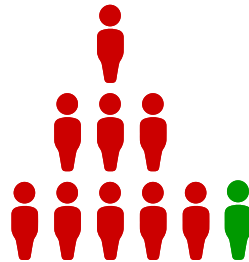


Young people, mental health and the internet

An information sheet for teachers

One in 10 children aged five to 16 has a diagnosable mental health issue.¹



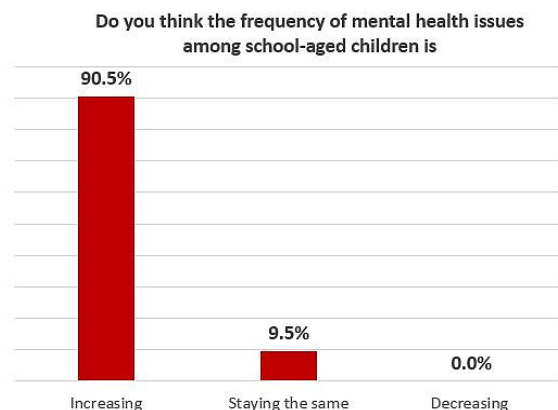
That's roughly three in every class.

The relationship between the internet and mental health is complex. The research that has been done in this area has not given us sufficient evidence to make a causal claim about the effects of the internet on mental health and emotional wellbeing.

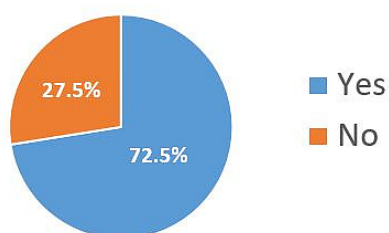
Schools and pupils disagree on its effect.

44% of schools think the internet is bad for young people's mental health, compared to just 28% of young people.

But teachers agree that pupils' mental health problems are getting worse



Have you ever had to deal with a pupil mental health issue that you think was negatively influenced by something they saw or did online?



Teachers feel the internet can make things worse and some pupils agree.

Shockingly, 61% of pupils surveyed have seen people talking about hurting themselves online. Of this 60%, it made 70% worried or upset.

51% had seen someone talking about suicide, and it made 82% of them worried or upset.

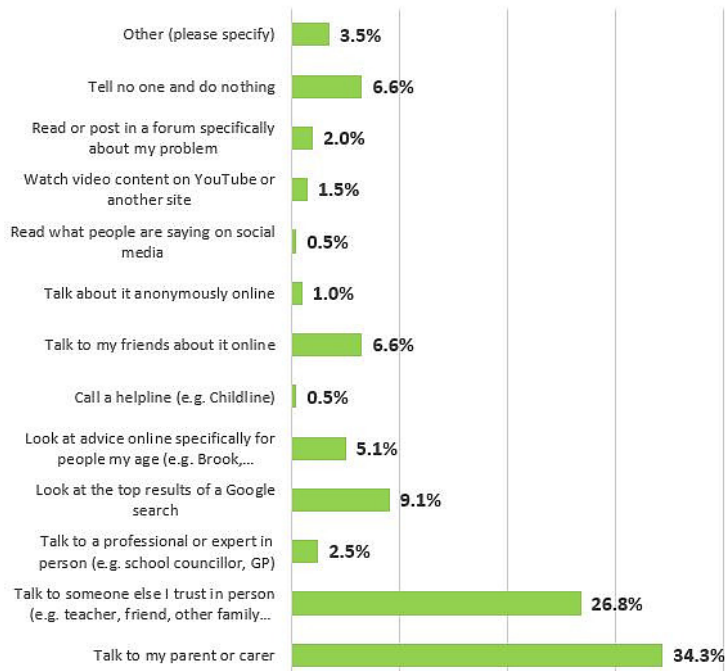
Yet most pupils (74.5%) also report that the internet makes them happy, and only 27.8% think it is bad for young people's mental health.



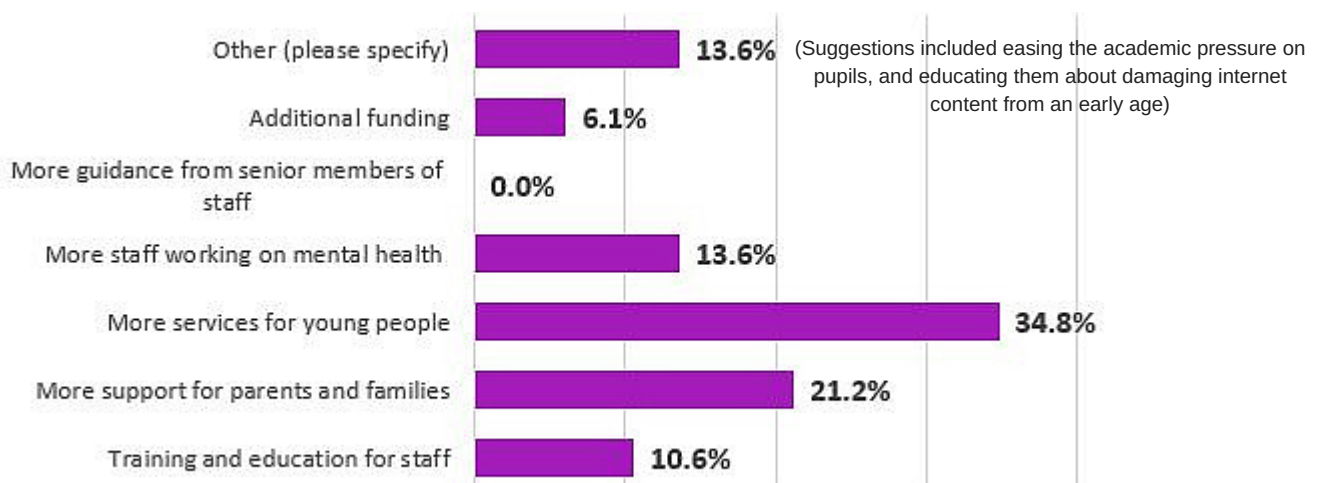
Young people see the internet as just part of everyday life, but over half (55.1%) say they wouldn't follow advice they read online.

In fact, the vast majority of pupils would turn to their family, a teacher or friend for advice first. This shows the vital role schools still play in pupils' wellbeing.

If you were upset or had a problem, what's the first thing you would do?



We asked teachers what they would like to see more of to help them help pupils with mental health issues. This is what they told us:



References

All statistics quoted are from Parent Zone's February 2016 report, *The Perfect Generation: Is the Internet Undermining Young People's Mental Health?*, except [1]
 Green, H, McGinnity, A, Meltzer, H, et al, *Mental health of children and young people in Great Britain 2004, 2005*. London: Palgrave.
 Results are based on surveys completed by pupils and schools between December 2015 and February 2016.
 To read the full report go to parentzone.org.uk/event/mental-health-digital-age.