

Children, violence and vulnerability 2024

Who has access to positive activities, youth clubs and trusted adults?



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Main findings and summary



Executive Summary

The Youth Endowment Fund surveyed over 10,000 teenage children (aged 13-17) in England and Wales about their experiences of violence.

The findings are detailed across five reports, each focusing on a different aspect.

In this report, we explore children's access to positive activities, youth clubs and trusted adult figures.

Here's what we found.

Most children do positive activities.

Activities such as sports programmes, arts and volunteering can provide children with safe spaces, support, educational opportunities and a sense of community. They can also provide 'hooks' to engage them in other services and support.

The majority of teenage children (95%) have access to these sorts of activities locally, with 84% participating in at least one activity once a month or more. Team and individual sports are the most common, with 72% of 13-17-year-olds having access to team sports and 42% regularly participating. Similarly, 62% have access to individual sports, with 35% participating.

Gender differences are notable: 88% of boys engage in positive activities compared to 80% of girls. Boys are far more involved in team sports (54% of boys vs 30% of girls), while girls participate more in arts (27% of girls vs 13% of boys) and part-time work (15% of girls vs 11% of boys). Among 17-year-olds, 34% of girls take up part-time work, compared to 25% of boys.

Interestingly, children directly affected by violence as victims (88%) and perpetrators (90%) are more likely to take part in positive activities than children who haven't been victims of or perpetrated violence (83%). They are less likely to do activities such as team sports, but are more likely to do volunteering, wilderness activities and combat sports.

Vulnerable children are the most likely to attend youth clubs.

Youth clubs are places that provide children and young people access to activities, support and community. They also provide opportunities or 'hooks' to engage children with other services and forms of support.

While 70% of 13-17-year-olds report having access to a youth club in their area, 40% attend one at least once a month. School-based youth clubs are the most commonly attended (35% have access and 17% attend), followed by those in youth or community centres (37% have access and 12% attend). A third (33%) of teenage children who don't currently attend a youth club would like to.

It seems that youth clubs manage to reach those who most need them. Children who've been directly affected by violence are twice as likely to regularly go to a youth club – 60% of victims and 65% of those who've perpetrated violence, compared to 31% who haven't been victims or perpetrators of violence.

Youth clubs, especially those based in schools, are generally viewed as safe spaces. For children who've been victims of violence, online youth clubs¹ are considered safer, with 14% attending them compared to 7% of their peers.



I think having more youth-led organisations in schools can really help because when I worked at a secondary school to do research, there were some youth workers in the room with the young people. And it seemed they were so comfortable with the youth worker compared to when a teacher came into the room. The atmosphere changed so much compared to the youth worker.

Muna, Youth Endowment Fund Youth Advisory Board member



¹ Online youth clubs offer spaces which children and young people can access from their devices. They provide opportunities for children and young people to meet and interact with other young people and youth workers and to engage in a variety of structured and unstructured activities. Digital youth clubs, such as [Space's online youth centre](#) and [Cardiff Youth Service's Discord youth club](#), have been set up to provide regular online environments for young people.

Most children, including those most affected by violence, have a trusted adult outside the home.

When a child or young person is vulnerable and in need of support, having an adult in their life who they can turn to can make a big difference. For some, this might be a family member, but others might feel more comfortable seeking help from someone outside their family or friends – for example, a youth worker, sports coach or more formal mentor.

While 82% of teenage children have a trusted adult outside their family, 18% do not. School staff are the most trusted adults (58%), but children who've been suspended, excluded or face greater risks of violence – such as drug use, exploitation or involvement with the police – are more likely than others to turn to adults outside of school settings, such as sports coaches, mentors, doctors or youth workers. Boys, in particular, are more likely to trust a sports coach (24% of boys vs 12% of girls), while girls tend to rely more on school staff (60% of girls vs 56% of boys). These findings highlight the importance of supporting and facilitating these trusted relationships to help vulnerable children navigate their challenges.

Headline findings

Most children do positive activities.

4 out of 5 children regularly do positive activities.

84% of 13–17-year-olds regularly participate in at least one type of positive activity. The most common activity is team sports (42%), followed by individual sports (35%). Only 20% participate in arts activities. 87% would like to try at least one activity they're not currently doing.

Children affected by violence are more likely to take part...

90% of children who've perpetrated violence and 88% of victims of violence regularly do at least one activity, compared to 83% of children who've been neither victims nor perpetrators.

...but what they do is different.

Children who've been victims of and perpetrated violence are less likely to do team sports (e.g. 37% of perpetrators vs 43% of children who haven't perpetrated) but more likely to do volunteering (13% of perpetrators vs 10% of non-perpetrators), wilderness activities (17% of perpetrators vs 8% of non-perpetrators) and combat sports (18% of perpetrators vs 9% of non-perpetrators).

Vulnerable children are the most likely to attend youth clubs.

2 in 5 children regularly attend youth clubs.

40% of 13–17-year-olds participate in some sort of youth club at least once a month. The most common are school-based (17%), followed by ones in youth or community centres (12%) and clubs that are part of religious organisations (11%). 7% attend youth clubs online.

Most children directly affected by violence attend youth clubs.

60% of victims and 65% of perpetrators attend a youth club – 2× the rate among those who haven't been victims or perpetrators (31%). Victims and perpetrators of violence are particularly more likely to attend clubs in youth centres (e.g. 23% of perpetrators vs 10% of non-perpetrators), at religious organisations (20% of perpetrators vs 10% of non-perpetrators) and online (16% of perpetrators vs 5% of non-perpetrators).

Most children who attend youth clubs think they're safe.

93% of children who attend youth clubs at school think they're safe vs 75% of those who don't attend. For youth clubs in community centres and online, this gap widens – 77% of children attending clubs in youth centres think they're safe vs 56% of those who don't attend. And 71% of children attending online youth clubs think they're safe vs 45% who don't attend.

Most children, including those most affected by violence, have a trusted adult outside the home.

3 in 5 children have an adult at school who they trust.

82% of children have at least one adult outside their family they go to for support. Teachers and school staff are the most likely to be considered trusted adults (58%), followed by sports coaches (18%) and doctors and other health professionals (12%). 1 in 10 children (9%) say they have a mentor.

Children affected by violence are just as likely to have a trusted adult...

84% of victims and 86% of perpetrators of violence have a trusted adult who's not a family member, compared to 82% of all children. Teachers are the most commonly cited source of support by around half of victims (49%) and perpetrators (48%) – although this is less than the average (58%).

...but are more likely to be supported by adults outside of school.

23% of victims and 27% of perpetrators have a sports coach they trust vs 18% of all children. 16% of victims and 19% of perpetrators have a mentor vs 9% of all children. 14% of both victims and perpetrators have a social worker vs 7% of all children. 10% of victims and 11% of perpetrators have a youth worker vs 6% of all children.

Methods and detailed findings



About this report

What we wanted to find out

This is our third annual survey into young people's experience of violence. This year, we surveyed over 10,000 children aged 13–17 in England and Wales about their experiences over the past 12 months – compared to 7,500 last year. The greater number of responses provides more confidence in the findings.

This year, we're publishing the findings of the survey in five separate reports, covering:

1. [Who is affected by violence?](#)
2. [What role does social media play in violence affecting young people?](#)
3. [How are boys and girls affected by violence?](#)
4. [What do children and young people think about the police?](#)
5. [Who has access to positive activities, youth clubs and trusted adults? \(this report\)](#)

This is the fifth and final report in this year's series. It covers the types of activities young people do outside of school, attendance at and access to youth clubs, and whether children have an adult outside their family who they can trust.

What we did

This year, a total of 10,387 children aged 13–17 responded to our survey. As with last year, this was an online survey. This year, we worked with a new surveying partner – Savanta. The survey took 15 minutes on average to complete and was live between 22 May and 2 July 2024. Questions typically related to children's experiences over the past 12 months.

To ensure the results were nationally representative, we did two things. Firstly, we set quotas for key groups. These were age, gender, ethnicity, region and socioeconomic status. The quotas were based on each group's share of the population using Census 2021 population estimates for 13–17-year-olds. Secondly, the results were weighted using the same characteristics to ensure they aligned exactly with their national population totals. For more details, see the [technical report](#).

How children were kept safe when taking part in the survey

Children were invited to take part in the survey and were made aware of the types of questions that would be asked. Anyone could refuse to take part if they wished. For all children aged under 16, a parent or guardian had to consent. Participants could drop out of the survey at any time. Participants were asked to complete the survey on their own and in a safe place where their responses could not be seen. Questions were presented so that responses would not remain visible once they'd been selected to protect their privacy. And it wasn't possible to look back at previous responses once questions had been answered. At the beginning and end and throughout the survey, participants were signposted to relevant support services.

Approach to reporting results

The smaller the number of responses, the less confident we are in the results. For this reason, no results are reported where the total number of responses to a particular question was less than 50. All group comparisons mentioned in the report are statistically significant at a 95% confidence level unless otherwise noted.

What to bear in mind when reading the findings

Like all research, our survey has some limitations. We're trying to understand what children across England and Wales have experienced. While our sample of 10,387 13-17-year-olds is large (for context, the Office for National Statistics' [Crime Survey of England and Wales](#) reached 1,528 10-15-year-olds in 2023/24 and has consistently reached around 3,000 young people in recent years), it still represents a small proportion of all children in the country. It's important, therefore, to remember these limitations when interpreting the results:

- Weights are applied to ensure that the results are broadly representative of the national populations of England and Wales. However, the weights applied only cover a limited number of factors.
- Like most surveys, those who respond are self-selecting. Respondents had the option not to take part. Applying weights helps to address this, but the self-selecting nature of the respondents may have biased the results in a way weighting couldn't account for.
- The sample size is significantly larger than last year's survey and other surveys of this kind. However, when we look at the results for some smaller subgroups (e.g. by region, ethnicity and age), these individual groups can be small. This makes it hard to make generalised conclusions for some smaller populations.
- The subject matter (children's experiences of violence) is sensitive. While we ensured the framing of the questions was suitable for children, it's possible that some may have been unwilling to respond openly and honestly, particularly about things they may have done.
- Caution should be taken when making comparisons between this year's survey and last year's. We cannot rule out that changes made to question order, survey length or respondents to the survey affected comparability between years.

What we found

Most children do positive activities, but access is unequal.

Most teenage children have access to positive activities where they live and are participating in them.

