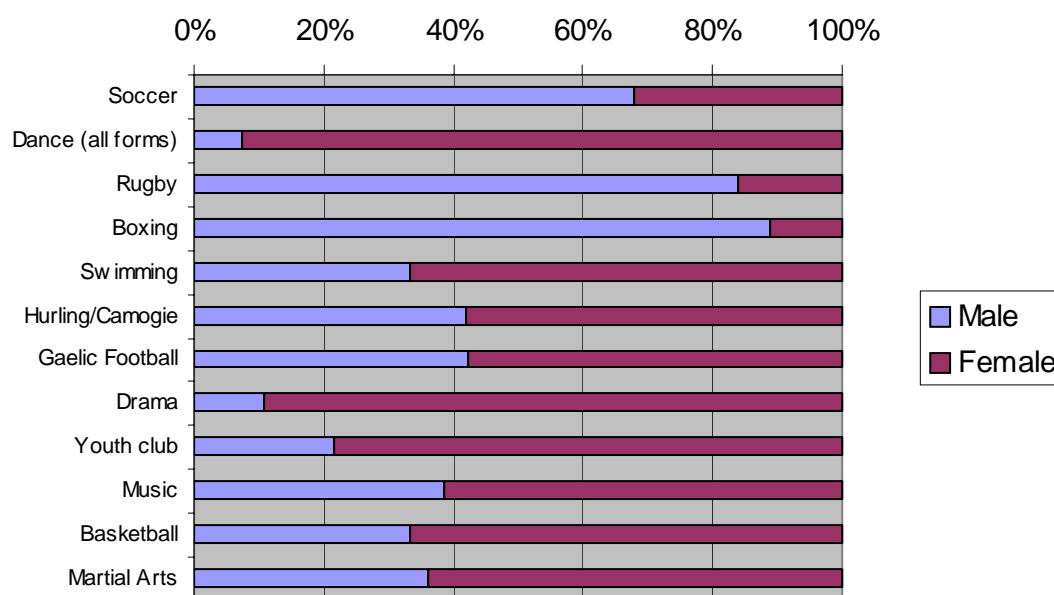
The 'like-to-join' list is hugely dominated by sports, 14 of the top 18 activities mentioned are sports and in total 49 of the 75 (65%) activities cited are sports. Dance, drama and music are the most popular hobbies accounting for a combined 16% of the sample. In total 18 of the 75 (24%) activities mentioned in this section are hobbies.

Only 8 (11%) community/charity groups feature in the like-to-join section and youth club is the only group to make it into the top 18 like-to-join activities with 4% expressing a desire to join a youth club. Sport was also the most common leisure time activity mentioned in the focus groups with motor sport and soccer dominating.

An interesting finding is that more young people would like-to-join boxing than are involved in the sport; 45 individuals in this study box, yet 89, almost 200% more, would like to join boxing. A similar, but not so startling trend is present for rugby; 162 young people play rugby and 118 would like-to-join.

Like-to-Join Activities by Gender

Figure 52: Like-to-Join Activities by Gender



Females were more likely than males to complete Section 6 of the questionnaire, 79% (n=899) of females as compared to 65% (n=735) of males. Significant gender differences emerge in the respondents' choices of activities that they would like to join, 93% of those who chose dance and 90% of those who chose drama are female. By comparison 89% of those who chose boxing and 84% who chose rugby are male. Only five of the top-ten activities for males and females are shared, and four of these are sports; soccer, hurling/camogie, Gaelic football and swimming. The fifth is music. Music is the only non-sports activity featuring in the male top-ten list. For females four of the top-ten activities are not sports; dance, drama, youth club and music.

Table 63: Top Ten Like-to-Join Activities by Gender

Like-to-join Male		Like-to join Female	
Activity	Frequency	Activity	Frequency
Soccer	15% (n=110)	Dance	9% (n=149)
Rugby	14% (n=99)	Drama	7% (n=58)
Boxing	11% (n=79)	Swimming	6% (n=56)
Hurling	4% (n=32)	Soccer	6% (n=52)
Gaelic football	4% (n=30)	Youth club	5% (n=47)
Swimming	4% (n=28)	Camogie	5% (n=42)
Motor sport	4% (n=26)	Gaelic football	5% (n=41)
Music	3% (n=22)	Horse riding	4% (n=40)
Snooker/pool	3% (n=19)	Kick-boxing	4% (n=39)
Golf	2% (n=18)	Music	4% (n=35)

Like-to-Join Activities and Age

The differences between the aspirations of the younger age groups and the older age groups with regard to joining leisure activities are not very large. The table below shows the percentages within each age group who would like-to-join a range of activities.

Table 64: Like-to-Join Activities by Age

	12-13 year olds	16-17 year olds
Soccer	12%	9%
Dance	8%	10%
Rugby	5%	6%
Boxing	5%	6%
Gaelic football	5%	4%
Drama	4%	4%
Youth club	4%	2%
Music	1%	5%
Motor sport	3%	2%
Swimming	5%	5%
Scouts/guides	2%	0%
Camogie	2%	4%

Some interesting differences across the age span are the increase in popularity of music (4% increase) and camogie (2% increase) with age and the decrease in popularity of scouts/guides (2% decrease), youth club (2% decrease) and motor sport (1% decrease). However, perhaps the most striking feature of the table above is the similarity across the age span of the activities that the sample would like-to-join.

Like-to-Join Activities and Home Location

When the responses to like to join are analysed by the respondents' place of residence, some interesting differences emerge within the activities. Again, the percentages represent the number within each area of residence opting for each activity.

Table 65: Like-to-Join Activities by Home Location

	CITY	TOWN	VILLAGE	COUNTRYSIDE
Soccer	8%	12%	8%	10%
Dance	14%	10%	11%	6%
Rugby	2%	5%	8%	10%
Boxing	4%	7%	5%	6%
Gaelic football	4%	5%	4%	4%
Drama	8%	4%	2%	3%
Youth club/group	1%	4%	4%	5%
Music	3%	5%	4%	3%
Motor sport	2%	2%	4%	2%
Swimming	5%	4%	7%	5%
Kickboxing	4%	2%	3%	3%

Dance and drama are significantly more popular amongst urban dwellers. 14% (n=36) of city dwellers who said that they would like-to-join a leisure activity chose dance, a further 8% (n=21) chose drama, this compares to 6% (n=48) and 3% (n=23) of those who live in the countryside. On the other hand, there is a rural bias for wanting to join rugby and youth clubs/groups. 10% (n=74) of rural dwellers want to join rugby a further 5% (n=35) would like to join a youth club/group. This compares to 2% (n=6) of city dwellers for rugby and less than 1% (n=2) for youth clubs/groups.

Like-to-Join and Parental Occupation

There are some differences between socio-economic groups with regard to the activities that the young people would like to join. Table 67 below shows the percentages within the professional/managerial and technical category as compared to the unskilled and unemployed category.

Table 66: Like-to-Join by Parental Occupation

	Professional/ Managerial/ Technical	Unskilled/ Welfare
Soccer	7%	10%
Dance	8%	10%
Rugby	7%	7%
Boxing	5%	6%
Gaelic football	5%	2%
Hurling/Camogie	5%	9%
Drama	5%	4%
Youth club	3%	5%
Music	3%	1%
Motor sport	2%	4%
Swimming	7%	10%
Golf	2%	0%
Total	59%	68%

The twelve activities listed above account for 68% (n=93) of the like-to-join activities of the lower socio-economic groups but only 59% (n=239) of the two highest socio-economic groups. This disparity may be accounted for by the fact that young people from more affluent homes face fewer structural constraints and therefore have broader horizons. Gaelic football, music, drama and golf are the only activities that a greater percentage from the higher than lower socio-economic groups would like-to-join. There is a small difference within the lower socio-economic groups between the number aspiring to play Gaelic football (2%; n=3) and hurling/camogie (9%; n=12). Notwithstanding the large sample size in this study (n=2260), the small numbers within each cell group at this level of analysis requires caution when generalising for the entire population.

Barriers to Joining

Respondents were asked to identify their reasons for not joining the activity listed. The table below identifies the top ten reasons cited by respondents for not joining an activity that they would like to have joined.

Table 67: Top Ten Barriers to Joining a New Activity

Barriers to joining	Frequency barrier cited	% Sample citing barrier (n=1635)	% Total barriers (n=3793)
The location of the activity didn't suit me	674	41.2%	17.8%
I didn't know anyone else doing it	485	29.7%	12.8%
I had no way to get there	468	28.6%	12.3%
I didn't know how to join	429	26.2%	11.3%
The times of the activity didn't suit me	417	25.5%	11.0%
I already do too many other activities	311	19.0%	8.2%
I didn't have good enough skills	254	15.5%	6.7%
It cost too much	235	14.4%	6.2%
My parent(s) didn't want me to do it	147	9.0%	3.9%
I wasn't old enough	94	5.7%	2.5%

The table below presents the most common like-to-join activities and the respondents' barriers to joining. The percentages represent the number of people within each activity who cited that barrier, as respondents could choose up to 7 barriers, the sum of the percentages is not meaningful.

Table 68: Barriers to Joining by Activity

	Soccer	Dance	Rugby	Boxing	Swimming	Gaelic Football	Drama	Youth Club
Not located nearby	36%	43%	50%	43%	52%	21%	42%	30%
Didn't know anyone else	22%	40%	26%	30%	36%	24%	34%	27%
No transport	36%	30%	36%	26%	40%	18%	25%	27%
Didn't know how to join	10%	33%	22%	27%	19%	18%	27%	33%
Times didn't suit	26%	23%	25%	21%	32%	42%	26%	27%
Already too busy	19%	19%	29%	21%	20%	15%	11%	12%
Skill level not good enough	23%	14%	13%	8%	18%	28%	17%	7%
Cost too much	8%	23%	3%	6%	8%	4%	26%	5%
Parents didn't approve	5%	3%	13%	25%	0%	7%	6%	8%
Not offered for my sex	9%	2%	10%	10%	1%	6%	2%	0%

The barriers to participation identified by the sample provide some interesting insight into the reasons why Irish young people do not join in activities that they would like to. The most common barrier is that the location of the activity didn't suit. This is not surprising as respondents were encouraged not to be constrained in their choice of activity; therefore many chose activities that are not available in their locality.

Location is most likely to be a barrier for swimming (50%; n=43) and least likely to be an issue for those who would like to join Gaelic football (21%; n=15). This reflects the ubiquitous coverage of the GAA and the poor provision in terms of swimming pools, particularly public swimming pools. Overall over a third (41%; n=677) of those who answered this section identified location of the activity as a barrier to participation. This was also frequently identified as a barrier to participation by young people with visual impairment in their semi-structured interviews and is outlined in more detail later.

The second most common barrier is not knowing anyone else involved. Overall, nearly a third (30%; n=485) identified this interpersonal barrier to participation. It is most likely in dance (40%; n=60) and swimming (36%; n=30) and least likely to be an issue in soccer (22%; n= 35) and Gaelic football (24%; n=17).

Allied to the location issue above is the issue of lack of transport as a barrier to participation. Over a quarter (29%; n=468) of respondents identify transport difficulties as an issue. As with location, transport is most likely to be a barrier for those who would like to join swimming (40%; n=34) and least likely for those who would like to join Gaelic football (18%; n=13).

A lack of information on how to join the activity is a barrier cited by over a quarter (26%; n=429) of the respondents that completed this section. This barrier is most likely with regard to dance (33%; n=51) and youth clubs/groups (33%; n=20) and least likely for soccer (10%; n=16) and Gaelic football (18%; n=13).

For a quarter (26%; n=417) of the respondents that completed this section, the time that the activity was offered was a barrier to their participation. This is particularly an issue for those who would like to join Gaelic football (42%; n=30). It may be that this barrier to participation only becomes an issue when the bigger structural barriers such as location, transport and information are not an issue.

One fifth of respondents (19%; n=311) have not joined an activity because they already do too many other activities. This barrier was more likely to exist for sports than for youth clubs/groups, drama or dance.

Perceived lack of skill is an important barrier to participation in Gaelic football (28%; n=20) and soccer (23%; n=37). Skill is of much less relevance for joining a youth club/group (7%; n=4) and, somewhat surprisingly, boxing (8%; n=7). Overall 16% (n=254) cite perceived poor skill level as a barrier to joining an activity.

Money is a barrier in 14% (n=235) of the cases. In the selection of activities presented in Table 69 cost is an issue only in drama (26%; n=17) and dance (23%; n=34), of course these activities are likely to incur high membership and/or tuition fees.

Of the sample 9% (n=147) cited the fact that their parents didn't want them to join as a reason for not joining a leisure activity. Not surprisingly, parental disapproval is particularly significant in boxing (25%; n=22) and rugby (13%; n=15). Both of these are full-contact sports and have a relatively high risk of physical injury or harm.

Only 4% (n=61) of the sample cite gender as a barrier to participation. This may reflect the tendency of the sample to choose sex-stereotyped activities (reflecting an intrapersonal barrier) rather than any significant gender inequality in the leisure time activities offered to Irish youth. The very male dominated sports of boxing (10%; n=9) and rugby (10%; n=12) are the two activities where respondents did cite gender inequality of access as a barrier.

Linking in with intrapersonal barriers, it can be extrapolated from cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957 in Crawford & Godbey, 1987 p125) that *'if barriers are perceived as sufficiently powerful or discouraging, rationalisation demands that the preference for an activity correspondingly diminishes. In other words, individuals do not wish to do that which they perceive that they cannot do'*.

CHAPTER 10: YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Key-Findings

Overall a number of themes emerged from the focus groups including:

- Social exclusion and discrimination issues
 - Structural barriers and supports
 - Interpersonal barriers and supports
 - Lack of integration with other young people in leisure
 - Leisure choice
 - Cultural Mores
-
- Most young people with additional needs experience some form of access social exclusion and/or discrimination difficulties
 - Structural barriers are a particular problem for young people with disabilities and young people with sensory impairment. These barriers are often experienced in multiples
 - Parental over-protectiveness and geographically spread friendship groups are interpersonal barriers experienced by many young people with disabilities and sensory impairments
 - Within the Traveller Community there are marked gender differences between male and female participation, opportunities and supports in sport.
 - Young people with sensory impairments report high levels of involvement in sport. However their opportunities for participation in competitive sport are limited.

Introduction

In an attempt to give voice to young people who may not have been captured in the sample group of the main study, focus groups and interviews were undertaken with young people from minority groups. These included early school leavers, Travellers and young people with visual impairment, special needs and physical disabilities. Participants were drawn from centres and schools in Cork, Kerry and Dublin. The duration of the focus groups and interviews ranged from 45-60 minutes. The main survey itself was undertaken with young deaf people.

While the experiences of each of these sub-groups are unique a number of themes emerged from the research illustrating some of the main barriers and supports to their recreation and leisure.

Social Exclusion and Discrimination Issues

One of the most striking themes to emerge from the focus groups with young people in minority groups was the experience of social exclusion and discrimination. These acted as major barriers, inhibiting participation in various forms of recreation and leisure.

Social exclusion has been defined by de Foucauld as *'a situation and process by which persons, groups, even geographical areas are rejected as participants in exchanges, practices and the exercise of social rights which characterise integration. Exclusion goes beyond inadequate income or even participation in the productive sphere and is visible in education, housing, health and areas where human rights are difficult to vindicate'*. It can be further understood by considering its polar opposite, integration, a sense of belonging, of being accepted for the way you are, having your rights recognised, enjoying the relationships and supports individuals need and being able to enjoy what people in a particular society regard as normal.

