

Year 7 Health Survey 2022 Report



An annual health and wellbeing survey of Year 7 students in the ACT.

What is the Year 7 Health Survey?

The Year 7 Health Survey (Y7HS) is an annual health and wellbeing survey of Year 7 students in the ACT.

The Y7HS covers topics such as the consumption of: fruit and vegetables; discretionary foods such as 'fast' foods, snacks high in fat, sugar or salt, and sugar sweetened drinks; as well as physical activity; sedentary behaviour; sleep; and, general wellbeing.

The survey is implemented in the classroom as part of the ACT Education Directorate's annual School Satisfaction and Climate Survey process for students in ACT public schools, while students in non-government schools are provided with a web link to complete the online survey — either within or outside the classroom setting — with the consent of their parents.

Students who do not wish to participate are able to opt-out of the survey. The data collection for the Y7HS is completed in Term 3 of each school year.

The Y7HS has been approved by the ACT Health Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), the ACT Government Education Directorate and Catholic Education (Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn). The ACT Association of Independent Schools has also given in-principle support for the Y7HS.

Notes

- It should be noted that the findings of the Y7HS are not directly comparable to the findings of other ACT Health survey data, such as the ACT Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey. This is due to differences in the population being sampled and differences in the questions asked.
- In this report we use non-overlapping 95% confidence intervals as a measure of the statistical significance of the difference between two estimates.
- Persons includes male, female, other and refused sex respondents and may not always equal the sum of the total number of male and female students.
- Only estimates with a Relative Standard Error (RSE) of less than or equal to 25% are considered sufficiently reliable for most analytical purposes. Estimates with an RSE greater than 25% and less than or equal to 50% are less reliable and should be used with caution. Estimates with a RSE between 25% and 50% are marked with an asterisk (*) throughout this report.

Year 7 Health Survey 2022

In February 2022, 6,181 Year 7 students were enrolled across all high schools in the ACT¹; 3,154 were males, 3,007 were females and 20 identified as non-binary or did not state their gender. There were more Year 7 students enrolled in ACT public schools (3,288) than non-government schools (2,893) in 2022.

Data collection for the Y7HS 2022 was completed between 19 August and 9 September 2022. A total of 1,815 students from 26 public and non-government schools participated in this year's survey, resulting in a survey response rate of 38% of students whose schools made the survey available to them.

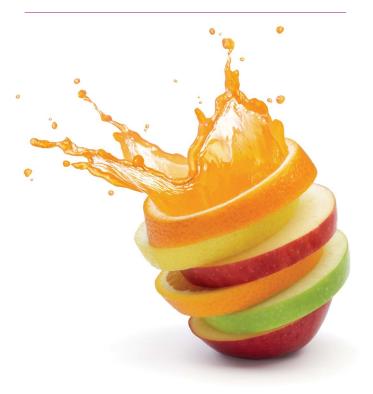
Of the participating students, 50.2% were female, 48.0% were male, 1.2% identified as 'Other' gender while 0.6%* did not respond to the question on gender. Subsequently, exploration of survey responses by gender has been limited to male and female respondents as the sample size for 'Other' or non-respondents for gender was too small to allow meaningful analyses. All categories of gender are included in the persons estimates.

Students who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin comprised 3% of the Y7HS 2022 participants.

Results

Fruit intake

The <u>Australian Dietary Guidelines</u> recommend that children aged 11–13 years eat 2 serves of fruit per day².



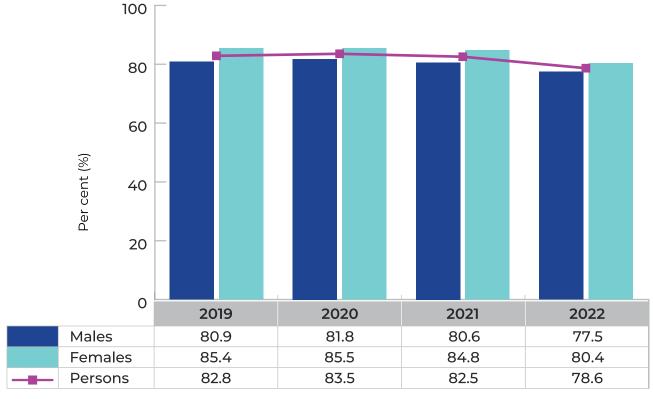


78.6% The majority of students who took part in the Y7HS 2022 reported that they ate 2 or more serves of fruit per day.

- Between 2019 and 2021, the proportion of students who met the recommended dietary guidelines of 2 or more serves of fruit per day has remained stable (2019: 82.8%; 2020: 83.5%; 2021: 82.5%). In 2022, the proportion of students who met the daily fruit intake guidelines reduced from 82.5% in 2021 to 78.6%. This difference was statistically significant.
- In all years, females were slightly more likely than males to meet the daily intake of 2 serves of fruit however, the differences were not statistically significant (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Proportion of students who had a daily fruit intake of 2 or more serves, ACT Year 7 students, by sex, 2019–2022



Survey year

Vegetable intake



The <u>Australian Dietary Guidelines</u> recommend that children aged 11–13 years eat 5 or more serves of vegetables each day².