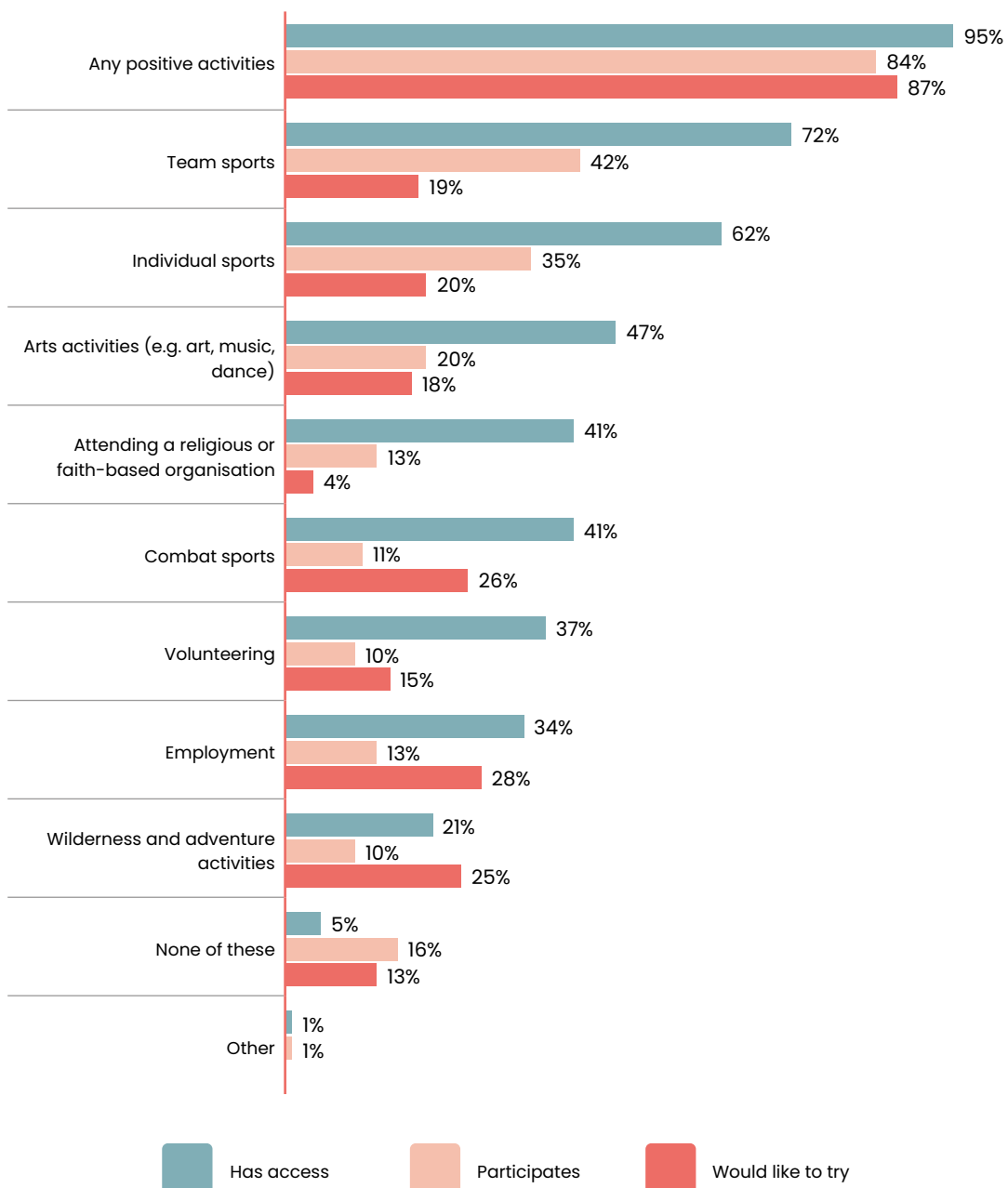
Activities such as sports programmes, arts and volunteering can provide children with safe spaces, support, educational opportunities and a sense of community. They can also provide 'hooks' to engage them in other services and support.

Why are we interested in certain types of activities?

A wide range of activities can be positive in helping children's development as well as their mental and physical health. We're particularly interested in more formal types of activities, as they can provide a structure within which to support more vulnerable children. For these reasons, we asked children whether they participated in a range of activities that tend to be more structured: team, individual and combat sports; wilderness and adventure activities (e.g. hiking, rock climbing); arts (e.g. art, music, dance); attending religious or faith-based organisations; volunteering; and part-time work. There's evidence that some of these activities, such as sports and adventure and wilderness activities, could help prevent violence, but evidence for the impact of others is weak. The Youth Endowment Fund is funding more research into the role of different activities in violence prevention.

Almost all teenage children (95%) say they have access to positive activities, such as sports or arts, where they live. Eighty-four per cent say they participate regularly (at least once a month) in at least one such activity. Team and individual sports are the most widely available and popular activities. Nearly three-quarters (72%) of 13-17-year-olds have access to team sports in their local areas, and 62% have access to individual sports. Forty-two per cent say they regularly participate in team sports, and 35% in individual sports. Arts activities, such as dancing, art, music and theatre, are the next most common type of activity and are available to 47% of children, with 20% taking part regularly.

Figure 1.1: Proportion of 13-17-year-olds in England and Wales who have access to, participate in and would like to try positive activities

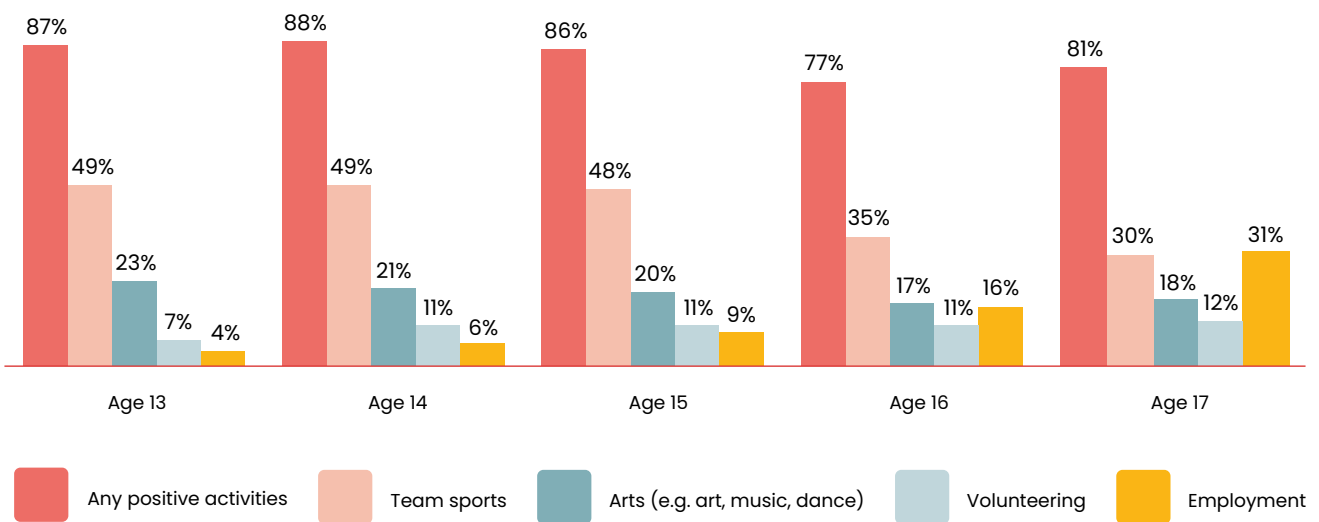


Despite most teenage children participating in some sort of positive activity, 87% say they'd like to try at least one new activity they're not currently doing. The most common activities children weren't currently doing but expressed interest in were part-time work (28%), combat sports (26%) and wilderness or adventure activities (25%). Of the children who currently don't do any positive activities, 69% say they'd like to try at least one.

Older children are less likely to do sports and arts and more likely to do part-time work.

Overall participation in positive activities falls with age. While 87% of 13-15-year-olds participate in at least one positive activity monthly, this drops to 79% for 16-17-year-olds. Seventeen-year-olds, in particular, are significantly less likely than younger teenagers to do all the mentioned activities, apart from attending a religious organisation, volunteering and doing part-time work. Sixteen per cent of 16-year-olds and 31% of 17-year-olds say they have some type of employment.

Figure 1.2: Proportion of 13-17-year-olds in England and Wales participating in selected positive activities by age

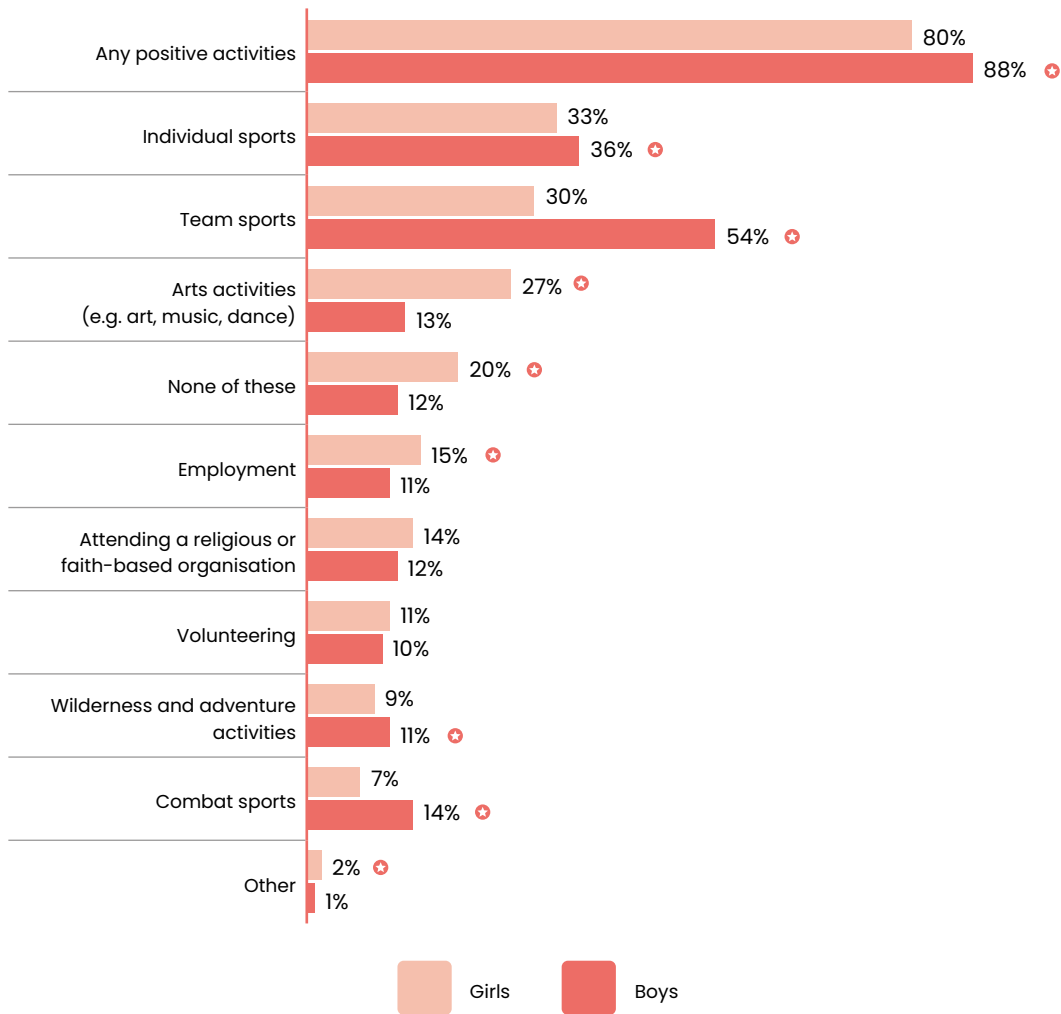


Girls and boys do different types of activities.

