

Young people and parents views on weight loss programmes

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About AYPH



- Bridges the world of **policy, practice and evidence** to promote better understanding of young people's health needs.
- Supports **young people's participation** in health and wellbeing
- Supports the development of youth friendly health services and **improved practice**
- Collate and disseminate **useful information** in reader-friendly formats for practitioner and policy audiences (Key Data on Adolescence, YP Health update 2014)
- Work with our members to **share innovative examples** of work in the field (events, twitter, publications)

Activities with young people and parents

- Focus group of young people aged 12-19 who had been involved in the PROMISE study
- Focus group with parents of young people who had been involved in the PROMISE study
- Public survey of young people's views
- Other work - NCB European project

Why did you choose to get involved?

To lose weight – ‘the right time’ and good opportunity

I’d tried other things - this was something different

Wanted to build confidence

To help other people – so doctors can help more people in the future

Making involvement better....1

Variation in activities for different age groups

Different methods, not just 'eat more fruit and veg!'

More action and less education

Include a way to monitor progress over time

Making involvement better...2

Meet up with other young people – shared experience

Incentives e.g. Gym pass

Advertise it on Facebook

More teen-friendly (e.g. have an app)

Young people's views on health implications of obesity

Range of physical health problems (from tired legs to heart disease)

Range of mental health issues (from anxiety to suicidal thoughts)

“Not excited about break time because their friends might run around but they can’t”

Barriers to getting help with weight issues

Parents – don't want them to find out

Health professionals – being judged or wasting the GP's time

Friends – fear of how they'll react or increase in bullying

Denial - not understanding it's a problem

Not knowing how or where to get help

Stigma - feeling ashamed and embarrassed.

“Don't want people to worry about you so you hide it”

“Believing nothing will help”

Solutions for getting help

Admitting the problem

Feeling safe to open up to someone

Counselling/someone to talk to

Parents being honest and not 'protective' and parents' groups

A range of options to get help

Talking to someone who's been through it before

“Why doesn’t the GP give people a gym pass?”

“Childline or NHS 111 should cover these issues”

Parents' views – good engagement

- Focus on emotional wellbeing
- Accessible information
- Incentives vouchers, gym membership
- Non medical focus, settings and language
- Support for parents and YP to make a decision – e.g. effective self assessment tool

BUT THE TIME NEEDS TO BE RIGHT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO ENGAGE

Best way to inform parents?

- NCMP Judgement without support – need support in place for it to work
- Need to find ways to reduce in stigma for parents
- Need to give parents tools to find out more about the particular needs of their YP
- Prevention including through advice at schools is important

What training do professionals need?

Parents stressed:

- Simplistic common sense advice in one off visits based on a medical model is not helpful
- Need positive practice advice
- A whole person approach
- Understanding of YP lives
- Understanding of impact of stress on weight gain
- Effective communication skills to work with YP

Importance of schools and local services

- Classes on nutrition and weight led by staff who have access to information and support
- Link between bullying and weight gain
- Linking weight and health in schools and elsewhere is not helpful
- Importance of local safe spaces to play
- Importance of services supporting YP aspiration – YP need aspiration to change.

