



**XXXX**

## **Secondary School**

**Lifestyle Survey: Results**

October 2005

## **Introduction**

Following the recent lifestyle survey conducted by the school we have compiled a short account of current lifestyle trends at XXX. The following results are based on a random sample of the data collected. We would hope to focus on certain areas of interest in the coming months, and this may require a more complete analysis of the data collected.

We recommend that the survey process should be repeated on an annual basis in order to assess the efficacy of the ongoing lifestyle programme.

## **Selected Results**

### **Nutrition**

Almost one-fifth of students do not eat breakfast at home, with 15% skipping breakfast completely. Inappropriate breakfast habits have an effect on health, behaviour and mood. In addition, inappropriate breakfast affects certain indicators of academic performance such as short term memory and the capacity for mental arithmetic.

Twenty-six percent of students report drinking fizzy drinks at lunch every day, with 14% of students consume soft drinks more than once per day. Most students (79%) drink soft drinks on a daily basis. This statistic is comparatively high. Moderate consumption of soft drinks has been linked to obesity, osteoporosis and type II diabetes, and is likely to have an effect on behaviour. It is estimated that approximately one-third of students consume fizzy drinks in worryingly high quantities.

Relatively few students (45%) reported eating fruit every day, with only 18% reporting consumption of more than one piece of fruit per day. The fruit consumption of 55% of students is worryingly low, with 5% of students reporting that they never eat fruit. This is likely to have a serious impact on long-term health.

Sixteen percent of students report consuming breakfast rolls at least twice weekly. Fifty-one percent of students eat chocolate at least once every day, and 15% of students consume sweets on a daily basis. Thirty-five percent of students eat crisps once per day, and 9% eat crisps more than once per day. Almost one-fifth of students surveyed report that they never sit down to dinner with their family.

One-third of students surveyed considered their diets to be "healthy", 58% considered themselves average and only 7% considered their diets to be "unhealthy".

### **Physical Activity**

The recreational habits of students give cause for some concern. The level of physical activity in 40% of students is worryingly low. There is also a worrying trend in relation to time spent watching television. Of the students surveyed, 70% reported having televisions in their rooms, a comparatively high statistic.

Forty-five percent reported watching 1-2 hours of television per day, 21% reported watching 2-3 hours per day and 15% reported watching more than 3 hours per day. This is a particularly worrying trend as it reduces time available to participate in healthier activities and increases exposure to the marketing of unhealthy products. Furthermore, it is common for teenagers to ignore their natural sleep rhythms when watching TV and this may result in daytime fatigue. Eleven percent of students reported playing computer games for 1-2 hours per day, and 5% of students play computer games for more than three hours daily.

## **Smoking and Drinking**

Seventeen percent of those surveyed admit to being smokers. According to the survey, 9% of students drink alcohol at least once per week. It is likely that these figures are an under-estimation of smoking/drinking rates.

## **Summary**

A high proportion of students consume energy-dense nutrient-poor snack foods throughout the school day. This can be expected to affect health and academic performance. Fizzy drink consumption is high, and this can be expected to affect health and performance.

In line with other schools in County XXX, students appear to be spending long periods of time each day watching television. The level of physical activity in many students probably does not meet the minimum requirement for health. This issue may also affect school performance, since it is known that physical fitness is strongly correlated with academic achievement.

## **Recommendations**

We recommend that the information provided by this survey should be used to set lifestyle-related goals for the school. This would help to prioritise areas where lifestyle changes are necessary, and would be the most effective way of achieving results. The goal-setting exercise can be facilitated and guided by RedBranch, and would have a direct influence on the RedBranch lifestyle programme in the coming school term. The school should consider establishing lifestyle-related policies as part of the goal-setting exercise.

The following issues might be considered:

- TV watching
- Minimisation of junk food consumption
- Improvement of fruit/vegetable consumption
- Physical inactivity

There are a range of initiatives that might be employed to address these issues. We would be happy to help the school to develop an appropriate implementation plan based on international best practice.