Social exclusion for young people is seen to result from a breakdown or malfunctioning in any one of the systems of integration such as the welfare system (which promotes social integration, ability to avail of state services e.g. education, health services) and the family and community systems (which promote interpersonal integration, having a family and friends).

In a video entitled *Young Pavee Voices*, depicting the lives and issues of young members of the Traveller Community, discrimination is described as *'being about more than not getting into a disco or cinema, it's in the lack of access to all kinds of services, the way people look at you or simply the way we are often forced to deny our own identity'*.

Marginalised groups, or those that experience such social exclusion, are at significant risk for substance abuse, homelessness, crime and suicide amongst other problems (Cleary & Prizeman, 1999; Connolly & Lester, 2000; Ní Laoire, 2001) sometimes seen as forms of adaptation to marginalisation as well as attempts to overcome it (McCullagh, 1996). Males also appear to be at greater risk especially from economic disadvantage (Barber, 2001).

In our study a large number of early school leavers (particularly males) spoke of being barred from cinemas, pool halls, shops and other locations. One young person complained about often being asked for a picture ID card and as he said '*where can you get a picture card at 15-16?*'. Many in the group spoke of themselves and/or their friends being 'barred' from a number of cinemas (as well as shops, pool/snooker clubs and pubs). One male spoke of '*not being allowed in because of my shaved head*' indicating the difficulties some young people encounter in simply gaining entry to venues. As a group they indicated that probably males were three times more likely than females to be barred. In addition size of group may have been a contributory factor as females tend to go to the cinema or other venues in small groups of '*3 or 4*', while males report going in larger groups of '*8 or 10*'.

According to one female '*about 90% of young people in my estate*' have been barred from the cinema or different shops, fast-food outlets and pool/snooker clubs. Another male spoke of how '*you get barred for a simple reason and then give some cheek and it gets out of hand*' and '*then they really bar you*' as opposed to just saying it and forgetting it the next day. When asked why the barring occurred, focus group participants spoke of '*snobby people*', '*people taking their mood swings out on others*', '*prejudice and racism towards Travellers*' and '*because you give them grief*'. Many of the group also agreed that if one member of a group gets barred, his/her pals suffer as well.

While this study does not explore the impact of 'being barred' from leisure venues in any depth and while it cannot provide any national data on this, our research does identify it as a salient concern and an issue in need of further research. It is important to note that the extent to which being barred was a consequence of inappropriate behaviour was unclear and the established research trend of participants seeking to portray themselves in the best possible light is likely to have led to an underreporting of barring due to inappropriate behaviour.

The fact that being barred was only reported in the focus groups undertaken with young people (particularly males and particularly those from the Traveller Community), who are already in educationally and economically disadvantaged circumstances is of significant concern. These young people are already in vulnerable or marginalised circumstances and to experience further exclusion from the few leisure activities they report participating in may mean their difficulties are compounded even more. These young people report little participation in sports, hobbies or community/charity groups. In the few leisure activities they do report they speak about being barred leaving them with little to do except to hang-around.

Some early school leavers spoke of prejudice about a pool/snooker club they'd like to have joined but couldn't because '*they don't leave in Travellers*'. Similarly, others spoke of being fobbed-off and told that they could only join in a particular month. When they went back in that month to join they were told to come back in another month.

The young male Travellers reported issues of discrimination with some sports clubs. In some clubs once two or three young Travellers were members club officials would not admit any more Travellers, operating an unwritten quota system. The young Travellers would '*sometimes hide your identity until you'd get in and then after a*

while you'd let them know you're a Traveller'. They felt strongly that although this deception was necessary (to gain membership) it was wrong and an infringement on their rights.

Another issue of discrimination is that often all Travellers suffer because a small number make trouble or cause disruption. The young men cited a recent incident at a swimming pool where two of the Travellers using the facility were being overly boisterous in the pool, this resulted in all of the Travellers present being asked to leave. *'When one Traveller messes they put all Travellers out...imagine if they tried to do that to settled people'*.

Recent research with young Irish homeless men illuminated the experience of ever-increasing marginalisation, stemming from the adolescent years, in contemporary Ireland. It highlighted the risk factors of economic and educational disadvantage and family break-up. *'Their experiences of school were generally ones of exclusion and they began to disengage early in second level'* (Cleary et al., 2004, p15).

Research in the UK has highlighted the social exclusion young people with visual impairments experience because of being unable to read new and popular books (Murray, 2002). Our research does not support this finding, however our sample of young people with a visual impairment was small (n=8).

Tackling social exclusion is a European Union policy priority. The EU White Paper on Youth urges member states to promote measures to prevent young people being excluded, unemployed and leading a precarious existence. Such measures might include leisure-time sporting and cultural activities directed at young people (europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/cha/c11605). Programmes such as 'youth (2000-2006)', the Irish Youth Work Act 2001 and special projects for disadvantaged youth were established to facilitate the integration of young people into society.

Research in the past has primarily concentrated on marginalisation from education and employment. Our research highlights how marginalisation from leisure may also be worth exploring in greater depth, particularly with early school leavers as youth leisure may offer protective or preventive functions.

Structural Barriers and Supports

The main leisure barriers experienced by young people from minority groups centred around structural barriers. Structural barriers reported include lack of transport, cost, inadequate equipment, poor access and a lack of provision and programming. These barriers are often experienced in multiples; all pose difficulties that result in very low access to mainstream leisure provision for these minority groups. Dedicated provision varies hugely across the State; it would appear that Dublin has the best range of leisure provision for young people with disabilities and impairments.

In relation to this, feedback from members of the Cork Association for the Deaf highlighted the lack of subtitling (other than for foreign language films) in cinemas outside of Dublin. Therefore the cinema is not an accessible leisure activity for young

deaf people outside of Dublin.

For young deaf people mobile phones and other new technologies, such as webcam, have been reported to lessen their isolation (Cork Association for the Deaf, 2005).

Young people with a visual impairment spoke of wanting to join a sport but indicated that they couldn't because of their impairment and a lack of adequate supports. One female cited *'tennis, the problem was the small ball... apart from getting a bigger ball I don't think there's anything that can be done'*. Another female said that she would *'love to play football with a team but I can't see the ball if it's coming towards me. In my old school we had a coloured ball and a ball with a sound inside it so you could actually hear the ball when it was coming towards you. If you have proper equipment there's not as much barriers'*.

One young male with a visual impairment identified transport and distance as barriers to joining football. *'I'd like to join a football team but I can't really because of my eyesight. I can see the ball but when it's coming overhead, taking it down is hard because the sunlight hits you right in the face. I was thinking about getting involved with Irish Blind Sports but it's 15-20 miles away and I've other things to do with my time than travel 15-20 miles'*.

All of the barriers experienced by the young, visually impaired people in our study have been identified in other research with people with sensory impairment (Berry, 2002).

For young people with physical disabilities, access and transport difficulties were also identified as barriers to leisure and also to socialising with young people without disabilities. Inadequate changing facilities were identified as a barrier in sports facilities and a lack of provision for wheelchairs beside standard seating was problematic in cinemas. *'Most cinemas are wheelchair accessible but not necessarily wheelchair friendly. For example, some don't have spaces for people to sit beside the wheelchairs which is needed as some of the lads need help to eat popcorn or to tap you on the shoulder to let you know if they want something'*. Some cinemas gave free entry to care staff, this was seen as a positive support as often the same care staff brought different groups of young people to the same film on different nights. Similarly, difficulties in even meeting or simply hanging around with young people their age was spoken of because of *'leisureplexes and friends houses not being wheelchair friendly'*.

For young people with special needs, males at least, our findings suggest that Special Olympics Ireland is a major support for sports participation and some other leisure activities such as discos.

Interpersonal Barriers and Supports

In terms of interpersonal barriers, many young people with a sensory impairment, physical disability or who have special needs often attend boarding school or travel a distance to school. This contributes to widely dispersed friendship groups and mitigates against meeting up informally with friends to hang-out, go to the cinema or play recreational sport.

Parental over-protectiveness can also be an issue for some young people, particularly where there are secondary medical issues compounding their condition. Young people with special needs and physical disabilities raised this as a barrier that often hinders their involvement in leisure activities.

One young person with special needs spoke of not being able to visit his friends from school in the evening time because they live far away and he wasn't allowed to go on the bus on his own.

Another young person with a physical disability and medical condition spoke of always having to have his friends visit him in his house and not being able to do the opposite because of his needs and his parents (and friends' parents) worrying about him.

Young deaf people, those with special needs and those with visual impairment contrast significantly with other young people in terms of the numbers who engage in part-time work. Virtually all of these young people did not work part-time this compares to over a third of the main sample, indicating this to be a key point of difference. Interviews with MDI members revealed they knew only one young person who was a wheelchair user who had a part-time job.

Lack of Integration with Other Young People in Leisure

Most of the young people with special needs indicated that their free-time participation in leisure activities is segregated from the mainstream and is organised through their school. Only one exception to this was encountered.

A young person with physical disability raised a lack of accessible public facilities for young people to hang out together, outside of school.

Specific issues that arise for young people with sensory impairments include communication difficulties with peers without impairments, and a lack of access to mainstream competitive sports. However most of their sports involvement is integrated with sighted people, for example cycling, which is organised through the school. *'The cycling is for everyone as well...there's tandem bikes there, but not many of the visually impaired people go, only about 6 go, if even that'*. An exception though was athletics where the visually impaired athletes receive specific coaching *'We don't bring sighted people with us from the school to the stadium but there are sighted people there from other schools. They don't work with us though'*.

Young people with a visual impairment also spoke of difficulties in attending discos because of the *'crowding and confusion'*. Additionally, a third of young deaf people report 'never' going to discos compared to 20% of other young people. The sample of young deaf people were all aged 14 or under which may have contributed to this difference though only 18% of 14 year olds in the main study report never going to discos.

Research with adolescents with disabilities has previously highlighted the social isolation they experience from their peers and a tendency by some to avoid inclusive leisure services due to a perception of a lack of social acceptance (Blomqvist et al.,

1998; West, 1984). Yet, connecting people to their communities is important for bridging barriers and facilitating people with disabilities to being ‘doers’ rather than ‘viewers’ (Devine, 2004).

When asked if they felt segregated from sighted adolescents in terms of recreation and leisure in general, only one of the eight young people with visual impairment said yes. This is in contrast with other research (albeit with small samples) that has reported such young people experiencing social exclusion from their sighted peers in leisure in general (Murray, 2002; Sherrill et al., 1984). Often this was construed to be more due to the perceptions others have of particular impairments than with the impairment itself (Murray, 2002).

The ‘pros and cons’ of an integrated sport activity were highlighted by a 12 year-old deaf girl who reported that she’d like to join gymnastics. She had done it before but had dropped-out because she *‘felt uncomfortable being with hearing people’*. She would like to join it again and would like if there were *‘deaf instructors so I’d be able to understand it more clearly’*.

All of the young Traveller men agreed that it is good to be involved in clubs and activities where Travellers and settled people mix. The young men recalled that there had been an all-Traveller soccer team in the past but the main organiser had become unwell and *‘the whole thing fell apart’*. Informal, competitive soccer matches are occasionally organised between different Traveller sites.

Leisure Choice

The popularity of individual sports such as cycling, athletics, swimming, martial arts and aerobics for young people with visual impairment is not surprising as most team sports require highly developed hand-eye or foot-eye coordination. The young men who mentioned involvement in soccer were involved only in recreational, unstructured play although they did express a desire to be involved in competitive sport.

Cultural Mores

Traditions and cultural mores appear to have a significant effect on the recreation and leisure activities reported by young people from the Traveller Community. Beyond approximately 10 years of age, females appear to be discouraged from participating in sports and hobbies and rather encouraged and expected to participate in helping out at home by cooking, cleaning and babysitting.

Certain sports, such as cycling, are discouraged (and in some families disallowed) for young girls once they reach age 10-12. Similarly participation in mixed sex sports activities, including swimming, is discouraged for girls over 10. The girls who took part in the focus group reported that this could cause problems at school when *‘you’re supposed to go swimming, they wouldn’t take the boys as an excuse and even if you don’t go you still have to pay for it’*.

Part-time work was reported by virtually all of the young men from the Traveller Community as a frequent activity. They mostly do this over the weekends with their

fathers, uncles or other male relatives. The types of work mentioned included gardening, tarring and selling. Young Traveller females on the other hand report helping-out a lot at home, cooking, cleaning and baby-sitting as opposed to paid-work.

Quite a few Traveller males also appear to spend an amount of their free time looking after animals. Two of the males spoke of spending some of their free time *'going out lamping with a dog and a gun after rabbits or hares'*. Often there would be *'two cars full'* of friends (all male) doing this. Pet dogs include greyhounds and fighting dogs (*'staffordshires'* and *'pitbulls'*).

Two of the five young men reported being heavily involved in horses. This included not just horse riding but sulky racing, horse-trading and breeding. The interest in horses appears to be passed down through generations as the males with this interest spoke of it being *'a family thing'* with their fathers or grandfathers being *'horse men'*. One male spoke of his grandmother having a keen interest in horses. Betting on greyhound and horse-racing as well as on fighting chickens was also popular for some of these young Traveller males.

According to the Irish Traveller Movement (2002) *'Horses play an immense social and cultural role in Travellers lives; Traveller men are responsible for the care of horses, which is considered an important social role.... For Traveller children horses are a great source of activity and fun, furthermore in teaching them how to care for their horses, the older generation passes on vital knowledge central to Traveller horse culture.'*

Youth work with Travellers should *'assist with the development of individual and collective self-esteem through services which are based on studies of excellence, are non-judgemental, accepting, culturally appropriate, encouraging and yet challenging'* (Task Force Report on the Traveller Community, 1995).

Apathy is likely, in part to be due to the inability of these young people to negotiate intrapersonal barriers. Also given the lower socio-economic profile of most Youthreach trainees it is likely that substantial structural barriers have limited their exposure to opportunities in recreation and leisure. When probed on the issue some of the young men in the Youthreach focus groups identified motor sport as an activity that they would like to join, money was the main barrier to participation. Other activities cited were paint-balling and overnight trips away (to be organised through the Youthreach centre).

CHAPTER 11: THE FREE TIME MOTIVATION SCALE

Cailín, trí bhliain déag d'aois, is ea Siún. Tá conaí uirthi ar oileán amach ó chósta iarthar na hÉireann. Is breá léi spórt a imirt. Imríonn sí peil ghaelach ar fhoireann a scoile agus lena cumann freisin. Bíonn orthu taisteal i mbád nó in eitleán nuair a bhíonn cluichí as baile á nimirt acu. Baineann siad an-sult as seo! Ba mhaith le Siún cluichí eile a thriail, ach is beag an réimse cluichí éagsúla eile atá ar fáil ar an oileán. D'fhoghlaim Siún scil na caoladoireachta ar scoil i rith an téarma seo caite. Baineann sí an-thaithneamh as an gcéird seo a chleachtadh mar chaitheamh aimsire. Chomh maith leis sin is maith le Siún cluichí cláir a imirt. Bíonn sí ag breathnú ar chláracha teilifíse sa trathnóna freisin.

