

Y RHWYDWAITH  
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SCHOOL  
HEALTH  
RESEARCH  
NETWORK

Welcome to our third newsletter. We have been busy since our last one in July and we want to keep you up to date with Network news.

With the invaluable help of the South East Wales Trial Unit, we were able to give feedback to each Network school on their school students' data from the Health Behaviour of School-aged Children (HBSC) survey. At the end of the summer term we sent a **tailored Student Health and Wellbeing Report, with easy to read charts, and suggested ways to use the data to all headteachers of Network schools.**

Since the summer, Network manager, Joan, has visited a number of Network schools. These visits were hugely valuable in gauging teachers' views of the Student Health and Wellbeing Reports and to meet up with staff from schools that were unable to send representatives to the launch. Feedback on the reports from both the launch and these follow-up visits has been very positive. School staff feel that the reports are accessible and easy to read, and that the data in the reports was well chosen. They also value the guidance on how the reports could be used in school, and the clear links between the reports and Healthy School Actions.



Schools have also told us that they would like to receive data every two years to monitor the health behaviours of their students. **The HBSC survey is only conducted every four years so we are now piloting an e-survey, which would mean data could be provided every two years.** The plan is that this will be rolled out in a year's time to the rest of the network. **Do get in touch if you have any queries about your school's report or would value a meeting with Joan.**

## LESSONS FROM CANADA

The key note speech at our launch event was given by Steve Manske from the [Propel Centre for Population Health Impact](#) at the University of Waterloo, Canada. Propel developed [SHAPES](#), the School Health Action, Planning and Evaluation System, and working with them throughout the development of our School Health Research Network in Wales has been invaluable. This Autumn, Joan, Gillian (our SHRN researcher) have been lucky enough to visit Propel. This was the first time we were able to see their work first-hand, and what a wonderful opportunity it proved to be!

provided us with a packed timetable of thought-provoking interviews and visits. These included conversations with researchers from across Canada, public health staff from provincial and local agencies and a fascinating and lively visit to a local school. We enjoyed meeting like-minded people with a passion for improving young people's health, and learning about exciting initiatives and innovative approaches being taken in this area.

We learnt some useful lessons about dealing with the very practical problem of geography. As our network includes [schools from all over Wales](#), we are always

Steve and the other staff at Propel

We think that others in the school will find this newsletter interesting, so please share it.



@SHRNWales



SHRN@cardiff.ac.uk



SHRN.org.uk

(cont from front page) keen to learn more about keeping connected over distances – something in which our Canadian colleagues are extremely well versed. They recognised that face-to-face meetings of group members are necessary, but when this is not practical, technology can play an invaluable role. Webinars are widely used, and certainly seem a sensible way of potentially linking together the members of our own School Health Research Network across Wales. See below.

As well as learning from the work being done in Canada, the trip gave us the opportunity to reflect on our own School Health Research Network and its Welsh context. Presenting on the network and discussing it with others led us to the conclusion that, although there's always room for progress, there is much to be celebrated! For example, all schools in Wales take part in the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes, we have an inspection process that considers student wellbeing, and legal requirements in relation to [nutritional standards in schools](#). With the addition of the School Health Research Network into this landscape, there is potential to really make a difference to young people's health in Wales.

We would like to thank Steve Manske and the staff at Propel for looking after us so well and providing us with such a valuable opportunity.



Joan, Steve and Gillian at PROPEL

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## LINKING WITH A SCHOOL IN CANADA

A number of schools across Canada use SHAPES reports to inform health and wellbeing actions. Would you like to link with one of these schools to share experiences of how you use your student data and the actions this can promote?

This could be a wonderful opportunity at both a staff and student level. If you think you would like to be involved please **register interest by emailing us**.

## NEW LOOK WEBSITE

Our new look [website](#) has now been launched, the website contains information on Network aims as well as an interactive map of all Network schools in Wales—see if you can spot your school!

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## HANNAH'S RESEARCH



My name is Hannah and, as many of you will know, I am a PhD student whose project is linked to the School Health Research Network. My research aims to explore school health improvement and how the School Health Research Network Health reports are used. It involves case studies of 3 schools, where I am interviewing staff, students and parents to gain their views on this. I have now recruited all 3 case study schools and have begun interviews in each of them, which have been very interesting and insightful so far. It is really great that the project is now in full swing and I would like to thank the 3 schools who are participating in case studies as well as the other schools who put their name forward to participate after the spaces had been filled.

By the end of my PhD, I hope to have developed an understanding of potential structures which could be put in place both internally and externally to the school to help optimise health improvement activity and use of the health reports within schools. To do this, I need your help. I am asking **one representative from each school (ideally the network contact or a member of senior management) within the School Health Research Network to complete a short 15-minute online survey**. Thank you to all of those who have completed this so far, but it would be brilliant to hear the views of the majority of schools in the network. Email: [LittlecottH@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:LittlecottH@cardiff.ac.uk)

The English survey can be found [here](#) and the Welsh survey [here](#).