Boys are more likely to participate in any type of positive activity (88%) than girls (80%). The gender gap is particularly noticeable in team sports, with 54% of boys participating compared to 30% of girls. And girls show a much larger drop in sports participation with age than boys. For example, 38% of 15-year-old girls participate in team sports, and this falls to 17% of 17-year-old girls. In comparison, 55% of 15-year-old boys do team sports, compared to 48% of 17-year-old boys.

In contrast, girls are more likely than boys to participate in art activities (27% of girls vs 13% of boys) and part-time work (15% of girls vs 11% of boys). One in three (34%) 17-year-old girls say they are employed, compared to one in four (25%) 17-year-old boys.

Figure 1.3: Proportion of 13–17-year-olds in England and Wales participating in positive activities by gender

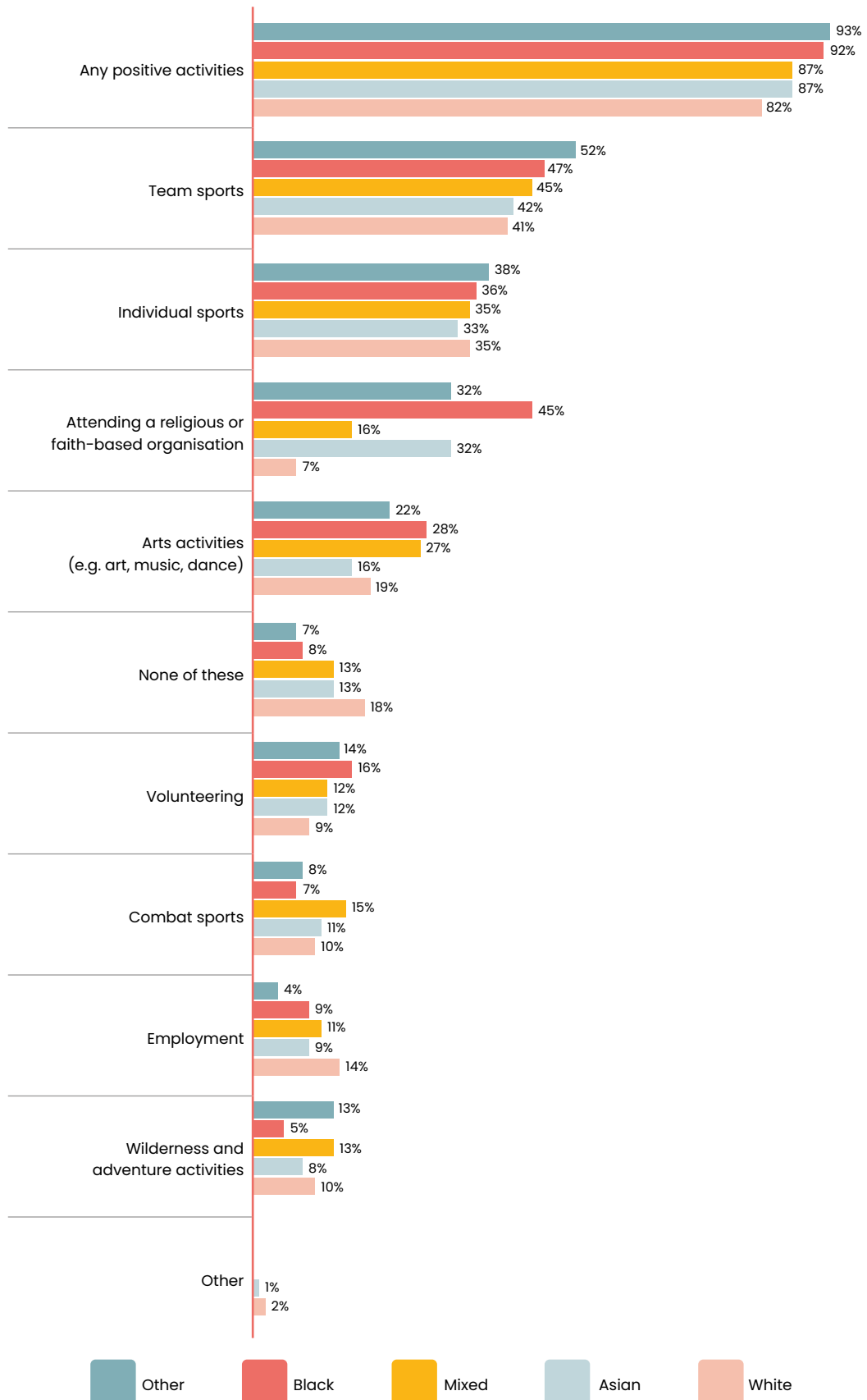


Note. Stars beside the bars indicate where estimates for the two groups are significantly different from one another at a 95% confidence level.

There are ethnic differences in what kinds of activities children do.

Black children are more likely to participate in at least one activity (92%) compared to children from Asian (87%), mixed ethnicity (87%) and White (82%) backgrounds. This is particularly driven by attendance at religious or faith-based organisations (45% of Black children vs 7% of White children), art activities (28% vs 19% of White children) and team sports (47% vs 41% of White children). The only activity White children were more likely to participate in than other groups was employment - 14% of White 13–17-year-olds say they participate in some form of part-time work compared to 11% of mixed ethnicity and 9% of children from Asian and Black backgrounds.

Figure 1.4: Proportion of 13–17-year-olds in England and Wales participating in positive activities by ethnicity



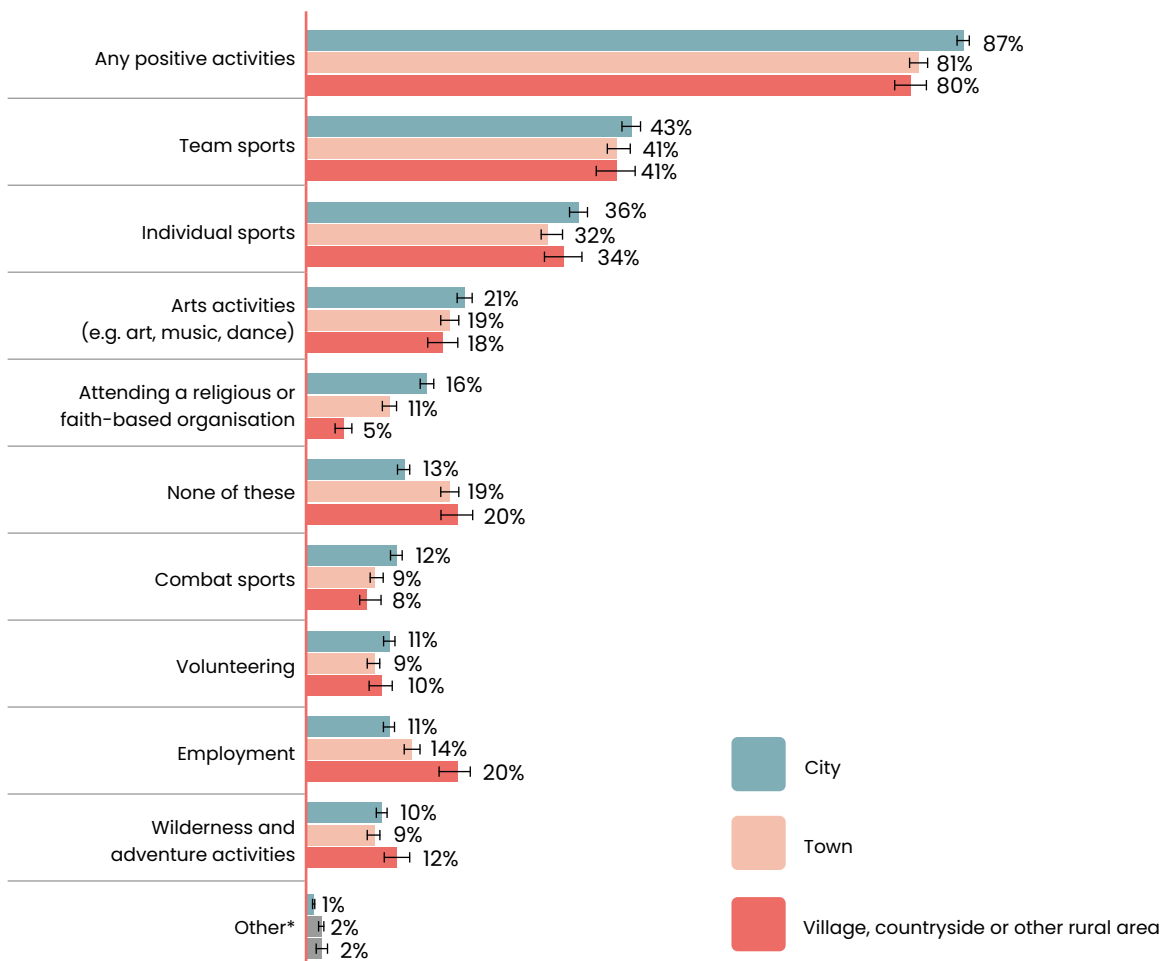
Where children live plays a part in access to activities.

Across regions, there isn't a large variation in the proportion of children who participate. Outside of London (where participation increases to 91% in at least one activity amongst 13-17-year-olds), there's only modest variation, varying between 81% and 84%.

However, when we look at location (e.g. urban/rural), rural children are less likely to participate in activities than children in urban areas (87% of those in cities vs 80% of those in rural areas). Yet, the types of activities undertaken vary. Interestingly, we find that 20% of children in rural areas are in part-time work, compared to 11% of urban children, while 12% of rural children participate in wilderness activities, compared to 10% of their urban counterparts.

Similarly, patterns of activities undertaken within cities across different regions also vary, with children living in London more likely to regularly participate in at least one activity than children in cities in other parts of the country. For instance, children living in London are the most likely to participate in team sports (49%) and individual sports (40%) compared to children in other urban areas.

Figure 1.5: Proportion of 13–17-year-olds in England and Wales participating in positive activities by geographic location



*Grey bars represent small (<50) numbers of respondents, so they should be interpreted with caution.

