

Upstream Cymru Pupil Survey Findings Report: September 2020 - May 2024





Authors statement and acknowledgements

This report was written by Dr. Ian Thomas (IT), Dr. Peter Mackie (PM), and Lauren Hill (LH). Lauren joined the research team as part of the Population Data Science Summer Internship Programme for 2024 being facilitated by the Secure Anonymised Information Linkage Databank.

Author contributions to the report are as follows: Writing – Original Draft: IT, PM, & LH; Writing – Review & Editing: IT, PM, & LH; Conceptualization: IT & PM; Investigation: LH & IT; Methodology: IT; Data Curation: LH; Formal Analysis: LH; Project Administration: IT & PM; Supervision: IT.

Publication of this report was possible with the ongoing support of the Upstream Cymru collaboration, led by Llamau and involving local authority youth services, housing services, schools and DoIT Profiler. We are particularly grateful to the many young people whose responses to the survey provide the basis for this report. Talog Harries, the Upstream Cymru co-ordinator, has been especially helpful throughout the process and we are extremely grateful for his continuous support.



Contents

Section

Page

Introduction	4
Headline findings	6
Youth homelessness	7
Family homelessness	11
School engagement	14
Resilience	17
Wellbeing	21
Conclusion	24

Introduction

What is Upstream Cymru?

Upstream Cymru responds to the challenge of preventing and alleviating homelessness prior to young people being forced to leave the family home. Pupils in schools complete a universal screening survey to assess their degree of risk of homelessness, enabling Llamau to engage with pupils most at risk. Different forms of support are offered based on the needs of the pupil, including family mediation and/or support via Llamau's 'Emphasis' project.

The approach adopted by Upstream Cymru is modelled on the Australian Geelong Project, which resulted in a 40% reduction in youth homelessness and a 20% reduction in the number of young people leaving school early¹. In addition to Wales and Australia, the Upstream model has also been adapted and piloted in the USA, Canada, England, Scotland, and Belgium. Learning is being shared across these different nations through the Upstream International Living Lab.

Upstream Cymru is currently being adopted in 13 schools mainly located in the South Wales and Valleys region. Central to Upstream Cymru is the pupil survey, and this report presents analysis of this survey.

About the Upstream Cymru survey

The survey is self-completed and conducted using the DoIT profiler system. Whilst remote completion is feasible, to-date the survey has always been conducted in a classroom setting. Questions can be read by pupils or listened to, ensuring the survey is accessible. Pupils can complete more than one survey, enabling change over time to be monitored.

Whilst the primary purpose of the survey is to identify risk of youth homelessness, the survey also includes questions on educational disengagement, resilience, and wellbeing. Schools are given flexibility to determine which year groups they wish to survey. Most schools have used the survey with pupils between the ages of 11 and 16 years old.

About this report

This report is intended to update earlier analysis undertaken on a smaller data set from the pilot phase of Upstream Cymru (n = ~840). Data underpinning this report originate from surveys completed by pupils between September 2020 and May 2024.

Upstream survey data are analysed in two ways. Information from the first survey completed by a pupil (n = \sim 4,720) is used to summarise the 'baseline' characteristics of pupils. The report also analyses change over time for a sub-set of pupils who completed an additional survey within 3 years of their baseline survey (n = \sim 265).

Pupils could choose not to respond to questions in the survey. Responses to some of the questions have been recategorised to reduce the chances that a pupil's identity might be disclosed based on a unique set of circumstances or characteristics. To further reduce disclosure risks, rounding and suppression of data are applied in this publication, specifically:

Counts relating to people are rounded to the nearest multiple of 5

¹ https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2018-02/apo-nid133006.PDF

- Percentages are based on unrounded data and are themselves rounded to the nearest percentage point. However, percentages are not published if they are fractions of a small group of young people (fewer than 22.5)
- Averages (like average wellbeing score) are not published if they are averages of a small group of young people (7 or fewer)

At points within this report, we use statistical tests to explore associations within the data. Several pieces of information are provided from these tests. We report the relevant 'test statistic', which is a number calculated when running a statistical test. Test statistics are used to assess if data differ from a situation where there is no association present. Probability values ('p-values') are also reported as they are used to determine if statistical tests are significant or not. In this report, we take $p \le 0.05$ as the cutoff for a significant finding. Where p-values are so small they are less than 0.01, we simply report 'p < 0.01'.