Findings from a wider group of young people

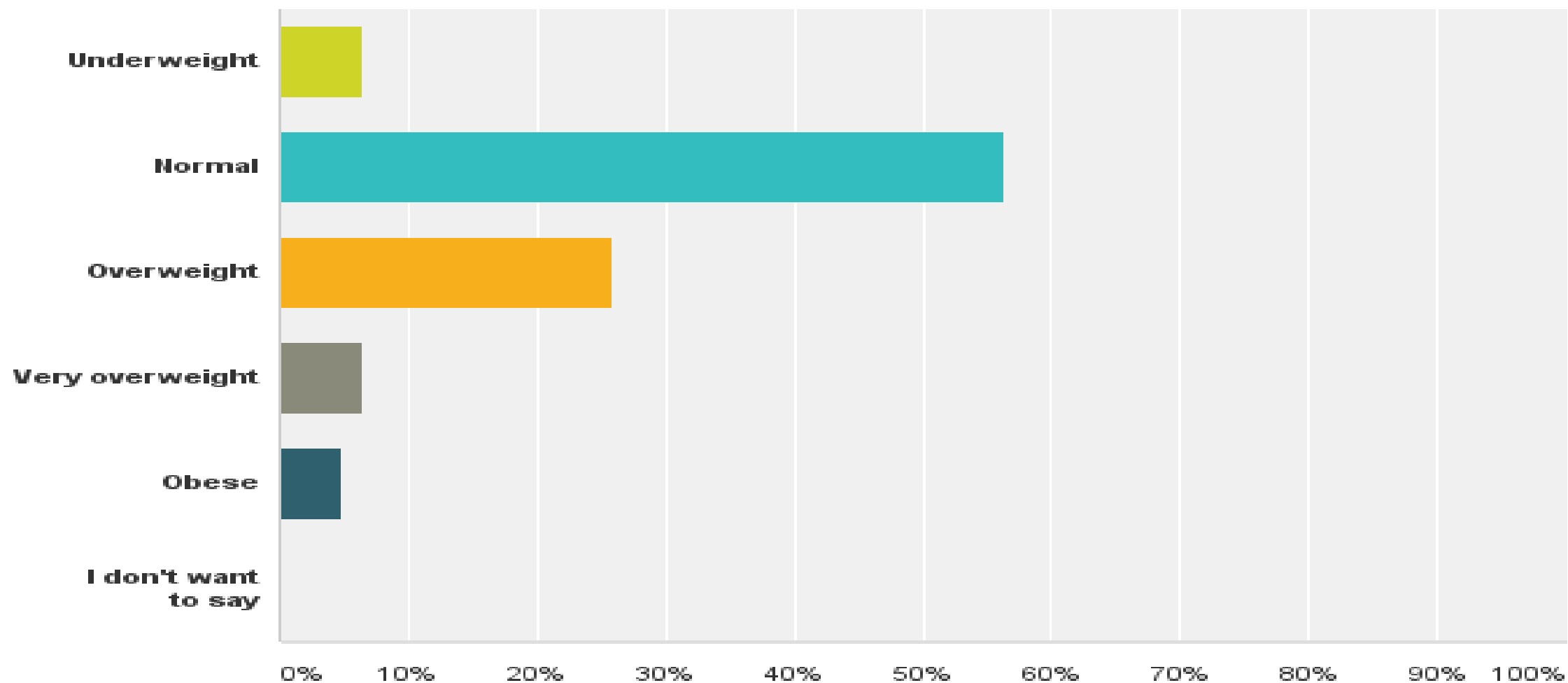
Online survey

(65) Responses

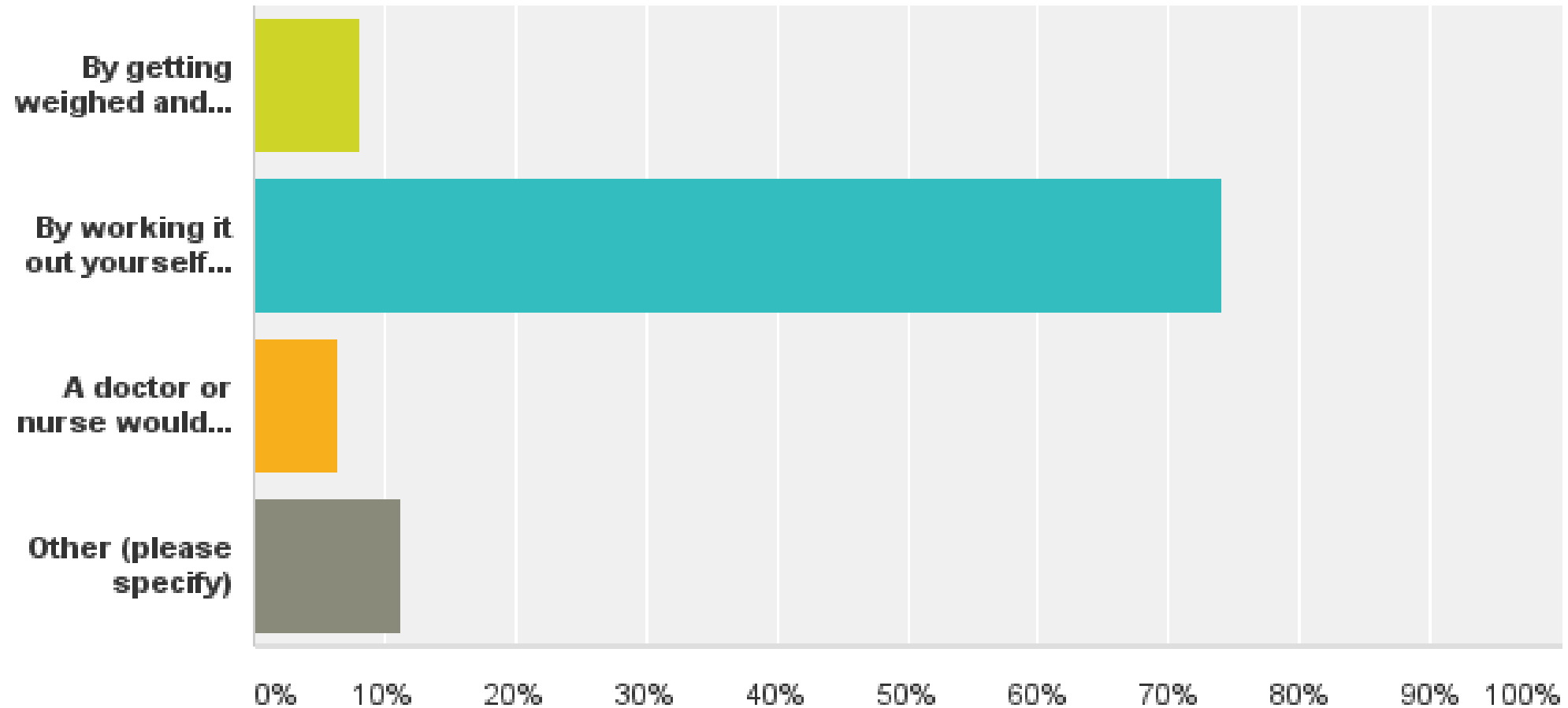
