

RESOURCE 2B

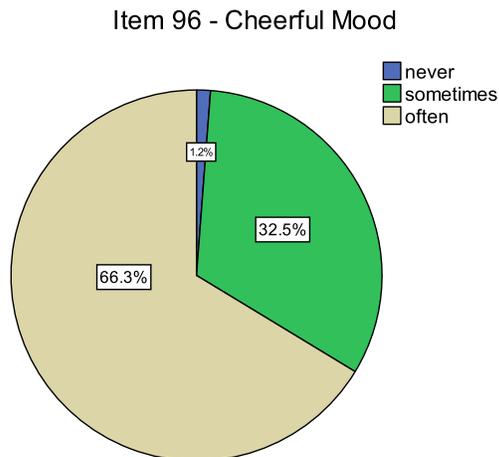
Unit I, Lesson 2 – Activity 2: Recent Youth Survey Results (40 minutes)

The Healthy Youth Survey

Healthy Youth in a Healthy Society. A community university alliance for the prevention of injuries in children and youth (see www.youth.society.uvic.ca) was an interdisciplinary research project funded through the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) “Community Alliance for Health Research” program. The **Healthy Youth** study joined teams of university-based researchers from several disciplines (sociology, psychology, child and youth care, education, and nursing) with interested members of the non-university community (e.g. policy makers, police, service providers, teachers, parents and children or youth themselves) to address the complex social determinants of youth health concerns that might lead to injuries. The study was comprised of seven “target projects” investigating different aspects of youth health. One of these target projects was the *Healthy Youth Survey* which was conducted with Victoria area youth in 2003, 2005, and again in 2007. In the Survey, there were questions about school, social support, stress, physical health, family, friends, relationships, substance use, and injuries.

Below is a summary of several results from the 2005 Healthy Youth Survey. Altogether, 580 young people aged 14 to 21 completed it; 47% were male and 53% were female. Discussion questions are included among the items. Data “pie charts” that provide a visual representation of the results are presented for several items.

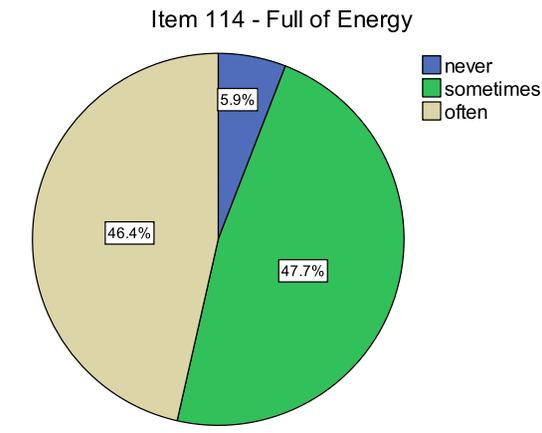
“Cheerful mood”



Two thirds of the youth in this survey sample said they generally had a cheerful mood. Almost a third said they sometimes had a cheerful mood; only about 1% said never.

Ask: What does it mean to you to “have a cheerful mood”? What does it “look like”? How do these results compare to your experience and to that of your friends?

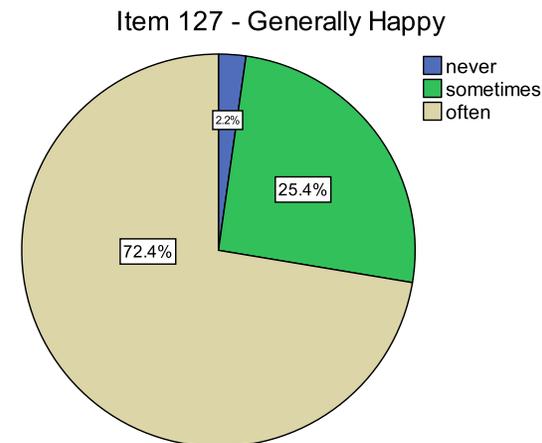
“Feel full of energy”



Not quite half, or 46%, of these young people said they often felt full of energy. 48% said they sometimes felt that way. Only 6% said never.