Key Findings

- The vast majority of young people do what they do in their free time out of choice and for enjoyment rather than because of external pressures
- 5.3% of the sample are low in leisure motivation
- Those low in leisure motivation participate significantly less in hobbies, sports and community/charity groups than other, more motivated, young people

Theoretical Background and Development

The Free Time Motivation Scale (FTMS) for adolescents is a 20 item, self-report measure developed by Baldwin and Caldwell (2003) that examines reasons for engaging in free time activities. Motivation is measured at a contextual level rather than on specific free time activities. Respondents rate their level of agreement with various reasons for what young people do in their free time. Agreement is indicated using a 5 point Likert scale anchored from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

It follows the framework for measurement established by Ryan and Connell (1989) and Pelletier et al (1996). It was adapted from a number of leisure and motivation scales (Chatzisarantis, Biddle & Meek, 1997; Goudas, Biddle & Fox, 1994; Pelletier et al., 1996; Ryan & Connell ; Vallerand et al, 1982) and is based on self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci 2000). According to self-determination theory, the needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness are important for energising human action (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and influence motivation via cognitive processes such as perceived competence, performance pressure and task involvement. In addition, social factors and social environment positively, or negatively, influence these processes and a sequence can be depicted as:

social factors → psychological mediators → types of motivation → behavioural consequences

Social factors include interpersonal factors and factors such as success/failure, competition/cooperation, instructor behaviour. Psychological mediators include perceptions of competence, autonomy and relatedness as well as intrapersonal barriers such as perceived skills and competence. Types of motivation refer to those assessed by the FTMS, or similar scales, while the behavioural consequences refer to the participation levels in different types of leisure as well as affect, persistence and sportsmanship (Alexandris & Grouis, 2002; Vallerand & Losier, 1999). Social factors considered to be supportive of one's feelings of autonomy, competence and relatedness will have a positive bearing on motivation while events that exert a negative impact on one's perceptions of autonomy, competence and relatedness will undermine motivation (Vallerand & Losier, 1999).

The FTMS scale consists of 5 dimensions, each assessing different types of motivation (amotivation, extrinsic or external motivation, introjected motivation, identified motivation and intrinsic motivation) allowing for a more differentiated framework between the 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic' motivation. According to Baldwin and Caldwell (2002, p5) '*Intrinsic motivation refers to the natural and inherent tendency to seek out novelty, challenge, pursue interests and engage in activity as an end in itself. In contrast, extrinsic motivation refers to engagement in an activity as a means to an end or due to some external compulsion*'.

Extrinsic motivation increases the frequency of participation in leisure activities (Alexandris & Grouis, 2002) and can be seen where young people's motivation to participate is heavily influenced by the desire to achieve tangible rewards or forms of recognition (such as prizes or attention and praise from others) or due to pressure from or the expectations of others.

Intrinsic motivation, according to Alexandris & Grouis (2002), incorporates motivation to know (performing an activity for the satisfaction derived from learning, exploring or trying to understand new concepts/skills), motivation to accomplish things (engaging in an activity for the satisfaction experienced in attempting to reach personal objectives) and motivation toward experiencing stimulation (engaging in activities to experience stimulating sensations such as sensory pleasure, aesthetic experience, fun and excitement).

Introjected motivation refers to the internalisation of initially external reasons for participating in an activity. According to Vlachopoulos and colleagues (2000, p387-8) '*individuals impose pressure on themselves to engage in particular behaviours*'.

Identified motivation, on the other hand, denotes '*individuals who engage in behaviours they both value and consider important for their own personal development (ibid)*'. It is not fully developed until early adulthood (Baldwin & Caldwell, 2002).

At the opposite end of a continuum of self-determined behaviour to intrinsic motivation is 'amotivation', behaviour that is non-intentional and non-regulated. Amotivation has been reported to be negatively associated with optimal leisure experience as well as substance abuse, though in the case of the latter its unclear if amotivation causes the substance abuse or vice versa (Caldwell et al., 2004; Kowal & Fortier, 1999). This 'amotivated' category appears to correspond to the 'non-participants- no-interest' category identified by Jackson and Dunn (1988).

According to Alexandris and Grouis, (2002, p8) '*amotivated individuals are neither intrinsically nor extrinsically motivated. They do not perceive contingencies between their actions and the outcomes of these actions and their behaviour is out of their control*'. Amotivation has been reported to be the most powerful predictor of the frequency of sports participation (Alexandris & Grouis, 2002) and amotivated individuals are likely to drop out of sports and other organised activities (Fortier et al., 1995). As a consequence they may be described as young people 'low in leisure motivation', which is how we have referred to them earlier in this report.

Recent American research using the FTMS has shown that group intervention programmes can contribute to reductions in amotivation with young people being better able to negotiate and overcome leisure constraints (Caldwell et al., 2004).

FTMS Results

A subgroup of 121 (60m; 61f) young people are amotivated or low in leisure motivation, 5.3% of the total sample, are clearly discernable from the results on the amotivation dimension of the FTMS.

In contrast, 39.7% of the sample (n=898) score very low on this dimension, reflecting high motivation. Comparing these two groups, those who are low in leisure motivation are more likely to describe themselves as 'shy' compared to those who are highly motivated (40.8% n= 49 vs 23.7% n= 213). This suggests the role of personality characteristics though whether the shyness underpins the low levels of leisure motivation (i.e. amotivation) or vice-versa is unclear.

Table 69: Leisure Amotivated Respondents by Age and Gender

	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total
Male	2	9	12	12	14	8	3	60
Female	4	6	22	4	4	16	5	61
Total	6	15	34	16	18	24	8	121

Table 70: Leisure Motivated Respondents by Age & Gender

	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total
Male	46	103	77	76	67	61	15	445
Female	55	94	105	66	69	52	12	453
Total	101	197	182	142	136	113	27	898

From the figure below it is clear that across the age span, as a percentage proportion of their age group, there is a slight rise in the proportion of young people low in leisure motivation and a drop in the proportion of motivated young people. Only 44.1% of the sample are captured in the tables above and the figure below, the others in the sample fall in between the two extremes of amotivation and intrinsic motivation.

Figure 53: Leisure Amotivated Vs Intrinsically Motivated Respondents by Age

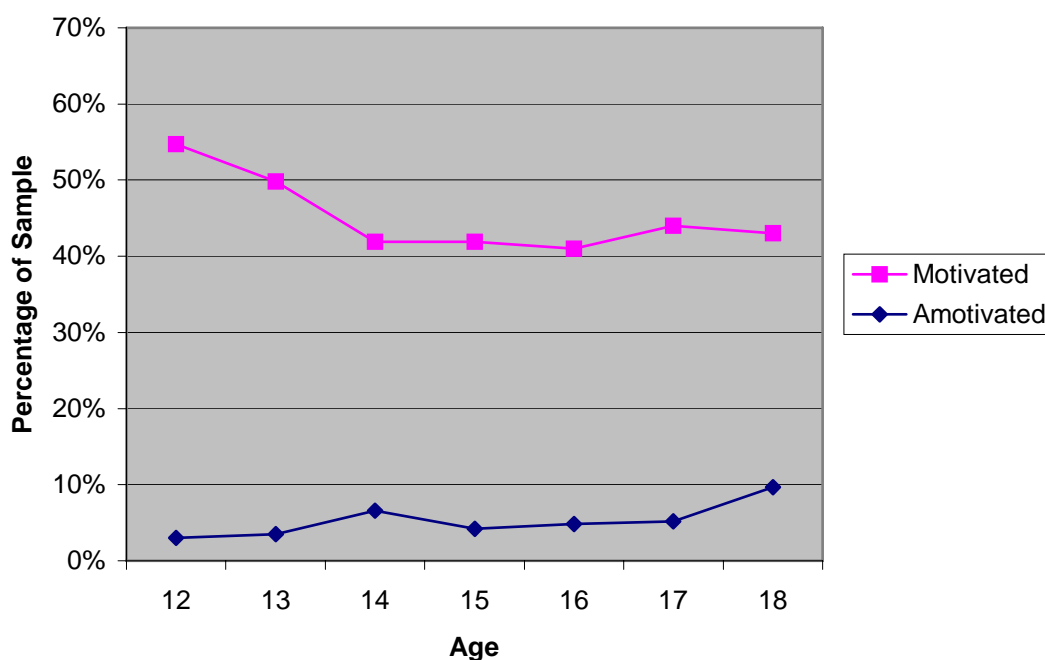


Table 71: Participation Levels: Leisure Amotivated Vs Rest of Sample

Participation	Amotivated n=121	Rest of Sample n=2020
Sports	67.7% n=82	94% n=845
Hobbies	54.5 n=66	70% n=629
Groups	18.1% n=22	38% n=342

Sports, Hobbies and Community/Charity Groups

Leisure amotivated young people are significantly *less* likely (Chi Sq. =13.024, df=3 p≤.005) than all other respondents to be involved in groups. Of the 121 amotivated young people, 81.8% are not involved in groups compared to 66.8% of the rest of the sample (n=2020).

Leisure amotivated young people are significantly *less* likely to report hobbies (Chi Sq.= 8.79, df=3, p≤0.03) than the rest of the sample (n=2020). Just under half of the leisure amotivated respondents (45%) report no hobbies compared to a third (33%) of the rest of the sample.

Leisure amotivated young people are significantly *less* likely to report sports (Chi Sq.= 63.5, df=3, p≤.001). Nearly a third (32.2%) of the amotivated respondents report no sport compared to 9.8% of the rest of the sample. Over three-quarters of the sample (85%; n=1925) score high on intrinsic motivation in contrast to 13% (n=28) who scored low. 14% (n=307) fall in between these two extremes. Little difference is evident between those who score high and low on this subscale in their participation in sport and hobbies though interestingly, those who score high on intrinsic motivation report less involvement in groups. However, the small number in the ‘intrinsic-low’ group may explain finding.

Table 72: Participation Levels: Intrinsic High Vs Low Respondents

Participation	Intrinsic High n=1925	Intrinsic Low n=28
Sports	89.4% n=1722	82% n=23
Hobbies	67.2% n=1294	64.2% n=18
Groups	33.2% n=641	67.8% n=19

Out of the total sample only 2.8% score high on external motivation compared to over half the sample (56%) who score low on it and over a third (40%) who fall in between the two extremes. Little difference is evident between those who score high and low on this subscale in their participation in sport, hobbies or groups.

Table 73: Participation Levels: Extrinsic High Vs Low Respondents

Participation	External High n=65	External Low n=1280
Sports	92.3% n=60	87.1% n=1115
Hobbies	72.3% n=47	65.6% n=840
Groups	35.3% n=23	33.2% n=426

These findings correspond with other research that has shown that motivation is associated with participation level and frequency of participation (Alexandris & Grouis, 2002; Pelletier et al., 1995).

As a consequence of the length and literacy demands of the questionnaire, it was not used with the young people at Youthreach centres and at the Traveller Community Resource Centre. As a consequence the quantitative research data lacks the inclusion of these groups. This is particularly salient with respect to the motivation measure (FTMS; Baldwin & Caldwell, 2003). From the focus groups with these young people it appears that these young people show low levels of motivation with respect to their leisure. If this is true, then the proportion of young people with lower levels of motivation (who are amotivated) are higher than what we estimated from the questionnaire research alone.

Table 74: Free Time Motivation Scale Items

<u>Amotivation</u>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
I don't know but it doesn't matter because I don't do much of anything	17.7%	16.5%	65.8%
I don't know, I have never really thought about it	30.5%	30.5%	39%
I don't know, nothing much interests me	13.8%	16.5%	69.7%
I don't know why I do my free time activities, and I don't really care	19.1%	19.4%	61.5%
 <u>External Motivation</u>			
I would get in trouble if I don't	9.1%	12.1%	78.8%
My parents expect me to	18%	13.8%	68.2%
I am supposed to	15.9%	18.4%	65.7%
That is the rule in my house	7.4%	8.6%	84.1%
So others won't get mad at me	13.5%	13%	73.5%
 <u>Introjected Motivation</u>			
I will feel badly about myself if I don't	25%	16.6%	58.4%
I want people to like me	27.8%	14%	58.2%
I want to impress my friends	12%	11.4%	76.7%
 <u>Identified Motivation</u>			
I want to understand how things work	52.2%	24.4%	23.4%
What I do is important to me	83.1%	10.8%	6.1%
The activities help me develop into the person I want to become	68.3%	21.2%	10.5%
I develop skills that I can use later in life	75.6%	14.6%	9.8%
 <u>Intrinsic Motivation</u>			
I like what I do	91.7%	5.3%	3%
I want to	87.1%	9.2%	3.7%
I enjoy what I do	93.4%	4.1%	2.5%
I want to have fun	94.6%	2.8%	2.6%

From the items on the external and introjected subscales, it is apparent that the vast majority do not do what they do in their free time because of pressure from others or guilt. A minority do however, report doing things in their free time because of pressure from or the expectations of others. Some of these pressures are interiorised.

In terms of intrinsic motivation, the vast majority spend their free time doing things they enjoy and like. A very small minority, however are not doing things in their free time for reasons of personal choice, enjoyment or fun.

With respect to the identified motivation items, the responses to these items are more spread out and less discerning; with 50% reporting that do what do they in their free-time to understand how things work. This was the item that respondents had the greatest difficulty understanding.

CHAPTER 12: OVERALL DISCUSSION

What do Irish young people do in their free time?

There are a number of free time activities that are close to universal across the adolescent population. Almost all young people watch television, listen to music, own a mobile telephone, go to the cinema and enjoy hanging around with their friends. Less pervasive, but still very popular, are leisure activities such as playing computer games, reading, going to discos and shopping. Just over half of Irish adolescents work part-time, including babysitting.

Sport is a leisure activity for the vast majority of young people. A large majority (88%) of the sample report involvement in at least one sport. This finding is comparable to statistics from other countries. The most popular sports are soccer and Gaelic football for males and basketball, Gaelic football and swimming for females. The benefits associated with involvement in sport are well documented; broadly they include enhanced physical and social well-being. This study did not investigate in detail the sports involvement of the sample, no differentiation was made between competitive and recreational participation, respondents were not asked to report on sports club membership, nor was any attempt made to assess the intensity or duration of the individuals exercise session. Further investigation into all of the above would enhance our understanding of the sporting involvement of Irish adolescents.

Most young people have at least one hobby. Just under two-thirds (65%) of the sample reported one or more hobbies. The most popular hobbies are playing a musical instrument, looking after pets and art/drawing. As with sports, hobbies contribute to self-development as well as enhancing well-being.

Far fewer young people are involved in groups/clubs than in sports and hobbies. Just under a third (32%) of the sample participate in one or more clubs/groups. The most popular clubs/groups were youth clubs/groups, choir/folk groups, voluntary work and scouts/guides. The relatively low involvement by Irish adolescents in clubs and groups is somewhat worrying. Membership of such community and charity groups has been linked to increased levels of 'social capital', self-esteem, citizenship and an increased likelihood of the person being involved in voluntarism as an adult (Kahn & Antonucci, 1989; Mc Gee et al., 2005). Involvement in community and charity groups has also been found to reduce school drop-out, particularly among those deemed to be at risk for early school leaving (Mahoney & Cairns, 1997).

Age features

Across the adolescent years there is a marked decline in participation in sports, hobbies and groups. This is in agreement with many past research studies. While experimentation with different activities is a feature of adolescence the level of drop-out is a concern particularly with respect to those who, by late adolescence are not committed to any sport, hobby or group. Participation in leisure activities has been identified as contributing to self-efficacy and self-worth, reducing the risk of involvement in deviant and anti-social behaviour and other developmental benefits (Dworkin, et al., 2003; Karvonen, et al., 2001). The health-related risks associated with reduced levels of physical activity are also of concern with young people who cease participation in sport and exercise (National Heart Alliance, 2001).

In contrast to the overall pattern of an age-related decrease in leisure activity involvement, listening to music and working part-time increase in frequency with age.

Gender features

Greater female participation in hobbies and groups and greater male participation in sports, especially team sports (while females reported more individual sports participation) are in agreement with past research. These findings may be due to gender socialisation, cultural values and sex-typing of activities among other factors.

