
D1 Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS) 2002

Key Points

- Eight per cent of 13 year olds and 23 per cent of 15 year olds had used drugs in the last month prior to the survey (Table D1.1).
- In both age groups boys were more likely to have used drugs than girls. Nine per cent of 13 year old boys used drugs in the last month compared with 6 per cent of 13 year old girls. Twenty four per cent of 15 year old boys reported using drugs in the last month compared with 21 per cent of 15 year old girls (Table D1.1).
- Reported drug use has not changed significantly since 1998 (when questions on drug use were introduced to this series of biennial surveys) (Table D1.2).
- The average age for the first occasion of drug use reported by 15 year old pupils was 14 years.

The following presents two extracts taken from the Interim Report of SALSUS national findings prepared by the Child and Adolescent Health Research Unit (CAHRU), The University of Edinburgh. The extracts cover background information about the survey and the interim results concerning drug misuse. ISD have amended the format of the tables of the interim report presented in this section. This has been done for consistency with other sections of the Drug Misuse Statistics Scotland 2002. The Interim Report can be accessed at;

<http://www.drugmisuse.isdscotland.org/publications/abstracts/salsus.htm> and
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/health/alcoholproblems/news.asp>

Interim Report (SALSUS, December 2002)

Background to the 2002 survey

The Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS) has been established by the Scottish Executive to allow a broad based approach to the monitoring of substance use among secondary school children in Scotland. The survey was undertaken by the Child and Adolescent Health Research Unit (CAHRU), University of Edinburgh, commissioned by the Information and Statistics Division (ISD Scotland) on behalf of the Scottish Executive.

SALSUS 2002 was designed to provide information about smoking, drinking and drug use in the context of adolescent lifestyles. The survey continues the biennial series of surveys used to monitor national trends in smoking, drinking and drug use among young people in Scotland since 1982 and in 2002 incorporates items on health, lifestyle and social factors for the first time (see additional Background Notes section, page 142). A further important development in 2002 is the provision of information at local as well as national level. Local reports will be provided to Drug and Alcohol Action Teams early in 2003. The main national report on the survey findings, including the interrelationships of substance use with other health and lifestyle factors will be published later in 2003.

Sample Design

In order to provide disaggregated as well as national information the SALSUS 2002 survey had a final sample size of over 23,000 Scottish school pupils in S2 and S4 from local authority and independently funded schools across Scotland, but excluding pupils attending special schools. The sample size was sufficient to obtain the level of accuracy required of prevalence estimates at a disaggregated level for pupils in S2 and S4. Mainly for reasons of cost and the survey burden on schools, it was not feasible to expand the sample size to cover pupils in S1 and S3 sufficiently.

Comparison with previous surveys

SALSUS 2002 was carried out in the spring school term, approximately six months later than the previous UK wide surveys. The survey sampled pupils from S2 and S4, a change from previous national surveys in the series that sampled pupils from S1-S4. These differences mean that care must be taken when comparing 2002 results with reports from previous surveys. Due to the timing of the survey S2 and S4 pupils in SALSUS 2002 are comparable with the '13 year old' and '15 year old' categories from the earlier surveys (rather than the 'S2' and 'S4' school years). Where comparisons with earlier surveys are made, therefore, S2 and S4 pupils from SALSUS 2002 are compared with '13 year olds' and '15 year olds' respectively from previous reports. For the purpose of reporting consistency, S2 pupils will be referred to as '13 year olds' and S4 pupils referred to as '15 year olds' throughout this report.

Interim results - Drug Use

Questions on drug use were first introduced to the series of biennial smoking surveys in 1998 and these have been extended to provide more information in 2002.

Prevalence of drug use

In 2002, 23 per cent of 15 year olds and 8 per cent of 13 year olds reported using drugs in the last month before the survey (Table D1.1).

Although the differences are not large, in both age groups boys were more likely to have used drugs than girls. Twenty four per cent of 15 year old boys reported using drugs in the last month compared to 21 per cent of 15 year old girls. Nine per cent of 13 year old boys used drugs in the last month compared with 6 per cent of 13 year old girls (Table D1.1).

In 2002, 33 per cent of 15 year old pupils and 11 per cent of 13 year old pupils had used drugs in the last year (Table D1.1).

Thirty seven per cent of 15 year olds and 13 per cent of 13 year olds reported ever having used drugs (Table D1.1).

There has been no significant change in reported drug use in the last month prior to the survey, the last year or ever, since information was first reported on drug use in the 1998 survey (Table D1.2).

Usual frequency of drug use

For the first time since questions on drugs were introduced in 1998, a question was asked on the usual frequency of using drugs. Overall, 4 per cent of all pupils reported that they took drugs once a week or more often, with a marked difference by age: 7 per cent of 15 year olds compared to 2 per cent of 13 year olds (Table D1.3).