6% 10-14 45% 15-19 34% 20-24 14% 25+

66% female 30% male

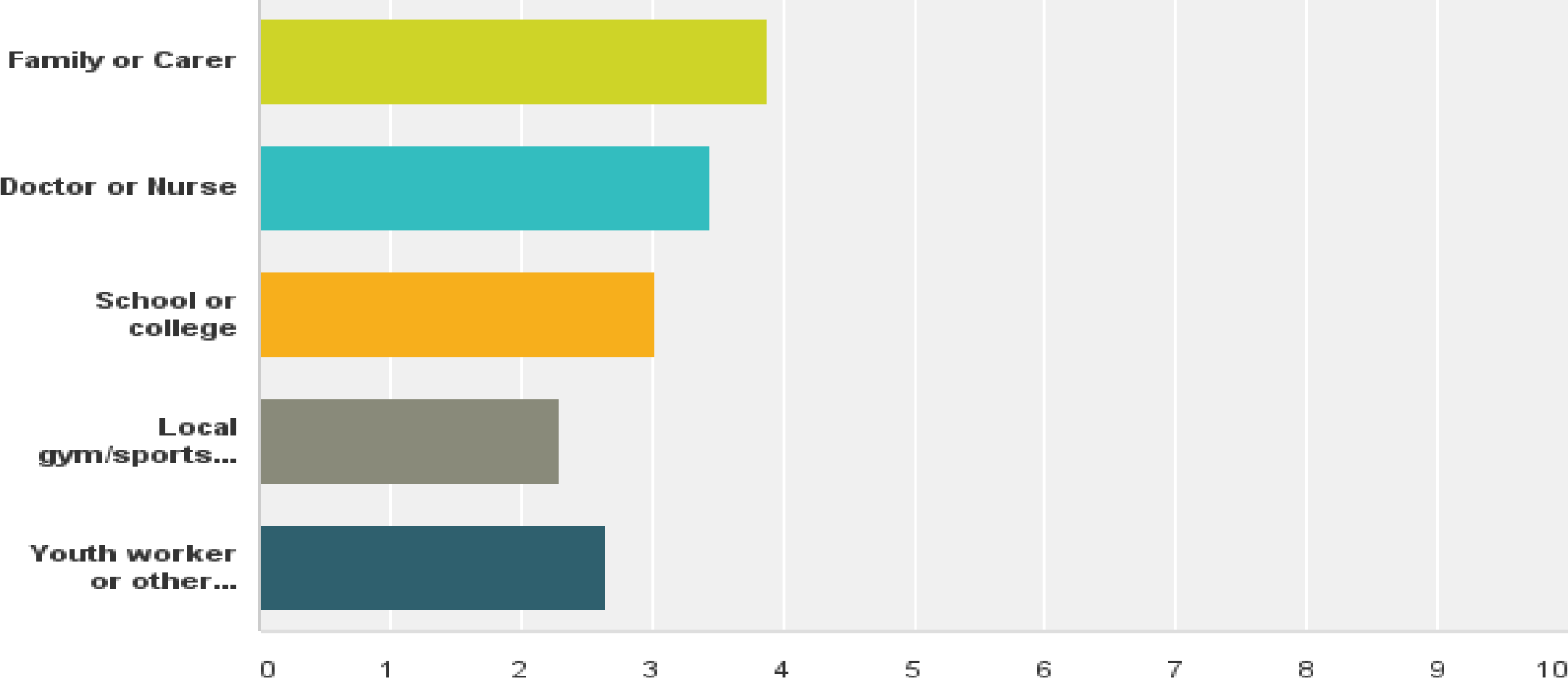
How would you describe your weight?