Some of the most significant differences between the sexes include:

- Males play significantly more computer games
- Males work part-time more frequently
- Females read more frequently
- Females look at shops more often
- More females identified dance as a hobby
- More males identified pool/snooker as a hobby
- Females spend more time on homework and study
- Males enjoy competition more

In the smaller studies involving minority groups the gender differences mirrored those in the main sample. One striking exception is with the young people from the Traveller Community where sex-role stereotyping occurs from a very young age and appears to mitigate against females with regard to opportunities for active leisure. As identified in a past Task Force report *'Both the internal and the external discrimination experienced by Traveller women need urgent responses. For this to begin to happen such discrimination must be named in ways which do not further marginalise Traveller women'* (Task Force Report on Violence against Women, 1997).

Our research found no significant increase or decreases in the extent to which males and females participate in sex-typed activities across the adolescent years. Longitudinal research is required to further understanding of the relationship between gender and activity across childhood and adolescence in Ireland.

SES features

The limitations of the research with regard to the collection of data on SES should be borne in mind when considering the following findings.

Our findings suggest that young people from:

- higher SES groups read more frequently in their free time
- higher SES groups report more hobbies
- lower SES groups hang around outside more frequently
- lower SES groups do more part-time work
- lower SES groups experience more financial barriers
- lower SES groups report less for young people to do in their locality.

As a whole these findings reflect broad inequalities between the socio-economic groups, such findings are not surprising.

Past research has identified the cost of joining fees, equipment and travel as barriers to young people's participation in leisure (Christchurch City Council, 2001; Connor, 2003). The finding on part-time work corresponds with research by McCoy and Smyth (2004) and may reflect the proposition that relative deprivation is often an obstacle to, rather than a facilitator of, paid work for school age children (Mizen et al., 1999). Reading behaviour is associated with parental education level, which in turn is linked to parental occupation (Verbood, 2003).

Poor town planning with unequal provision of leisure facilities by socio-economic area no doubt contributes to unequal participation.

Barriers and Supports

The main purpose of this study is to explore the opportunities, barriers and supports that Irish young people experience with regard to leisure. To this end four sections of the research questionnaire (sections 3-6) are dedicated to obtaining information from young people on their opinions on and experience of barriers and supports.

The findings indicate that a majority of young people are fulfilled in their leisure time. Most engage in a range of activities (sports, hobbies and groups) as well as enjoying hanging out with their friends and doing less directed activities such as watching TV and listening to music. Young people indicate that what they do is done out of personal choice rather than as a result of parental or familial pressure. When asked what motivates them to do what they do in their free time, most young people report that they enjoy what they do, that they want to have fun and that what they choose to do is important to them. This indicates a high level of intrinsic motivation; very few appear to be extrinsically motivated, those who are, are in the early years of adolescence.

With regard to intrapersonal barriers there is a small, but significant, number of the sample who score low on leisure motivation, this sub-group are discussed in more detail below. The high numbers of young people who report dissatisfaction with their looks is worrying as body image is closely related to self-image and self-esteem, which in turn are related to an individual's experience of life. Low self-esteem is also a risk factor for depression.

In the interpersonal realm Irish young people appear to be well supported with regard to leisure. Almost all enjoy hanging out with their friends. Parental support, and to a lesser extent, familial support are high. Interestingly less than half of young people (48%) prefer activities where there is an instructor or leader. This latter finding, especially when coupled with the small numbers of young people who are members of clubs and groups, points to a potential issue with young people's experience of leaders. There is a need to further investigate these issues in future research.

Structural barriers are a broad category of physical or material constraints on leisure that can impact on a person's participation (or non-participation). Our findings show that 15% of young people do not have enough money to join the leisure activities that they would like to join. A lack of money is a difficult barrier to mediate on an individual level with regard to leisure, as young people do not generally have control

of household finances and where money is scarce leisure pursuits are unlikely to be prioritised. At community level, particularly in areas of high disadvantage, leisure activities for young people should be free or heavily subsidised and matched to their leisure interests. Allied to this, young people from lower socio-economic groups are more likely to report that there is little for them to do in their area.

Time constraints increase substantially with age across the adolescent years. Outside of the amount of time spent in school many adolescents spend large amounts of time studying and doing homework (particularly females) and in part-time work (particularly males).

Older adolescents and rural dwellers disproportionately experience transport difficulties. Weather is a barrier to outdoor recreation for one in five of the sample.

Motivation

Given that a small number (6%) of the sample are low in leisure motivation (i.e. 'leisure amotivated') and participate little in sports, hobbies or groups, this research highlights the need for support mechanisms to nurture and bolster leisure motivation in children and young people. Youth programmes have in the past focused heavily on risk reduction, prevention and positive youth development curricula, with leisure as a component. Current research though is looking at leisure education youth programmes as a means of empowering young people for the constructive use of their free time and meaningful leisure activity. Interestingly, as far back as 1912, the educationalist John Dewey advocated the importance of educating youth for wise use of their leisure time. One example of a leisure education programme is 'Timewise' recently developed and evaluated in America and currently under research investigation in Germany and South Africa. .

The 'Timewise: Learning lifelong leisure skills curriculum', developed by Caldwell and colleagues (2004), attempts to increase positive free time use and to mitigate substance use and abuse. A key focus of the programme is boredom reduction and the enhancement of a sense of interest in one's free time use. To achieve this it tries to assist young people to internalise extrinsically motivated 'developmentally healthy' behaviours. The programme consists of six core areas, helping young people to (a) determine personally satisfying and meaningful leisure activities and interests (b) understand the benefits of participating in healthy leisure (c) understand how one's motivation affects one's experience and participation in healthy behaviours (d) alleviate boredom and increase optimal experience in leisure time (e) learn how to take responsible action to participate in desired activities and (f) identify and overcome constraints to participation (Caldwell, Baldwin, Walls & Smith, 2004; Caldwell, 2005). Research so far (Caldwell et al., 2004) indicates that young people who received this curriculum report being less amotivated and more motivated for leisure by identified and introjected forms of motivation. They report being better able to restructure boring situations to make them more interesting, having better decision-making skills, initiative, community awareness and participation in new interests, sports and nature based activities (ibid). While the research into this is still in its infancy, the initial trends suggest that programmes addressing leisure education with children and young people may be a worthwhile avenue for policy consideration.

Early school leavers report little participation in hobbies, sports or clubs/groups. Of concern is the frequency with which these young people, in a number of different focus groups, spoke of 'being barred' from various pool halls, cinemas and other venues leaving them with nothing to do except to hang-around.

What do young people drop out of and why?

This study investigates adolescent drop out from leisure time activities with a view to gaining insight into the opportunities, barriers and supports young people experience in leisure from this perspective. Dropping out of activities is a natural part of adolescence; research has shown that young people are likely to drop particular activities as particular development needs are met (Kleiber, et al., 1986; Kelly, 1987).

Three quarters of young people report that they have dropped out of an activity. Dance (predominantly Irish dance), basketball, drama and music are reported most commonly by females. Males report dropping out of soccer, martial arts and swimming.

The most common reason cited for drop out is losing interest in the activity. Again, this concurs with the research studies mentioned above that young people 'out grow' activities as they mature. For most individuals a small number of the leisure pursuits they engage in as adolescents will be carried forward into adulthood.

Other reasons for drop out include, in order of importance, time, not liking the leader, skill level, friends dropping out, rules, age and cost. All of these barriers were discussed in Chapter 7. This study allows for examination of reasons for drop out by activity. Some interesting findings emerge here with quite varying profiles for different activities. Those involved in organising activities for adolescents may be interested in the findings relating to their particular activity.

What would young people like to do in their free time?

As with drop out, a section on what young people would like to join was included in the questionnaire to better inform our understanding of the complex opportunities, barriers and supports that young people encounter with regard to leisure. In this section respondents were given free reign and encouraged to include any leisure time activity that they would like to join or would have liked to join in the past.

Almost three quarters of respondents expressed a desire to join a new activity. The spread of activities cited is over seventy-five. However, the top eight most popular responses in which there are significant gender differences accounts for 50% of all responses. Males almost all express a desire to join a sport, in particular soccer, rugby, boxing, hurling and Gaelic football. Responses from females have a greater range, spanning sports, hobbies and groups. The top five responses for females in this section are dance, drama, swimming, soccer and youth club/group.

The reasons for not joining the activity cited vary by activity, and, as with drop out, will inform providers of each of the activities covered in Chapter 9. The most common reason for not joining a new activity is that the location of the activity didn't suit. While adults can often overcome geographical barriers, adolescents seldom have the private transport to travel to leisure activities and so are dependent on parents,

friends' parents or public transport. From the focus groups we note that transport difficulties impact disproportionately on young people with physical disabilities and those with special needs.

Other barriers to joining include not knowing anyone else doing it, not knowing how to join, times not suiting, not having good enough skills, cost and age.

This is an important section from a policy perspective and two of the key findings below have been drawn from this section. We would, however, caution against using only these findings to inform decisions with regard to provision. Local peculiarities will exist in all communities and these will affect the potential success of any intervention or provision. We recommend that needs assessments be carried out, as a matter of policy, in any community before funding is allocated for provision.

Young people with additional needs

Notwithstanding this study's restricted sample of young people with additional needs and the obvious need for further research with such young people, this study recommends attention to be paid to the principle of 'reasonable accommodation' in leisure provision. This principle is well established in employment law. The Employment Equality Act provides for reasonable accommodation in the following way. *'For the purposes of this Act, a person who has a disability shall not be regarded as other than fully competent to undertake and fully capable of undertaking any duties if with the assistance of special treatment or facilities such persons would be fully competent to undertake...such duties'* (Section 16 (3)). The cost of the provision of the 'special treatment or facilities' must be 'nominal' if it is to be reasonable.

The principle of reasonable accommodation is complex and has been the cause of reference to the Supreme Court of the Employment Equality Bill. Despite all the complexities associated with this principle, the importance and value of serious consideration and action towards the application of this principle across the leisure sector cannot be overemphasised. Ideally, the law in relation to leisure provision should track employment law.

Strengths and Limitations of the Research Study

From their experience of both data collection and input, the researchers believe that the respondents positively engaged in the study. This can be seen in the high completion rate of the full questionnaire and the low number of spoilt questions. The smaller studies had similarly high levels of engagement.

The cell number of the 18-year-old group is small (n=81) relative to all the other age groups. As a consequence caution needs to be exercised in interpreting the 18 year-old data.

The questionnaire was anchored in theoretical frameworks and past research (the leisure constraints and supports framework developed by Raymore et al., 1993, 1994 and Jackson & Rucks, 1995; Self determination theory Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Baldwin & Caldwell, 2003 and constraints research by Hultsman, 1992).

As a consequence the data can be discussed in the context of such theories and research. The questionnaire was pilot tested. The final themes and patterns from the data were explored further in focus groups.

The questionnaires were anonymous and the young people were instructed about the study and encouraged to be honest. Respondents may however still have wanted to '*present themselves in the best light*' and thus may have reported more hobbies, sports etc than they actually do. The class groups completed the questionnaires as a whole and although students were instructed not to discuss or show their questionnaires to each other while completing them, the presence of others may have compromised the validity of some of the answers given.

Convergent validity is present in that the major findings (gender and age differences) are consistent with past research in this field. The questionnaire also had face validity and was meaningful for young people. Clear instructions assisted with this. In general, only a small number of young people had difficulties with any of the items. Caution does however need to be exercised around the accuracy of the SES scores, as certain information was not asked e.g. acreage of farms, rank of Garda. Also many respondents reported non-specific occupation ranks such as 'manager'.

The combination of a survey, focus groups and interviews allowed for a useful and informative combination of quantitative and qualitative findings. In addition the use of a motivation scale (the FTMS) enabled the intrapersonal measure of motivation, (which may serve as a barrier or support to leisure behaviour) to be explored in relation to survey data.

The geographic spread of the sample, across all 26 counties of Ireland, ensures that all regions of the country are represented and that no region receives an unfair bias.

The inclusion of some minority groups gives an insight into the leisure of young people whose needs and background may contribute to differences from the majority in the experience of leisure. The sub-samples of young people from these minority groups should not however be taken as representative in the way that the main sample is. The research undertaken in these sub-studies was designed to broaden the sample such that minority groups were assured a voice. The findings from these sub-studies may serve as signposts for future research.

A number of other minority groups were not included in the focus groups including young people who are asylum seekers or refugees and young people in State care. Some members of these groups may have been captured in the main study. Future research on the leisure experience of such groups would be valuable additions to this research report.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research study provides core quantitative data across the entire domain of youth leisure in the Irish Republic. There is now a need for more in-depth, follow-on research to explore many of the key findings of this study.

In particular the following areas should be explored:

1. Local needs analyses to determine the leisure preferences of young people.
2. Low motivation for positive leisure participation in a minority of Irish youth.
3. Body image, self-concept and self-esteem and their relationship to leisure participation.
4. The prevalence and experience of 'being barred' in Irish youth.
5. Physical education in school; its role in enhancing physical activity in adulthood.
6. Young people leading young people in leisure activities.

REFERENCES

- Aaron, D.J., Sorti, K. L., Robertson, R. J., Kriska, A. M. and LaPorte, R.E. (2002) Longitudinal Study of the Number and Choice of Leisure Time Physical Activities from Mid to Late Teens; Implications for school Curricula and Community Recreation Programs *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, 156, Nov. 1075-1080.
- Aaron, D.J., Sorti, K.L., Kriska, A.M., Hindes, K.M., Murray, P.A. and LaPorte, R.E. (2002). Decline in Physical Activity from Adolescence to Young Adulthood: Physical Activity in Young Adults Study. *Medicine and Science in Sport and Exercise*, **34**, 5, 254.
- Adams, G.R., Shea, J. & Fitch, S.A. (1979). Toward the development of an objective assessment of ego-identity status. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, **8**, 223-237.
- Agnew, R., & Petersen, D.M. (1989) Leisure and delinquency. *Social Problems*, **36**, 332-350.
- Ainsworth, M.D. (1990). Some considerations regarding theory and assessment relevant to attachments beyond infancy. In M.T. Greenberg, D. Cicchetti & E.M. Cummings (Eds.) *Attachment in the preschool years: Theory, research and intervention* (p463-488). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ainsworth, M.D., Blehar, M.C., Waters, C.E. & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment*. New York: Wiley.
- Alexandris, K., & Grouis, G. (2002). Perceived constraints on recreational sport participation: investigating their relationship with intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation. *Journal of Leisure Research*, **34**, 3, 233-253.
- Allen, L., Cipielewski, J. & Stanovich, K.E. (1992). Multiple indicators of children's reading habits and attitudes: Construct validity and cognitive correlates. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, **84**, 489-503.
- Aoki, K. & Downes, E. (2003). An analysis of young people's use of and attitudes towards cell phones. *Telematics and Informatics* **20**, 4, 349-364.
- Ananova, (2001). Teenagers to get free mobile phones to improve literacy standards (online) [cited 7 August2001], 18 February 2001. Available from http://www.ananova.com/news/story/sm_211754.html>.
- Ary, D.V., Duncan, T.E., Duncan, S.C. & Hops, H. (1999). Adolescent problem behaviour: The influence of parents and peers. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, **37**, 217-230.
- Argyle, M. (1992). *The social psychology of everyday life*. London: Routledge.
- Arnett, J.J. (1995). Adolescent's use of media for self-socialisation. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 24, 5, 519-533.

