

**Promoting the emotional
wellbeing of children and young
people; an exploratory
sequential mixed methods study.**

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Why is it so important?

The effects of poor health during the teenage years can last a lifetime. Keeping adolescents healthy is a valuable investment in the nation's future

England Chief Medical Officer's report, 2007.

One person in every four will be affected by a mental disorder at some stage of life

Mental health is crucial to the overall well-being of individuals, societies and countries and must be universally regarded in a new light

The World Health Report, WHO, 2001

Global prevalence of major psychiatric disorders

Table 2.1 Prevalence of major psychiatric disorders in primary health care

Cities	Current depression (%)	Generalized anxiety (%)	Alcohol dependence (%)	All mental disorders (according to CIDI ^a) (%)
Ankara, Turkey	11.6	0.9	1.0	16.4
Athens, Greece	6.4	14.9	1.0	19.2
Bangalore, India	9.1	8.5	1.4	22.4
Berlin, Germany	6.1	9.0	5.3	18.3
Groningen, Netherlands	15.9	6.4	3.4	23.9
Ibadan, Nigeria	4.2	2.9	0.4	9.5
Mainz, Germany	11.2	7.9	7.2	23.6
Manchester, UK	16.9	7.1	2.2	24.8
Nagasaki, Japan	2.6	5.0	3.7	9.4
Paris, France	13.7	11.9	4.3	26.3
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	15.8	22.6	4.1	35.5
Santiago, Chile	29.5	18.7	2.5	52.5
Seattle, USA	6.3	2.1	1.5	11.9
Shanghai, China	4.0	1.9	1.1	7.3
Verona, Italy	4.7	3.7	0.5	9.8
Total	10.4	7.9	2.7	24.0

^aCIDI: Composite International Diagnostic Interview.

Source: Goldberg DP, Lecrubier Y (1995). Form and frequency of mental disorders across centres. In: Üstün TB, Sartorius N, eds. *Mental illness in general health care: an international study*. Chichester, John Wiley & Sons on behalf of WHO: 323–334.

Why is it so important?

‘If projections are correct, within the next 20 years, depression will have the dubious distinction of becoming the second cause of global disease burden’ (p ix).

