



About time

**A report investigating the actions taken
by young people to look after their
mental wellbeing.**

October 2018

POWERED BY:

YMCA

PRESENTED BY:

#IAMWHOLE

Introduction

Nearly one million young people in the UK and Ireland are known to have a diagnosed mental health difficulty¹, with the actual number likely to be much higher, and rising.

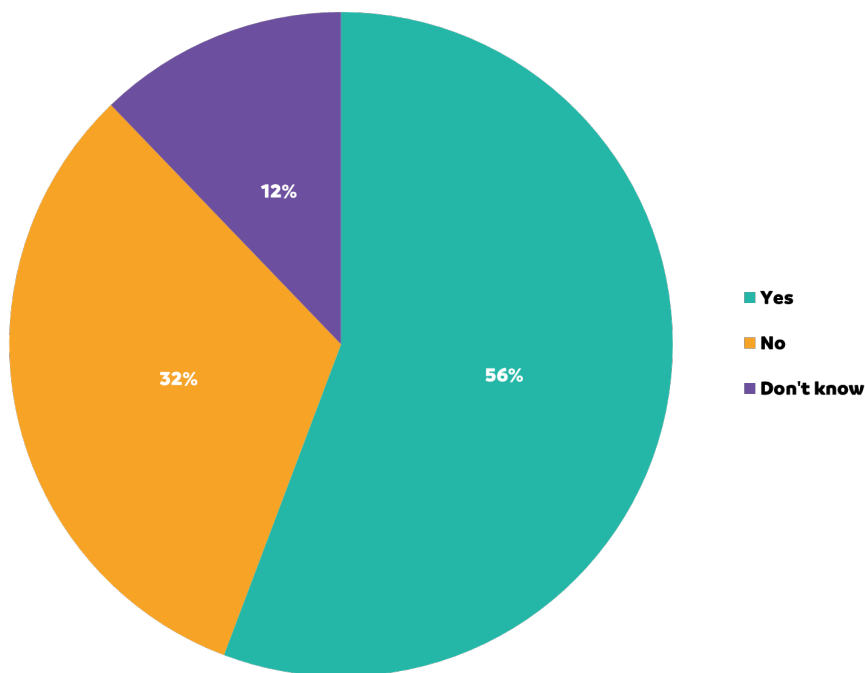
While the importance of young people's mental health continues to rise slowly in the public and political consciousness, positive responses have been slow to materialise, both at a service and individual level.

This research seeks to understand the actions young people are taking to look after their own mental wellbeing and what barriers exist to them doing more.

Key findings

Around half of young people (56%) report taking some time out to look after their mental wellbeing.

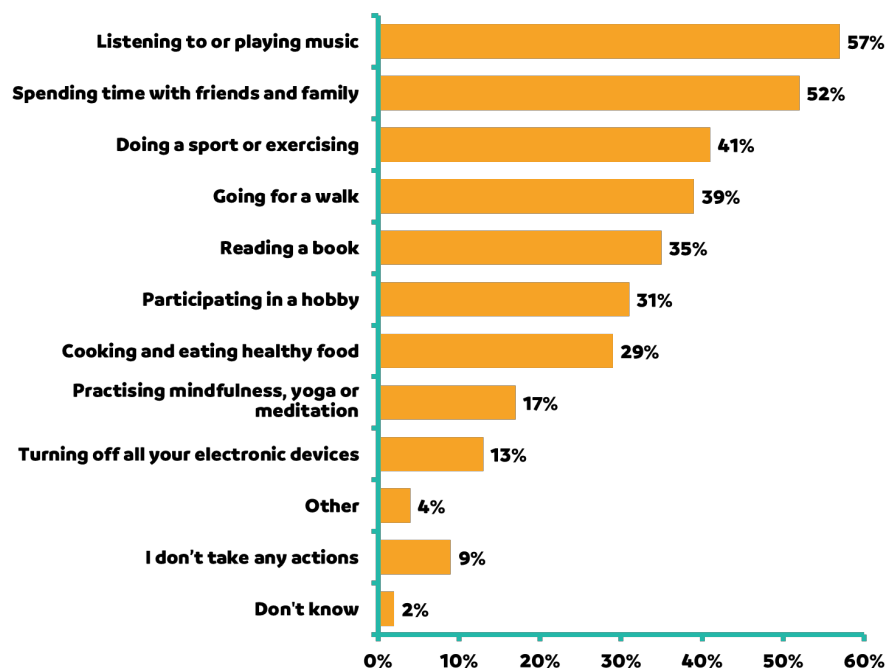
Do you take time out to look after your mental wellbeing? (n=1,123)



Taking action to look after their mental wellbeing is more prominent among older age groups, with nearly two thirds (65%) of 18 to 24 year-olds saying they take time out, compared to 42% of 11 to 17 year-olds.