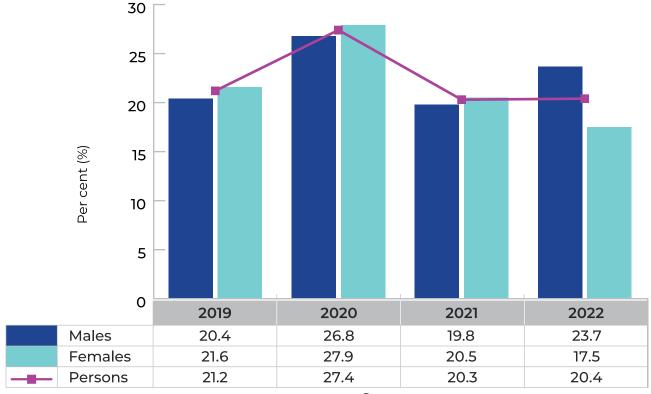


In 2022, 20.4% of students who participated in the Y7HS 2022 reported that they ate 5 or more serves of vegetable per day (Figure 2).

- The proportion of Year 7 students who ate 5 or more serves of vegetables daily increased significantly from 21.2% in 2019 to 27.4% in 2020, then reduced significantly to 20.3% in 2021. There was no significant difference between 2021 and 2022 (20.3%; 20.4%) (Figure 2).
- Males (23.7%) were significantly more likely than females (17.5%) to meet the recommended dietary guideline for vegetable intake in 2022, however there were no statistically significant differences by gender for vegetable intake for each survey year between 2019 and 2021 (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Proportion of students who had a daily vegetable intake of 5 or more serves, ACT Year 7 students, by sex, 2019–2022



Survey year

Source: Year 7 Health Survey 2019-2022

Discretionary food intake

Discretionary foods are high in saturated fat, and/or sugar and/or salt and have limited nutritional value. Examples of discretionary food include biscuits, cakes, confectionary, pastries, pies, processed meats, commercial burgers, pizza, fried foods, potato chips, crisps, and other savoury snacks.

The Australian Dietary Guidelines
recommend that children limit their intake
of discretionary foods as they are associated
with an increased risk of obesity and
chronic diseases including heart disease,
stroke, type 2 diabetes and some cancers².

Year 7 students were asked to report their consumption of fast food and discretionary snacks in the 7 days prior to the survey. In 2022, 95.9% of Year 7 students ate discretionary food/s (fast food and snacks) in the 7 days prior to the survey.



Fast food

The proportion of students who reported consuming fast food one or more times in the week prior to the survey remained stable between 2021 (67.3%) and 2022 (71.0%).

In 2022, 29.0% of students reported not eating any fast food in the week prior to the survey.

There was no significant difference between the proportion of males (69.6%) and females (71.9%) who consumed fast food one or more times in the week prior to the survey in 2022.



Discretionary snacks

The proportion of students who reported consuming discretionary snacks one or more times in the week prior to the survey remained stable between 2021 (95.5%) and 2022 (95.3%).

In 2022, 4.7% of students reported not eating any discretionary snacks in the week prior to the survey.

There was no significant difference between the proportion of males (93.9%) and females (96.4%) who consumed discretionary snacks one or more times in the week prior to the survey in 2022.



Between 2019 and 2022, the proportion of students who consumed fast food one or more times in the week prior to the survey increased slightly from 67.1% to 71.0% however, this increase was not statistically significant (2019: 67.1%; 2020: 68.8%; 2021: 67.3%; 2022: 71.0%). Similarly, there were no significant changes for males or females.



The discretionary snack intake of Year 7 students remained stable between 2019 and 2022 (2019: 95.6%; 2020: 93.6%; 2021: 95.5%; 2022: 95.3%).

Discretionary drinks

The <u>Australian Dietary Guidelines</u> recommend water and milk as fluids of choice for children and to limit intake of discretionary drinks².

Year 7 students were asked to report how many times in the last 7 days they had consumed discretionary drinks such as fruit juice and fruit drinks, flavoured milk, iced tea, soft drinks or cordials, diet or artificially sweetened soft drinks or cordials, energy drinks and sports drinks and vitamin waters.

See Table 1 for results for persons for 2021 and 2022, and Table 2 for results for males and females for 2022.



In 2022 the most consumed discretionary drink choices in this cohort of Year 7 students were fruit juice and fruit drinks 65.2%, soft drinks and cordials 57.4%.