*Ask: Do these results surprise you? Why or why not?
How often do you feel full of energy? If not most of the time, why do you think that is?
The next item might partly explain this finding.*

“Generally happy”



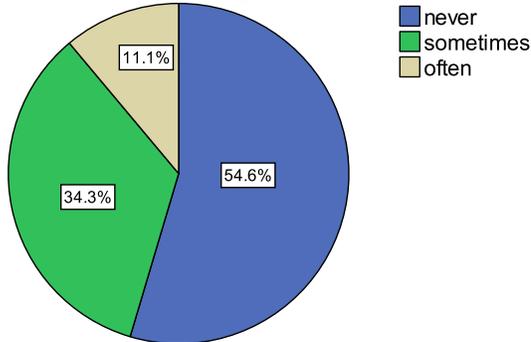
Over 72 % of the youth surveyed said they were often happy. 25% said they were sometimes happy. About 2% said they were never happy.

Ask: How does this finding relate to the previous two items (Cheerful Mood and Full of Energy)? Are they consistent? (Discuss)

Now for some contrasting data –

“Not as happy as other people your age”

Item 134 - Not as happy as other people your age



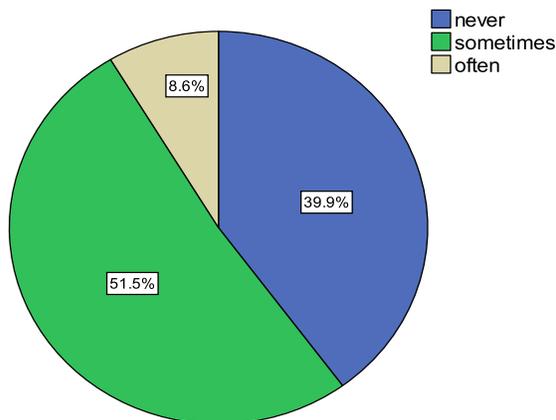
Eleven per cent (11%) of these young people said they were often not as happy as others their age.

34% said they were sometimes not as happy.

The rest, about 55%, said they were as happy as others their age.

“Are unhappy, sad, or depressed”

Item 107 - Unhappy, Sad, or Depressed



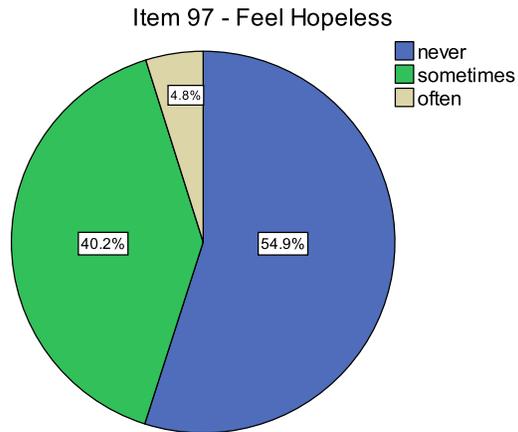
Just about 10% of this sample reported that they **often** felt unhappy, sad or depressed during the past six months.

Over half, or almost 52% said they sometimes felt that way.

40% said never.

Ask: Does it surprise you that 40% of these young people said they never felt unhappy, sad, or depressed? Does this seem realistic in your experience?

“Feel hopeless”

