



Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives:

Fourth annual progress report (2020)

Changing environments and the way we have been living our lives.

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In 2020, the coronavirus outbreak disrupted communities and everyday life around the world. As a result of the pandemic, lock down restrictions were put in place. People were asked to stay at home, work from home, and be educated from home with immediate effect.



The impact on our lifestyle

In a sample of UK adults surveyed during social lockdown when compared to before the COVID -19 crisis, a large percentage of participants reported changes in weight related lifestyle practices. Although declines in behaviors that are normally weight gain protective were common, some participants reported increases in weight gain protective behaviours (e.g., 47% reported exercising more frequently). The majority of the sample (79%) reported declines in frequency of at least one of the five weight gain protective lifestyle behaviours studied <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/oby.22850>.

Lifestyle behaviours associated with weight gain are likely to have been affected by the COVID-19 crisis. Reductions to the perceived frequency by which people engage in behaviours usually associated with successful weight management appear to be common, and people living with obesity and mental health problems may be at increased risk. Lifestyle factors were raised for physical inactivity, smoking, obesity but not for heavy alcohol consumption in relation to COVID-19 compared to optimal reference categories www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S088915912030996X.



Changes in Eating Habit

Changes in food use was also noticed among people of younger age group, between April and June 2020, the people between 16-34 years changed their food use pattern, there was a shift towards home cooking, whereas the older age group remained consistent.



In a UK study, 49% of participants said they were bingeing on food more often, compared to only 19% who said it happened less frequently. When compared to before the COVID-19 crisis, 32% reported eating healthily less frequently and 30% reported eating healthily more frequently. The most common response for alcohol use was 'remained the same' (41%), and similar numbers reported increases (28%) and decreases (30%) <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/osp4.442>.

Diet quality during the lockdown

Males who were younger, had less education, were Caucasian, and had a higher BMI were all (independently) related with significantly poor nutrition quality during lockdown.

Overeating during lockdown

Being younger, female, lower in education, having a previous psychiatric diagnosis, having had suspected/confirmed COVID-19, higher BMI and experiencing negative mental health since lockdown were (independently) significantly associated with increased overeating during lockdown <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2020.104853>.

Changes in Physical Activities

As a result of the lockdown restrictions, most people took to walking, cycling, running and home activities as they were activities that were readily available and easy to do within a family unit or alone. 1.6m more children and young people went for a **walk** (+22.2%) or did fitness activities (+22.1%) whilst 1.4m more **cycled** for fun or fitness (+18.4%).



Sport England show the majority of young people failed to meet the recommended 60 minutes of daily exercise in the 2019/20 academic year. That was a decrease of almost 2% compared with the previous 12 months. Almost a third of children (2.3 million) were classed as 'inactive' as a result of lock-down restrictions, not even doing 30 minutes per day, up by 2.5%. A drop of 16% in children taking part in sporting activities – team sports, athletics, running and swimming was also observed – but there was a sharp increase in walking, cycling and fitness activities.

www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives.

Also noteworthy that,

For both exercise (47%) and sleep (49%), it was most common for participants to report increases, although many reported exercising less (35%) and sleeping less (23%). Lower income, being non-white, having a high-risk medical condition, higher BMI, experiencing negative mental health and increased physical health symptoms since lockdown were all (independently) significantly associated with lower physical activity levels during lock-down



www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0195666320310060.

Digital Poverty, ability to engage with physical activities via digital platforms.

One of the outcomes of the pandemic is the exposure of the digital gap in countries, as well as its consequences in worsening inequality between the rich and the poor, as well as between urban and rural areas.

www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0148296321005725#b0480.

Relatively privileged people can use their access to digital technologies to enable remote access to health and education, as well as economic and political empowerment. However, a significant proportion of the global population is digitally excluded because they lack internet access and/or have low levels of digital literacy. It is estimated that over 40% of the people in the world do not have access to the Internet.

www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7245204/.



Do you know

Even within Great Britain, moving learning online has shone new light on the disparities that exist within our country, as up to 1 in 10 households do not have access to the internet.

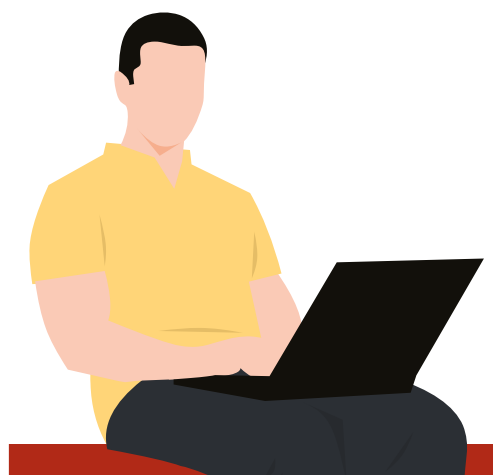
While almost all households had access to the internet, 7% did not. Most of these did not have access to the internet as they felt that they did not need it, with 61% reporting as such in 2019. Lack of skills and privacy or security concerns were also factors, at 34% and 33% respectively.

www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividuals/2019.

More current research needs to be conducted on digital poverty and literacy in order to say for certain the impact it had and continues to have on people's engagement with physical activities via digital platform.

We must be aware that,

Unless advancements are purposefully tailored to address the unique needs of the most deprived, the use of digital technology risks excluding and further disempowering those who have already been left behind.



A brief focus on North Yorkshire County

The second annual Active Lives Children and Young People Survey (Dec 2019) looks at physical activity participation figures.

2018/19 data shows an England average of **46.8%** physically active children and young people. www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives

The proportion of children and young people in North Yorkshire who are physically active is reported as **44.8%** in 2018/19, which is statistically similar to the England average.

At a district level, 2018/19 data highlights **Richmondshire** (37.0%) and **Scarborough** (40.8%) as having significantly worse levels of physical activity in children than the England average.

Let's take stock... An average of two out of three children in Richmondshire and Scarborough are not moving enough.

Adults

The Active Lives Adult Survey www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives looks at the number of adults aged 19 and over that are physically active.

2018/19 data shows an England average of **67.2%** of adults are meeting the recommended levels of activity.

The proportion of adults in North Yorkshire who are physical active is reported as **70.7%** in 2018/19, which is statistically better than the England average (67.2%).

At a district level, 2018/19 data highlights all districts are either statistically similar or significantly better than the England average. This is good news; however we do know that the levels of physical activity are disproportionate amongst particular groups of the population, including older adults, Black and Minority Ethnic communities, women and girls, people living in deprivation, people with disabilities.

For more information

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2020.104853>

www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives

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