Drugs offered to pupils

Half of all pupils (50 per cent) reported that they had been offered drugs, a proportion slightly lower than the 57 per cent reported in 2000 for corresponding age groups. This reduction was more marked for the younger pupils: 44 per cent of 13 year old pupils in 2000 and 34 per cent in 2002, than the older pupils: 70 per cent in 2000 and 65 per cent in 2002.

The most commonly offered drug type was cannabis, 58 per cent of 15 year old pupils and 25 per cent of 13 year old pupils had been offered cannabis in the last year (Table D1.4).

Types of drugs used in the last year

The most frequently used drug in the last year was cannabis. Older pupils reported more use of cannabis than younger pupils: 31 per cent of 15 year olds had used cannabis in the last year compared with 10 per cent of 13 year olds (Table D1.5).

Use of other types of drugs was much lower: Six per cent of all pupils had used stimulants (cocaine, crack, ecstasy, amphetamine and poppers), 4 per cent had used solvents, 2 per cent had used psychedelics (LSD, magic mushrooms) and 1 per cent had used opiates (heroin or methadone) (Table D1.5). The proportion of pupils using each type of these drug types was not significantly different from those found in 2000.

Money spent on drugs

Of all pupils who used drugs once a month or more, 50 per cent reported that they usually spent money on drugs each week, spending an average of £9 per week.

Dependency on drugs

Thirty-nine per cent of all 13 year old and 15 year old pupils who reported taking drugs a few times a year or more reported that they did not want to give up taking drugs. Twenty per cent said they would like to give up sometime in the future, 15 per cent said they would like to give up now and 26 per cent were not sure what they wanted to do (Table D1.6).

Almost all pupils (96 per cent) who had ever taken drugs said they had never felt that they needed help because they were using drugs, though 72 per cent felt they would know where to go to get help.

All 13 and 15 year old pupils were asked if they knew where to get information on drugs; 69 per cent reported that they did know where to get information.

Background Notes

- 1 The first survey in the series of biennial school surveys commissioned by the Scottish Executive was carried out in 1982 to obtain information on smoking prevalence and behaviour. From 1990 the surveys have included questions on alcohol and from 1998 questions on drugs. Until 1998 the surveys were carried out by ONS; the 2000 survey was undertaken by the National Centre for Social Research (NCSR) and the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER).
- 2 In the 2002 SALSUS survey questions on health, lifestyle and social factors were derived largely from the Health Behaviour in School Aged Children (HBSC): a WHO Cross-National Study. A national HBSC survey has been conducted in Scotland every four years since 1990 by Dr Candace Currie, Scottish HBSC Principal Investigator and Director of CAHRU. The 2002 HBSC survey and 2002 SALSUS survey were carried out concurrently to reduce survey fatigue in Scottish schools.
- 3 The SALSUS Protocol, soon to be available, provides more detailed background information, including the government policy frameworks for smoking, drinking and drug use, survey aims and objectives, sample design and the questionnaire rationale.
- 4 One mainland and one island authority declined to take part in the SALSUS 2002 survey. These authorities represent only a small fraction of the target population and consequently SALSUS 2002 is still a nationally representative sample.

D1.1 Pupils who had used drugs in the last month, in the last year (including the last month) and ever; age: 2002

gender

	Scotland - all pupils	13 years	15 years
number			
Base (2002)¹			
Boys	11 069	5 856	5 213
Girls	11 365	6 135	5 230
All pupils	22 434	11 991	10 443
<i>percentage²</i>			
Used drugs in the last month			
Boys	16	9	24
Girls	13	6	21
All pupils	14	8	23
Used drugs in the last year (including those who had done so in the last month)			
Boys	23	13	35
Girls	20	10	32
All pupils	22	11	33
Ever used drugs			
Boys	26	15	38
Girls	23	11	36
All pupils	24	13	37

1 Some children failed to answer each question, these 'no answers' have been excluded from the analyses and so the tables that describe the same population may have varying bases.

