**- healthupdates - http://healthupdate.gov.ie -**

**Minister for Health, James Reilly TD, launches report on children’s Health Behaviour**

Posted By EmmaC On September 23, 2013 @ 3:01 pm In On The Record | [Comments Disabled](http://healthupdate.gov.ie/on-the-record/minister-for-health-james-reilly-td-launches-report-on-children%E2%80%99s-health-behaviour.html/print/#comments_controls)

[1]

Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Ireland Trends Report 1998-2010.

**Minister for Health, James Reilly TD, launches report on children’s Health Behaviour – More children reporting high life satisfaction and being happy, less children smoking or drinking**

The Minister for Health, Dr James Reilly TD, today (23 September), launched the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Ireland Trends Report 1998-2010. The survey was carried out by the Health Promotion Research Centre in NUI Galway.

The HBSC is a cross-sectional study conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe. It runs every 4 years and in 2010 there were 43 participating countries and regions collecting data on the health behaviours, health outcomes and contexts of children’s lives.

In terms of risky behaviour, the survey reports that in 2010 12% of Irish children said they were smoking compared to 21% in 1998.  28% reported that they had been drunk compared to 29% in 1998.  8% reported that they had used cannabis compared to 10% in 1998.

In terms of positive behaviour, seat-belt wearing rates have doubled (82%) amongst children since 1998 and 33% reported that their health was excellent compared to 28% in 1998.  High rates of life satisfaction (76%) and reported happiness (91%) continue.

Commenting, the Minister said that:

“I am encouraged that the number of children who have smoked tobacco has decreased, similar to the trend in alcohol consumption and use of cannabis. This is a step in the right direction and I hope to see this continue for the good of all our children.  As Minister for Health I have placed a high priority in highlighting the deadly dangers of smoking, in particular, for our children and I will continue that battle”.

Commenting on the findings, Principal Investigator Dr Saoirse Nic Gabhainn stated “this report is the culmination of many years of work, and brings some good news about the health behaviours of children in Ireland over the years, with a decrease in smoking and in alcohol use for example. Yet still more needs to be done to improve their health, in particular around physical activity. Importantly, the proportion of children reporting high life satisfaction and being happy, fundamental aspects of childhood, has increased over the years, as have health and safety behaviours such as wearing a seatbelt and brushing teeth”

**Notes for Editors**
The survey has been carried out by the Health Promotion Research Centre, NUI Galway since 1998 and brings together all the data (relating to almost 40,000 Irish children) collected over this period to examine the key trends and patterns between 1998 and 2010.

Overall, 12% reported in 2010 that they currently smoke compared to 21% in 1998; 49% reported in 2010 that they had their first cigarette at age 13 or younger, compared to 61% in 1998; 28% reported in 2010 that they ever been drunk compared to 29% in 1998; 8% reported in 2010 that they used cannabis in the last 12 month compared to 10% in 1998.

Positive health behaviours
Overall, 20% reported in 2010 that they consume fruits more than once a day compared to 18% in 1998; 82% reported in 2010 that they always wear seatbelt when they are travelling by car compared to 41% in 1998; 51% of children reported in 2010 that they exercise 4 or more time per week compared to 54% in 1998.

Health and well-being
Overall, 33% of children reported in 2010 that their health is excellent compared to 28% in 2002; 91% of children reported in 2010 that they are happy with their life compared to 89% in 1998; 76% of children reported high life satisfaction in 2010 compared to 75% in 2002.

General findings
Overall, 67% of children reported in 2010 that they brush their teeth more than once a day compared to 58% in 1998; 37% of children reported in 2010 that they have been injured in the past 12 months compared to 40% in 1998; 52% of children reported in 2010 that they talk to their friends on the phone, via text messages or on the internet every day compared to 31% in 2002.

A copy of the report can be viewed at http://www.dohc.ie/publications/HBSCtrends2013.html [2]

Article printed from healthupdates: **http://healthupdate.gov.ie**

URL to article: **http://healthupdate.gov.ie/on-the-record/minister-for-health-james-reilly-td-launches-report-on-children%e2%80%99s-health-behaviour.html**

URLs in this post:

[1] Image: **http://healthupdate.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/2013-Trends-rep-cover.jpg**

[2] http://www.dohc.ie/publications/HBSCtrends2013.html: **http://healthupdate.gov.ie http://www.dohc.ie/publications/HBSCtrends2013.html**

Click [here](http://healthupdate.gov.ie/on-the-record/minister-for-health-james-reilly-td-launches-report-on-children%E2%80%99s-health-behaviour.html/print/#Print) to print.

Copyright © 2010 healthupdates. All rights reserved.