Table 1: Consumption of discretionary drinks one or more times in the week prior to the survey, ACT Year 7 Students, 2021–2022

Discretionary drinks	Survey year	Proportion (%)	Comment	
Fruit juice and fruit drinks	2021	60.3	Consumption of fruit juice and fruit drinks increased significantly from 2021 to 2022.	
	2022	65.2		
Flavoured milk	2021	29.1	Consumption of flavoured milk increased significantly from 2021 to 2022.	
	2022	35.8		
Iced tea	2021	22.6	Consumption of iced tea remained stable between 2021 and 2022	
	2022	24.1		
Soft drinks or cordials	2021	54.0	Consumption of soft drinks or cordials remained stable between 2021 and 2022.	
	2022	57.4		
Diet soft drinks or cordials	2021	21.7	Consumption of diet soft drinks or cordials remained stable between 2021 and 2022.	
	2022	25.1		
Energy drinks	2021	13.3	Consumption of energy drinks increased significantly from 2021 to 2022.	
	2022	18.9		
Sports drinks and vitamin waters	2021	20.0	Consumption of sports drinks and vitamin waters increased significantly between 2021 and 2022.	
	2022	27.1		

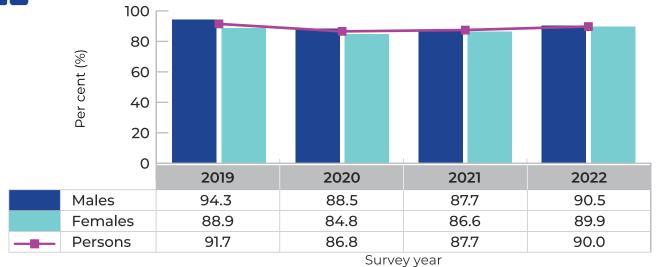
Table 2: Consumption of discretionary drinks one or more times in the week prior to the survey, ACT Year 7 Students by sex, 2022

Discretionary drinks	Sex	Proportion (%)	Comment	
Fruit juice and fruit drinks	Males	66.0	There was no significant difference between the proportion of males and females in the consumption of fruit juice or fruit drinks in 2022.	
	Females	64.8		
Flavoured milk	Males	38.6	There was no significant difference between the proportion of males and females in the consumption of flavoured milk in 2022.	
	Females	33.4		
Iced tea	Males	21.4	Females were significantly more likely to consume iced tea than males in 2022.	
	Females	27.3		
Soft drinks or cordial	Males	62.1	Males were significantly more likely to consume soft drinks or cordials than females in 2022.	
	Females	52.6		
Diet soft drinks or cordial	Males	28.2	Males were significantly more likely to consume diet soft drinks or cordials than females in 2022.	
	Females	22.1		
Energy drinks	Males	21.0	There was no significant difference between the proportion of males and females in the consumption of energy drinks in 2022.	
	Females	16.8		
Sports drinks and vitamin waters	Males	32.1	Males were significantly more likely to consume soft drinks and vitamin waters than females in 2022.	
	Females	22.4		

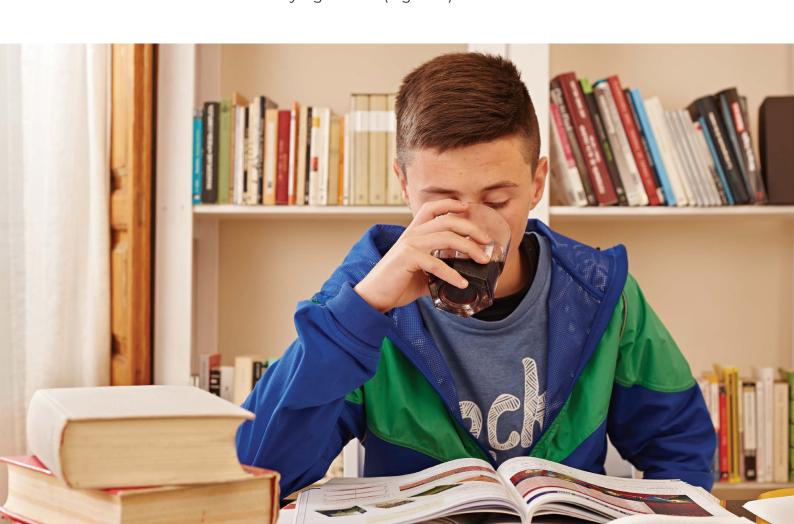




Figure 3: Proportion of students who consumed discretionary drinks in the 7 days prior to the survey, ACT Year 7 students, by sex, 2019–2022



• The proportion of Year 7 students who consumed discretionary drinks one or more times in the last week decreased significantly between 2019 and 2020. The proportion then increased slightly in 2021 and 2022, however these increases were not statistically significant. The proportions of males and females who consumed discretionary drinks one or more times in the last week increased slightly from 2021 to 2022, however these increases were not statistically significant (Figure 3).