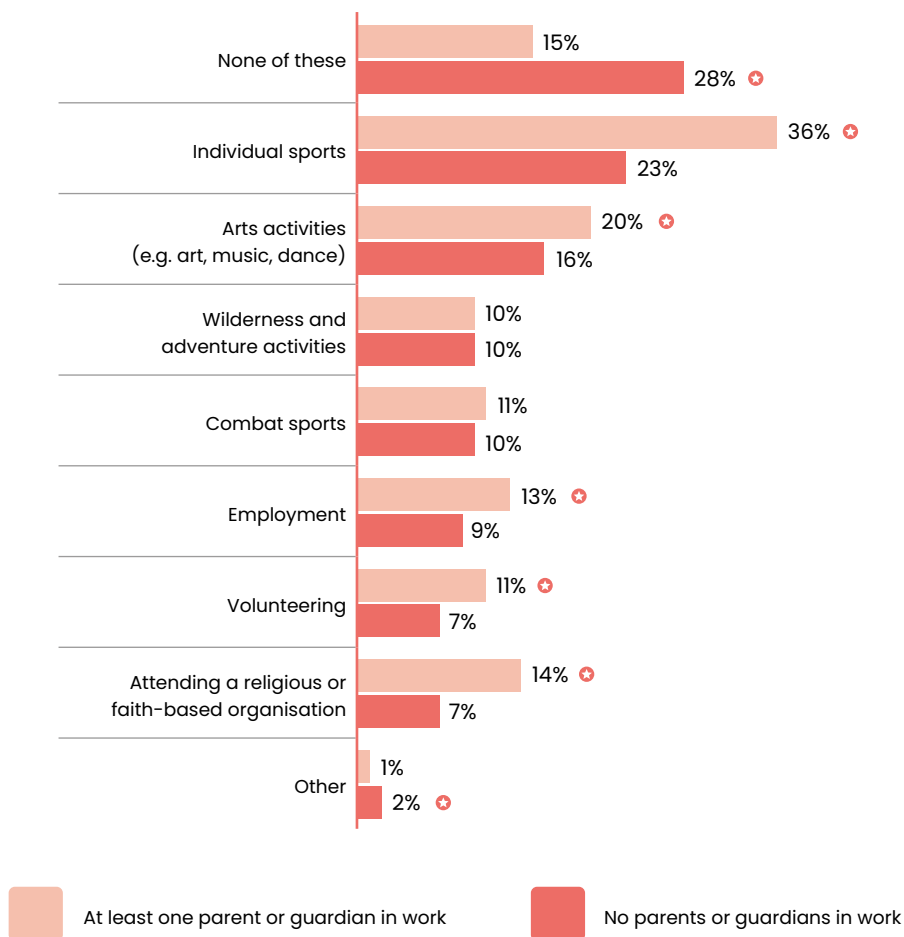
Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the estimates to fall within.

Children from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds are less likely to have access to positive activities...

Children from poorer socioeconomic groups are less likely to participate in any activities. For instance, 74% of those living in social housing regularly participate in positive activities, compared to 87% of those living in houses owned by their parents. Seventy-two per cent of those living in households where no parent or guardian is in work regularly participate, compared to 85% of those living in households where at least one parent or guardian is in work.

It's not just that participation is lower, access is as well. Ten per cent of teenage children living in social housing (compared to 4% living in houses owned by their parents) and 11% living in non-working households (compared to 4% living in working households) don't think any positive activities are available where they live.

Figure 1.6: Proportion of 13–17-year-olds in England and Wales participating in positive activities by household working status



Note. Stars beside the bars indicate where estimates for the two groups are significantly different from one another at a 95% confidence level.

...but children with other potential vulnerabilities to violence are more likely to take part.

Children with vulnerabilities to violence are less likely to participate in team sports but more likely to do activities such as volunteering, combat sports and wilderness or adventure activities. This is fairly consistent across different vulnerabilities to violence, including children with special educational needs (SEN); those who've been supported by a social worker, persistently absent, excluded from school, missing from home, asked to hold drugs and in a gang;² and those who've carried weapons. For instance, 88% of children who've had a social worker in the past year regularly take part in at least one activity, compared to 83% of those who've never been supported by a social worker: 35% do team sports vs 45% with no social worker, but 14% do volunteering vs 9% with no social worker. The pattern is particularly pronounced for the most vulnerable children. For example, almost all children who've been excluded from school in the past year regularly (96%) participate in at least one type of activity. Only 20% do team sports compared to 45% who've never been excluded, but 32% do wilderness activities vs 8% who've never been excluded, 28% do art activities like music and dance vs 20% who've never been excluded, 22% do volunteering vs 10% who've never been excluded and 22% do combat sports vs 9% who've never been excluded.

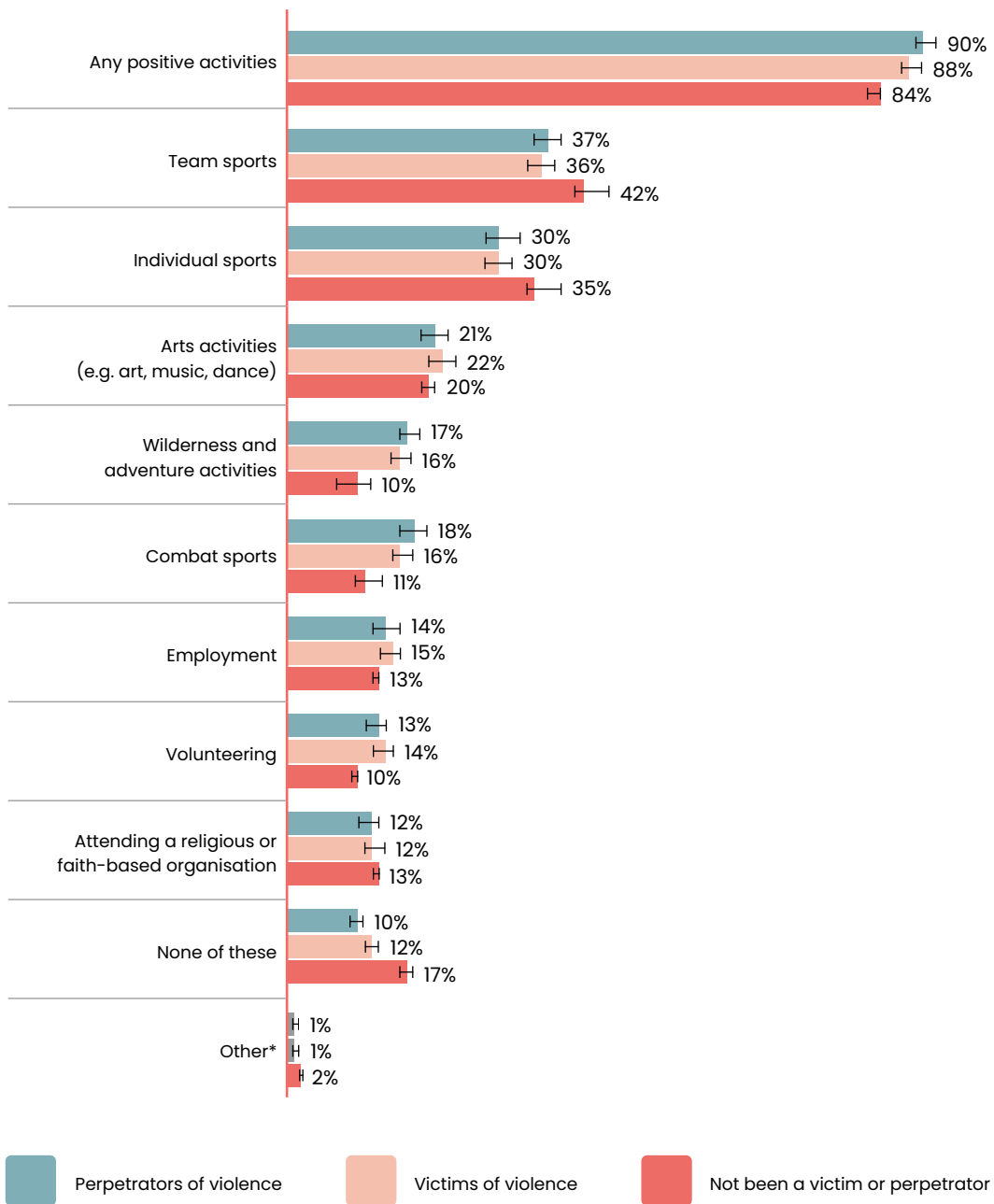
And children directly affected by violence are more likely to participate, particularly in certain types of activity.

Eighty-eight per cent of 13–17-year-olds who've been victims of violence and 90% who've perpetrated violence in the past year regularly participate in at least one positive activity, compared to 83% of children who haven't been victims or perpetrators of violence. Similar to children who are vulnerable in other ways, they're less likely to do team sports and individual sports, such as running or swimming, but more likely to do combat sports, volunteering and wilderness or adventure activities. Thirty-seven per cent of children who've perpetrated violence do team sports, and 30% do individual sports, compared to 44% and 38%, respectively, for those who haven't been victims or perpetrators. Eighteen per cent do combat sports, and 17% do wilderness or adventure activities, compared to 8% of those who haven't been victims or perpetrators. Thirteen per cent do volunteering, compared to 9% of those who haven't been victims or perpetrators. The pattern is similar for children who've been victims of violence.

The findings that vulnerable children and those directly affected by violence report high levels of participation are surprising, as it's often argued that children at risk of violence have fewer opportunities in their local areas. However, there's very little national data available to help us contextualise our findings. It could be that targeted provision is successfully reaching children with higher needs. Or it could be that more vulnerable children are more likely to attend youth clubs where such activities are provided. We also don't know what the relative frequency or quality of these opportunities is like for children affected by violence compared to opportunities for other children. See below for a brief summary of the other data available and how our findings compare.

² We used the following definition of being in a gang: "By a 'gang', we mean a group of young people who think of themselves as a gang, probably with a name, and are involved in violence or other crime."

Figure 1.7: Proportion of 13–17-year-olds in England and Wales participating in positive activities by experiences of violence



*Grey bars represent small (<50) numbers of respondents, so they should be interpreted with caution.

Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the estimates to fall within.

Vulnerable children are the most likely to attend youth clubs.

Two in five children regularly attend a youth club, with a wide range in the types they attend.

Youth clubs are places that provide children and young people access to activities, support and community. They also provide opportunities or 'hooks' to engage children with other services and forms of support.