David Egan  
Director  
RedBranch Human Performance

**XXX Secondary School**

**Lifestyle Survey October 2005 Full Results**

**Percentage**

**TELEVISION HABITS**

**Average time spent watching T.V.**

none	4
less than 1 hour	15
1-2 hours	45
2-3 hours	21
more than 3 hours	15

**Televisions in Rooms**

yes	70
no	30

**Average time spent playing computer games**

none	30
less than 1 hour	54
1-2 hours	11
more than 3 hours	5

**BREAKFAST HABITS**

**Breakfast consumption**

Students eating breakfast at home	81
Students not eating breakfast	17

**Type of Breakfast Consumed**

cereal	51
porridge	13
toast	11
fry	6
other	4
no breakfast	15

**MORNING BREAK**

**Foods consumed at morning break**

crisps	9
bar	20
sandwich	26
sweets	2
fruit	2
other	22
nothing	20

**Drinks consumed at morning break**

fizzy drink	11
water	36
fruit juice	11
diluted juice	18
nothing	22

## LUNCH BREAK

<b>Home made sandwich consumption</b>	
most days	40
2-3 days/week	18
rarely	43
<b>Shop bought sandwich consumption</b>	
most days	20
2-3 days/week	27
rarely	54
<b>Crisp Consumption</b>	
most days	13
2-3 days/week	21
rarely	66
<b>Chip/Wedges Consumption</b>	
most days	13
2-3 days/week	18
rarely	70
<b>Breakfast Roll Consumption</b>	
most days	10
2-3 days/week	21
rarely	69
<b>Chocolate Consumption</b>	
most days	15
2-3 days/week	46
rarely	38
<b>Sweet Consumption</b>	
most days	15
2-3 days/week	49
rarely	36
<b>Fruit Consumption</b>	
most days	24
2-3 days/week	29
rarely	47
<b>Drinks consumed at lunch</b>	
fizzy drink	26
water	43
fruit juice	4
diluted juice	17
other	4
no drink	6

## DAILY EATING HABITS

<b>Who prepares meals at home?</b>	
mother	62
father	4
both	15
self	13
other	6
<b>Snack before bed</b>	
yes	63
no	37
<b>Regularity of chocolate consumption</b>	
more than once a day	11
once a day	40
2-3 days per week	36
once a week	9
never	4
<b>Regularity of biscuit consumption</b>	
more than once a day	7
once a day	39
2-3 days per week	23
once a week	23
never	9
<b>Regularity of fruit consumption</b>	
more than once a day	18
once a day	27
2-3 days per week	30
once a week	20
never	5
<b>Regularity of soft drinks consumption</b>	
more than once a day	14
once a day	25
2-3 days per week	39
once a week	16
never	7
<b>Regularity of crisp consumption</b>	
more than once a day	9
once a day	26
2-3 days per week	23
once a week	28
never	14
<b>Regularity of chip/wedge consumption</b>	
more than once a day	2
once a day	9
2-3 days per week	26
once a week	47
never	16

<b>Regularity of breakfast roll consumption</b>	
once a day	5
2-3 days per week	11
once a week	32
never	52

<b>Average daily soft drinks consumption</b>	
none	21
1 glass	45
2-3 glasses	26
4-5 glasses	2
more than 5 glasses	6

<b>How often sit down to dinner with family</b>	
every day	51
3 or 4 times a week	21
once or twice a week	9
never	19

<b>Where do you normally eat</b>	
at dinner table	74
in front of telly	21
other	4

<b>How healthy do you consider your diet</b>	
very healthy	2
healthy	33
average	58
unhealthy	7

## **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

<b>How many days a week physically active</b>	
1 day	7
2 days	14
3 days	19
4 days	21
5 or more days	40

<b>Are you physically active outside of school?</b>	
yes	84
no	14

<b>Leisure time activities with family</b>	
yes	41
no	59

## **SMOKING & DRINKING HABITS**

<b>Family members that smoke</b>	
mother	2
father	13
both parents	2
brother	4
sister	4
other	22
no one	52

**Do you smoke?**

yes	17
no	83

**Alcohol Consumption**

never	22
once off	31
1-2 times a month	38
once a week	9