Headline findings

Youth homelessness

- Roughly 1 in 20 (6%) pupils were flagged as needing immediate intervention because of their risk of youth homelessness
- Nearly 1 in 10 (9%) pupils were flagged as being at high risk of youth homelessness.

Family homelessness

• 16% of pupils had one or more risk indicators for family homelessness

School engagement

- 8% of pupils reported that they were bullied almost every day
- Of pupils flagged for immediate intervention because of their risk of youth homelessness, 66% showed no or low levels of disengagement from school

Resilience

- 79% of pupils had an adult in their life they could trust and talk to about personal problems
- Pupils categorised as being at low risk of youth homelessness had greater levels of resilience than pupils in all other risk categories

Wellbeing

 Pupils categorised as being at low risk of youth homelessness had greater wellbeing than pupils in all other risk categories

Youth homelessness

Key findings

- In the month prior to completing a baseline survey, 1% of pupils had usually slept in situations which could be described as homeless
- 3% of pupils reported experiencing at least one episode of homelessness in the past year
- Over 13% of pupils got into lots of conflict with their parents or guardians, whilst less than 3% did not feel safe at home
- 15% of pupils were at a high or immediate risk of youth homelessness
- 7% of pupils whose first survey indicated low risk of youth homelessness, were at high/immediate risk of youth homelessness when surveyed again

Youth homelessness refers to exits into homelessness where the young person is not accompanied by a parent or guardian. Common triggers for youth homelessness are a breakdown in the young person's relationship with parents/guardians, and/or conflict at home.

Recent and historic experiences of youth homelessness

In relation to recent experiences of homelessness, pupils were asked; '*In the past month, where did you usually sleep?*'. Where pupils were able to provide a definitive answer to this question (i.e., excluding people who did not know or skipped the question), the majority (95%) usually slept at their parent(s)/guardian(s) home or were in care (Figure 1). A further 4% of pupils slept in another family member or friend's home, which could be considered as homelessness under wider definitions². 45 pupils (1%) indicated that in the past month they had usually slept in situations that unambiguously related to homelessness—including not having a usual place to sleep, sleeping in hostels, hotels, cars, and other public places.



Figure 1. Breakdown of where pupils usually slept in the past month (n=4,530)

² https://www.feantsa.org/en/toolkit/2005/04/01/ethos-typology-on-homelessness-and-housing-exclusion

In relation to historic experiences of homelessness, pupils were asked: '*During the past year, how many different times have you found yourself homeless for one or more nights?*'. A definition of homelessness was provided to pupils, with this being sleeping in a place where people were not meant to sleep because they did not have a permanent place to stay; couch surfing; staying temporarily with friends, family, or strangers; in a homeless shelter; or in a supported housing project. To limit the risk of disclosing a pupil's identity, we re-categorised responses to this question into a binary indicator of whether a pupil reported being homeless or not in the past year. Though most pupils did not report any homelessness (97%), 123 (3%) young people reported being homeless on more than one occasion in the past year (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Pupil reported ever being homeless for more than one night in the past year (n=4,565)

Risk of youth homelessness

Pupils were asked four questions about home life that may indicate risk of youth homelessness. The questions are adapted from the Australian³ and US⁴ Upstream surveys.

Pupils were presented with two statements about their current home life and asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement (Figure 3). Approximately 14% of pupils agreed or strongly agreed that they get into lots of conflict with their parent(s)/guardian(s). A minority of pupils (2%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that they feel safe where they live now.