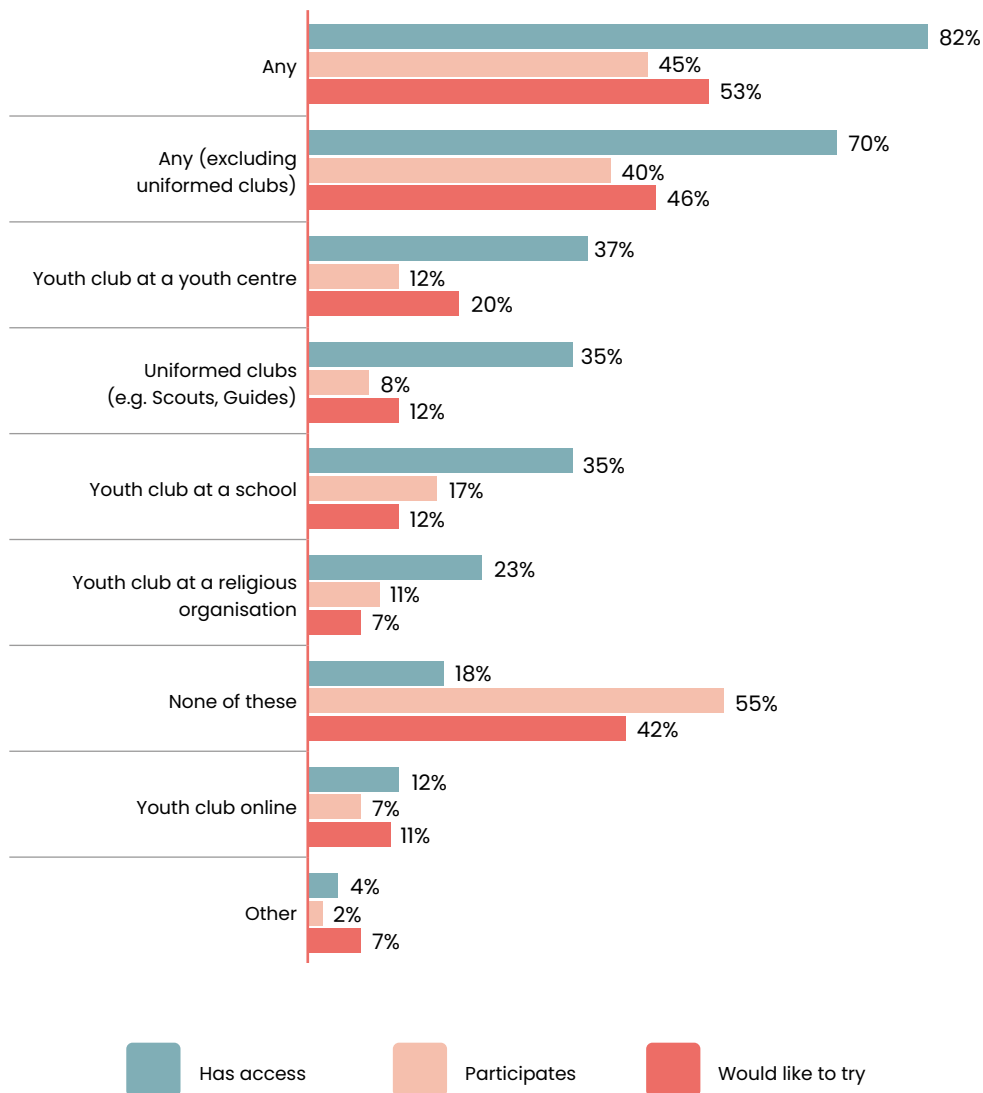
Seventy per cent of 13-17-year-olds say that some form of youth club (excluding uniformed groups like Scouts or Guides) is available where they live, and 40% say they go to one at least once a month. The most common types of youth clubs attended are at a school (35% say it's available in their local area, and 17% attend) and in youth or community centres (37% say it's available, and 12% attend). A sometimes-overlooked area of youth club provision is via religious organisations, with just over one in 10 (11%) of 13-17-year-olds saying they regularly attend a faith-based youth club. Online youth clubs are also an increasing part of the picture of youth club provision, with 7% of 13-17-year-olds saying they participate in one at least once a month.

What are online youth clubs?

Online youth clubs fall under the umbrella of digital youth work more broadly – a form of youth work that has become increasingly popular since the Covid-19 pandemic. They provide spaces for young people to meet and interact with other young people and youth workers. Digital youth clubs, which children and young people can access from their devices, such as [Space's online youth centre](#) and [Cardiff Youth Service's Discord youth club](#), have been set up to provide regular online environments for young people to engage in a variety of structured and unstructured activities. They can also be blended, offering a mix of online and in-person activities. [Guidance](#) is available on how to run online groups safely using apps such as Discord.

We haven't included uniformed groups, such as Scouts or Guides, in our overall definition of youth clubs, but they're also an important part of the picture. Thirty-five per cent of 13-17-year-olds say uniformed groups are available in their local areas – a similar rate to youth clubs at school – though only 8% say they take part. When we include uniformed groups in the youth club total, the proportion of children who say any youth club is available where they live increases to 82%, and 45% say they attend at least one.

Figure 2.1: Proportion of 13–17-year-olds in England and Wales who have access to, participate in and would like to try different types of youth clubs



One in three children not attending a youth club would like to if given the opportunity.

Just over half (52%) of all 13–17-year-olds say they’d like to try some type of youth club that they don’t currently attend. Twenty per cent say they’d like to try a club in a youth or community centre, 12% say they’d like to try one at school and 12% say they’d like to try a uniformed group, such as Guides or Scouts. Of the children who don’t currently attend any youth club, 33% would like to try at least one type. Eighteen per cent would like to try a club in a youth or community centre, and 11% would like to try one at a school.

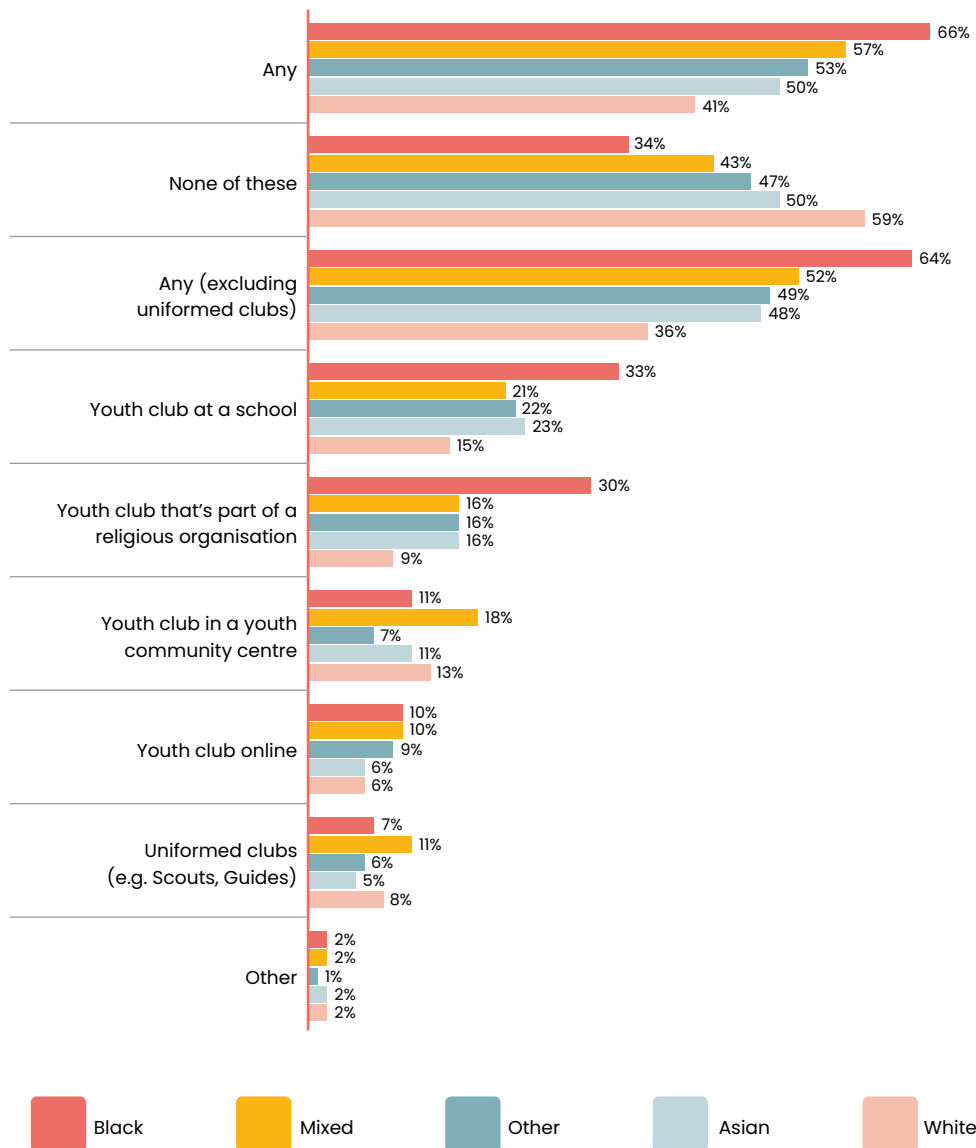
Girls, older children and those living in rural areas are less likely to attend youth clubs.

Girls are less likely than boys to attend youth clubs – 33% of girls compared to 47% of boys. Younger teenagers are more likely to attend youth clubs than older teenagers – 48% of 13–15-year-olds, compared to 28% of 16–17-year-olds. Older girls (aged 16–17) are the least likely to attend youth clubs (24%), followed by older boys (33%) and younger girls (aged 13–15; 40%). Younger boys are the most likely to attend a youth club (54%).

Children living in inner city areas are significantly more likely to be attending a youth club (63%) than those who live in towns or rural areas, where only 31% and 23%, respectively, regularly attend a youth club. But children living in London, specifically, are significantly more likely (63%) to attend a youth club than children living in cities in every other region bar Wales. In comparison, only 46% of children living in any city in England and Wales, excluding London, currently attend a youth club.

When looking at differences by ethnicity, Black children are the most likely to attend a youth club (64% vs 52% of mixed ethnicity and 48% of Asian children). White children are the least likely to attend (36%). Attendance at youth clubs that are part of a religious organisation and at a school is particularly high for children from Black backgrounds – 30% and 33%, respectively, compared to 9% and 15%, respectively, for White children. Children from mixed ethnic backgrounds are the most likely to attend youth clubs in youth or community centres – 18% compared to 15% of White, 11% of Black and 11% of Asian children.

Figure 2.2: Proportion of 13-17-year-olds in England and Wales who attend youth clubs by ethnicity



Children who are more vulnerable to violence are more likely to attend youth clubs.

Unlike the positive activities discussed in the previous section, youth clubs are just as likely to be attended by children in households where no parents or caregivers are in work (41%) as by children in working households (40%). Although other measures of socioeconomic status suggest that children from poorer households might be less likely to have access to and attend youth clubs. For instance, out of children living in social housing, 65% have a youth club available in their areas, and 34% attend one, compared to 70% and 41%, respectively, of children living in homes their parents own.