Breakfast intake

Participants of the Y7HS were asked to report how many times per week they usually have breakfast, selecting from the response options: never or rarely, one to 2 times, 3 to 4 times, 5 to 6 times, or every day.

The proportion of students who consumed breakfast every day was significantly reduced from 60.5% in 2020 to 55.5% in 2021. In 2022, over half of the students (56.8%) who participated in the Y7HS reported consuming breakfast every day which was similar to 2021 (Table 3).



Between 2020 and 2022, males were significantly more likely to eat breakfast every day than females (Table 3).

Table 3: Proportion of students who ate breakfast every day, ACT Year 7 Students, by sex, 2020–2022

Year	Males	Females	Persons
2020	68.9%	50.2%	60.5%
2021	63.9%	51.2%	55.5%
2022	65.1%	48.9%	56.8%

Source: Year 7 Health Survey 2020-2022

Mealtime behaviours

Year 7 students were asked about their mealtime behaviours including whether they assisted in preparing dinner, ate at the table with family, ate dinner while watching television, and if they ate dinner while using an electronic device.

In 2022:

Over half of the students (60.8%) reported that they helped with dinner preparation and clean-up 3 or more times a week (Figure 4a).

77.6% of students reported that they ate dinner at the table with family 3 or more times a week (Figure 4b).



30.2% of students reported that they ate dinner while watching TV 3 or more times a week (Figure 4c).

Almost a quarter of the students (21.4%) reported that they ate dinner 3 or more times a week while using an electronic device (Figure 4d).



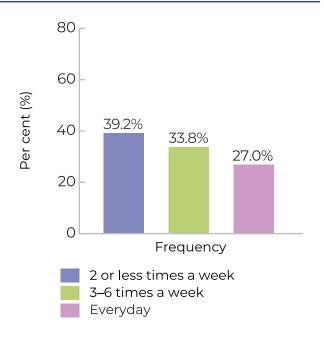
Figure 4: Comparison of usual mealtime behaviours, ACT Year 7 Students, 2022



Figure 4a: Proportion of students who helped with dinner preparation and clean up



Figure 4c: Proportion of students who ate dinner while watching TV



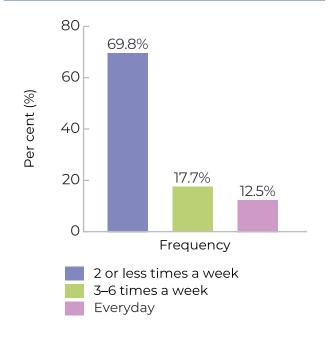
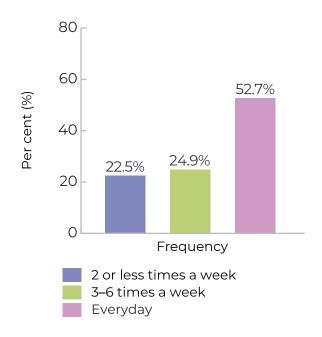




Figure 4b: Proportion of students who ate at the table with family



Figure 4d: Proportion of students who ate dinner while using an electronic device



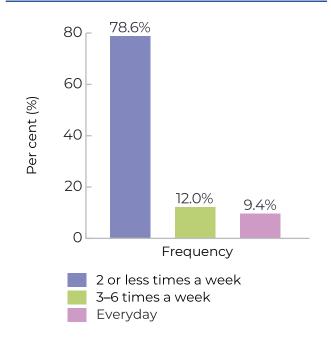
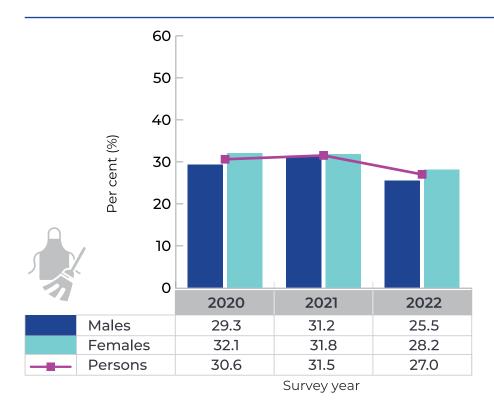




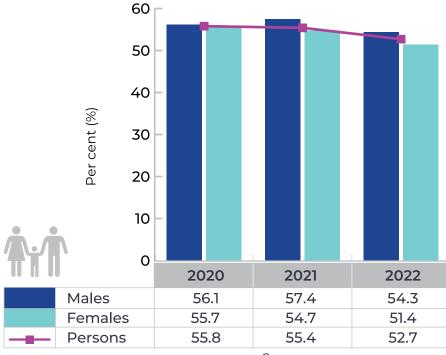
Figure 5: Comparison of daily mealtime behaviours, ACT Year 7 students, 2020–2022

Figure 5a: Proportion of students who helped with dinner preparation and clean up every day



- The proportions of students who helped with dinner preparation and clean up remained stable between 2020 and 2021. The proportion decreased significantly in 2022.
- There was no significant difference between the proportions of males and females who helped with dinner preparation and clean up between 2020 and 2022.