Figure 3. Pupil perceptions of home life (n=4,565)



A third question about risk of youth homelessness asked whether a pupil had ever slept away from their parent's or guardian's because they were kicked out, ran away or didn't feel safe to stay. Pupils were asked to think about their experiences in the past year. Figure 4 shows 6% of pupils had been forced to sleep away from home.

³ Australian Index of Adolescent Development 2017

⁴ Chapin Hall Student Needs Survey 2019

Figure 4. Proportion of pupils by whether they were forced to sleep away from home during the past year (n=4,565)



A fourth question asked pupils if they were worried that they might run away or be asked to leave home sometime in the coming year. Most pupils (87%) were not worried that they may run away or otherwise have to leave home, 4% of pupils were worried, and a further 9% of pupils were unsure (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Proportion of pupils by whether they were worried about having to run away or being asked to leave home this year (n=4,540)



Upstream Cymru assign pupils to categories that express their risk of youth homelessness. Responses to individual questions about home life are used. Categories were low⁵, medium⁶, high⁷ risk and immediate⁸ priority. As indicated in Figure 6, most pupils (75%) were categorised as being at low risk of experiencing youth homelessness, 10% were categorised as medium risk, and a further 15% were at high risk or considered immediate priority.

⁵ Pupils are low risk if they do not meet the criteria to be classified as medium, high or immediate risk.

⁶ Pupils don't agree or disagree that they feel safe at home; OR they agree that they get into lots of conflict.

⁷ Pupils strongly agree that they get into lots of conflict; OR they are worried they might run away or be asked to leave; OR they have been forced to sleep away from home.

⁸ Pupils disagree or strongly disagree that they feel safe; OR they have found themselves homeless on one occasion or more; OR they usually slept in a hostel, hotel, B&B, car, campground, public space, somewhere else (e.g. friend's house), or they didn't have a usual place to sleep.

Figure 6. Overall risk of youth homelessness (n=4,585)



Change in youth homelessness risk over time

For a sub-set of pupils who completed more than one survey, we compared the overall risk of youth homelessness between baseline and last available survey, where this was undertaken in a different academic year (Figure 7 & 8). Due to low numbers in the 'immediate' and 'high' risk categories, we combine these into a 'high/immediate' category. Furthermore, percentages have been suppressed in Figure 1. Most pupils started in the low risk of youth homelessness group (80%), and of these, 86% remained at low risk of youth homelessness, whilst 7% progressed to high or immediate risk of youth homelessness. It is also notable that 17% of pupils who started at high/immediate risk remained in this category. The main contributor to the high/immediate category were pupils who started off at low risk.



Figure 7. Flow diagram showing movement between youth homelessness risk categories (n=265)

Figure 8. Percentage breakdown of youth homelessness risk category at last survey based on starting risk (n=265)

		Ending risk		
		Low	Medium	High/immediate
		(83%)	(8%)	(9%)
Starting	Low (80%)	86%	7%	7%
risk	Medium (8%)	*	*	*
	High/immediate (11%)	73%	10%	17%

* Cell value suppressed due to % being based on fewer than 22.5 people

Family homelessness

Findings

- 16% of pupils displayed two or more risk indicators for family homelessness
- 6% of pupils experienced a time in the past year when their family could not pay the rent or mortgage
- 6% of pupils and their families had moved home 3 or more times in the past year
- 7% of pupils and their families had stayed with friends or relatives because they did not have a place to stay during the past year
- 8% of pupils whose first survey indicated no risk of family homelessness, identified one or more risk
 of family homelessness when surveyed again

Family homelessness is distinct from youth homelessness, as it refers to homelessness where the young person is still with their family/legal guardians. A common trigger of family homelessness is eviction. Family homelessness questions were adapted from the US⁹ Upstream survey.

Risk of family homelessness

Pupils were presented with two statements about the ability of their family to remain in their current home and were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with each statement. These questions were 'Was there a time in the past year when you or your family could not pay the rent or mortgage because you did not have enough money?', and 'Are you worried that you or your family might not have a place to live sometime this year?' Figure 9 shows approximately 6% of pupils reported a time in the past year when their family could not pay the rent or mortgage, whilst 3% of pupils were worried that they or their family might not have a place to live sometime in the coming year.