In contrast, children with other risk factors are significantly more likely to attend youth clubs, suggesting that the clubs are reaching the children who most need them. This is in line with our finding that more vulnerable children are more likely to take part in certain types of positive activities. For instance:

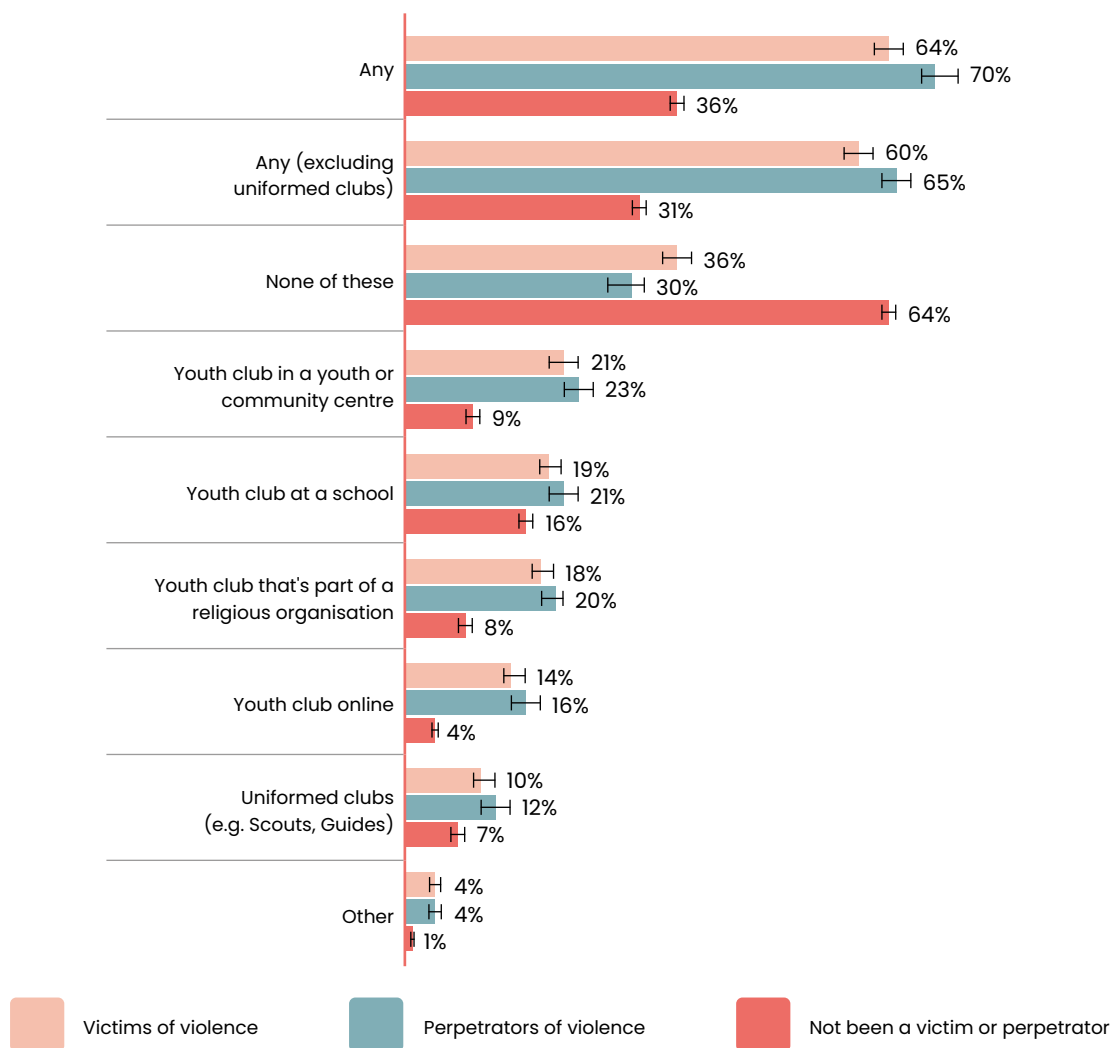
- Forty-eight per cent of 13-17-year-olds with SEN regularly attend a youth club, compared to 37% with no SEN.
- Sixty-one per cent who've been supported by a social worker in the past year attend, compared to 33% who've never had a social worker.
- Eighty-four per cent who've been excluded from school in the past year attend, compared to 36% who've never been excluded.
- Eighty-seven per cent who've been in a gang attend, compared to 36% not in a gang.

Children directly affected by violence are more likely to attend youth clubs.

Sixty per cent of children who've been victims of violence and 65% of those who've perpetrated violence in the past year say they currently attend a youth club, compared to 31% of children who haven't been victims or perpetrators. Victims and perpetrators are more likely to attend all types of youth clubs than those who haven't been victims or perpetrators, but the difference is particularly large for clubs in youth or community centres (21% of victims and 23% of perpetrators vs 9% of those who haven't been victims or perpetrators), at religious organisations (18% of victims and 20% of perpetrators vs 8% of those who haven't been victims or perpetrators) and online (14% of victims and 16% of perpetrators vs 4% of those who haven't been victims or perpetrators). This again fits with the finding that children who've been victims of and perpetrated violence are also more likely to participate in positive activities.

Thirty-six per cent of victims and 36% of children who've perpetrated violence who don't currently go to any type of youth club say they'd like to – similar to the proportion for children who haven't been victims or perpetrators (33%).

Figure 2.3: Proportion of 13-17-year-olds in England and Wales who attend different types of youth clubs by experiences of violence



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the estimates to fall within.

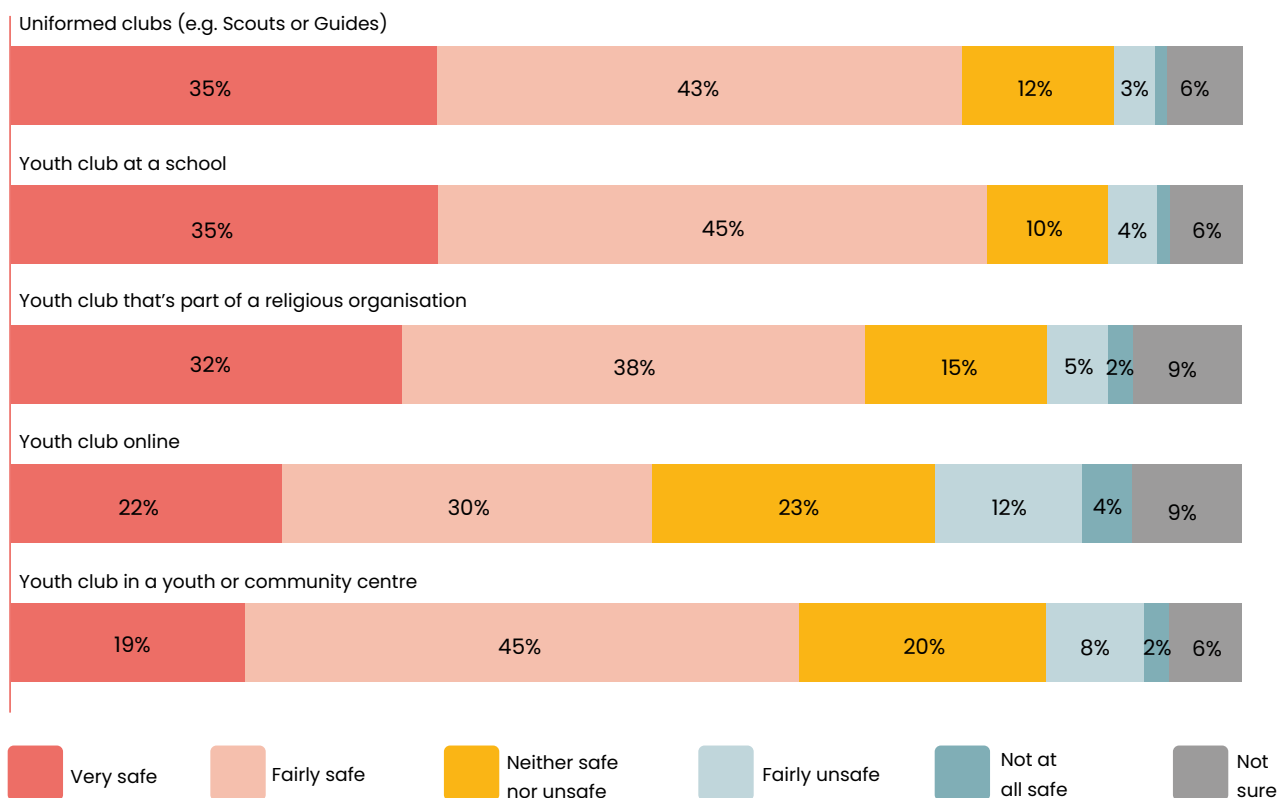
How does this compare to findings from other sources?

The pattern of which children in our survey participate in positive activities and youth clubs is similar, apart from household income, where findings are more mixed. According to both the [Active Lives survey](#) and the [Youth Voice Census](#), children from poorer or less affluent families are less likely to engage in positive activities, except when it comes to youth clubs – which roughly fits with what we find. The Youth Voice Census also found that children with additional needs were less likely to do sports but more likely to attend youth clubs, which again fits with our findings. But there aren't other good estimates available of participation rates among other potentially vulnerable groups or for different types of activities, and we don't know how effective these activities are in preventing violence. The Youth Endowment Fund is commissioning more work to understand this area.

Children who go to youth clubs view them as safe spaces.

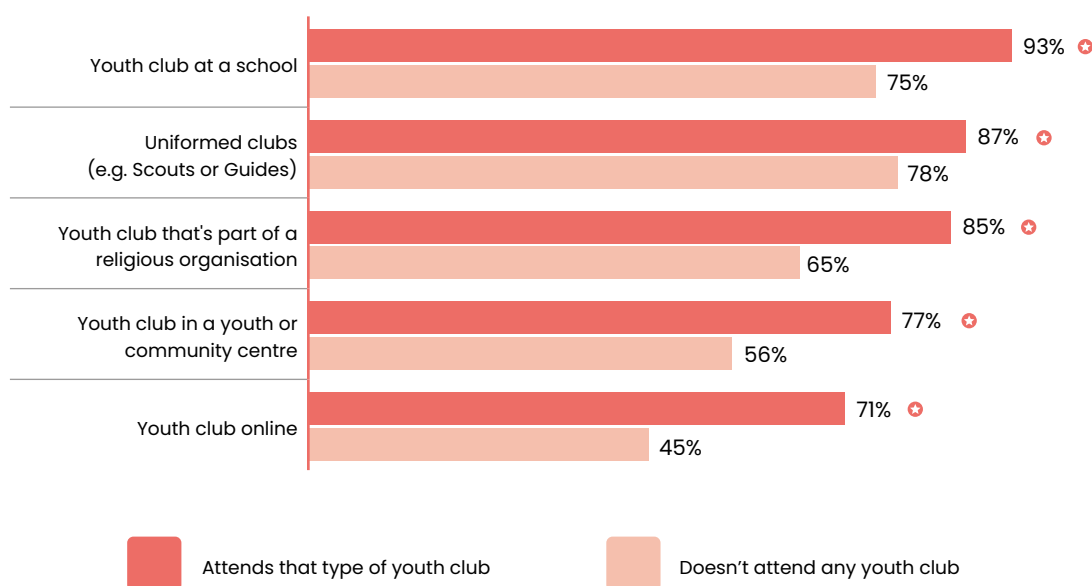
This year, we asked teenage children how safe from violence they thought different types of youth clubs were in comparison to school, home and the streets. Eighty per cent think youth clubs in schools are safe (either very or fairly safe). This falls to 63% who think youth clubs in youth or community centres are safe, with only 19% saying they think they are very safe. Seventy-eight per cent say they think uniform groups (such as Guides or Scouts) are safe. Interestingly, only 52% say they think online youth clubs are safe. These figures compare to other types of supervised and unsupervised settings, with 93% of children saying they feel safe at home and 80% at school but only 39% on the street.