- Arnett, J. J., Larson, R., and Offer, D. (1995). Beyond effects: Adolescents as active media users. *J. Youth Adolesc.* 24(5): 511-518.
- Arnett, J. (1999). Adolescent storm and stress, reconsidered. *American Psychologist*, 54, 317-326.
- Bachman, J.G. & Schulenberg, J. (1993). How Part-Time Work Intensity Relates to Drug Use, Problem Behaviour, Time Use, and Satisfaction Among High School Seniors: Are These Consequences or Merely Correlates? *Developmental Psychology*, 29, 2, 220-235.
- Baldwin, C.K. & Caldwell, L.L. (2003). Development of the free time motivation scale for adolescents. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 35, 2, 129-52.
- Barber, J.G. (2001). Relative misery and youth suicide. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 35, 49-57.
- Barber, B.L., Eccles, J.S. & Stone, M.R. (2001). Whatever happened to the Jock, the Brain and the Princess? Young adult pathways linked to adolescent activity involvement and social identity. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 16, 429-455.
- Bartko, W.T. & Eccles, J.S. (2003). Adolescent participation in structured and unstructured activities: a person-oriented analysis. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 32, 4, 233-242.
- Basketball Ireland (2005). Personal correspondence.
- Beck, A.M. & Meyers, N.M. (1991). The pet as an anxiolytic intervention. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 179, 482-489.
- Bedini, L.A. (2000). 'Just sit down so we can talk'. Perceived stigma and community recreation pursuits of people with disabilities. *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*, 34, 55-68.
- Benson, P. L. (1991). *The Troubled Journey: A Profile of American Youth*. Research Institute, Minneapolis, MN.
- Berry, H. (2002). Young people's access to social, cultural and leisure opportunities. Edinburgh: EYSIP.
- Biddle, S.J., Fox, K. & Boutcher, S.H. (2000). *Physical activity and psychological well-being*, Routledge, London.
- Biddle, S. & Mutrie, N. (2001).. *Psychology of physical activity*. London: Routledge.
- Burke, R., and Grinder, R. E. (1966). Personality-oriented themes and listening patterns in teen-age music and their relation to certain academic and peer variables. *School Rev.* 74: 196-211.

- Blomqvist, K.B., Brown, G., Peersen, A. & Presler, E.P. (1998). Transitioning to independence: Challenges for young people with disabilities and their caregivers. *Orthopaedic Nursing*, **3**, 27-35.
- Boneva, B., Kraut, R., & Frohlich, D. (2001). Using e-mail for personal relationships the difference gender makes. *American Behavioral Scientist*, **45**, 530–549.
- Borbely, A.A., Huber, R., Graf, T., Fuchs, B., Gallman, E. & Achermann, P. (1999). Pulsed high-frequency electromagnetic field effects human sleep and sleep electroencephalogram. *Neuroscience Letters* **275**, 207–210.
- Brown, B. B. (1990). Peer groups and peer cultures. In Feldman, S. S., and Elliot, G. R. (eds.), *At the Threshold: The Developing Adolescent*. Harvard Press, Cambridge, MA, pp. 171-196.
- Buckworth, J. & Dishman, R.K. (2002). *Exercise Psychology*. Champaign, IL.: Human Kinetics.
- Buckworth, J. & Nigg, C. (2004). Physical activity, exercise, and sedentary behavior in college students. *Journal of American College Health*, **53**,1, 28-35.
- Buhrmester, D. (1996). Need fulfilment, interpersonal competence and the developmental contexts of early adolescent friendship. In W.M. Bukowski, A.F. Newcomb & W.W. Hartup (Eds.) *The company they keep: Friendship in childhood and adolescence*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Burn, S. M., O'Neil, A. K., & Nederend, S. (1996). Childhood tomboyism and adult androgyny. *Sex Roles*, **34**, 419-428.
- Bryant, B. (1985). The neighborhood walk: Sources of support in mid-childhood. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, **3**, Serial No. 210.
- Caldwell, L. (2005). Final report, R21 DA13193. Personal Correspondence.
- Caldwell, L. & Baldwin, C. (2005). A developmental approach to understanding adolescent leisure. In Jackson, E. (Ed) *Constraints to Leisure*. *In Press*.
- Caldwell, L.L., Baldwin, C.K., Walls, T. & Smith, E. (2004). Preliminary effects of a leisure education program to promote healthy use of free time among middle school adolescents. *Journal of Leisure Research*, **36**, 3, 310-336.
- Caldwell, L.L., Baldwin, C.K., Smith, E. & Boone, T. (2002). *TimeWise – Learning lifelong leisure skills; Conceptualization and preliminary evidence for a new substance abuse prevention program*. Pacific Rim Conference on Leisure Education., Honolulu, January 2002.
- Caldwell, L.L. & Darling, N. (1999). Leisure context, parental control and resistance to peer pressure as predictors of adolescent partying and substance use; An ecological perspective. *Journal of Leisure Research*, **31**, 57-77.

- Caldwell, L.L., Darling, N., Payne, L. & Dowdy, B. (1999). 'Why are you bored'? An examination of psychological and social control causes of boredom among adolescents *Journal of Leisure Research*, **31**, 103-121.
- Caldwell, L.L., Smith, E.A., & Weissinger, E. (1992). Development of a leisure experience battery for adolescence; Parsimony, stability and validity. *Journal of Leisure Research*, **24**, 361-376.
- Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. (1992). A matter of time: Risk and opportunity in the nonschool hours. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York.
- Catalano, R., Berglund, M., Ryan, J., Lonczak, H. & Hawkins, D. (1999). Positive Youth Development in the United States: Research Findings on Evaluations of Positive Youth Development Programs. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Seattle, WA. Cited in Dworkin, J.B., Larson, R. & Hansen, D. (2003). Adolescents' accounts of growth experiences in youth activities. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, **32**, 1,17-27.
- Chan, C.G. & Elder, G.H. (2001). Family influences on the social participation of youth: the effects of parental social involvement and farming. *Rural Sociology*, **66**, 22-42.
- Chatzisarantis, N. L. D., Biddle, S. J. H., & Meek, G. A. (1997). A self-determination theory approach to the study of intentions and the intention-behaviour relationship in children's physical activity. *British Journal of Health Psychology*, **2**, 343-360.
- Charlton, T., Panting, C., Hannan, A., 2002b. Mobile telephone ownership and usage among 10- and 11-year-olds: participation and exclusion. *Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties* **7** (3), 152-163.
- Child Accident Prevention Trust (2002). Taking chances: The lifestyles and leisure risk of young people. London: CAPT.
- Christchurch City Council (2001) *Youth Recreation and Sport Forum Report* Christchurch, New Zealand.
- Christenson, P. G. & Peterson, J. (1988). Genre and gender in the structure of music preferences. *Community Research*, **15**, 282-301.
- Cleary, A., Corbett, M., Galvin, M. & Wall, J. (2004). *Young men on the margins*. Dublin: The Katherine Howard Foundation.
- Cleary, A. & Prizeman, G. (1999). Homelessness and mental health. Dublin: Combat Poverty/ Homelessness and Mental Health Action Group.
- Coleman, J.C. & Hendry, L.B. (1999). *The nature of adolescence*. London: Routledge.

- Coffield, F., Borrill, C. & Marshall, S. (1986). *Growing up at the margins*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Coley, R.L., Morris, J.E. & Hernandez, D. (2004). Out-of-school care and problem behaviour trajectories among low-income adolescents: Individual, family and neighbourhood characteristics as added risks. *Child Development*, *75*, 3, 948-965.
- Connor, S. (2003). *Youth sport in Ireland: The sporting, leisure and lifestyle patterns of Irish adolescents*. Dublin: The Liffey Press.
- Connolly, J.F. & Lester, D. (2000). Suicide rates in Irish Counties. *Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine*, *17*, 2, 59-61.
- Cork Association for the Deaf (2005). Personal correspondence.
- Crawford, D.W., & Godbey, G. (1987). Reconceptualizing barriers to family leisure. *Leisure Sciences*, *9*, 119-127.
- Crawford, D.W., & Huston, T.L. (1993). The impact of the transition to parenthood on marital leisure. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *19*, 39-46.
- Crawford, D., Jackson, E. & Godbey, G. (1991). A hierarchical model of leisure constraints. *Leisure Sciences*, *13*, 309-320.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. & Larson, R. (1984). *Being adolescent: Conflict and growth in the teenage years*. New York: Basic Books.
- D'Amico, R. (1984). Does employment during high-school impair academic progress? *Sociology of Education*, *57*, 152-164.
- Davie, R., Panting, C. & Charlton, T. (2004) Mobile phone ownership and usage among pre-adolescents. *Telematics and Informatics*, *21*, 359-373.
- Deci, E.L. & Ryan, R.M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behaviour*. New York: Plenum.
- Department of Education and Science, (2003). *National Youth Work Development Plan*, Dublin, Stationary Office.
- Department of Health and Children, (2000). *Our Children – Their Lives; The National Children's Strategy*, Dublin, Stationary Office
- (2000). *The National Health Promotion Strategy 2000-2005*, Dublin, Stationary Office
- (1999). *The National Health Promotion Strategy 2000-2006*. Government of Ireland, Dublin

- Dept. of Public Health- Health Service Executive Southern Area (2005). Our children...their future, why weight ? . Cork: Dept. of Public Health- Health Service Executive Southern Area.
- Dept. for Victorian Communities (2003). Speak out about sport. Victoria: Office for Youth.
- Devine, M.A. (2004). Being a 'doer' instead of a 'viewer': the role of inclusive leisure contexts in determining social acceptance for people with disabilities. *Journal of Leisure Research*, **36**, 2, 137-60.
- Dishman, R.K., Sallis, J.F. & Orenstein, D.R. (1985). The determinants of physical activity and exercise. *Public Health Reports*, 100, 158-171.
- Dolan, P. (2005) Helping Young People at Risk through Social Support: NYP Youth Study Summary Report - Commissioned by Foróige/HSE Western Region, a Foróige Publication.
- Dowda, M., Pate, R.R., Felton, G.M., Saunders, R., Ward, D.S., Dishman, R.K. & Trost, S.G. (2004). Physical activities and sedentary pursuits in African American and Caucasian girls. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, **75**, 4, 352-3661.
- Dubas, J. S. & Snider, B. A. (1993). The role of community-based youth groups in enhancing learning and achievement through non-formal education. In Lerner, R. M. (Ed.), *Early Adolescence: Perspectives on Research, Policy, and intervention*. Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ, pp. 150-174.
- de Róiste, Á. (2000). Peer and parent-related loneliness in Irish adolescents. *Irish Journal of Psychology*, **21**,3-4, 237-246.
- Dietz, W.H. & Gortmaker, S.L. (1985). Do we fatten our children at the television set? Obesity and television viewing in children and adolescents. *Pediatrics*, **75**, 807-812.
- Duncan, S.C., Duncan, T.E. & Strycker, L.A. (2000). Risk and protective factors influencing adolescent problem behaviour: A multivariate latent growth curve analysis. *Annals of Behavioural Medicine*, **22**, 103-109.
- Driver, B. L. (1992). The benefits of leisure. *Parks and Recreation*, **27**, 16-23.
- Dworkin, J.B., Larson, R. & Hansen, D. (2003). Adolescents' accounts of growth experiences in youth activities. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, **32**, 1,17-27.
- Dyer, P., 1997. Households without telephone in the UK. *Telecommunications Policy* **21**, 341-353.
- Eccles, J. S. & Barber, B. L. (1999). Student council, volunteering, basketball, or marching band: What kind of extracurricular matters? *Journal of Adolescent Research*, **14**, 10-43.

- Eccles, J.S. & Harold, R.D. (1991). Gender differences in sport involvement: Applying the Eccles' Expectancy-value model. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, **3**, 7-35.
- Eck, L.H., Klesges, R.C., Hanson, C.L. & Slawson, D. (1992). Children at familial risk for obesity: An examination of dietary intake, physical activity and weight status. *International Journal of Obesity*, **16**, 71-78.
- Eckert, P. (1999). *Jocks and burnout: Social categories and identity in high school*. New York: Teacher College Press.
- Edinburgh and East of Scotland Deaf Society (2001). *Access all areas: A report on access to social, cultural and leisure opportunities for young deaf people*. Edinburgh: EYSIP.
- Edwards, L. & Hatch, B. (2003). *Passing Time: A report about young people and communities*. London: IPPR.
- Erikson, E. (1968). *Identity, youth and crisis*. London: Faber & Faber.
- ESPAD (European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs). (2003). In National Children's Office (2004). *Scoping Document*.
- European Union, White Paper on Youth. Available from europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/cha/c11605
- Fahey, T., Layte, R. & Gannon, B. (2004). *Sports participation and health among adults in Ireland*. Dublin: ESRI.
- Fine, G.A., Mortimer, J.T. & Roberts, D.F. (1990). Leisure, work and the mass media. In Feldman, S.S. & Elliott, G.R. (eds.) *At the Threshold: The developing adolescent*. Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.
- Foróige (2005) Annual report and personal correspondance.
- Fortier, M., Vallerand, R., Briere, N. & Provencher, P. (1995). Competitive and recreational sport structures and gender: A test of their relationship with sport motivation. *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, **26**, 24-39.
- Fox, K., 2001. Evolution, alienation and gossip social issues research centre (online) [cited 20 February 2002]. Available from <<http://www.sirc.org/publik/gossip.shtml>>.
- Fuligni, A.J. & Eccles, J.S. (1993). Perceived parent-child relationships and early adolescents' orientation towards peers. *Developmental Psychology*, **29**, 4, 622-632.
- Furlong, A., Campbell, R. & Roberts, K. (1990). The effects of experiences and social class on the leisure patterns of young adults. *Leisure Studies*, **9**, 213-224.
- Furlong, A. & Cartmel, F. (1997). *Young people and social change. Individualization and risk in late modernity*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

- Gaelic Athletic Association (2005). Personal correspondence.
- Galbo, J.J. (1986). Adolescents' perceptions of significant adults: implications for the family, school and youth servicing agencies. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *8*, 37-51.
- Garton, A.F. & Pratt, C. (1991). Leisure activities of adolescent school students: Predictors of participation and interest. *Journal of Adolescence*, *14*, 305-320.
- Gantz, W., Gartenberg, H., Pearson, M., and Schiller, S. (1978). Gratifications and expectations associated with popular music among adolescents. *Popular Music Soc.* *6*, 1.: 81-89.
- Gilligan, R. (2000). Adversity, resilience and young people: the protective value of positive school and spare time experiences. *Children and Society*, *14*, 37-47.
- Glendinning, A., Hendrey, L. & Shucksmith, J. (1995). Lifestyle, health and social class in adolescence. *Social Science & Medicine*, *41*, 235-248.
- Goudas, M., Biddle, S., & Fox, K. (1994). Perceived locus of causality, goal orientations, and perceived competence in school physical education classes. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *64*, 453-463.
- Griffiths, M.D., Davies, M.N. & Chappell, D. (2004). Online computer gaming: a comparison of adolescent and adult gamers. *Journal of Adolescence*, *27*, 87-96
- Government of Ireland (2001) Youth Work Act, 2001: 42.
- (1997) Report of the Task Force on Violence Against Women. Dublin:Office of the Tanaiste
- (1995): Task Force Report on the Traveller People. Dublin.
- Gullotta, T.P., Adams, G.R. & Markstrom, C.A. (1999). The adolescent experience. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Hagerty Davis, J. & McCreary Juhasz, A. (1985). The preadolescent/pet bond and psychosocial development. *Marriage and Family Review*, *8*,5-10.
- Hamburg, D.A. & Takanishi, R. (1989). Preparing for life: the critical transition of adolescence. *American Psychologist*, *44*, 5, 825-827.
- Hanna, J.L. (1988). Dance and stress. Resistance, reduction and euphoria. New York: AMS Press Inc.
- Harrington, V., Mayhew, P., 2001. Mobile Phone Theft. Home Office, London.
- Hart, D. & Fegley, S. (1995). Prosocial behaviour and caring in adolescence: relations to self-understanding and social judgement. *Child Development*, *22*, 157-162.