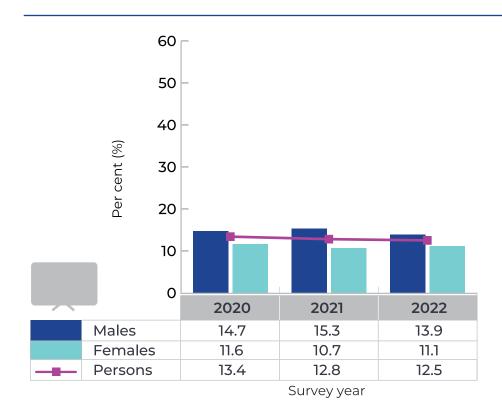
Figure 5b: Proportion of students who ate dinner at the table with family every day



Survey year

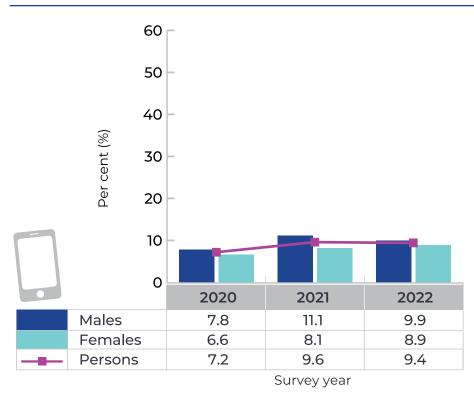
- The proportions of students who ate dinner at the table with family every day decreased between 2020 and 2022. However, these decreases were not statistically significant.
- There was no significant difference between the proportions of males and females who ate dinner at the table with family every day between 2020 and 2022.

Figure 5c: Proportion of students who ate dinner while watching TV every day



- The proportions of students who ate dinner while watching TV every day remained stable between 2020 and 2022.
- There was no significant difference between the proportions of males and females who ate dinner while watching TV every day between 2020 and 2022.

Figure 5d: Proportion of students who ate dinner while using an electronic device every day



- The proportions of students who ate dinner while using an electronic device every day remained stable between 2020 and 2022.
- There was no significant difference between the proportions of males and females who ate dinner while using an electronic device every day between 2020 and 2022.

Physical activity

Physical activity is activity that moves the body and increases the heart rate and breathing. Survey participants were asked to report their physical activity including their engagement in active video games such as 'Just Dance'.

The <u>Australian 24-hour movement</u> <u>guidelines</u> recommend that children and young people aged 5–17 years should aim for at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day³.

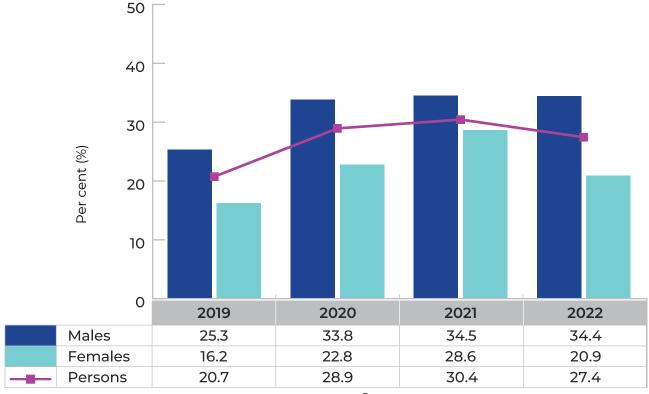
The majority (81.3%) of students who participated in the Y7HS 2022 were physically active for 60 minutes on 3 or more days.

The proportion of students who met the recommended physical activity guidelines of 60 minutes or more every day increased significantly between 2019 and 2020. The variations between 2020 to 2022 were not statistically significant (Figure 6).

In 2019, 2020 and 2022, males were significantly more likely to meet the recommended physical activity guideline of 60 minutes or more per day than females. Even though males were more likely to meet the physical activity guidelines than females in 2021, the difference was not statistically significant (Figure 6).



Figure 6: Proportion of students who met daily physical activity guidelines, ACT Year 7 Students, by sex, 2019–2022



Survey year

Sedentary behaviour

Sedentary behaviour is sitting or lying down and not being physically active.

