



GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

PLANET
Youth

ABOUT PLANET YOUTH

Planet Youth is an innovative public health project being adopted in counties Roscommon, Mayo and Galway. Its aim is to improve the **health and happiness of young people** in our communities and assist them in achieving their full potential.

The latest Planet Youth Survey was conducted amongst 4,478 15-16 year olds in all of the secondary schools in Roscommon, Mayo and Galway during December 2020.

88%

Easy to get Caring and Warmth from parents



48%

Exercise 3 times a week or more



14%

out after midnight



59%

not getting enough sleep



74%

happy in their lives

18%

Get alcohol from parents



86%

feel safe in their community

32%

reported self-harm once or more



33%

Tried alcohol by **13**

20%

Drunk last month



17%



have tried Cannabis

50%

spend 3 hours or more on social media daily



FAMILY TIME

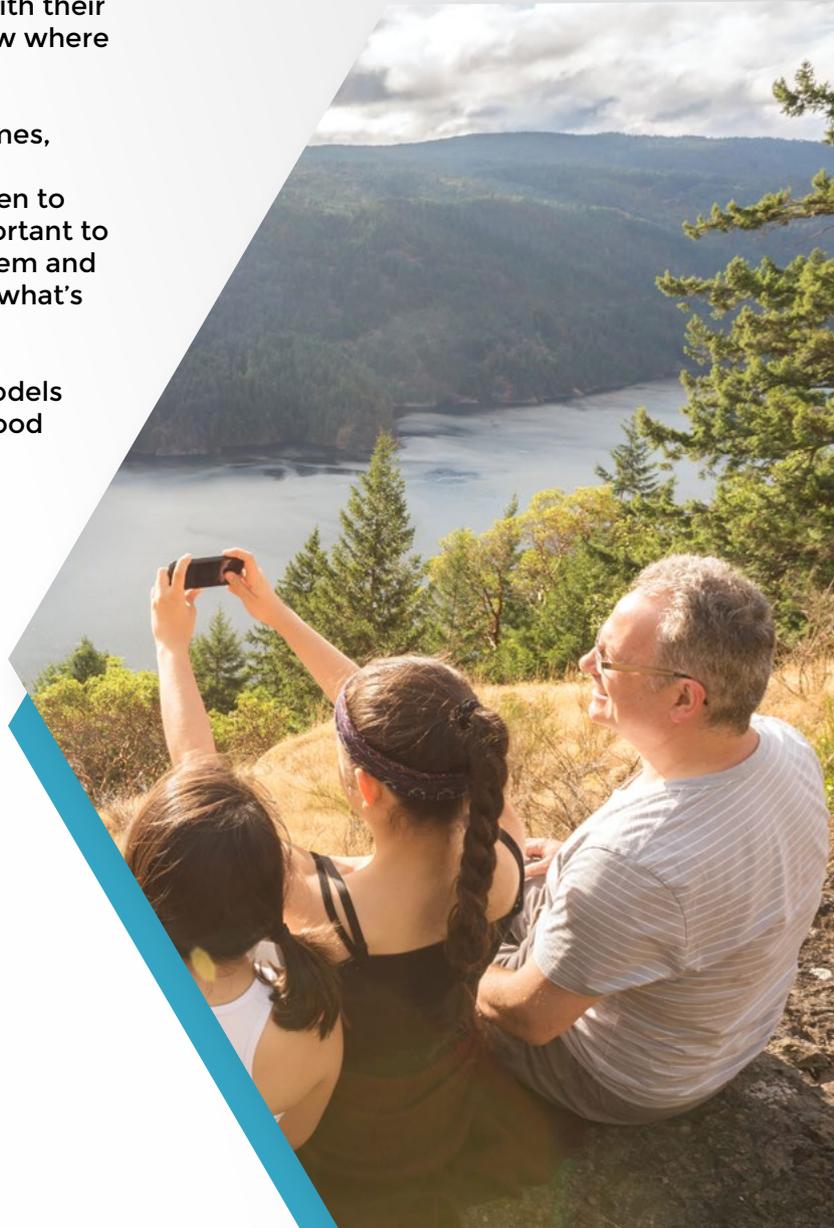
The Planet Youth survey had some really positive findings related to family life and the relationships that our teenagers have with their parents. 88% stated that it's easy to receive caring and warmth from their parents. Teens report spending a lot of time with their parents and 88% stated that their parents know where they are in the evenings.

Having shared interests, regular family mealtimes, family activities and family meetings creates enjoyable time and space to chat with and listen to our teenagers. As they get older, it is important to maintain good quality communication with them and to stay connected, interested and engaged in what's happening in their lives.

As parents, we are the most important role models for our teens so it is important that we set a good example with our own behaviours.

88%

Easy to get
Caring and
Warmth from
parents



SCREEN TIME GUIDELINES

The Planet Youth survey showed us that 50% of our young people are spending 3 hours a day or more on social media. We know that too much screen time impacts upon homework and hobbies and can be detrimental to good mental health. Screen use should be kept to a maximum of **2 hours per day** after homework and other activities are completed.

Screens should be off at least one hour before bed and kept out of bedrooms after bedtime.

If you can have these guidelines in place from first year they will become increasingly important as your child gets older. Talk to your child about their online life and be a good role model with your own screen use.

50%
spend 3 hours
or more on
social media
daily





BEDTIME GUIDELINES

The Planet Youth survey showed us that over half of our young people are not getting enough sleep. The suggested guidelines for bedtime are:

59%

don't get
enough
sleep

**FIRST
YEAR**

09:30PM

**SECOND
YEAR**

09:45PM

**THIRD
YEAR**

10:00PM

**TRANSITION
YEAR**

10:15PM

**FIFTH
YEAR**

10:30PM

**LEAVING CERT
YEAR**

10:45PM



Sleep is just as important to your child's development and well-being as nutrition and physical activity. It is recommended that teenagers get a minimum **8 to 10 hours** of undisturbed sleep per night. For example; a first year that has to get up at 07.30am should be asleep by 09.30pm in order to get their 10 hours of sleep.



INTERESTS, HOBBIES & SPORTS

It is important that young people are encouraged to keep engaging in quality supervised, structured activities that interest them as they get older.

Physical activity is important for good health and wellbeing but not every child is interested in sports. Other hobbies and interests that provide opportunities to get involved in their community outside of school allow our children to further develop their social skills and build emotional resilience.

Good quality **supervised** and structured activities are also a known protective factor against substance use and anti-social behaviour.

48%

Exercise
3 times a
week or
more



20%

Drunk in
the last
month



17%

Lifetime
cannabis
use



SUBSTANCE USE

As your child gets older, they will become more and more curious about alcohol and other drugs.

The survey showed us that 33% of our children have already tried alcohol by thirteen. 61% of the children that reported using cannabis had tried alcohol by thirteen.

Use of alcohol or drugs at a young age can impair brain development and will increase the chances of developing a dependency later in life. It also increases the likelihood of other risky behaviours.

PARENTAL SUPPLY OF ALCOHOL

Teens that get alcohol from their parents are over **3.5 times more likely** to have been drunk in the last month.

As well as getting alcohol from parents, nearly a third of all teenagers reported that they were doing their drinking at a friend's house.

The evidence is clear that the best thing we can do as parents is to defer any alcohol use for as long as possible. By agreeing, as parents collectively, to not give any alcohol to other children in our homes we can make a big difference to the long-term health and wellbeing of our young people.

18%

get alcohol from a parent



10%

get alcohol from a friend's parent



You can find updates, resources, further information and links at the Planet Youth website.

www.planetyouth.ie