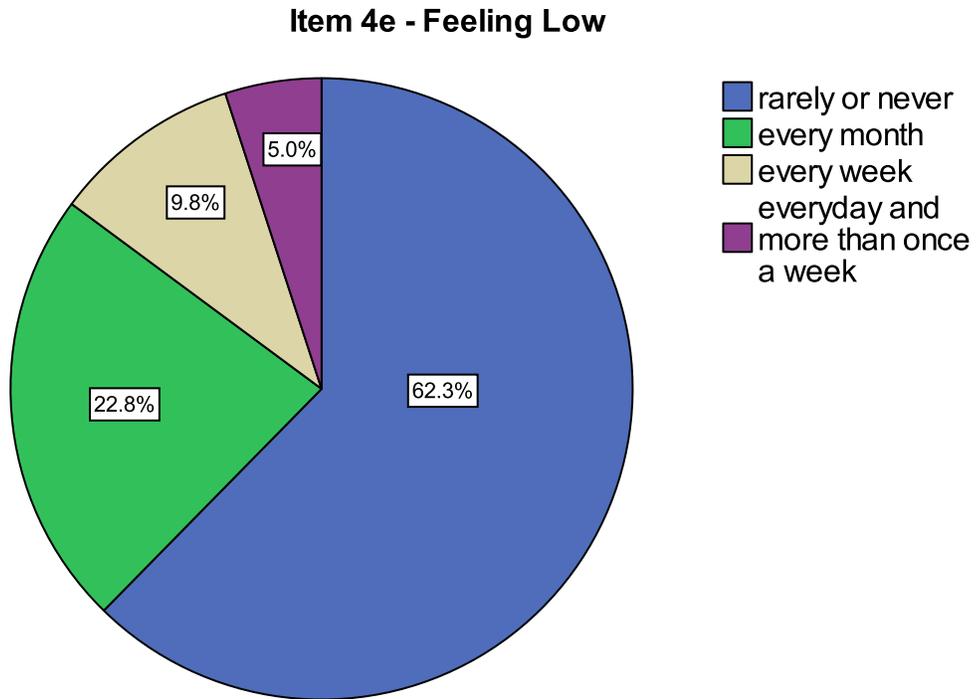


Only 5% of these young people, or 1 in 20, said they often felt hopeless. However, 40% said they sometimes felt hopeless, which is of concern. Over half, or about 55% said they never felt that way.

Ask: Do you know of someone who might say they often feel hopeless? What are some ways to help young people who say they feel this way? (Discuss)

Some of the survey items asked young people how often they felt certain ways:

“Feeling low”



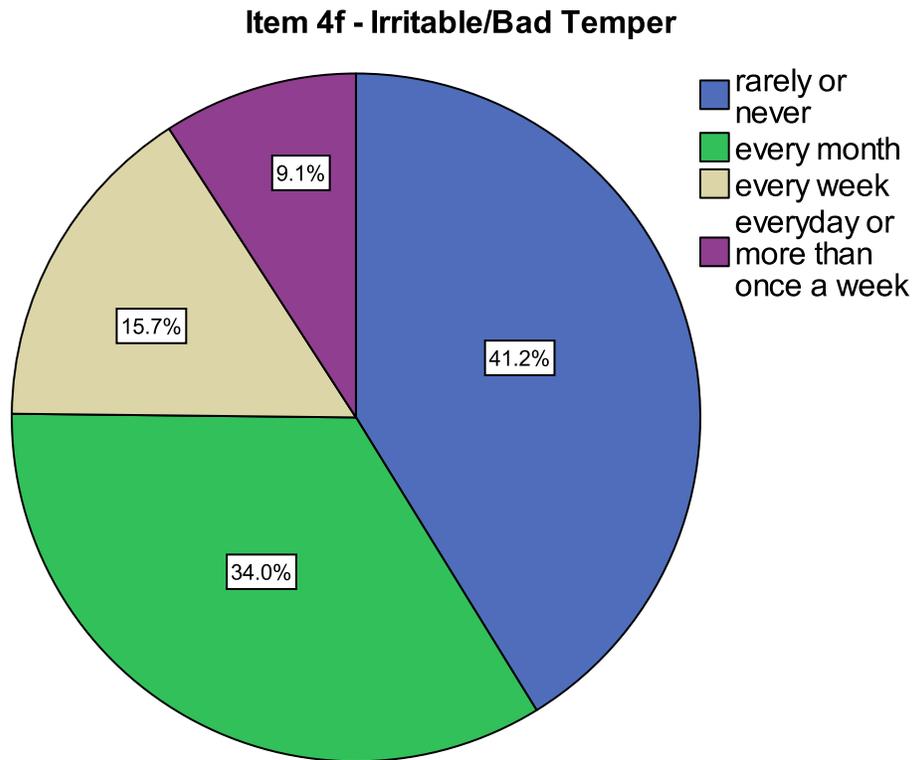
About 5% of the youth reported “feeling low” either every day or more than once a week within the past 6 months.

About 10% said they felt this way every week and almost 23% said every month.

However, just over 60% said they rarely or never felt low.

Ask: How often do you feel low? More than once a week? Or less often? How often do you think most of your friends feel this way?

“Feeling irritable or in a bad temper”

