

**Welcome To the SHRN Secondary School e-news For January 2024**

The [School Health Research Network (SHRN)](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.shrn.org.uk%2F&data=05%7C01%7CBoffeyM1%40cardiff.ac.uk%7C5c1aa3295a4a4d7cd96a08dbb85dbf8e%7Cbdb74b3095684856bdbf06759778fcbc%7C1%7C0%7C638306485010688732%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=MQPu92lFy1uDDG1EkjBTvXazPwaIpmsGMNZOxpcFSnQ%3D&reserved=0) is a policy-practice-research partnership betweenWelsh Government, Public Health Wales, andCardiff University. SHRN aims toimprove **young people’s health and wellbeing** in Wales by working with both primary and secondary schools to generate and use **good quality evidence** for health and wellbeing improvement.

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**The SHRN survey window for secondary schools closed for 2023**

Over the last four months, the SHRN survey has been rolled out to all secondary schools in Wales.

We have been overwhelmed by the hard work that you have put in to make sure we have heard from as many learners as possible.

We are pleased to announce the early data on this year’s survey numbers, a significant increase from the 2021 survey:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Survey Year  | No. of sites who ran the Student survey  | No. learner surveys received  | No. SEQ completed  |
| **2023**  | **204**  | **143,705**  | **192**  |
| 2021  | 202  | 123,204  | 174  |

Professor Simon Murphy**,**ProfessorinSocial Interventions and Health, Director DECIPHer, and Lead for the Schools Health Research Network said:

*‘I’m delighted that so many schools took part, enabling SHRN to support public health improvement efforts across Wales by providing actionable data about learners’ health and wellbeing. A key strength of SHRN data is that it provides evidence at national, regional, and local levels, enabling schools to identify the health and wellbeing needs of learners and target appropriate action. I very much look forward to the next phase of our work together when the findings from this survey will be released in Spring 2024’.*

**Progress update on the Evaluation of the Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Wellbeing**

Statutory Guidance introduced by Welsh Government in 2021, requires all schools in Wales to embed a whole school approach (WSA) towards mental health andemotional wellbeing in their everyday practice.

[DECIPHer](https://decipher.uk.net) and the [Wolfson Centre for Young People’s Mental Health](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/wolfson-centre-for-young-peoples-mental-health) are conducting a three-year evaluation of the WSA in Wales.

The study aims to gain insight into how schools have made use of the WSA Framework in the development of their strategies, policies and school environment to support learner and staff wellbeing. It also looks at whether there are any changes in the way that learners in schools describe their own mental wellbeing, using the national SHRN survey data and tracking changes over time. Then, by considering these things together, exploring whether the WSA Framework might have contributed to any changes in learners’ mental wellbeing and in school approaches.

Dr. *Rachel Brown,* Research Fellow who is leading on this researchand Zoe Haslam, Research Assistant at DECIPHer, Cardiff University, recently presented a progress update on this research.

You can find a recording of the presentation [here](https://youtu.be/o_l9DgAssEg) and read Rachel’s Blog [here](https://decipher.uk.net/blog/assessing-the-whole-school-approach-to-mental-health-and-wellbeing/).

**Trends in adolescent emotional problems in Wales between 2013 and 2019: the contribution of peer relationships**

Academics studied Health Behaviour in Schools (HSBC) and Student Health Research Network (SHRN) data collected across three time points (2013/14, 2017/18 and 2019/20) from more than 200,000 young people aged 11-16 in Wales to investigate trends over time in adolescent emotional problems.

The study specifically aimed to examine:

1. If rates of adolescent emotional problems changed from 2013 to 2019?
2. If changes in emotional problems varied by gender, child age or family affluence?
3. If the quality of young people's social relationships changed from 2013 to 2019 (friendship quality, face-to-face bullying, cyberbullying)?
4. If changes in young people's social relationships varied by gender, child age or family affluence?
5. To what extent do any changes in social relationships account for changes in young people's emotional problems?