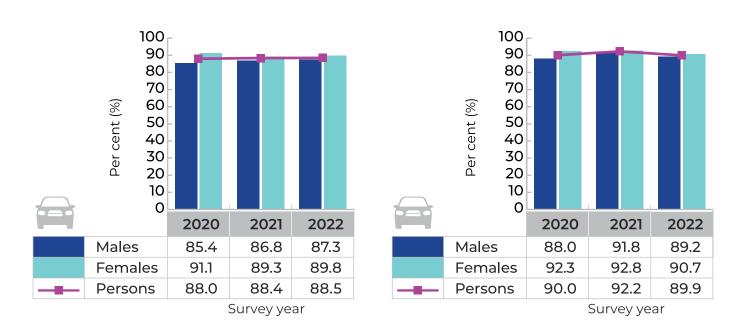
The <u>Australian 24-hour movement</u> <u>guidelines</u> for children and young people (5 to 17 years) recommend that children and young people should limit their sedentary behaviour, including time spent sitting, and that no more than 2 hours per day is spent on sedentary recreational screen time (excludes screen-based activities for educational use) on any day of the week³.

The survey asked Year 7 students about the time they spent sitting or lying down during activities such as vehicle travel, reading and writing (excluding schoolwork), and screen-based activities using devices or the internet including watching videos, playing games and social networking during a typical weekday (Monday to Friday) and weekend day (Saturday and Sunday) (Figure 7).



Figure 7: Comparison of sedentary behaviours in a typical weekday and weekend day, ACT Year 7 students, 2020–2022

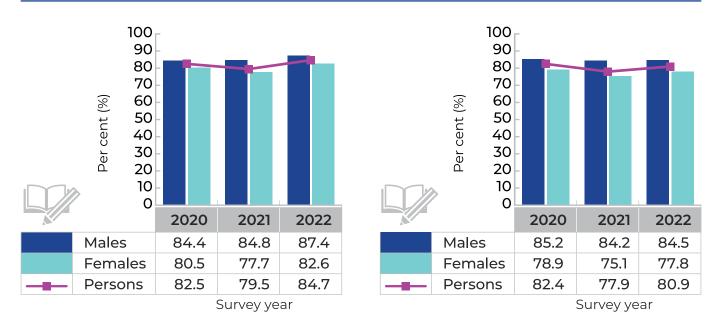
Figure 7a: Proportion of students who travelled by vehicle for fewer than 2 hours during a typical weekday (L) and weekend day (R)



Source: Year 7 Health Survey 2019-2022.

The proportions of Year 7 students who travelled in a vehicle for less than two hours on weekdays or weekend days remained stable between 2020 and 2022; variations in proportions were too small to be statistically significant (Figure 7a).

Figure 7b: Proportion of students who read or wrote for leisure for fewer than 2 hours during a typical weekday (L) and weekend day (R)

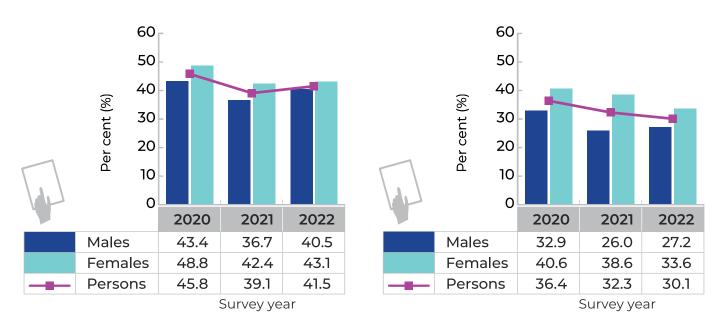


On weekdays, the proportion of Year 7 students who were reading or writing for less than two hours (excluding for schoolwork) increased significantly from 2021 to 2022, however the change in proportion over the 2020 to 2022 period was not large enough to be significantly different (Figure 7b (L)).

On weekend days, the proportion of Year 7 students who were reading or writing for less than two hours (excluding for schoolwork) decreased significantly from 2020 to 2021, however as with weekdays, the change in proportions over the 2020 to 2022 period was not large enough to be statistically significant (Figure 7b (R)).



Figure 7c: Proportion of students who used screen-based activities in their free time for fewer than 2 hours during a typical weekday (L) and weekend day (R)



On weekdays, the proportion of Year 7 students who were engaged in screen-based activities (excluding for educational use) for less than two hours decreased significantly from 2020 to 2021 (Figure 7c (L)). However, between 2020 and 2022, there was no significant change overall in the proportion of students engaged in screen-based activities for less than two hours per day, nor were any differences seen between male and female students. Consequently, on weekdays there was no change in the proportion of students who met the sedentary recreational screen time guidelines between 2020 and 2022.

On weekend days, the proportion of Year 7 students who were engaged in recreational screen-based activities (excluding for educational use) for less than two hours decreased from 2020 through to 2022 however the change was not significant until 2022 (Figure 7c (R)). This was also

the case for female students but was not observed in male students where a significant decrease occurred earlier, in 2021, but not in 2022. As such, on weekend days a smaller proportion of Year 7 students met the sedentary recreational screen time guidelines in 2022 compared to 2020.

The decrease in 2022 compared to 2020 in the proportion of Year 7 students who met the sedentary recreational screen time guidelines on weekend days was more likely to occur among female students, however female students comprised the larger proportion of Year 7 students overall who met the sedentary recreational screen time guidelines.