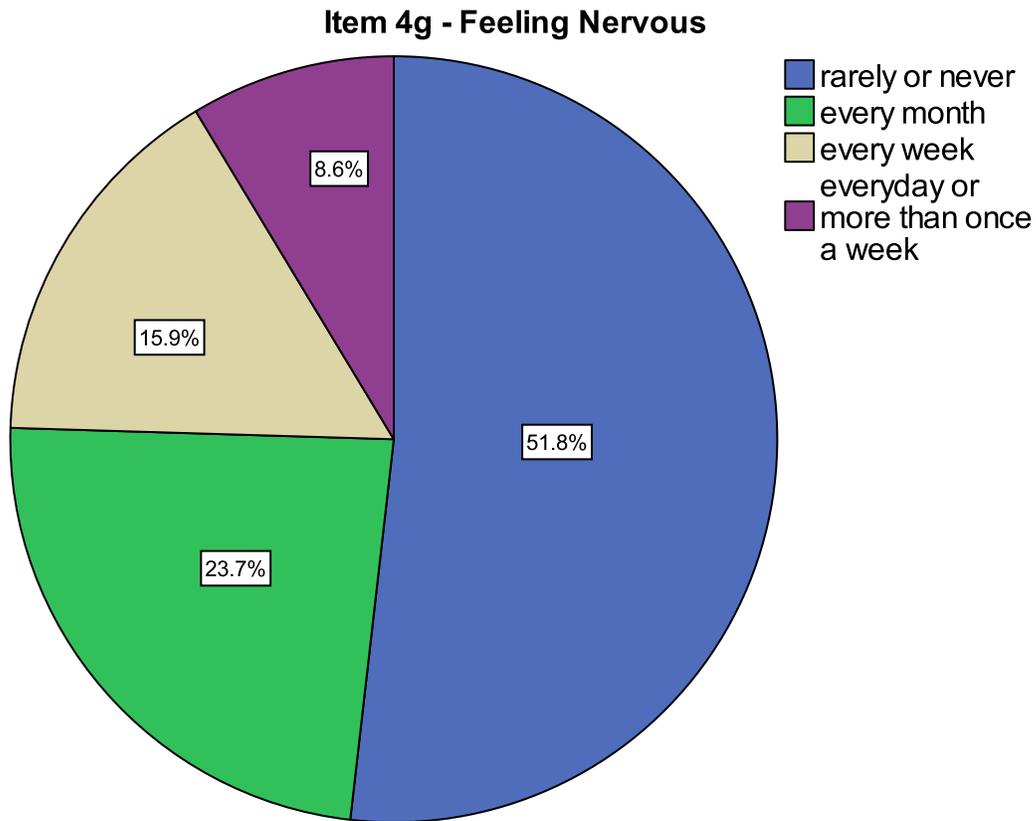


About 9% of the Victoria youth said they felt irritable or in a bad temper every day or more than once a week.

Sixteen per cent (16%) said they felt this way every week, 34 % said they felt irritable or in a bad temper every month, and 41% said they rarely or never felt this way.

Ask: Again, how does this compare to your experience?

“Feeling nervous”



Almost 9% of these young people said they felt nervous every day or more than once a week.

16% said every week,
24% said every month, and
52% said rarely or never.

Ask: How often do you feel nervous and in what situations? Is this “normal”?

“Stress”

There were several items in the survey asking young people about **stress** in their lives. When asked about **relationships with family members**, 12 % of the youth said these were high stress.

About 45% said these relationships were medium stress and 43% said low stress.

With regard to **relationships with friends**, only 3 % of the youth said these were high stress. About 29% said these relationships were medium stress and 68% said low stress.

Ask: What does this say to you about young people’s relationships with friends in comparison to their relationships with family members? Why might this be so?

When asked about **relationships at school or work**, 12 % of the youth said these were high stress. About 47% said these relationships were medium stress and 41% said low stress.

This is very similar to the results above in relation to family. Why might this be?

When asked about **relationships with community members**, only 2 % of the youth said these were high stress. About 15% said these relationships were medium stress and 83% said low stress.

“Number of stressful events in the last 12 months”

Youth were asked how many stressful events they had experienced in the last year.

Ask: What percentage do you think said “none”?

Almost 17% said none.

Ask: Do you find that surprising? Explain.

65% said 1 to 3 stressful events in the last 12 months.

A further 15% said they had experienced 4 or 5 such events.

Slightly over 2% reported 6 or more.

Ask: How does this compare to your experiences?

“Sleep”

One question asked about sleep. During the previous 6 months, just over 12% of young people reported that they had difficulties sleeping every day (4%) or more than once a week (8%).

About 15% said they had difficulty sleeping once a week, and 18% said once a month or so.

32% said they rarely had difficulty sleeping and

23% said never.

Ask: How often do you or people you know have difficulty sleeping? Is this situation increasing or decreasing over the past few years? Why might that be?

Thinking about these Survey results, how do these young people’s responses relate to what we might call their “mental health”? (Discuss)