The results show the number experiencing emotional symptoms associated with anxiety or depression (i.e. feeling low, irritable, nervous and having sleep difficulties) increased over time, with the proportion of young people with high emotional problems rising from 23% to 38% over this period.

Results showed that girls and young people from less affluent backgrounds had more emotional problems, according to the analysis, with pre-existing inequalities in emotional symptoms widening during this time.

Friendship quality and experiencing any form of bullying were strongly associated with higher emotional problems in all three surveys. However, while rates of bullying increased slightly over time and friendship quality reduced these trends did not explain the population-level increases in emotional problems over time.

Lead author Dr Rebecca Anthony, based at Cardiff University’s Centre for the Development, Evaluation, Complexity and Implementation in Public Health Improvement (DECIPHer) and Wolfson Centre for young People's Mental Health said: “This study provides evidence of a sharp increase in emotional problems among young people in Wales prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly for young people from less affluent backgrounds.

“Our findings highlight a growing need for prevention efforts across society, and mental health support for young people. Policymakers, schools and mental health practitioners should be aware of the high burden of emotional problems in young people, particularly among those from less affluent families.

Further research to address these rising problems is going to be vital as we move on from the pandemic.”

Trends in adolescent emotional problems in Wales between 2013 and 2019: the contribution of peer relationships, is published in the Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and available at the following link:

<https://acamh.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jcpp.13924>

**Upcoming SHRN Webinars**

We would like to extend you an invitation to our rescheduled live webinar:

**When: Tuesday 30 January 2024 3.45 -4.30pm**

**Title: SHRN School-Level Data Dashboard Update**

Researchers at DECIPHer, Cardiff University been working to develop a school-level data dashboard. This dashboard will, when live, enable schools to analyse their Student Health and Wellbeing data over different survey rounds. This is expected to be a useful tool for schools when creating health and wellbeing policies or looking at the impact of current ones.

This webinar will provide an update on the development of the prototype dashboard.

We are delighted to welcome Dr Hayley Reed, Dr Nick Page, Dr Jeremy Segrott, and Dr Sara Long, DECIPHer, Cardiff University, to present the webinar. They will also be available to answer questions from attendees after the presentations have finished.

You can find a prototype of the dashboard, as well as a short video explaining its function, [here](https://mappedsites.cardiff.ac.uk/shrn-dash/).

You can register for the webinar [here](https://www.tickettailor.com/events/schoolhealthresearchnetwork/1084928).

**When: Thursday 8 February 2024 3.45 -4.30pm**

**Title: The SWELL Study – Can Depression in Young People be Prevented?**

We are delighted to welcome [Professor Frances Rice](https://profiles.cardiff.ac.uk/staff/ricef2), [Wolfson Centre for Young People’s Mental Health,](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/wolfson-centre-for-young-peoples-mental-health) Cardiff University, to present on the [SWELL Study](https://ncmh-surveys.cardiff.ac.uk/redcap/surveys/?s=ARELCFWHTDFJJR8P).

This webinar will define depression in young people and briefly overview the scientific literature about risk and protective factors for youth depression.  We will summarize results of intervention studies that aim to protect young people against depression. These include “universal studies” that include all young people and “targeted studies” those that focus on young people most in need.  Evidence suggests that targeted approaches are most effective.  We will then describe an early-intervention study that we are recruiting to that aims to prevent depression in young people at elevated risk of depression.  We will describe how you could support recruitment to the study if this fits with your school priorities.

You can register for the webinar [here](https://buytickets.at/schoolhealthresearchnetwork/1122411)

**When: Thursday 29 February 2024 3.45 -4.30pm**

**Title:** [**The SAMA Project**](https://decipher.uk.net/uncategorized/adaptation-of-a-secondary-school-mental-health-and-wellbeing-intervention-to-the-welsh-context/) **- Identifying and Adapting Global Mental Health Programmes to Wales**

We are delighted to welcome [Dr Hayley Reed](https://profiles.cardiff.ac.uk/staff/reedhm), DECIPHer, Cardiff University, to present the findings of her fellowship - investigating the need to identify and adapt global mental health programmes to Wales to address adolescent mental health issues.