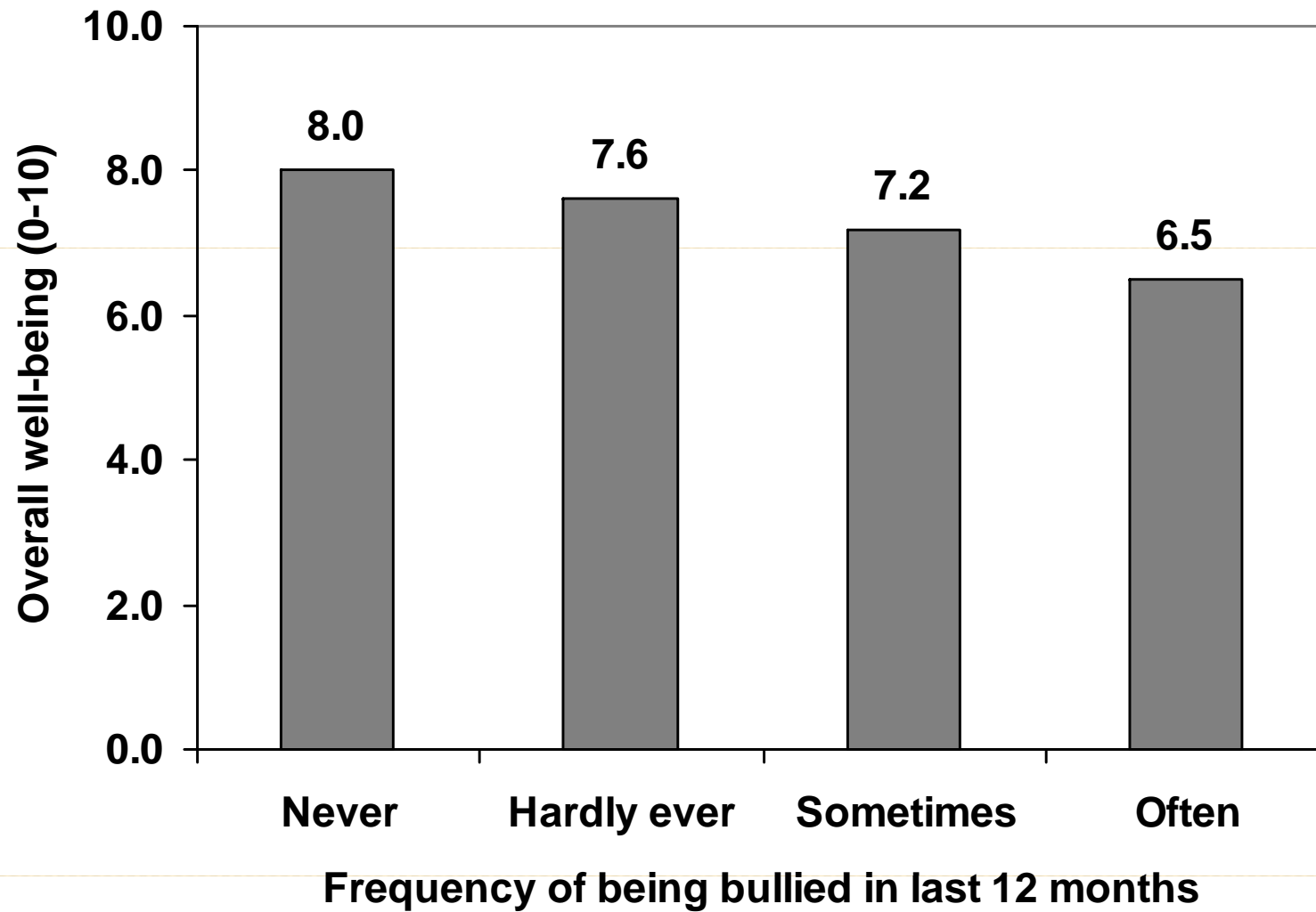
- Globally, 70 million people suffer from alcohol dependence.
- 50 million have epilepsy; another 24 million have schizophrenia.
- A million people commit suicide every year; Between ten and 20 million people attempt it.

The World Health Report WHO, 2001

Why is it so important?

- **Self harm is increasing, with 7–14% of adolescents self-harming and 20–45% of older adolescents say they have had suicidal thoughts.**
- **Half of lifetime mental illness starts by the age of 14**
- **1 in 10 children aged 5–16 years were estimated to have a diagnosable mental disorder.**
- **Mental health problems in childhood and adolescence are also associated with many poor childhood outcomes such as lower educational attainment, increased likelihood of smoking, alcohol and drug use, poorer social skills and poorer physical health.**

Being bullied



UK Mental Health Strategy

‘by promoting good mental health in crucial childhood and teenage years, we can help to prevent mental illness from developing and mitigate its effects when it does’

(DH, 2011, p2).

Preventing mental ill health

Promoting emotional wellbeing is a primary prevention measure that can be defined as:

- involving actions that help participants to protect existing states of health function, prevent predictable and interrelated problems and promote psychosocial wellness (Bloom and Gullotta, 2003)
- any initiative directed at young people who do not have an established diagnosed mental health problem (Harden, 2001).

Aims of the research

- To identify what the meaning of emotional wellbeing is to young people and to parents of young people.
- To identify what young people and parents have experienced that has influenced their emotional wellbeing?

Objectives

- Identify what emotional wellbeing means
- Explore what influences it (enhancing and inhibiting factors)
- Identify and explore the sources of help experienced by them that have facilitated it
- Explore what sources of support they would value
- Identify via an audit the range of local policy and services offered to young people and parents within a local Children's Trust that promote emotional wellbeing



Research question ?

