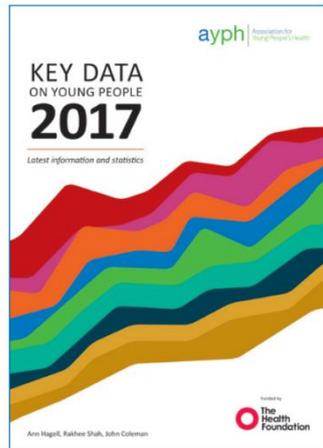
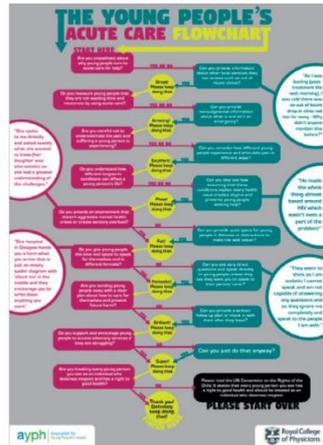
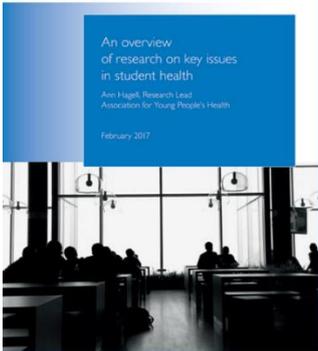


Ten reasons to invest in young people's health

The UK has 11.6 million young people aged 10-24, making up 18% of the population. AYPH believes it is important to invest in their health, because:

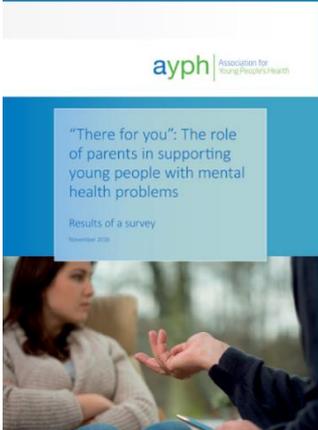
- 1 The years between 10 and 24 are critical for health.** The first signs of many serious longterm conditions emerge at this age. It is a time when risk-taking behaviours begin and when life-long health behaviours are set in place. This provides a unique opportunity to intervene and promote health for life.
- 2 Young people's health is not improving enough.** There have been fewer health improvements or reductions in mortality amongst adolescents compared to other age groups. Some improvements seen in the last decade have stalled. Accidents and suicide are the leading cause of death in this age group and are both preventable.
- 3 Young people are not getting the health services or information they require.** They are regular users of primary care, but the age group least satisfied with their consultations. They also get the shortest time with a GP. They have been disproportionately affected by cuts to public health and other community based services. Many with longterm conditions suffer poor transitions from child to adult services.
- 4 Health inequalities are widespread by the time of transition to adulthood, and some are widening.** Action to reduce health inequalities in outcomes such as death, obesity, asthma and mental health needs to be taken during the secondary school years if they are not to persist – and grow – in adulthood. Inequalities are the result of deprivation, and are also seen for young people in particular situations such as young carers and young people with learning disabilities.
- 5 Positive trends in health behaviours must be supported in order to continue.** Under-18 conception rates for 2018 were the lowest ever recorded in England, use of cigarettes and alcohol have halved in recent decades, and antisocial behaviour has fallen. But we need to invest to maintain these positive trends or they will start to rise again.
- 6 Ignoring chronic adolescent disease costs money.** Longterm conditions in the 10-24 age can lead to emergency hospital admissions. Young people with Type 1 diabetes are up to five times more likely to be admitted to hospital as their peers. Improved adolescent health brings economic and larger societal benefits for all.
- 7 Effects of poor healthcare in adolescence can last a lifetime.** One fifth of 11-15 year olds in the UK are obese. Even though younger children are smoking less, 1 in 5 of 16-24 year olds are current smokers. These behaviours have longterm health impacts and costs to the NHS unless they are addressed.
- 8 Investing in young people's wellbeing has benefits beyond health.** 24% of 15 year olds in England have experimented with illegal drugs and 69% have consumed alcohol. These actions impact on antisocial behaviour and crime levels and can also result in accidents and A&E attendance.
- 9 Many mental health issues are diagnosed at this age.** Half of all psychiatric disorders start by age 14 and three quarters by age 24. Investment is needed in young people's mental health services which are over-stretched and have long waiting lists and high thresholds.
- 10 Investment in young people maintains and reinforces successful health interventions delivered in early childhood.** For maximum benefit, we cannot stop in the early years. Gains made through maternal & child health programmes may be lost if we do not continue into the second decade of life.



AYPH is the independent voice for young people's health. We believe that young people have a right to good health and high quality accessible healthcare.

1 in 5 of the UK's population is aged 10-25. Over the last 10 years we have raised the profile of young people's health, improved understanding about young people's needs and promoted youth friendly health services.

All our work is done in partnership with young people, practitioners and other experts in the field.



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