You can register for the webinar [here](https://buytickets.at/schoolhealthresearchnetwork/1122422)

**The SHRN School-Level Digital Dashboard wins Mental Health Data Prize and further funding**

We are pleased to announce that the DECIPHer project team working on the school-level data dashboard has been awarded further funding.

The aim of the School Level Digital Dashboard is to empower you to use bespoke School Health Research Network (SHRN) data to create environments that promote good mental and physical health for your learners. It was developed as part of a Mental Health Data Prize project, funded by [The Wellcome Trust.](https://wellcome.org/)

You can read more a here: [SHRN Data Dashboard Project one of three winners of the Mental Health Data Prize - DECIPHer](https://decipher.uk.net/news/shrn-data-dashboard-project-one-of-three-winners-of-the-mental-health-data-prize/)

**SHRN Data Informs Public Health Wales Vaping Guidance**

[Public Health Wales](https://phw.nhs.wales/) has published new guidance for secondary schools to help tackle the rise in youth vaping.

The guidance, [which can be read here](https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/information-and-guidance-on-vaping-for-secondary-aged-learners-in-wales/), provides key information to schools around e-cigarettes and their use (commonly known as ‘vaping’) among young people, as well as actions schools can take to address vaping. It draws on data from the [School Health Research Network (SHRN) Student Health and Wellbeing (SHW) survey](https://www.shrn.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/PrSHRN-2022-23-national-report-English.pdf), which shows vaping has risen among 11–16-year-olds in Wales in recent years.

Among the actions suggested to respond to and address vaping, Public Health Wales advises schools to undertake ten key actions in relation to vaping. When used alongside other priority areas as part of their curriculum delivery and implementation of a whole-school approach to health and wellbeing, these actions include:

* Using the [SHRN dashboard](https://decipher.uk.net/research/programmes/healthy-settings-and-organisations/school-level-digital-dashboard/) to understand how vaping behaviours at their school compare with other areas and Wales wide.
* Using the national SHRN Student Health and Wellbeing report alongside each school’s SHRN report to help identify the age profile of vaping behaviour and plan curriculum delivery accordingly.
* Continuing to participate in the SHRN school surveys to help build a picture of smoking and vaping behaviours and responses and how they are evolving.

*Information and Guidance on Vaping for Secondary-aged learners in Wales*, compiled by the Tobacco Control Team and Educational Settings Team, Health Improvement Division, Public Health Wales, can be read here: <https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/information-and-guidance-on-vaping-for-secondary-aged-learners-in-wales/information-and-guidance-on-vaping-for-secondary-aged-learners-in-wales/> .

More on the survey can be read on the SHRN website: <https://www.shrn.org.uk/national-data/> .

**Contacts Us**

If you have any questions or feedback about any of the content in this e-news, or about SHRN, please email the Secondary School or Primary School SHRN Team.

Please forward this e-news to anyone you think may be interested. They can subscribe to receive the latest e-news and updates by emailing Maria Boffey, SHRN Knowledge Exchange Manager: boffeym1@cardiff.ac.uk

Join the conversation.

* Twitter / X: [@SHRNWales](https://twitter.com/shrnwales?lang=en)
* Website: [School Health Research Network (shrn.org.uk)](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.shrn.org.uk%2F&data=05%7C01%7CBoffeyM1%40cardiff.ac.uk%7C5c1aa3295a4a4d7cd96a08dbb85dbf8e%7Cbdb74b3095684856bdbf06759778fcbc%7C1%7C0%7C638306485010844943%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=QQ8zBf4usKQYt6Z0MjWUokmDvzRo4a49mFvAdP3Iak4%3D&reserved=0)
* YouTube: [SHRN Wales](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4_B0Yr1VXT-V-vLIBdmjvg)