**What is the meaning of
emotional wellbeing to young
people and parents?**

Literature review

- The reviews conclude that there is a dearth of good research and evaluations of research on promoting emotional and mental wellbeing in young people in the UK (Harden, 2001; Coleman, 2007; Edwards, 2003; Oliver, 2008).
- Growing body of seminal work describing some of the concepts linked to good emotional and mental health - happiness, life satisfaction, control, self esteem, coping capacity, physical activity, motivation, resilience, optimism
- Much of the research is US/Canada/Australia based and is intervention focussed and concentrates on young people's views of mental health (with its negative connotations) or the prevention of aspects such as suicide, self esteem, self harm.
- There is little research carried out with parents of adolescents with very little emphasis on exploring the promotion of emotional wellbeing per se.
- Most of the research is either qualitative or quantitative via RCT's

Defining emotional health

Box 1: Definitions of emotional health

'A state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.'

World Health Organization, 2004⁷

'Being able to develop psychologically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually; initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships; use and enjoy solitude; become aware of others and empathise with them; play and learn; develop a sense of right and wrong; resolve (face) problems and setbacks and learn from them.'

Mental Health Foundation, 1999²

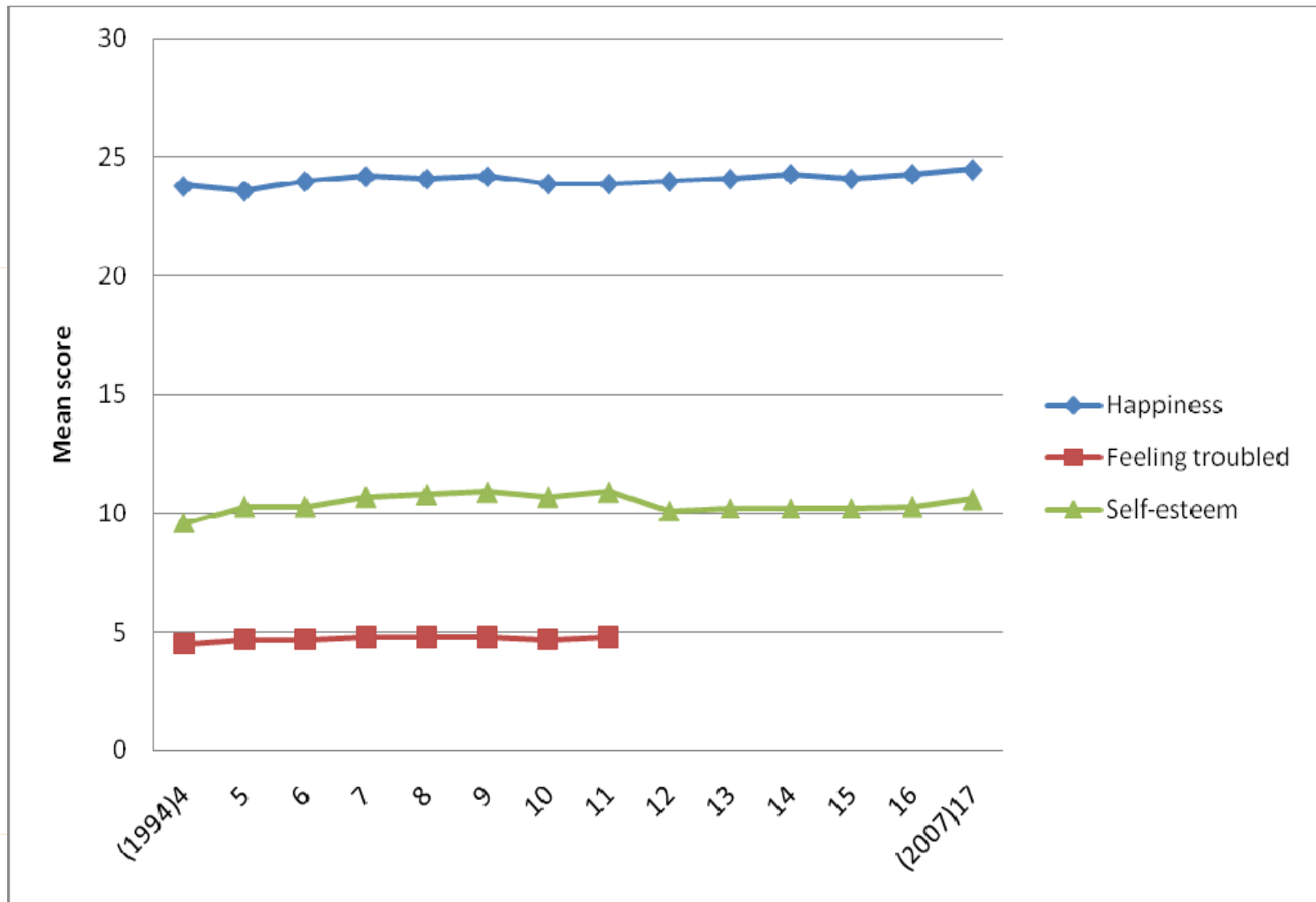
'Self-esteem; in control; healthy; secure; stable; content; fit.'