The most popular ways young people chose to take time out includes listening to or playing music (57%), spending time with friends and family (52%) and doing a sport or exercise (41%).

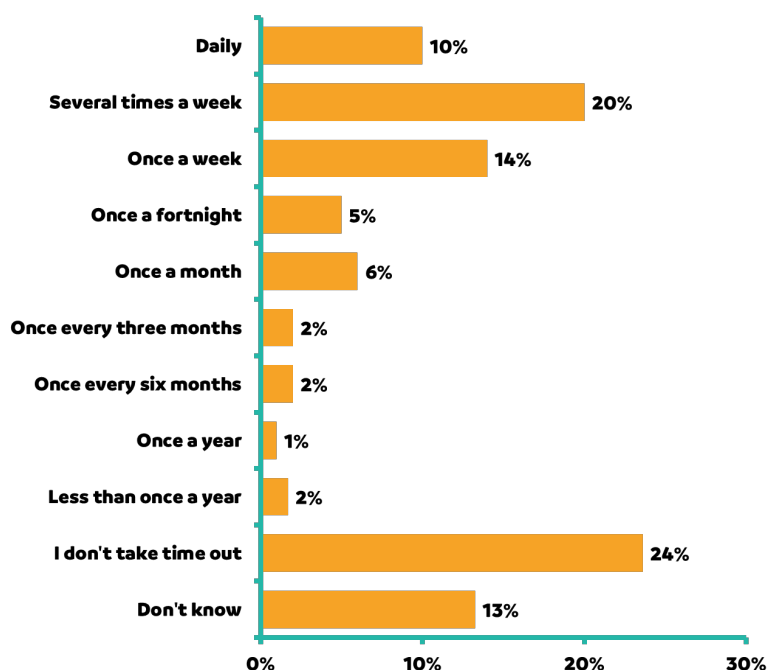
What actions do you take to look after your mental wellbeing? (n=1,123)



While half of young people report taking time out to look after their mental wellbeing, the research found that the time they do take, was often infrequent in nature.

Less than half of young people (45%) do something at least once a week to look after their mental wellbeing.

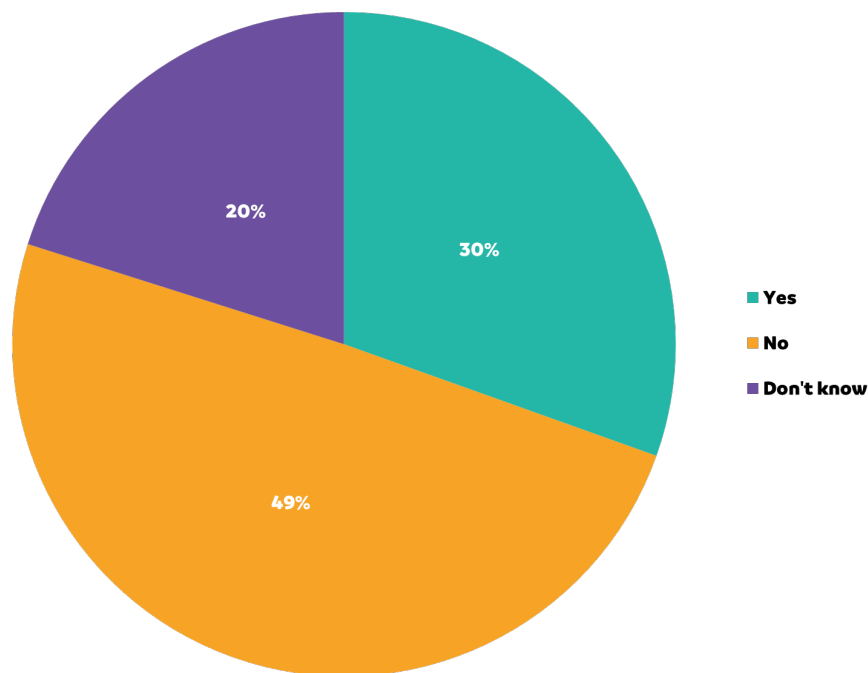
How often do you take time out to look after your mental wellbeing? (n=1,123)



Not only are the younger age groups less likely to take time out, when they do, it is less regular. Half of 18 to 24 year-olds (50%) take time out every week to look after their mental wellbeing, compared to 37% of 11 to 17 year-olds.