Sleep

The <u>Australian 24-hour movement</u> <u>guidelines</u> for children and young people (5 to 17 years) recommend young people aged 5 to 13 years should have 9 to 11 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night. This reduces to 8 to 10 hours per night for those aged 14 to 17 years³.

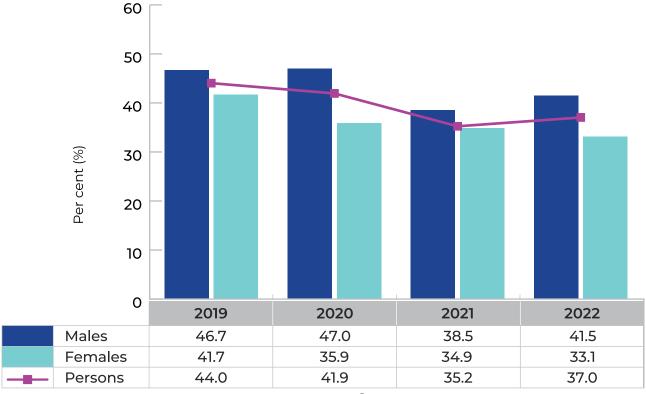
The proportion of Year 7 students who met the recommended sleep guideline of 9 or more hours each night reduced between 2019 and 2022. The reduction between 2020 and 2021 was statistically significant however, the reductions between the other years were not significant (Figure 8).



 Males were significantly more likely to meet the daily sleep guidelines than females in 2019, 2020 and 2022. The difference between genders in 2021 was not statistically significant.



Figure 8: Proportion of students who met daily sleep guidelines, ACT Year 7 Students, by sex, 2019–2022



Survey year

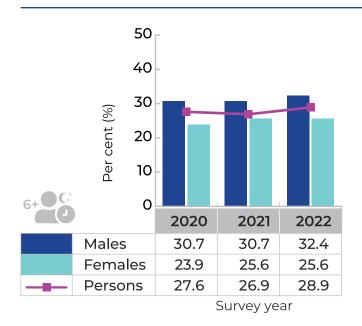
Sleep behaviours:

Students who took part in the Y7HS were asked to report how often they went to sleep at the same time, woke up at the same time, fell asleep using electronic devices and woke up at night to use electronic devices (Figure 9).



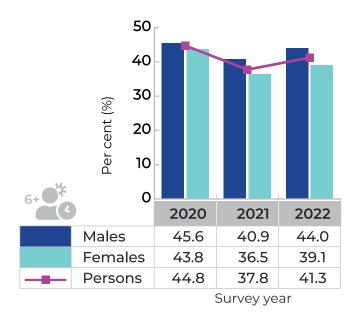
Figure 9: Comparison of sleep behaviours on 6 or more days, ACT Year 7 students, by sex, 2020-2022

Figure 9a: Proportion of students who go to sleep at the same time on 6 or more days



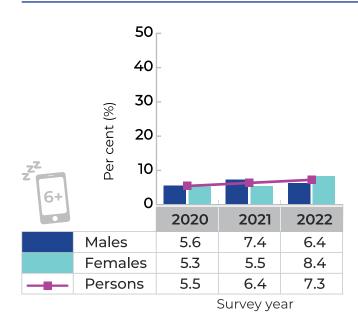
- The proportion of students who go to sleep at the same time on 6 or more days remained stable between 2020 and 2022.
- In 2020 and 2022, males were significantly more likely to go to sleep at the same time on 6 or more days of the week than females. There was no significant difference between males and females in 2021.

Figure 9b: Proportion of students who wake up at the same time on 6 or more days, ACT Year 7 students, by sex, 2020–2022



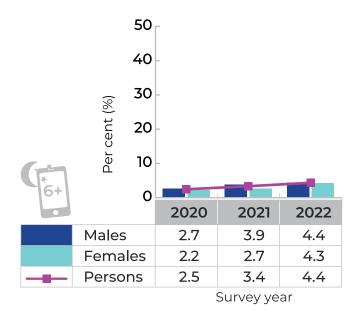
- The proportion of students who reported waking up at the same time on 6 or more days of the week reduced significantly between 2020 and 2021.
 The slight increase in 2022 however, was not significant.
- There was no significant difference between the proportions of males who reported waking up at the same time on 6 or more days of the week between 2020 and 2022.
- The proportion of females who reported waking up at the same time on 6 or more days of the week reduced significantly between 2020 and 2021. The slight increase in 2022 however, was not significant.

Figure 9c: Proportion of students who fell asleep using electronic devices on 6 or more days, ACT Year 7 students, by sex, 2020–2022



- The proportion of students who fell asleep using electronic devices on 6 or more days remained stable between 2020 and 2022.
- There was no significant difference between the proportions of males and females who fell asleep using electronic devices on 6 or more days between 2020 and 2022.