Figure 2.4: Proportion of 13-17-year-olds in England and Wales who think the following locations are safe or unsafe from violence



However, when we look at the responses of children who say they attended each type of youth club, we see perceptions of safety increase notably. Children who attend youth clubs are more likely to view them as safe. Ninety-three per cent of children who attend youth clubs at school think they're safe, compared to 75% who don't attend. For youth clubs in community centres and online, this gap widens – 77% of children attending clubs in youth centres think they're safe, compared to 56% of those who don't attend. Seventy-one per cent of children who participate in online youth clubs think they're safe, compared to 45% who don't attend.

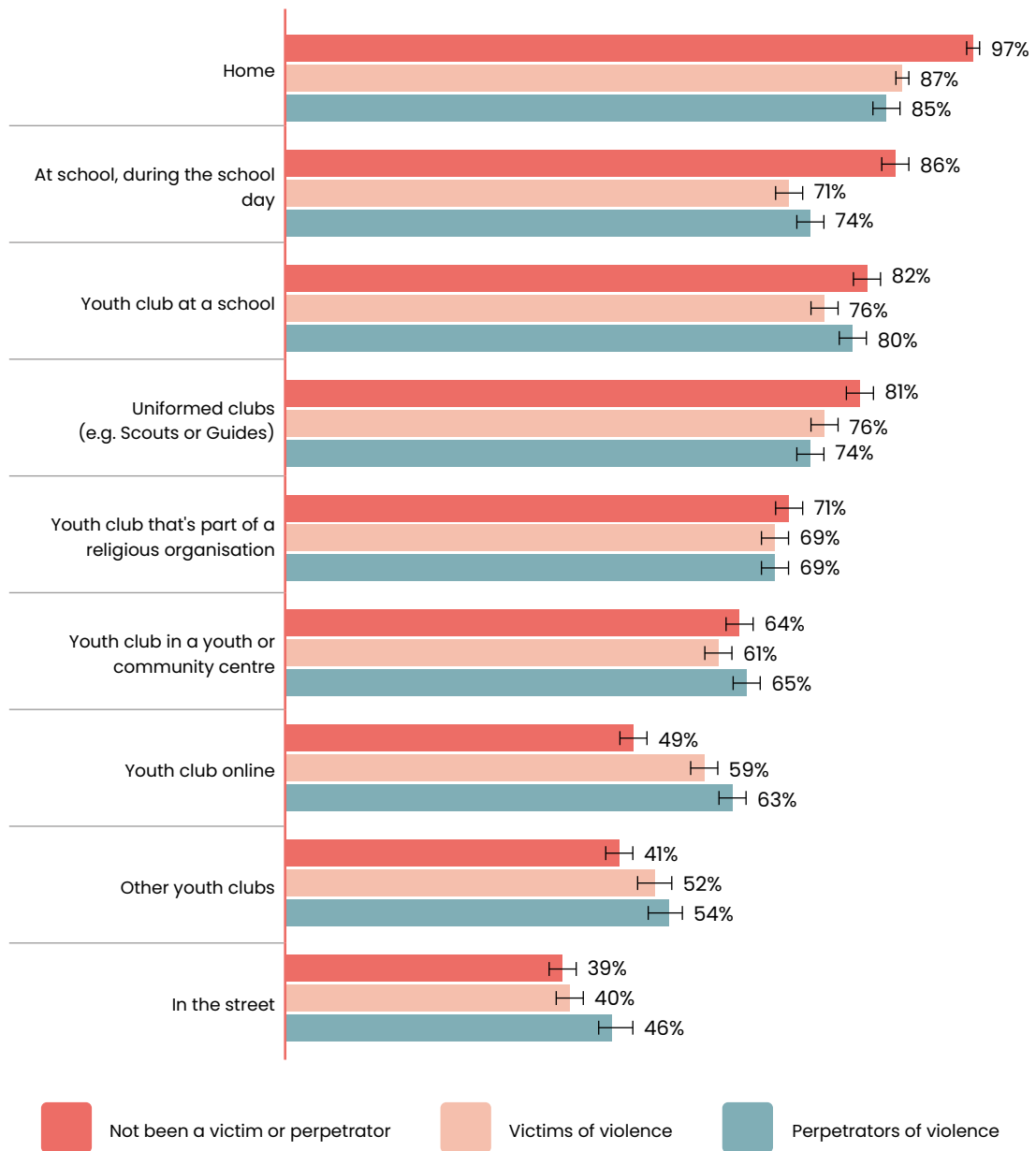
Figure 2.5: Proportion of 13–17-year-olds in England and Wales who think different types of youth clubs are very or fairly safe from violence by whether they attend



Note. Stars beside the bars indicate where estimates for the two groups are significantly different from one another at a 95% confidence level.

Youth clubs in certain settings might also present safe spaces for children directly affected by violence. Those 13–17-year-olds who've been victims of violence are less likely to feel safe at school and at home. They're also slightly less likely to feel safe at youth clubs at schools or community centres, but they are more likely to view youth clubs online as safe (61%) compared to all children (52%) and twice as likely to attend a youth club online (14%) than the average (7%). Children who've perpetrated violence are similarly less likely to feel safe at home (85%) and school (74%) than the average (93% and 82%, respectively). They're no less likely to feel safe at school or community centre-based youth clubs but are also more likely to consider online youth clubs safe (63%) than the average (52%).

Figure 2.6: Proportion of 13-17-year-olds in England and Wales who think different places are very or fairly safe from violence by experiences of violence



Most children, including those most affected by violence, have a trusted adult outside the home.

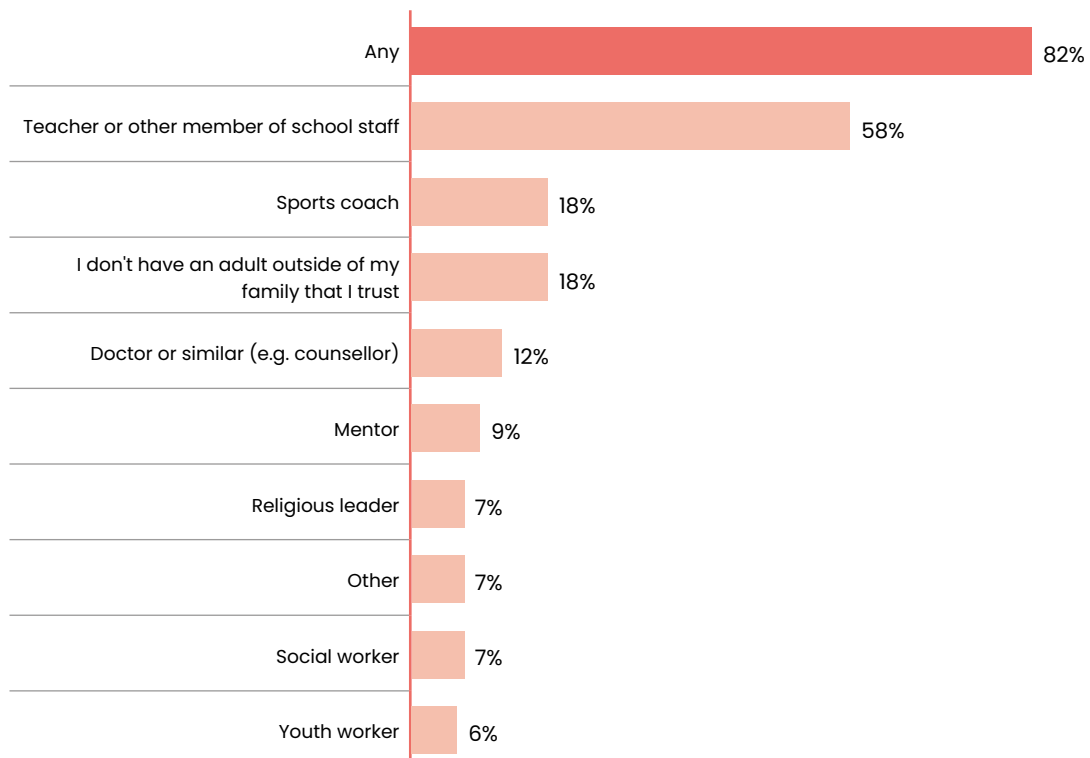
Most children have a trusted adult outside of their family.

When a child or young person is vulnerable and in need of support, having an adult in their life who they can turn to can make a big difference. For some, this might be a family member, but others may feel more comfortable seeking help from someone outside their family or friends – for example, a youth worker, sports coach or more formal mentor.

Eighty-two per cent of 13-17-year-olds have at least one adult outside of their family who they trust that they can go to with their worries. But this means that nearly a fifth of children (18%) don't have a trusted adult outside their family.

Teachers and other members of school staff are the most likely to be named as trusted adults (58%). The next most likely are sports coaches (18%) and doctors or other health professionals (12%). One in 10 (9%) say they have a mentor.

Figure 3.1: Proportion of 13-17-year-olds in England and Wales who have trusted adults from different settings



The adults children trust differ by age, gender and ethnicity.