Views of a focus group of 16-18 year olds, CAMHS Review, 2008⁵

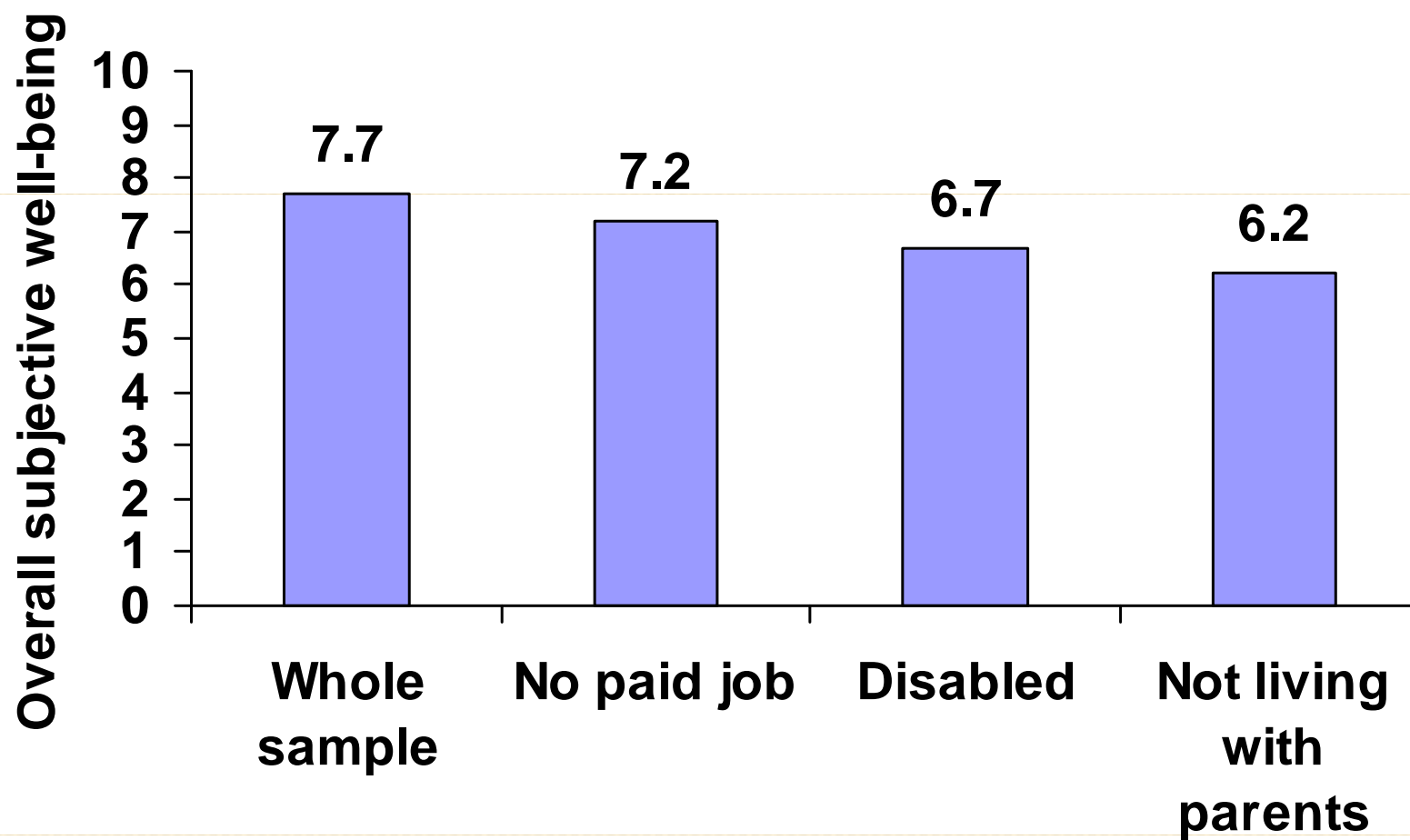
'Skills and confidence; resilience; self-esteem; having aspirations; achieving; feeling motivated.'