The limited amount of time they set aside was recognised in the fact that less than one in three young people (30%) believe they take enough time out to look after their mental wellbeing.

Do you think you take enough time out to look after your mental wellbeing? (n=1,123)



Despite taking more time out, it is 18 to 24 year-olds who most strongly believe they aren't doing enough to look after their mental wellbeing.

More than half of 18 to 24 year-olds (54%) believe they don't take enough time out, while just 43% of 11 to 17 year-olds share this viewpoint, possibly reflecting the importance the older group put on their mental health and self care.

As well as across age groups, there is also a marked difference across genders on whether young people feel they are taking out enough time to look after their mental wellbeing.

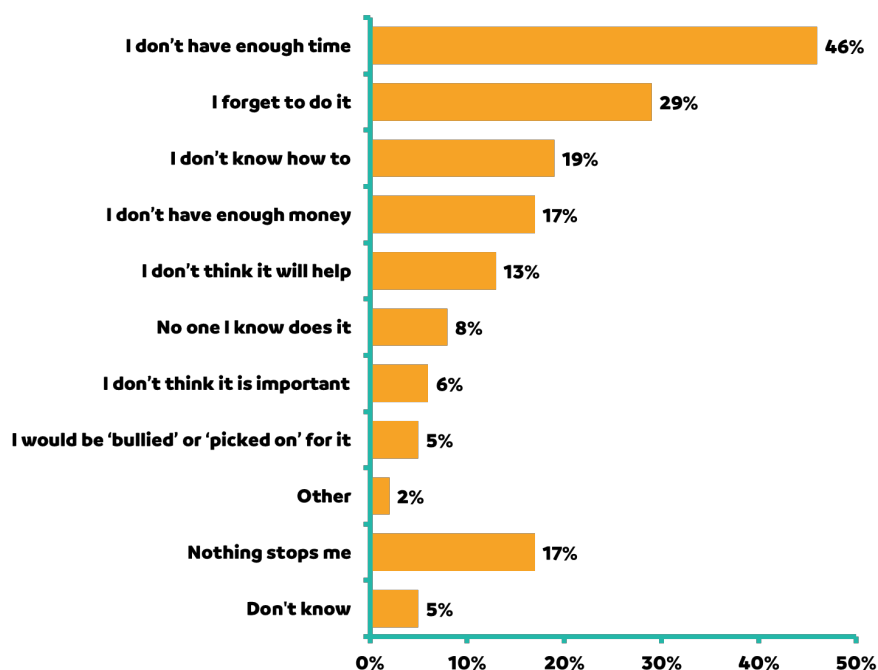
More young males (36%) than young females (26%) believe they take enough time out to look after their mental wellbeing.

Accordingly, young males are also less likely to say they do not do enough, with 41% saying they do not think they take enough time out to look after their mental wellbeing, in comparison to 56% of young females.

The main barrier young people identify to doing more to look after their mental wellbeing is not having enough time.

Almost half of young people (46%) say they don't have enough time to look after their mental wellbeing.

What stops you from taking time out to look after your mental wellbeing? (n=1,123)



These time pressures are felt most prominently among older age groups and females.

18 to 24 year-olds (57%) are nearly twice as likely as 11 to 17 year-olds (30%) to say they don't have enough time to look after their mental wellbeing.

More than half of young females (52%) identify not having time as preventing them taking time out to look after their mental wellbeing, compared to 39% of young males.

In addition to not having enough time, more than one in four (29%) admit they forget to take time to look after their mental health, while just under one in five (19%) put their lack of action down to not know what they should be doing to look after their mental wellbeing.

Conclusions

As this research demonstrates, young people are struggling to make time for their mental wellbeing.

If we are to address the rising numbers reaching crisis point, it is critical a focus is placed on prevention and early intervention. As such, young people are afforded the knowledge, space and time to look after their mental wellbeing from an early age.

It is for this reason YMCA believes it is about time that more be done to promote and champion the importance of self care among young people.

¹ Green, H, McGinnity, A, Meltzer, H, et al, *Mental health of children and young people in Great Britain 2004, 2005* & Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, *The mental health of young people in Ireland, 2013*

The #IAMWHOLE campaign aims to tackle mental health stigma and encourage young people to speak out, seek help and get support. This research was developed by YMCA in support of the #IAMWHOLE campaign. The fieldwork for this research was conducted by YouthSights, a specialist youth research agency. The quantitative sample consisted of 1,123 young people aged between 11 and 24 years-old from across the UK and Ireland. The fieldwork was conducted in September and October 2018.



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