DECIPHer's research advisory group of young people, ALPHA, is a group of young people aged 14-21 who have a range of experiences and opinions, to help make sure research reflects what is relevant, important and acceptable to young people.



An ALPHA meeting underway

Throughout the development and establishment of the School Health Research Network we have collaborated with ALPHA. Their opinions and thoughts were taken into consideration when the initial bid for funding was made. We also asked the young people to comment on the school reports. They reviewed the style and content of the reports as well as giving us suggestions as to possible ways that students at network schools could be engaged with their own report. As part of our commitment to the young people of ALPHA, we feel it would be beneficial to share this. The group thought it would be most appropriate for students to consider sections of the report at a time rather than the whole report.

## HOW TO INVOLVE STUDENTS

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| <p><b>Sharing with student voice groups</b></p>                        | <p>Already established student voice groups such as school councils could consider the data and plan appropriate actions.</p> <p>A different group could be set up with a focus on health to consider the implications of the report.</p>  |
| <p><b>Opportunities within the curriculum to consider the data</b></p> | <p>Allowing students to use the real data in lessons and for coursework would be good. E.g.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the data charts could be used in Maths;</li> <li>• English and Welsh lessons could focus on writing or presenting on different aspects of the report;</li> <li>• the data for each health topic could be considered during PSE;</li> <li>• the dataset could be invaluable for the Individual Investigation for the Welsh Baccalaureate.</li> </ul> <p>Data should be presented in an innovative way such as through exercises and games e.g electronic voting to consider likely responses which could lead to interesting discussions.</p> |
| <p><b>Other opportunities to share data with students</b></p>          | <p>Schools could have a week dedicated to health. The report has five sections so one health topic could be the focus of each day.</p> <p>Data could be shared during assemblies with presentations by staff or student voice groups</p>   |

ALPHA is currently looking for new members aged 14-19 years old from the South Wales area. The group meets once a month on a Saturday or during school holidays, with one residential trip a year. There are a number of benefits for a young person involved in ALPHA: personal development, an insight into research development and having a role in shaping health related research. Involvement should be beneficial to a student when applying for further education or work.

The costs for young people to attend meetings are covered and lunch is provided and they receive high street shopping vouchers for each monthly meeting they attend as a thank you for their work.

If any of your students would like more information on ALPHA or are interested in joining, they can email Ed and Hayley at [ReedHM@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:ReedHM@cardiff.ac.uk)

## RESEARCH INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITY

Children and Young People's Suicide and Self-Harm Collaboration

Would your school like to be involved at the inception of a new SHRN adopted study? We are looking for staff from ten Network schools from across Wales to help shape this research. Are you worried about how to approach this sensitive area? Would you like to share your practice with others?

**Children and Young People's Suicide and Self-Harm Workshop: Developing School-based Intervention and Support**  
Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015, 10am – 4pm, Cardiff University

Expenses can be paid for a member of staff from ten Network schools for one day's supply cover, travel and overnight accommodation where required. Schools are welcome to bring more than one representative but we are only able to cover the expenses of one person per school.

Please email us ([shrn@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:shrn@cardiff.ac.uk)) to register your interest. The closing date is Friday 16th January.

The workshop marks the launch of the Children and Young People's Suicide and Self-Harm Collaboration. The collaboration brings together schools, policy-makers and researchers aiming to take forward the research agenda around suicide and self-harm in children and young people, with a specific view to improving intervention and support within educational settings. The workshop will include:

### Experiences of Suicide and Self-harm in Children and Young People

Presentations by researchers about their work on suicide and self-harm in children and young people across a range of settings.

Consultation with school staff about their experiences of identifying and supporting students who experience suicidality and self-harm.

### Setting the Research Agenda

Presentations by researchers and policy-makers about the future direction of research and policy addressing suicide and self-harm in children and young people, particularly with regard to educational settings.

Consultation with school staff about their needs and recommendations for the future direction of the research agenda, and how it might best develop school-based intervention and support.

## RESOURCES

### Cardiff University Community Engagement

We are now able to direct you to the Cardiff University Curriculum Support [Website](#) for a wealth of opportunities for your school to access training and other support.

The Curriculum Support site is designed to allow teachers to search the full range of curriculum linked engagement activities by **key stage, curriculum subject, type of activity and Academic School**. In addition to curriculum linked activities, the **programme** search allows teachers to link directly with the full range of school outreach programmes that the University offers. These include those activities and events aimed at encouraging students to aspire to and prepare for higher education as well as those linked to research institutes and other partner organisations.

The site will be available in Welsh from January 2015.



### Cancer Research UK

Citizen Science games and apps are available for your students to access online via the Cancer Research UK website. Students are able to create a magical world, save a race of minion and help CRUK scientists analyse real cancer data all through the puzzle game Reverse the Odds. All games can be found [here](#).

### ASH Wales 2014 Young People and E-cigarettes Survey

ASH Wales are surveying young people aged 13-18 years about e-cigarettes. If you want your students to be involved you can access and complete the survey online [here](#) until 19 December 2014.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact [Steven.Macey@ashwales.org.uk](mailto:Steven.Macey@ashwales.org.uk)