Views of a group of practitioners at an NI 50 seminar, July 2009

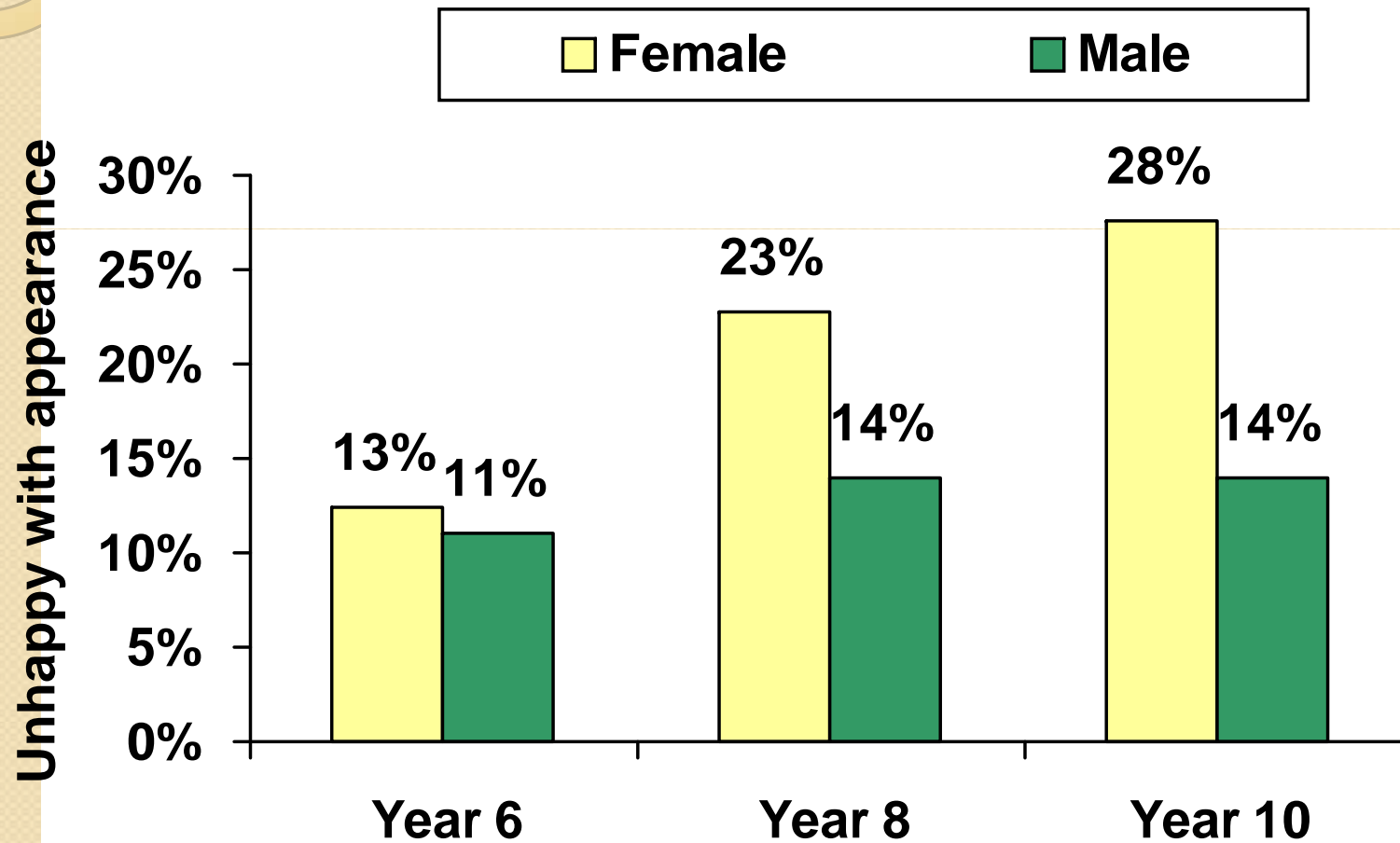
British Household Panel Survey – 11-15 year olds