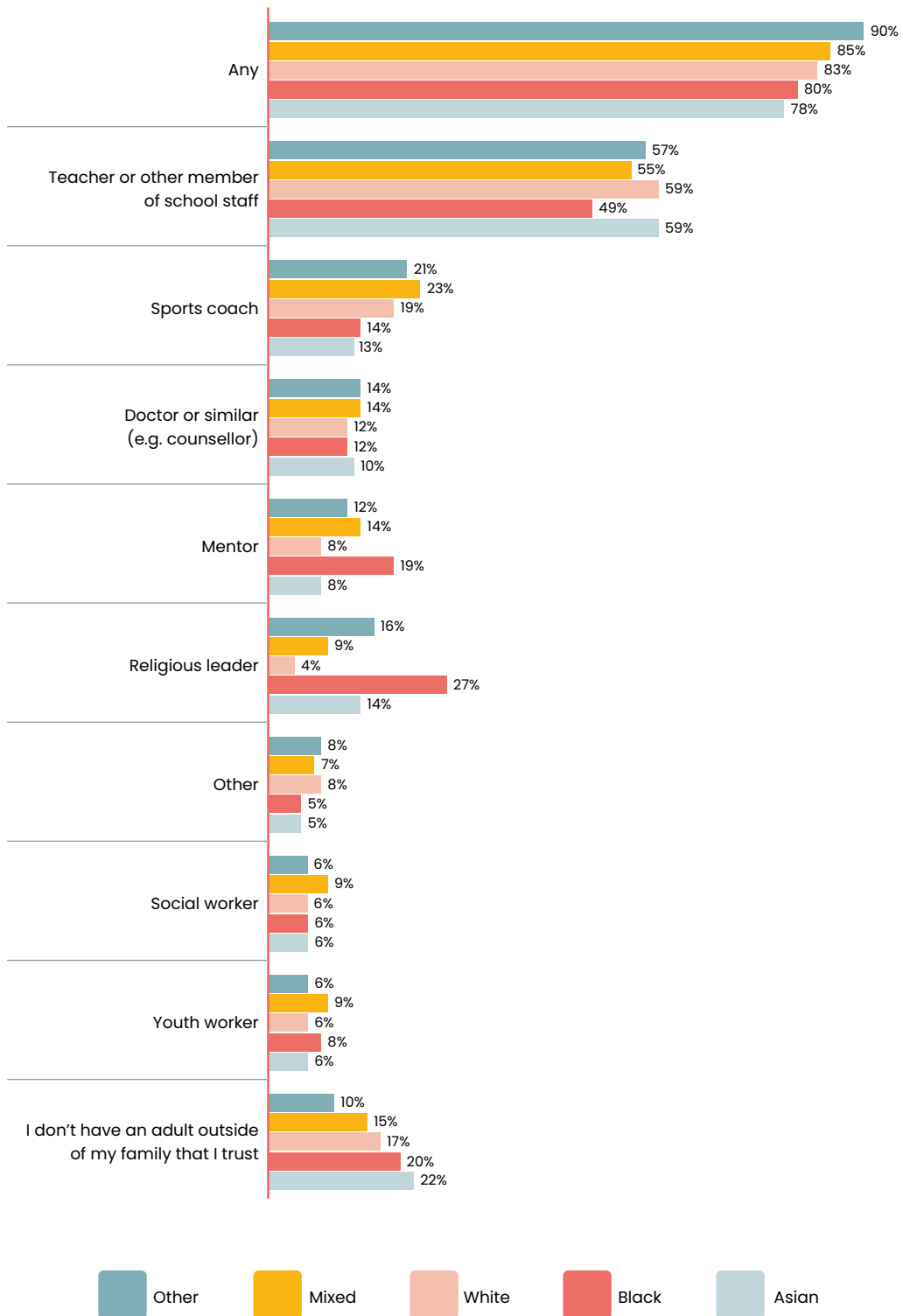
Boys and girls are equally likely to have at least one trusted adult (both 82%) but have differences in the types of adults they trust. Girls are more likely to trust school staff than boys (60% of girls vs 56% of boys). Boys are more likely to consider a sports coach a trusted adult than girls (24% of boys vs 12% of girls), aligning with their higher likelihood of participating in sports.

Older teenagers are less likely to have a trusted adult than younger teenagers. Seventy-nine per cent of 17-year-olds say they have a trusted adult compared to 84% of 13-year-olds.

This difference is mainly because older children are less likely to have a member of school staff (53% of 17-year-olds vs 63% of 13-year-olds) and a sports coach (13% of 17-year-olds vs 20% of 13-year-olds) that they trust. This is in line with the finding that older teenagers are less likely to regularly participate in activities such as sports.

Mixed ethnicity children are the most likely to say they have a trusted adult (85%), followed by White children (83%), Black children (80%) and Asian children (78%). But the differences aren't large. Black children are less likely to trust a member of school staff (49%) compared to mixed ethnicity (55%), White (59%) and Asian (59%) children but are more likely to say they have a religious leader they trust (27% vs 14% of Asian, 9% of mixed and 4% of White children). Children from Black (19%) and mixed ethnicity (14%) backgrounds are more likely than White and Asian children to say they have a mentor (both 8%). Children from mixed ethnicity (23%) and White (19%) backgrounds are more likely than Black (14%) and Asian (13%) children to consider a sports coach a trusted adult.

Figure 3.2: Proportion of 13-17-year-olds in England and Wales who have trusted adults from different settings by ethnicity



There are few differences in the proportion of children who say they have a trusted adult across regions. However, children living in towns (60%) and rural areas (61%) are more likely to consider a teacher a trusted adult than children living in inner city areas (53%). In contrast, they're less likely to have a mentor (for example, 7% of children in towns vs 17% of inner city children) or sports coach (16% in towns vs 22% of inner city children) that they trust.

More vulnerable children are less likely to have trusted adults at school but more likely to have them in other settings.

Similar to what we've found for participation in both positive activities and youth clubs, more vulnerable children are just as likely, if not more likely, to have at least one trusted adult as children from other backgrounds. For example, 91% of children who've been excluded from school in the past year say they have a trusted adult, compared to 83% of those who've never been excluded. But poverty is one risk factor that consistently shows children to be less likely to have an adult outside their household whom they trust. One in five (21%) children from single-parent and non-working households say they have no trusted adults outside their family. This is significantly greater than the proportion from two-parent (16%) and working (17%) households and fits with the finding that children from poorer households are less likely to do positive activities.

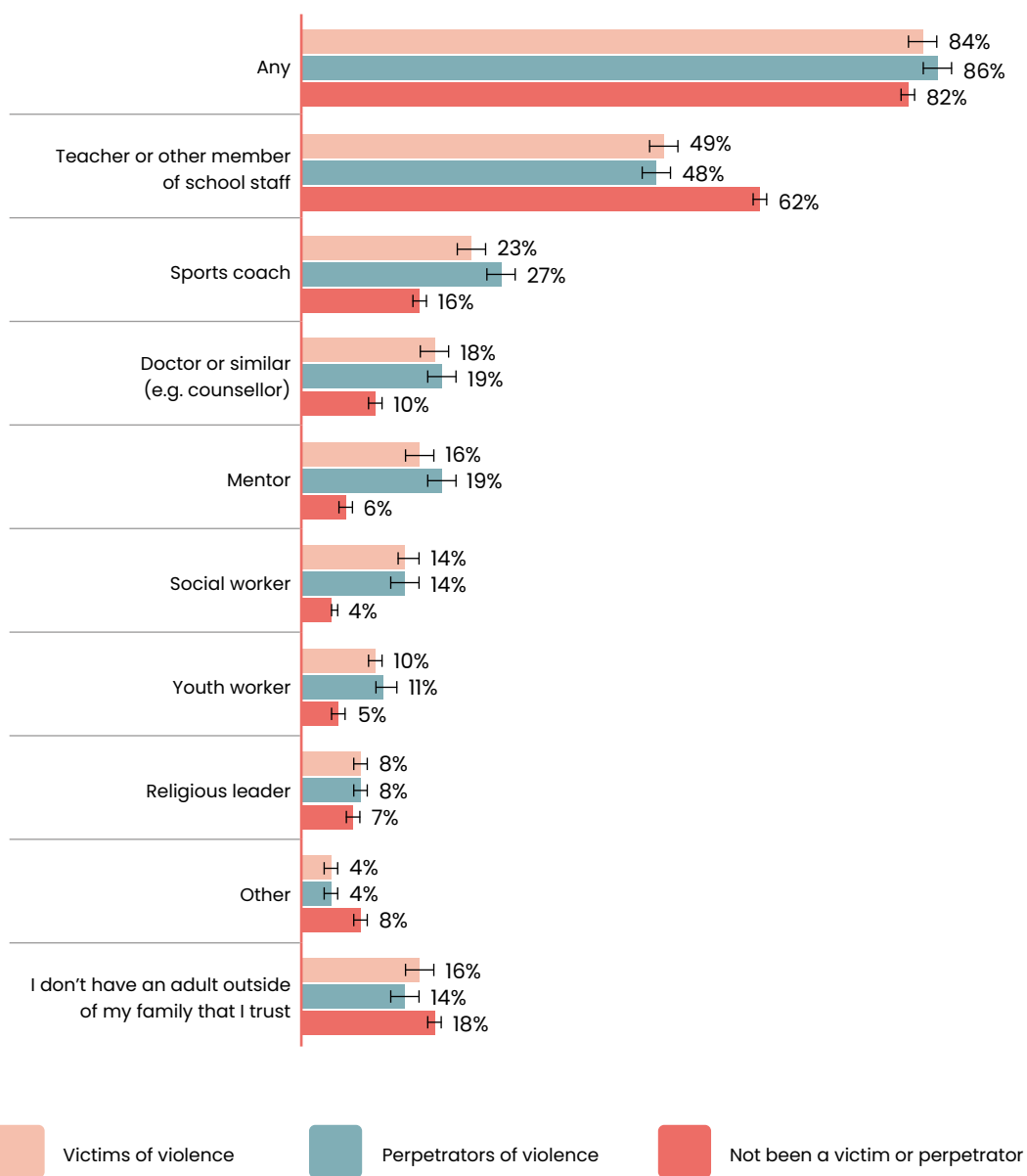
Eighty-four per cent of victims and 86% of perpetrators of violence have at least one adult outside of their family who they trust – a similar proportion to the 82% of children who weren't victims or perpetrators of violence in the past year.

For all children, school staff are the most commonly cited adult outside their family to whom they turn for support. However, children at risk of and with direct experience of violence are more likely than other children to put their trust in adults from other settings. For example:

- Fifty-two per cent of 13-17-year-olds with SEN trust a teacher or member of school staff, compared to 61% of those with no SEN. However, those with SEN are more likely to trust a mentor, doctor, counsellor, social worker or youth worker than those with no SEN.
- Thirty-seven per cent of 13-17-year-olds who've been excluded in the past year say they trust a teacher or member of school staff, compared to 62% of those who've never been excluded. However, compared to those never excluded, they're twice as likely to trust a sports coach (35% vs 17% of those never excluded), almost three times as likely to trust a youth worker (15% vs 5% of those never excluded), almost four times as likely to trust a mentor (28% vs 8% of those never excluded) and over five times as likely to trust a social worker (26% vs 5% of those never excluded).
- Forty-five per cent of children who say they've been in a gang trust a teacher or member of school staff, compared to 59% of those not in a gang. Thirty per cent have a sports coach they trust vs 17% of those not in a gang, and 25% trust a mentor vs 8% of those not in a gang.
- Forty-one per cent of children who've carried weapons trust a teacher or member of school staff, compared to 60% of those who haven't carried a weapon. Twenty-eight per cent trust a sports coach vs 17% of those who haven't carried weapons, and 23% trust a mentor vs 8% of those who haven't carried weapons.

Teachers and school staff also remain the most likely source of support for children who've been victims (49%) and perpetrators (48%) of violence, although significantly less likely compared to children who haven't been victims or perpetrators (62%). Amongst 13-17-year-olds who've been victims of violence in the past year, 23% trust a sports coach, 16% a mentor, 18% a doctor or similar, 14% a social worker, 10% a youth worker and 8% a religious leader. Among those who've perpetrated violence, 27% trust a sports coach, 19% a mentor, 14% a social worker, 11% a youth worker and 8% a religious leader. Among those who've not been a victim or perpetrator, 27% trust a sports coach, 19% a mentor, 14% a social worker, 11% a youth worker and 8% a religious leader.




Figure 3.3: Proportion of 13-17-year-olds in England and Wales who have trusted adults from different settings by experiences of violence



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the estimates to fall within.



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