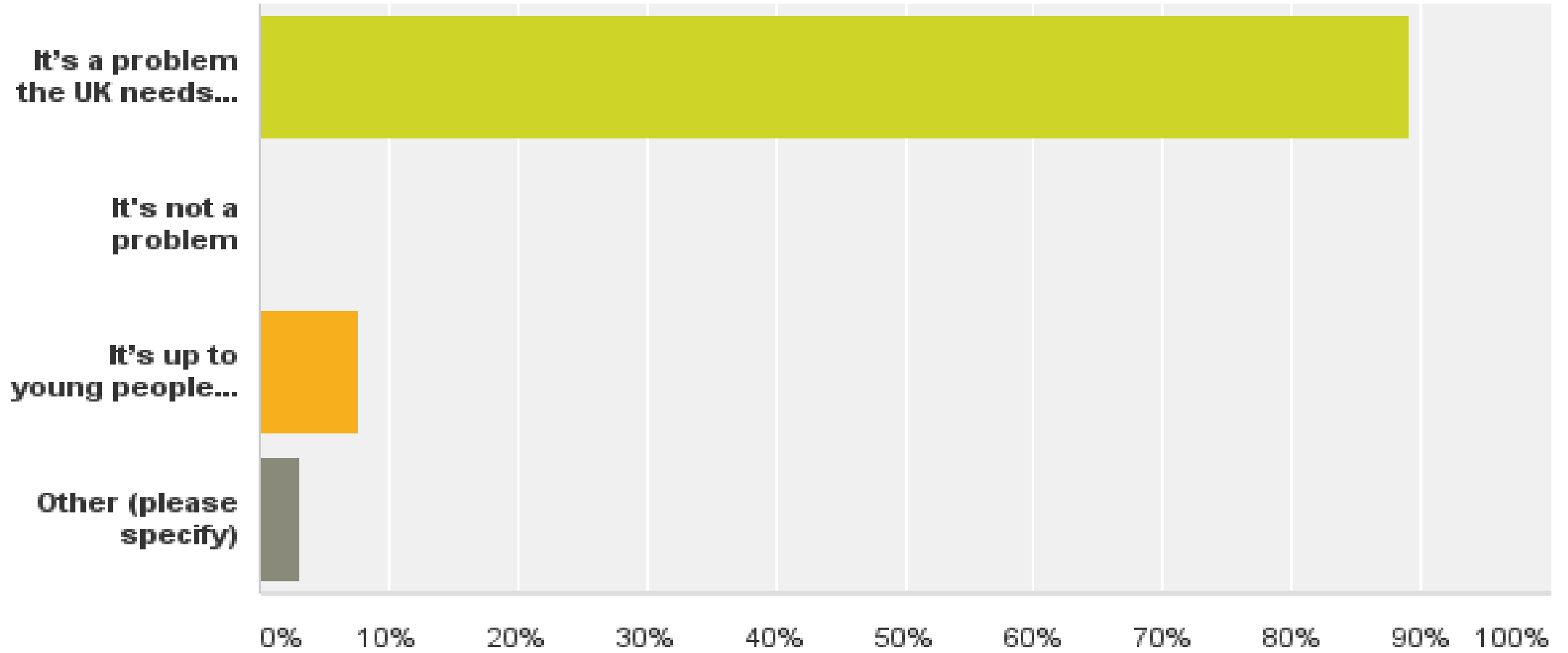
How would you know if you were getting overweight?



Who should give young people information about their weight?



What do you think about young people being very overweight or obese?



Do you have a message for the government?

“I myself have been obese since I was 11, I have tried many methods to lose weight, these are all very expensive or aimed at older people.”

“Sports classes etc. are usually full of much fitter people so it is intimidating to go to these.”

If my emotional problems and addictions had been sorted out when I was a lot younger say 11 or 12 I wouldn't still be obese and putting a strain on the NHS.” (Female, aged 20-24)

European Youth Tackling Obesity (NCB)

Young people identified internal, emotional factors as the main barrier to making healthy lifestyle choices. Messaging about these issues needs to focus on how young people feel about themselves and their lives.

Key findings include need for:

- Positive and inspirational messaging
- Relevant & reliable information & accessible options for making healthy choices
- Effective targeting of vulnerable groups
- A Youth-led and peer-to-peer approach
- A holistic approach
- A family model approach, building the capacity of parents

www.eyto.org.uk Amy Davies, Senior Development Officer NCB eyto@ncb.org.uk

Implications of PROMISE findings

- Acknowledgement of young people's emotional needs
- Recognition of their barriers to seeking help
- Support for parents and families

Implications for service delivery

- Better publicity for weight loss programmes (inc. social media)
- Choice of methods to help them lose weight
- Age-appropriate activities and programmes
- Group/peer support

“Very often there’s no help available until the problem has become totally unmanageable. There isn’t help for me to be able to manage things myself and stop health crises.”

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