Sub-groups



Unhappiness with appearance



Mixed Methods theory

- **Combining qualitative and quantitative data provides the researcher with a more complete view of trends and some generalizations as well as an in depth perspective of the participants.**

Cresswell and Plano-Clark (2007)

Mixed Methods theory

- A Sequential Mixed Methods research design occurs when the different aspects occur in chronological order and when the analysis affects or impacts upon the design and analysis of the following method

Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009

- In this study Qualitative will be followed by Quantitative data collection methods

Sample population

- Young people aged 14 or 15 in a defined local authority high school
- Parents of young people aged 14 or 15 in another defined high school within the authority
- Schools matched for similar demographics

Mixed Methods approach

Phase 1a - QUAL phase:

- 4 Separate semi-structured focus groups will be held with parents and with young people. Two face to face and two online. The aim is to identify meanings and views of emotional wellbeing in their language and vocabulary.

Phase 1b - QUAL phase:

- The data will be analysed and then used to develop and design a draft web survey in collaboration with the participants ability of the range of questions, which will be piloted prior to use.

Phase 2a - QUAN phase:

- The designed online web survey will be made available and marketed to the larger population sample to collect data from young people and from parents via separate web surveys to assess agreement/dissent/comparisons with the views of the focus groups.

Phase 2b

- The data will be analysed.

Phase 3 – Audit:

- An audit of local policy and services that promote emotional wellbeing will be made via a scoping of documents to identify the range of services provided, their aims and outcome measures and range of service providers.

Phase 4 – Final mixing of data

Data Analysis

Phase 1

- The qualitative data will be analysed via thematic analysis (Collaizzi, 1978) and coded into emergent themes to generate the questions for phase 2.

Phase 2

- The quantitative data will be processed via SPSS to generate descriptive statistics depending on data type. Graphical summaries will also be produced. Inferential statistical analysis will also be guided by the comparisons that will be identified during phase 1.

Phase 4

- Finally the complementary data will be explored at the final analysis stage phase 4 to allow for in depth interpretation of the results

Ethical issues

The local and education authority require ethical approval via the University of Research Committee and the following will be adhered to:

- Informed consent and assent: Arrangements will be made to ensure informed consent is obtained. Participants will be informed of the research objectives and procedures and be made aware that they can withdraw at any time.
- Appropriate use and protection of data: Information will be treated as confidential and where published, participants will not be identifiable.
- Participant involvement in the research process – participant representatives will be invited to sit on the advisory group.
- Respect for diversity: Full account will be taken of human diversity throughout the research process.

Pilot findings

What is emotional wellbeing?

- Having a big group of friends, **Fitting in**, Secure home environment, **Being happy**, Not being bullied, **No stress**, Confidence, **Self esteem**, Ability, **Being thin**, following the trend, **Support**, Stability, **Hobbies**, Sport, **Love**, Being listened to, **Having someone to talk to**, Feeling appreciated, **Feeling accepted**, Peace, **Being able to express feelings appropriately** and having feelings validated

Sources of support they have experienced

- Sharing experiences with Friends, Parents, Teachers, Friends mums, School Nurse, Boyfriends, school councillor
- **HYPs, SEAL (SEL), Seeing the GP, Youth Clubs, Free clinic**
- Leisure activities, Alcohol, Books, School, Family experiences, Achievements,

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