Figure 9d: Proportion of students who woke up at night to use electronic devices on 6 or more days, ACT Year 7 students, 2020–2022



- The proportion of students who woke up at night to use electronic devices on 6 or more days remained stable between 2020 and 2022.
- There was no significant difference between the proportions of males and females who woke up at night to use electronic devices on 6 or more days between 2020 and 2022.



Self-rated health

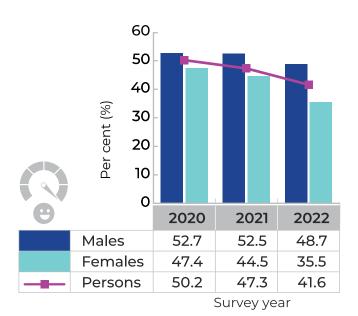
Self-rated health captures an individual's view of their own health and wellbeing and provides a general overview of both physical and mental health at a point in time. The students who took part in the Y7HS were asked to rate their health as poor, fair, good, very good or excellent in the month leading up to the survey. For this report, results for self-rated health were combined into three categories: excellent/very good, good and fair/poor (Figure 10).





Figure 10: Comparison of self-rated health, ACT Year 7 students, by sex, 2020–2022

Figure 10a: Proportion of students who self-rated their health as excellent/very good, ACT Year 7 students, by sex, 2020–2022



rate their health as excellent/very good compared to females, however this difference was not statistically significant. Between 2021 and 2022, males were significantly more likely to rate their health as excellent/very good

In 2020, males were more likely to

The proportion of students who rated their health as excellent/very

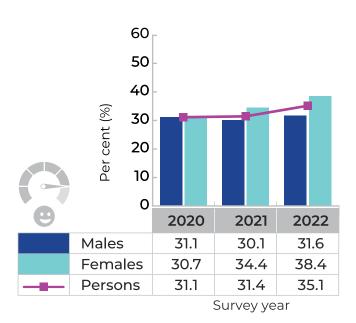
significant in 2022.

than females.

good decreased between 2020 and

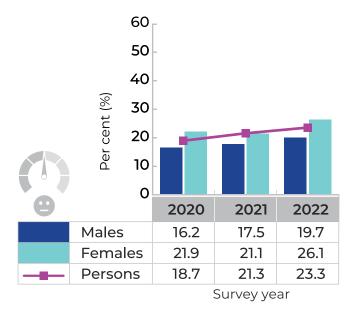
2021, however this difference was not statistically significant. The decrease was

Figure 10b: Proportion of students who self-rated their health as good, ACT Year 7 students, by sex, 2020–2022



- The proportion of students who rated their health as good remained stable between 2020 and 2022.
- There were no significant differences between the proportions of males and females who rated their health as good in 2020 and 2021. Females were significantly more likely to rate their health as good compared to males in 2022.

Figure 10c: Proportion of students who self-rated their health as fair/poor, ACT Year 7 students, by sex, 2020–2022



- The proportion of students who rated their health as fair/poor remained stable between 2020 and 2022.
- Females were significantly more likely to rate their health as fair/poor compared to males in 2020 and 2022. There were no significant differences between the proportions of males and females who rated their health as fair/poor in 2021.

Summary

Healthy eating, regular physical activity and quality sleep are important factors to maintain good physical and mental health and wellbeing at any age.

Overall, of the students who participated in the Y7HS 2022:



78.6% met the recommended daily fruit intake guidelines of 2 or more serves.



55.5% ate breakfast every day.



52.7% at e dinner at the table with family every day.



64.5% did not use electronic devices during mealtimes.

Approximately 42% (41.6%) of the students who participated in the Y7HS rated their overall health as excellent/very good in the month leading up to the survey. Furthermore, a similar proportion (41.3%) reported waking up at the same time on 6 or more days of the week.

In addition:



20.4% ate the recommended daily intake of 5 or more serves of vegetables.



27.0% helped with dinner preparation and clean up every day.



12.5% ate dinner watching TV.



27.4% engaged in the recommended amount of daily physical activity of 60 minutes or more.



37.0% met the recommended sleep guideline of 9 or more hours each night.



28.9% went to bed at the same time, fell asleep using electronic devices (7.3%) or woke up at night to use electronic devices (4.4%) 6 or more days of the week.

Almost all Year 7 students ate discretionary food (95.9%) such as fast food and snacks, and drank discretionary drinks (90.0%) one or more times in the week prior to the survey.

While some differences were noted between males and females, the majority of the survey findings applied equally to females and males.

References

- ACT Government Education Directorate (2022), Census of ACT schools February 2022. Accessed via https://www.education.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1993701/ACT-Schools-Census-February-2022.pdf
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Acknowledgment of Country

We wish to acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We wish to acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

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