- Hartup, W.W. (1996). The company they keep: Friendships and their developmental significance. *Child Development*, **67**, 1-13.
- Health Promotion Unit (1998), *The National Health and Lifestyle Surveys*, Results of the National Health and Lifestyle Surveys; SLÁN (Survey of Lifestyle, Attitudes and Nutrition) and HBSC (Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children), Dublin
- Henderson, K.A., Stalnaker, D. & Taylor, G. (1988). The relationship between barriers to recreation and gender-role personality traits for women. *Journal of Leisure Research*, **20**, 1, 69-80.
- Hendry, L. B. (1989). The influence of adults and peers on adolescents' lifestyles and leisure styles. In K. Hurrelmann and U. Engel (Eds.) *The social world of adolescents: International perspectives*. Berlin: Walter de Gry.
- Hendry, L. B., Shucksmith, J., Love, J.G. & Glendinning, A. (1993). *Young people's leisure and lifestyles*. (YPPL study) London: Routledge.
- Herberger, R. (1987). The degree of attractiveness to 15-year-old high school students in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) of different styles, genres, and trends of contemporary music--Results of a factor analysis. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, **91**, 70-76.
- Ho, S. M. Y., & Mclee, T. (2001). Computer usage and its relationship with adolescent lifestyle in Hong Kong. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, **29**, 258-266.
- Hocking, B., 1998. Preliminary report: symptoms associated with mobile phone use. *Occupational Medicine*, **48**, 357-360.
- Howard, D. & Crompton, J. (1984). Who are the consumers of public park and recreation services ? An analysis of the users and non-users of three municipal leisure service organizations. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, **2,3**, 33-48.
- Hultsman, W.Z. (1992). Constraints to Activity Participation in Early Adolescence. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, **12**, 3, 280-299.
- Ingledeu, D.K. and Sullivan, G., (2002). Effects of body mass and body image on exercise motives in adolescence, *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, **3**, 4, 323-338
- Irish Girl Guides (2005) Personal correspondence.
- Irish Sport's Council, (2003). *'Sport for life'; The Irish Sport's Council Statement of Strategy 2003-2005*, Dublin, Stationary Office
- Irish Traveller Movement (2002). End of The Road? Report on the socio-economic consequences of The Control of Horses Act 1996 on the Traveller Community. Dublin:ITM.

- Iso-Ahola, S. (1980). *The social psychology of leisure and recreation*. Dubuque, IL: W.C.Brown.
- Jackson, E.L. & Dunn, E. (1988). Integrating ceasing participation with other aspects of leisure. *Journal of Leisure Research*, *20*, 1, 31-45.
- Jackson, E.L. & Rucks, V.C. (1995). Negotiation of leisure constraints by junior-high and high-school students: An exploratory study. *Journal of Leisure Research*, *27*, 85-105.
- Jackson, L. A., Ervin, K. S., Gardner, P. D., & Schmitt, N. (2001). Gender and the internet women communicating and men searching. *Sex Roles*, *44*, 363–379.
- Jacobs, J. E., Lanza, S., Osgood, D. W., Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2002). Changes in children's self competence and values: Gender and domain differences across grades one through twelve. *Child Development*, *73*, 509-527.
- James, K. (1993). The activity predilections of high-school girls: Case studies profiling Western Australian girls use of out-of-school time. In .A.Broag, C. Lamond & E.Sun (Eds.). *The Australian and New Zealand Assoc. for Leisure Studies Conference*, Griffith University, April 14th-16th (cited in Patterson).
- James, K. (1998). Deterrents to active recreation participation: Perceptions of year 10 girls. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*, *8*, 3, 183-189.
- James, K. (2001). 'I just gotta have my own space!': The bedroom as a leisure site for adolescent girls. *Journal of Leisure Research*, *33*, 1, 71-90.
- Jarrett, R. L. (1998). African American children, families, and neighborhoods: Qualitative contributions to understanding developmental pathways. *Applied Developmental Science*, *2*, 2-16.
- Johansen, C., Boice, J.D., McLaughlin, J.K., Olsen, J.H., 2001. Cellular telephones and cancer—a nationwide cohort study in Denmark. *Journal of National Cancer Institute*, *91*, 203–207.
- Jones, T., Duffy, P., Dinneen, J. and Murphy, G. (1991) *Girls and Boys Come Out to Play*, Physical Education Association of Ireland, Limerick.
- Kahn, R.L. & Antonucci, T.C. (1980). Convoys over the life course: attachment, roles and social support. In P.B. Baltes & O.G. Brim (Eds.) *Life-span Development and Behaviour*, vol. 3. New York: Academic Press.
- Karvonen, S., West, P., Sweeting, H., Rahkonen, O. & Young, R. (2001). Lifestyle, social class and health-related behaviour: A cross-cultural comparison of 15 year olds in Glasgow and Helsinki. *Journal of Youth Studies*, *4*,4, 393-413.
- Katz, C. (1998). Disintegrating developments: global economic restructuring and the eroding ecologies of youth (p130-144). In T. Skelton and G. Valentine (Eds) *Cool places: geographies of youth cultures*. London: Routledge.

- Katz, J.E., & Aakhus, M. (2002). *Perpetual Contact. Mobile Communication, Private Talk, Public Performance*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Katz, P., & Ksansnak, K. (1994). Developmental aspects of gender role flexibility and traditionality in middle childhood and adolescence. *Developmental Psychology*, **30**, 272-282.
- Kelly, J.R. (1987). *Freedom to be. A new sociology of leisure*. New York: Macmillan.
- Kennedy, D.W., Smith, R.W. & Austin, D.R. (1991). *Special recreation- Opportunities for persons with disabilities*. New York: Brown Publications.
- King, J., Bond, T., & Blandford, S. (2002). An investigation of computer anxiety by gender and grade. *Computers in Human Behavior*, **18**, 69–84.
- Kleiber, D.A., Larson, R. & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1986). The experience of leisure in adolescence. *Journal of Leisure Research*, **18**, 3,169-176.
- Kowal, J. & Fortier, M.S. (1999). Motivational determinants of flow; contributions from self-determination theory. *Journal of Social Psychology*, **139**, 355-368.
- Kowalski, A.P., Crocker, P.R.E. and Kowalski, K.C., (2000). The physical self and physical activity relationships in college women: Does social physique anxiety moderate effects. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*. **3**, 1, 55-62
- Larson, R. (1994). Youth organisations, hobbies and sports as developmental contexts. In R.K. Silbereisen & E. Todt (Eds.) *Adolescence in context: The interplay of family, school, peers and work in adjustment*. New York: Springer.
- Larson, R. (1995). Secrets in the bedroom: Adolescents' private use of media. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, **24**, 5, 535-550.
- Larson, R. (1995). Variations of experience in informal and formal sports. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, **55**.
- Larson, R. (2000). Towards a psychology of positive youth development. *American Psychologist*, **55**, 170-183.
- Larson, R., Dworkin, J. & Gillman, S. (2001). Facilitating adolescents' constructive use of time in one-parent families. *Journal of Applied Developmental Science*, **5**,3, 143-157.
- Larson, R. & Kleiber, D. (1991). Daily experiences of adolescence. In P.Tolan & B. Cohler (Eds.) *Handbook of clinical research and practice with adolescents* (p125-145) New York: Wiley.
- Larson, R. & Kubey, R. (1983). Television and music: Contrasting media in adolescent's life. *Youth Soc.* **15**, 1, 13-31.

- Larson R., Kubey, R. & Colletti, J. (1989). Changing channel: Early adolescent media choices and shifting investments in family and friends. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, **18**, 6, 701-736.
- Larson, R., and Richards, M. (1991). Daily companionship in late childhood and early adolescence: Changing developmental contexts. *Child Development*, **62**, 284-300.
- Larson, R., & Verma, S. (1999). How children and adolescents spend time across the world: Work, play and developmental opportunities. *Psychological Bulletin*, **126**, 701-736.
- Leena, K. Tomi, L. & Arja, R. (2005). Intensity of mobile phone use and health compromising behaviours- how is information and communication technology connected to health-related lifestyle in adolescence ? *Journal of Adolescence*, **28**, 35-47.
- Lerner, R.M. & Thompson, L.S. (2002). Promoting healthy adolescent behaviour and development: Issues in the design and evaluation of effective youth programs. *Journal of Paediatric Nursing*, **17**, 5, 338-343
- Lerner, R.M., Sparks, E. & McGubbin, L. (1999). Family Diversity and Family Policy: Strengthening Families for America's Children. Norwell (MA): Kluwer
- Leung, L. & Wei, R. (1999). Who are the mobile phone have-nots? *New Media & Society*, **1**, 209–226.
- Leung, L. & Wei, R., (2000). More than just talk on the move: uses and gratifications of cellular phones. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, **77**,2, 308–320.
- Lindstrom, Hanson & Ostergren (2001).
- Lewko, J.H. & Greendorfer, S.L. (1988). Family influences in sport socialisation of children and adolescents. In F.L. Smoll, R.A. Magill & M.A. Ash (Eds) Children in sport. Champaign, IL.
- Leyser, Y. & Cole, K.B. (2004). Leisure preferences and leisure communication with peers of elementary students with and without disabilities: educational implications. *Education*, **124**, 4,595-605.
- Ling, R., (2000). “We will be reached”: the use of mobile phone telephony among Norwegian youth. *Information Technology and People*, **13**, 102–120.
- Lull, J. (1992). Popular music and communication: An introduction. In Lull, J. (ed.), Popular Music and Communication (2nd edn.). Sage, Newbury Park, CA, pp. 1-32.
- Little, A. & Leyshon (1998). A place to hang-out: Rural youth and access to education, training and leisure in Somerset. Somerset: Somerset Rural Youth Project.
- Lynch, F., Mills, C. & Fitzpatrick, C. (2004). Challenging times: A study to detect Irish adolescents at risk of psychiatric disorders and suicidal ideation. *Journal of Adolescence*, **27**, 441-51.

- McCoy, S. & Smyth, E. (2004). *At work in school: Part-time employment among second level students*. Dublin: ESRI/Liffey Press.
- McCullagh, C. (1996). *Crime in Ireland: A sociological introduction*. Cork: Cork University Press.
- McGee, R., Williams, S., Howden-Chapman, P., Martin, J. & Kawachi, I. (2005). Participation in clubs and groups from childhood to adolescence and its effects on attachment and self-esteem. *Journal of Adolescence*, (in press).
- McHale, S., Crouter, A.C. & Tucker, C.J. (2001). Free-time activities in middle childhood: links with adjustment in early adolescence. *Child Development*, **72**, 6, 1764-79.
- McHale, S.M., Shanahan, L., Updegraff, K.A., Crouter, A.C. & Booth, A. (2004). Developmental and individual differences in girls' sex-typed activities in middle childhood and adolescence. *Child Development*, **75**, 5, 1575-89.
- McMurray, R.G., Harrel, J.S., Deng, S., Bradley, C.B., Cox, L.M. & Bangdiwala, S.I. (2000). The influence of physical activity, socio-economic status and ethnicity on the weight status of adolescents. *Obesity Research*, **8**, 130-139.
- McPhearson, B.D., Curtis, J.E. & Loy, J.W. (1989). *The social significance of sport*. Illinois: Human Kinetics.
- Mahoney, J.L. (2000). School extracurricular activity participation as a moderator in the development of antisocial patterns. *Child Development*, **71**, 502-516.
- Mahoney, J.L. & Cairns, R.B. (1997). Do school extracurricular activities protect against early school drop-out? *Developmental Psychology*, **33**, 241-253.
- Mahoney, J.L. & Stattin, H. (2000). Leisure activities and adolescent antisocial behaviour: The role of structure and social context. *Journal of Adolescence*, **23**, 113-127.
- Mainprize, S. (1985). Interpreting adolescents' music. *J. Child Care*, **2**, 55-62.
- Marsh, H.W. (1992). Extracurricular activities: Beneficial extension of the traditional curriculum or subversion of academic goals? *Journal of Educational Psychology*, **84**, 553-562.
- Martino, W. (2001). Boys and reading: Investigating the impact of masculinities on boys' reading preferences and involvement in literacy. *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, **24**, 1, 61-71.
- Marzin, Y. (2003). *A professional dance curriculum for Ireland*. Dublin: The Arts Council.

- Medrich, E.A, Roizen, J., Rubin, V. & Buckley, S. (1982). The serious business of growing-up: A study of children's lives outside of school. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Met Eireann www.met.ie/climate/rainfall.asp 4.4.2005
- Miller Covert, A. Phipps Whirren, A. Keith, J. & Nelson, C. (1985). Pets, early adolescents and families. *Marriage and Family Review*, **8**, 79-94.
- Minuchin, P. (1985). Families and individual development: Provocations from the field of family therapy. *Child Development*, **56**, 289-302.
- Mizen, P., Bolton, A. & Pole, C. (1999). School age workers: The paid employment of children in Britain. *Work, Employment and Society*, **13**, 3, 423-438.
- Morgan, M. (2000). School and part-time work in Dublin- The facts. Dublin: Dublin Employment Pact.
- Murray, P. (2002). Hello! Are you listening? Disabled teenagers' experience of access to inclusive leisure. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation/York Publishing Services.
- National Heart Alliance, (2001). Position Paper on Physical Activity for Children and Young People. Dublin.
- National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2000). Improving Intergroup Relations Among Youth: Summary of a Research Workshop. National Academy Press, Washington, DC.
- National Opinion Poll, 2001a. Half of 7-16s have a mobile phone (online) [cited 9 August 2001]. NOP Research Group Internet Surveys, 29 January. Available from <http://www.nop.co.uk/news/news_survey_half_of_7-16s.shtml>.
- National Opinion Poll, 2001b. 21st century kids: bullied by mobile phone (online) [cited 9 August 2001].
- National Youth Council of Ireland, (2003). *Arts in Their Lives; A policy on young people and the arts*, Dublin
- National Youth Council of Ireland, (2003). *National Youth Arts Programme Strategic Plan 2003-2006*, Dublin
- Nieman, D. (1998), *The Exercise-Health Connection*, Human Kinetics, Illinois.
- (1999) *Proceedings from Young and Active Roundtable*, Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- Ní Laoire, C. (2001). A matter of life or death? Men, masculinities and staying 'behind' in rural Ireland. *Sociologia Ruralis*, **41**, 2, 220-236.