2 Percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Source: Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey 2002 (Interim Report, Table 13)

D1.2 | Pupils who had used drugs in the last month, in the last year (including last month) and ever; age: 1998, 2000 and 2002

gender

		13 years	15 years
Used drugs in the last month			
Base (2002) ¹		number	
Boys		5 771	5 052
Girls		6 030	5 047
		<i>percentage²</i>	
Boys	1998	9	26
	2000	8	23
	2002	9	24
Girls	1998	7	22
	2000	7	20
	2002	6	21
Used drugs in the last year (including those who had done so in the last month)			
Base (2002) ¹		number	
Boys		5829	5173
Girls		6107	5179
		<i>percentage²</i>	
Boys	1998	14	36
	2000	12	32
	2002	13	35
Girls	1998	9	34
	2000	10	27
	2002	10	32
Ever used drugs			
Base (2002) ¹		number	
Boys		5856	5213
Girls		6135	5230
		<i>percentage²</i>	
Boys	1998	16	42
	2000	15	35
	2002	15	38
Girls	1998	11	38
	2000	11	31
	2002	11	36

1 Some children failed to answer each question, these 'no answers' have been excluded from the analyses and so the tables that describe the same population may have varying bases.

2 Percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Source: Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey 2002 (Interim Report, Table D1)

D1.3 | Pupils' usual frequency of drug use; age: 2002

gender

	Scotland - all pupils	13 years	15 years
Base (2002)¹	number		
Boys	11 124	5 894	5 230
Girls	11 408	6 176	5 232
All pupils	22 532	12 070	10 462
	<i>percentage²</i>		
Boys			
Once a week or more often	6	3	9
Once or twice a month	4	2	7
A few times a year	5	2	7
Do not use drugs	85	92	77
Girls			
Once a week or more	3	1	5
Once or twice a month	4	2	7
A few times a year	5	2	8
Do not use drugs	88	95	81
All pupils			
Once a week or more	4	2	7
Once or twice a month	4	2	7
A few times a year	5	2	7
Do not use drugs	87	94	79

1 Some children failed to answer each question, these 'no answers' have been excluded from the analyses and so the tables that describe the same population may have varying bases.
 2 Percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Source: Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey 2002 (Interim Report, Table 14)

D1.4 Pupils who have been offered individual drugs; age: 2002

drug group, drug name

	Scotland - all pupils	13 years	15 years
	number		
Base (2002)¹	20 614	10 853	9 761
	<i>percentage³</i>		
Cannabis	40	25	58
Stimulants	19	11	28
Cocaine	6	5	8
Crack	4	4	4
Ecstasy	12	6	18
Amphetamines	7	3	11
Poppers	9	4	14
Psychedelics	10	6	14
LSD	5	3	7
Magic mushrooms	8	5	11
Opiates	5	5	6
Heroin	5	4	5
Methadone	2	2	2
Gas, glue or other solvents	12	11	15
Tranquillisers	5	3	8
Anabolic steroids	2	2	2
Semeron ²	1	1	1
Other	1	1	1

1 Some children failed to answer each question, these 'no answers' have been excluded from the analyses and so the tables that describe the same population may have varying bases.

2 Dummy drug.

3 Columns in the table may not add up to 100 as pupils could give more than one answer.

Source: Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey 2002 (Interim Report, Table 15)

D1.5 Pupils who had used individual drugs in the last year ; age : 2002

drug group, drug name

	Scotland - all pupils	13 years	15 years
	number		
Base (2002)¹	23 090	12 440	10 650
	<i>percentage³</i>		
Cannabis	19	10	31
Stimulants	6	3	9
Cocaine	1	1	2
Crack	1	1	1
Ecstasy	3	1	4
Amphetamines	2	1	3
Poppers	3	1	5
Psychedelics	2	1	3
LSD	1	1	1
Magic mushrooms	2	1	3
Opiates	1	1	1
Heroin	1	1	1
Methadone	-	-	1
Gas, glue or other solvents	4	3	5
Tranquillisers	2	1	2
Anabolic steroids	1	-	1
Semeron ²	-	-	1
Other	-	-	-

1 Some children failed to answer each question, these 'no answers' have been excluded from the analyses and so the tables that describe the same population may have varying bases.

2 Dummy drug.

3 Columns in the table may not add up to 100 as pupils could give more than one answer.

Source: Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey 2002 (Interim Report, Table 16)

D1.6 Pupils who reported whether they want to stop using drugs; age: 2002

all pupils who take drugs a few times a year or more often

	Scotland - all pupils	13 years	15 years
Base (2002)¹	number		
Boys	1 615	440	1 175
Girls	1 284	300	984
All pupils	2 899	740	2 159
	<i>percentage²</i>		
Boys			
would like to give up now	14	17	13
would like to give up in the future	20	18	21
would not like to give up	43	40	45
not sure	23	26	22
Girls			
would like to give up now	17	26	14
would like to give up in the future	19	17	20
would not like to give up	34	32	35
not sure	30	25	31
Both			
would like to give up now	15	21	14
would like to give up in the future	20	17	20
would not like to give up	39	37	40
not sure	26	26	26

1 Base equals all pupils who take drugs a few times a year or more often.

2 Percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Source: Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey 2002 (Interim Report, Table 18)