- Nix, G.A., Ryan, R.M., Manly, & Deci, E.L. (1999). Revitalization through self-regulation: the effects of autonomous and controlled motivation on happiness and vitality. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, **35**, 266-284.
- NOP Research Group Public Opinion Surveys, 22 April, 2005. Available from <http://www.nop.co.uk/news/news_survey_21st.shtml>.
- North Western Health Board, (2004). *Consultations with teenage girls on being and getting active*. Health Promotion Department, Sligo.
- Oettinger, G.S. (1999). Does high school employment affect high school academic performance? *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, **53**, 1, 136-151.
- Office for Youth, Department of Victorian Communities (2003). *Speak out About Sport – Report of 8th Round Table* Victoria, Australia.
- Ottney Cain, A. (1985). Pets as family members. *Marriage and Family Review*, **8**, 5-10.
- Osgood, D.W., Wilson, J.K., O'Malley, P.M. Bachman, J.G. & Johnston, L.D. (1996). Routine activities and individual deviant behaviour. *American Sociological Review*, **61**, 635-655.
- Passmore, A. & French, D. (2001). Development and Administration of a Measure to Assess Adolescents' Participation in Leisure Activities, *Adolescence*, **36**, 141, 67-69
- Pate, R.R., Trost, S.G., Levin, S. & Dowda, M. (2000). Sports participation and health-related behaviours among US youth. *Archives of Paediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, **154**, 904-11.
- Patrick, H., Ryan, A., Alfeld-Liro, C. Fredricks, J., Hruda, L., and Eccles, J. (1999). Adolescents' commitment to developing talent: The role of peers in continuing motivation for sports and the arts. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, **29**, 741-763.
- Patterson, G.R., Dishion, T.J. & Yoerger, K. (2000). Adolescent growth in new forms of problem behaviour: Macro and micro-peer dynamics. *Prevention Science*, **1**, 3-13.
- Patterson, I., Pegg, S. & Dobson-Patterson (2000). Exploring the links between leisure boredom and alcohol use among youth in rural and urban areas of Australia. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, **18**, 3, 53-75.
- Pavee Point Traveller Resource Centre, (2005). Young Pavee Voices, (Documentary Video). Dublin, Pavee Point.
- Pavis, S. & Cunningham-Burley, S. (1999). Male youth street culture: understanding the context of health-related behaviours. *Health Education Research*, **14**, 5, 583-596.
- Pavis, S., Hubbard, G., Platt, S., 2001. Young people in rural areas: social excluded or not? *Work, Employment & Society*, **15**, 291–309.

- Percy-Smith, B. (1999). Multiple childhood geographies: giving voice to young people's experience of place. Unpublished PhD thesis, Centre for Children and Youth, University College Northampton. In F. Tucker and H. Matthews (2001) 'They don't like girls hanging around there': conflicts over recreational space in rural Northamptonshire. *Area*, **33**, 2, 161-168.
- Pettit, G.S., Bates, J.E., Dodge, K.A. & Meece, D.W. (1999). The impact of after-school contact on early adolescent externalising problems is moderated by parental monitoring, perceived neighbourhood safety and prior adjustment. *Child Development*, **70**, 768-778.
- Payne, J. (2001). Post-16 students and part-time jobs: Patterns and effects. London: Dept of Education and Employment.
- Pelletier, L. G., Fortier, M. S., Vallerand, R. J., Tuson, K. M., & Briere, N. M (1995). Toward a new measure of intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation in sports: The sport motivation scale (SMS). *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, **17**, 35-53.
- Persson, A., Kerr, M. & Stattin, H. (2004). Why a leisure context is linked to normbreaking for some girls and not others: personality characteristics and parent-child relations as explanations. *Journal of Adolescence*, **27**, 583-598.
- Piko, B.F. & Fitzpatrick, K.M. (2002). Without protection: Substance use among Hungarian adolescents in high-risk settings. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, **30**, 463-466.
- Piko, B.F. & Vazsonyi, A.T. (2004). Leisure activities and problem behaviours among Hungarian youth. *Journal of Adolescence*,
- Place, K. & Hodge, S.R. (2001). Social inclusion of students with physical disabilities in general physical education: A behavioral analysis. *Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly*, **18**, 389-404.
- Prezza, M., Giuseppina Pacilli, M. & Dinelli, S. (2004). Loneliness and new technologies in a group of Roman adolescents. *Computers in Human Behavior* **20**, 691-709
- Raffaelli, M. & Richards, M.H. (1989). We were just talking...conversations in early adolescence. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, **18**, 567-582.
- Raymore, L.A., Godbey, G., Crawford, D. & von Eye, A. (1993). Nature and process of leisure constraints: An empirical test. *Leisure Sciences*, **15**, 99-113.
- Raymore, L.A., Godbey, G.C. & Crawford, D.W. (1994). Self-esteem, gender and socio-economic status: Their relation to perceptions of constraint on leisure among adolescents. *Journal of Leisure Research*, **26**, 2, 99-118.
- Richards, M. & Larson, R. (1989). The life space and socialisation of the self: Sex differences in the young adolescent. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, **18**, 617-26.

Roberts, D. (2000). Media and youth: Access, exposure and privatisation. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 27*, 8-14.

Roberts, D. F., & Henricksen, L. (1990). Music Listening vs. Television Viewing Among Older Adolescents. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Dublin, Ireland, June 1990. Cited in Schwartz, K.D. & Fouts, G.T. (2003). Music preferences, personality style, and developmental issues of adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 32*, 3, 205-9.

Roberts, K. & Parsell, G. (1994). Youth cultures in Britain; the middle-class take-over. *Leisure Studies, 13*, 33-48.

Robinson, L. (1999). The effects of part-time work on school students. Victoria: Australian Council for Educational Research.

Rogoff, B., Turkkanis, C. G., and Bartlett, L. (eds.) (2001). Learning Together: Children and Adults in a School Community. Oxford University Press, New York.

Rosenberg, M. (1965). Society and the adolescent self-image. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Rothman, K.J. (2000). Epidemiological evidence on health risks of cellular telephones. *The Lancet, 356*, 1837-1840.

Rubin, A. M. (1994). Media uses and effects: A uses-and-gratifications perspective. In Bryant, J., and Zillman, D. (eds.), *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research*. Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ.

Ruhm, C.J. (1995). The extent and consequences of high school employment. *Journal of Labor Research, 16*, 3, Summer, 293-303.

Rutter, M., Graham, P., Chadwick, D. & Yule, W. (1976). Adolescent turmoil: fact or fiction? *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 18*, 617-26.

Ryan, R. M., & Connell, J. P. (1989). Perceived locus of causality and internalization: Examining reasons for acting in two domains. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 57*, 749-761.

Ryan, R.M. & Deci, E.L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development and well-being. *American Psychologist, 55*, 68-78.

Sallis, J.F., Simons-Morton, B.J., Stone, E.J., Corbin, C.E., Epstein, L.H., Faucette, N., Iannotti, R.J., Killen, J.D., Klesges, R.C., Petray, C.K., Roland, T.W. and Taylor, W.C., (1992). Determinants of Physical Activity and Interventions in Youth, *Medicine and Science in Sport and Exercise, 6*, 248-257.

Sampson, R.J., Raudenbush, S.W. & Earls, F. (1997). Neighborhoods and violent crime: A multilevel study of collective efficacy. *Science, 277*, 918-924.

- Sandstrom, M., Wilen, J., Hansson Mild, K., Oftedal, G., (2001). Mobile phone use and subjective symptoms experienced by users of analogue and digital mobile phones. *Occupational Medicine* **51**, 25–35.
- Santrock, J. W. (2000). *Adolescence*. McGraw-Hill, Boston, MA.
- Schwartz, K.D. & Fouts, G.T. (2003). Music preferences, personality style, and developmental issues of adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, **32**, 3, 205-14.
- Schwartz, K. (1992). Adolescents and Their Music. An Analysis of Variables Related to Adolescents' Music Listening. Involvement, and Preferences. Master's Thesis, University of Calgary.
- Schwartz, K.D. & Fouts, G. T. (1998). Personality of adolescents and amount of time listening to music. Paper presented to the Western Psychological Association, Albuquerque, NM, April 1998.
- Schwartz, K.D. & Fouts, G.T. (2003). Music preferences, personality style, and developmental issues of adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, **32**,3, 205-9.
- Selwyn, N. (2003). Schooling the mobile generation: the future for schools in the mobile-networked society. *British Journal of Education*, **24**, 2, 131–144.
- Shashaani, L. (1997). Gender differences in computer attitudes and use among college students. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, **16**, 347–367.
- Shaw, S., Caldwell, L. & Kleiber, D. (1996). Boredom, stress and social control with daily activities of adolescents. *Journal of Leisure Research*, **28**, 274-92.
- Sherrill, C., Rainbolt, W. & Ervin, S. (1984). Attitudes of blind persons towards physical education and recreation. The Centre for Research into Sport and Society.
- Shinew, K.J., Norman, K.A. & Baldwin, C.K. (1997). Early adolescents and their leisure time: Implications for leisure service agencies. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, **15**, 2, 61-83.
- Silva, P.A. (1987). 4000 Otago teenagers: A preliminary report from the pathways to employment projects. Dunedin: The Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Research Unit.
- Smith, D.M. (1987). Some patterns of reported leisure behaviour of young people: A longitudinal study. *Youth and Society*, **18**, 255-282.
- Sport England (2003). Young People and Sport in England: Trends in participation 1994-2002 Research study conducted for Sport England by MORI, London.

- Stack, N., Cammock, T., McKechnie J. & Hobbs, S. (1998). Child employment and female gender-role stereotypes in the Republic of Ireland. *Irish Journal of Psychology*, **19**, 2-3, 358-367.
- State Examinations Commission, (2003). *Inaugural Annual Report*, Athlone
- Steele, J. R. & Browne, J. D. (1995). Adolescent room culture: Studying the media in the context of everyday life. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, **24**, 5, 551-576.
- Stiles, D.A., Gibbons, J.L. & Peters, E. (1993). Adolescents' views of work and leisure in the Netherlands and the United States. *Adolescence*, **28**, 110, 473-489.
- Storey & Brannan (2000). Young people and transport in rural areas. Leicester: Youth Work Press for Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Stubbe, J.H., Boomsma, D.I. & de Deus, E.J.C. (2005), Sports Participation During Adolescence: A Shift from Environmental to Genetic Factors, *Medicine and Sports Science in Sports and Exercise*, **37**, 4, 563-570.
- Sweeting, H. & West, P. (2000). Teenage health: The West of Scotland 11-16 study. Glasgow: MRC Social and Public Health Sciences Unit.
- Swim Ireland (2005). Personal correspondence.
- Tanner, I.J. (1973). *Loneliness: The fear of love*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Taylor, A., Harper, R., 2003. The gift of the gab? A design orientated sociology of young people's use of mobiles. *Computer Supported Cooperative Work*, **12**, 267-296.
- Tesch, S. A. (1983). Review of friendship development across the life span. *Human Development*, **26**, 266-276.
- The Arts Council, (2002). *Arts Plan 2002-2006*, Dublin.
- Thompson, K. P. (1990). What do we know about teenagers and popular music? *Quires* **19**,4,14-16.
- Thompson, R. & Larson, R. (1995). Social context and the subjective experience of different types of rock music. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, **24**, 6, 731-744.
- Thurlow, C. (2002). High-schoolers' peer orientation priorities: a snapshot. *Journal of Adolescence*, **25**, 341-349.
- Tiggerman, M., (2001). The impact of adolescent girls' life concerns and leisure activities on body dissatisfaction, disordered eating and self-esteem, *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, **162**, 2, 133-143.
- Trew, K. (1997). Time for sport? Activity diaries of young people. In J. Kremer, K. Trew & S. Ogle *Young Person's Involvement in Sport*, London: Routledge.

Tucker, F. & Matthews, H. (2001) 'They don't like girls hanging around there': conflicts over recreational space in rural Northamptonshire. *Area*, **33**, 2, 161-168.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990). Available from <http://www.unhcr.ch/htm//menu2/6/treaties/crc.htm>.

US Department of Health and Human Services, (1996). Physical Activity and Health a Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, Georgia: Department of Health and Human Services, Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, National Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

Vallerand, R.J. & Losier, G.F. (1999). An integrative analysis of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in sport. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, **11**, 142-169.

Vlachopoulos, S.P., Karageorghis, C.I. & Terry, P.C. (2000). Motivation profiles in sport: A self-determination theory perspective. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, **71**, 4, 387-397.

van Houtte, B. & Jarvis, P. (1995). The role of pets in preadolescent psychosocial development. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, **16**, 463-79.

van Mierlo, J. & van den Bulck, J. (2004). Benchmarking the cultivation approach to video game effects: a comparison of the correlates of TV viewing and game play *Journal of Adolescence*, **27**,1, 97-111.

von Rossberg-Gempton, I.E., Dickinson, J. & Poole, G. (1999). Creative dance: potentiality for enhancing social functioning in frail seniors and young children. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, **26**, 5, 313-327.

van Schooten, E., & de Glopper, K. (2003). The development of literary response in secondary education. *Poetics*, **31**, 155-187.

Vandewater, E.A., Shim, M & Caplovitz, A.G. (2004). Linking obesity and activity level with children's television and video game use. *Journal of Adolescence*, **27**, 1, 71-85.

Vazsonyi, A.T., Pickering, L.E., Belliston, L.M., Helsing, D. & Junger, M. (2002). Routine activities and deviant behaviours: American, Dutch, Hungarian and Swiss youth. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, **18**, 397-422.

Verboord, M. (2003). Should the teacher descend or the student climb? The influence of literature instruction and parents on the reading of books between 1975-2000. University of Utrecht: Thesis.

Verma, S. & Larson, R.W. (2002). Television in Indian adolescents' lives: A member of the family. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, **31**, 3, 177-184.

Wade, T.E. & Troy, T.C. (2001). Mobile phones as a new memory aid; a preliminary investigation using case studies. *Brain Injury*, **15**, 305-320.

- Waterman, A. (1984). Identity formation: Discovery or creation? *Journal of Early Adolescence*, *4*, 329-341.
- West, P.C. (1984). Social stigma and community recreation participation by the physically and mentally handicapped. *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*, *26*, 1, 40-49.
- West, P. & Sweeting, H. (2002). A review of young people's health and health behaviours in Scotland. Glasgow: MRC.
- Whalen, C.K., Jamner, L.D., Henker, B., Delfino, R.J. & Lozano, J.M. (2002). The ADHD spectrum and everyday life: Experience sampling of adolescent moods, activities, smoking and drinking. *Child Development*, *73*, 1, 209-227.
- Whitely, B.E. (1984). Sex-role orientation and psychological well-being: Two meta-analyses. *Sex Roles*, *12*, 207-225.
- Wilson, W.J. (1987). *The truly disadvantaged*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Williams, S. & McGee, R. (1991). Adolescent self-perceptions of their strengths. *Journal of Youth Adolescence*, *20*, 325-337.
- Wilska, T., 2003. Mobile phone use as part of young people's consumption styles. *Journal of Consumer Policy*, *26*, 441-463.
- Wolfradt, U., & Doll, J. (2001). Motives of adolescents to use the Internet as a function of personality traits and social factors. *International Journal of Educational Computing Research*, *24*, 13-27.
- Woods, C. (2004) *Active Living: The Public Health Answer to Tackling Obesity in Ireland*. Centre for Sports Science and Health, DCU paper delivered to Tackling Obesity Together Conference, November 2004.
- World Health Organisation (2002). Young people and physical activity. Available from <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/news/workout.doc> In National Children's Office (2004) Scoping Document. Dublin.
- <http://www.sparc.org.nz/research/participation.php#young> (March 2005)
- Yates, M. (1999). Community service and political-moral discussions among adolescents: a study of mandatory school-based program in the United States. In M. Yates & J. Youniss (Eds.). *Roots of civic identity: International perspectives on community service and activism in youth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Youniss, J. (1980). *Parents and Peers in Social Development: A Sullivan-Piaget Perspective*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Youniss, J., McLellan, J.A. & Strouse, D. (1994). 'We're popular but we're not snobs': adolescents describe their crowds. In R. Montemayor, G. Adams & T. Gullotta (Eds.). *Personal relationships during adolescence* (p101-122). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Youniss, S., McLellan, J. A., Su, Y. & Yates, M. (1999). The role of community service in identity development: Normative, unconventional, and deviant orientations. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, **14**, 248-261.

Youniss, S. & Yates, M. (1997). *Community Service and Social Responsibility in Youth*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL.

Youniss, S., Yates, M. & Su, Y. (1997). Social integration: Community service and marijuana use in high school seniors. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, **12**, 245-262.

Young, R., West, P., Sweeting, H., Karvonen, S. & Rahkonen, O. (2001). Temporal and cross-cultural stability of adolescent leisure, HRL.Social & Public Health Services Unit, Working Paper No. 6.

York, J., Vandercook, T. & Stave, K. (1990). Recreation and leisure activities: Determining the favourites for middle school students. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, **22**, 10-13.

Youthreach (2000). A Consultative Process; A report on the outcomes (Available from www.youthreach.ie)

Whalen, C.K., Jamner, L.D., Henker, B., Delfino, R.J. & Lozano, J.M. (2002). The ADHD spectrum and everyday life: Experience sampling of adolescent moods, activities, smoking and drinking. *Child Development*, **73**, 1, 209-277.

Zarbatany, L., Hartmann, D. & Rankin, D. (1990). The psychological functions of preadolescent peer activities. *Child Development*, **61**, 1067-80.

Zeijl, E., Beker, M., Breedveld, K., van den Broek, A., de Haan, J., Herweijer, L., Huysmans, F., & Wirrebrood, K. (2002) *Report on the Young*. Social and Cultural Planning Office of the Netherlands.

Zeijl, E., Poel, Y., du Bois-Reymond, M., Ravesloot, J. & Meulman, J. (2003). The role of parents and peers in the leisure activities of young adolescents. *Journal of Leisure Research*, **32**, 281-302.

APPENDICES

Young people's views about opportunities, barriers and supports to recreation and leisure.

Please wait for instruction before you begin the questionnaire

Additional Methodological Information

Youthreach is a programme directed at unemployed, young early school leavers aged 15-20. It offers participants opportunities to identify and pursue viable options within adult life and provides them with opportunities to acquire certification (e.g. via FETAC). There are approximately 3,258 places in Youthreach centres nationally. It is delivered via VEC centres and a network of 45 community training centres funded by FÁS and 10 justice workshops. A parallel programme in a culturally appropriate setting is delivered by 33 senior Traveller training centres. It is worth noting that the number in Ireland who leave education with no qualifications is 3.2% and 15.3% leave with only the Junior certificate (www.youthreach.ie).

Scoring the FTMS

To categorise a respondent as ‘amotivated’, their item total on this subscale had to be less than or equal to 8. To categorise them as ‘motivated’, their item total on this subscale had to be greater than or equal to 16.

To categorise a respondent as ‘intrinsic-high’, their item total on this subscale had to be less than or equal to 8. To categorise them as ‘intrinsic-low’, their item total on this subscale had to be greater than or equal to 16.

To categorise a respondent as ‘extrinsic-high’, their item total on this subscale had to be less than or equal to 10. To categorise them as ‘extrinsic-low’, their item total on this subscale had to be greater than or equal to 20.

Focus Group Schedule

General free time activities

What do you like to do in your free time ? Probe – sports, hobbies, social groups

Why ? Probe individual and social factors

Reading has been found to be a regular leisure activity for girls. What do you like dislike about reading ? when where and what type ?

Computer games have been found to be a regular leisure activity for boys but not as much for girls why ? when where and what type

Hanging -around is a frequent leisure activity for all young people . What do ye do in when ye hang around outside? when, where with whom ...

Listening to music is a very popular leisure activity for young people...why resons ..where with whom

Looking at shops is a frequent activity for girls more than boys ...why is it popular for girlswhat type

(schools only) A lot of free-time is spent on homework and more by girls than boys. Do ye spend a lot of time on homework... why ...where with whom...

Sports

Boys report more sport involvement than girls, particularly as they get older. Why

Boys compared to girls also report more involvement in team as opposed to individual sports ..why

Clubs/Groups

Smaller numbers in our study participated in social groups such a youth clubs/scouts etc ..why might this be the case.... Girls reported more involvement then boys why ?

General

A lot of young people go to discos. Do ye go a lot ?probe enjoyment

What helps you to do what you like to do in your free time ?

What stops you from doing what you like to do in your free time ?

Focus Group with Young People with Special Needs

What do you do in your free time?

Probe sports, hobbies and groups

Who do you do these activities with?

How often?

What do you like about these activities (list)?

What do you not like about these activities (list)?

What helps you to do activities (list)?

Probe transport, friends, family...

Can you think of a new activity that you would like to try?

Probe sports, hobbies, groups.

Lists of Hobbies and Community/Charity Groups

Hobbies

	Total n=1475	Male n=660	Female n=815
1st	Play music 30.7% n=454	Play music 28.7% n=190	Dance 34.9% n=285
2nd	Pets 21.5% n=318	Pets 19.2% n=127	Play music 32.3% n=264
3rd	Art 21% n=310	Pool/Snooker 16.5% n=109	Art 26.6% n=217
4th	Dance 20.3% n=300	Technology 15% n=99	Pets 23.8% n=191
5th	Cooking 10.4% n=148 Technology 9.8% n=145 Board Games 9.7% n=144 Drama 8.5% n=126 Pool/Snooker 8.3% n=123 Singing 8% n=119 Collecting things n=70 Friends n=61 Driving n=57 Farming n=31 Writing n=20	Art 14% n=93 Board Games 12.7% n=84 Driving 7.7% n=51 Collecting things 7.7% n=51 Fishing 6.9% n=46 Drama 4.2% n=28 Farming 4.2% n=28 Cooking 1.9% n=13 Friends n=18 Dance 2.2% n=15 Carpentry 1.9% n=13 Photography n=7 Writing n=6 Singing n=6 Drinking n=10 Drugs n=8 Smoking n=8 Film making n=4 Making things inc.models n=7 Motor sports n= Bird watching n=1 DIY n=1	Cooking 16% n=131 Singing 13.8% n=113 Drama 12% n=98 Board Games 7.2% n=59 Technology 5.6% n=46 Friends n=46 Collecting things 2.3% n=19 Writing 1.7% n=14 Pool/Snooker 1.7% n=14 Photography n=6 Driving n=6 Farming n=3 Making jewellery n=3 Hair/Beauty n=6 Public speaking n=2 Drinking n=3 Knitting n=1 Embroidery n=1 Bingo n=2 Film making n=3

Community/Charity Groups

	Total n=728	Male n=291	Female n= 437
1st	Youth Clubs/Grps 58.7% n=428	Youth Clubs/Grps 68% n=198	Youth Clubs/Grps 52.6 % n=230
2nd	Choir/Folk grp 25.9% n=189	Scouts/Guides 11.3% n=33	Choir/Folk Grp 37.5% n=164
3rd	Voluntary Work 11.2% n= 82	Voluntary Work 9.2% n=28	Voluntary Work 12.3% n=54
4th	Scouts/Guides 10.3% n=75 Presidents award n=31 Red Cross n=29	Choir/Folk Grp 8.5% n=25 Presidents award n=18 Red Cross n=17	Scouts/Guides 9.6% n=42 Religious groups n=14 Presidents award n=13

Appendices

Religious groups	n=20	Fundraising	n=15	Red Cross	n=11
Self-defence	n=13	FCA	n=8	Fundraising	n=10
Coaching	n=10	Self defence	n=6	Self defence	n=7
FCA	n=10	Religious groups	n=6	Coaching others	n=7
Order of Malta	n=7	Coaching others	n=4	Order of Malta	n=5
Homework club	n=5	Gun club	n=4	Macra na feirme	n=2
Self help	n=4	Order of Malta	n=2	FCA	n=2
Gun club	n=4	Macra na feirme	n=2	Weightwatchers	n=1
Political groups	n=2				
Animal rescue	n=1				
Environmental groups	n=2				
Macra na Feirme	n=2				
Debs committee	n=1				
School council	n=1				
Weightwatchers	n=1				

List of Sports

Soccer	911
Gaelic Football	896
Basketball	514
Swimming	405
Hurling	308
Cycling	186
Tennis	165
Camogie	152
Rugby	149
Hockey	143
Horse riding	141
Golf/Pitch & Putt	123
Badminton	106
Jogging/Running	95
Athletics	57
Gym	51
Volleyball	48
Boxing	44
Martial Arts	43
Skateboarding	21
Handball	19
Kickboxing	16
Aerobics	16
Table tennis	15
Rounders	14
Shooting/Hunting	12
Motor sport	11
Netball	11
Water sports	10
Surfing	10
Darts	10
Gymnastics	9
Squash	7
Rollerblading	6
Rowing	6
American Football	3
Rock climbing	3
Archery	2
Bowls	2
Skiing	2
Trampoline	2
Weight lifting	2
Lifesaving	2
Australian rules football	1
Cricket	1
Water polo	1

Posters

The activities were all written scattered randomly across each poster as opposed to in any order. Young people were informed that these were only examples of leisure hobbies or sports or community/charity groups.

HOBBIES POSTER

Playing music Dance Drama Art Board games
Collecting things Looking after pets Cooking

SPORTS POSTER

Volleyball Tennis Golf Cycling Camogie Boxing
Horse-riding Hurling Swimming Athletics Soccer
Gaelic football Rugby

COMMUNITY/CHARITY GROUPS POSTER

Girl guides Choir President's award/Gaisce FCA Red Cross
Foróige St Vincent de Paul Scouts Youth club/group

Additional Tables

NO. OF COMMUNITY/CHARITY GROUPS PARTICIPATED IN BY PARENTAL OCCUPATION

Groups	Prof/Managerial		NonMan/Farmer		Skilled/Semi		Unskilled/Welfare	
0	61.7%	n=331	66%	n=382	69.3%	n=517	72%	n=139
1	29.4%	n=158	24.2%	n=140	22.9%	n=171	18.1%	n=35
2	6.9%	n=37	7.7%	n=45	6%	n=45	6.7%	n=13
3	1.8%	n=10	1.9%	n=11	1.7%	n=13	3.1%	n=6

NO. OF SPORTS PARTICIPATED IN BY PARENTAL OCCUPATION

Sports	Prof/Managerial		NonMan/Farmer		Skilled/Semi		Unskilled/Welfare	
0	10%	n=54	10%	n=58	10.4%	n=78	10.3%	n=20
1	10.6%	n=57	11.9%	n=69	14.4%	n=108	16%	n=31
2	22.3%	n=120	22.8%	n=132	21%	n=157	23.3%	n=45
3	56.9%	n=305	55.1%	n=319	53.8%	n=402	50%	n=97

Hobbies	Urban-City		Urban-Town		Rural	
None	33.9%	n=171	33.7%	n=322	36%	n=289
1	26.3%	n=133	29.6%	n=283	30.5%	n=245
2	21.4%	n=108	23.6%	n=226	19.7%	n=158
3	18.2%	n=92	12.9%	n=124	13.6%	n=109

Table 75: FTMS Subscale Correlations

		amotiv	intrinsic	external	introjected	identified
amotiv	Pearson Correlation	1	-.346(**)	.215(**)	.111(**)	-.372(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	2141	2109	2101	2107	2094
intrinsic	Pearson Correlation	-.346(**)	1	-.250(**)	-.106(**)	.433(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	2109	2176	2129	2137	2120
external	Pearson Correlation	.215(**)	-.250(**)	1	.596(**)	.102(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	2101	2129	2166	2135	2112
introjected	Pearson Correlation	.111(**)	-.106(**)	.596(**)	1	.188(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	2107	2137	2135	2186	2123
identified	Pearson Correlation	-.372(**)	.433(**)	.102(**)	.188(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	2094	2120	2112	2123	2155

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Young people's views about opportunities,
barriers and supports to recreation and leisure.

Please wait for instruction before you begin the questionnaire

Section 1

Please complete the following questions

Are you male or female?

Tick one box only

male

female

What age are you?

Circle one number only

12 13 14 15 16 17 18

What year are you in at school?

Tick one box only

1st year.....

2nd year.....

3rd year.....

Transition year.....

5th year.....

6th year.....

Not at school.....

What is your nationality?

Irish Other if other please state _____

Where do you live? Tick one box only

city

town

village

countryside

How many brothers have you (if any)? _____

How many sisters have you (if any)? _____

Please give the occupation of your parent(s)/guardian(s) in the space provided eg. teacher, hairdresser, manager

Do you own a mobile phone? Yes No

Do you have any long-term illness or disability? Yes No

If yes please give details _____

Does this illness or disability restrict your leisure time activities?

Tick one box only

Not at all

Yes a little

Yes a lot

Here is a list of things that teenagers sometimes do in their spare time. How about you? Tick one box on each line		Every day	Most days	weekly	Less often	never
Watch sports matches						
Listen to music						
Read books, magazines, papers						
Go to the cinema						
Hang around outside						
Go to discos						
Part time work						
Look around the shops						
Play computer games						
Use the phone to talk/text.						
Walk for leisure						
Watch TV						
Play Sport	1.					
List up to 3 sports	2.					
	3.					
Community/ charity groups	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
List up to 3 groups	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
Do hobbies	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
List up to 3 hobbies	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
Other	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
List up to three others	1.					
	2.					
	3.					

Here is a list of things that young people say about leisure time activities.					
Tick the box that best reflects YOUR opinion					
	strongly agree	agree	don't know	disagree	strongly disagree
I enjoy joining new clubs/groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't have enough time to try new activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I only do activities that I'm good at.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I enjoy competition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't have the money to join	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Where I live there is very little for people my age to do in leisure time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My friends don't have the time, money, transport etc. to do activities with me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I prefer activities with boys and girls together	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most of my free time is spent doing homework and studying	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like hanging out with friends in my free time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would only join a new activity if my friends were joining too	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel safe going to and from activities in the evening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My parents don't allow me to do activities that I would like to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't know what activities there are where I live	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My family encourage me to join clubs and groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am happy with the way I look	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Because of the weather I don't like outdoor activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am a shy person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like activities where there is an instructor/leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have transport difficulties getting to and from places	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 4

Directions: Tick the box that best reflects WHY you do what you do in your free time					
I DO WHAT I DO IN MY FREE TIME BECAUSE...					
	strongly agree	agree	don't know	disagree	strongly disagree
I would get in trouble if I don't	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will feel badly about myself if I don't	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to understand how things work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What I do is important to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't know why I do my free time activities, and I don't really care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am supposed to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to impress my friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
That is the rule in my house	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want people to like me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to have fun	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
So others won't get mad at me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't know, nothing much interests me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My parents expect me to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I enjoy what I do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I develop skills that I can use later in life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't know, I have never really thought about it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like what I do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't know but it doesn't matter because I don't do much of anything	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The activities help me develop into the person I want to become	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 5

Many young people dropout or leave activities for various reasons, some of which are listed below.

I have never dropped-out of an activity

OR

I dropped out of _____

_____ *months/years ago when I was age* _____.

Read through the following statements and tick any that affected your decision to dropout of the activity named above.

If only 1 or 2 answers apply then only choose those.

I had no way to get there

The times of the activity didn't suit me

My parent(s) didn't want me to do it

My friends didn't want me to do it

My skill level wasn't good enough

I didn't like the activity leader(s)

I felt I was too young

I felt I was the wrong sex

It cost too much

We moved house

My friends dropped-out

I felt I was too old

The activity was no longer offered

I lost interest in the activity

The leader(s) left

I didn't like the rules

Other (*Please state*) _____

Section 6

I would have liked to join _____, but didn't.

Read through the following statements and tick any that affected your decision not to join the activity named above.

If only 1 or 2 answers apply then only choose those.

I had no way to get there

It cost too much

The times of the activity didn't suit me

My parent(s) didn't want me to do it

I didn't know how to join

I wasn't old enough

It wasn't offered for my sex

I didn't like the rules

My friends didn't want me to do it

I didn't know anyone else doing it

I didn't have good enough skills

I already do too many other activities

I didn't like the activity leader(s)

The location of the activity didn't suit me

Other (*Please state*) _____