Figure 9. Pupil's concerns about the ability of their family to remain in their current home (n = 4,535)



A third question asked pupils; 'How many times have you moved from one address to another during the past year?' Frequent moves may be a sign of housing instability and an indicator of potential homelessness risk. However, as frequent moves may be highly disclosive, responses were recategorised for the purposes of this report. Most pupils had not moved in the past year (77%) or moved only 1-2 times (17%), and a minority (6%) had moved three or more times (Figure 10).

⁹ Chapin Hall Student Needs Survey 2019

Figure 10. Number of times pupils and their families have had to move (n=4,565)



A fourth question asked pupils; 'During the past year, how many times have you and your family stayed with friends or relatives because you did not have a place to stay?' Responses were re-categorised into a binary indicator for whether a pupil's family had stayed with friends or relatives due to a lack of their own place to stay. As indicated in Figure 11, the families of most pupils had not had to stay with friends or relatives due to a lack of their own place to stay (93%).





A pupil's overall risk of family homelessness was calculated using a composite of responses to individual questions about home life¹⁰. Pupils were categorised based on the number of risk indicators present as 'no risk indicators', 'one risk indicator', and 'two or more risk indicators'. Figure 12 shows that the majority (84%) of pupils demonstrated no risk indicators of family homelessness, 13% had one risk indicator, and 3% had two or more risk indicators present.

Figure 12. Number of risk indicators for family homelessness (n=4,585)



¹⁰ Responses to each of the four individual questions are categorised into 'at risk' or 'not at risk'. The following responses are categorised as 'at risk' of family homelessness: (1) YES, there was a time in the past year when their family could not pay the rent or mortgage; (2) YES, pupils were worried that they or their family might not have a place to live; (3) Three or more moves from one address to another; (4) One or more occasions when the pupil or their family stayed with friends or relatives because they did not have a place to stay.

Change in risk of family homelessness over time

Analysis was conducted of change in intensity of family homelessness risk between baseline and last available survey. This analysis relates to a subset of pupils who completed more than one survey. Due to low numbers, we combined 'one risk indicator' and 'two or more risk indicators', into a 'One or more indicators' category. Figure 13 visualises flows between family homeless risk categories, whilst Figure 14 provides detailed breakdowns on where people within each risk category ended up. 83% of pupils were initially in the 'no indicators' category and 17% were initially in the 'one or more' category. Of those in the 'no indicators' category, 8% ended in the 'one or more' group and of those who started in the 'one or more' category, 28% remained in this category. As illustrated in Figure 13, most pupils started and ended in the no risk category.



Figure 13. Flow diagram showing movement between levels of family homelessness risk (n=265)

Figure 14. Percentage breakdown of family homelessness risk indicator category at last survey based on starting risk (n=265)

		Ending risk indicators	
		No indicators	One or more indicators
		(88%)	(12%)
Starting risk	No indicators (83%)	92%	8%
indicators	One or more indicators (17%)	72%	28%

School disengagement

Key findings

- Most pupils (85%) were at low or no risk of school disengagement
- 60% of pupils agreed or strongly agreed that they get along well with most of their teachers
- 7% of pupils agreed or strongly agreed that they regularly skip school and 11% get into a lot of trouble at school
- 22% of pupils reported being bullied at least 1-2 times per month
- Of pupils who were at immediate priority due to youth homelessness, 66% were at low or no risk of school disengagement

School disengagement refers to situations where pupils might lack interest in school and may lead to a student either withdrawing from the school environment or being disruptive whilst at school. Pupils were asked about their time at school to identify possible signs that they were disengaging from school. Questions are primarily adapted from the Australian Upstream survey¹¹.

Risk of school disengagement

Figure 15 shows the extent to which pupils agreed with five statements about their engagement with school¹². Focusing on responses that indicate potential risk of disengagement: 34% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they enjoy going to school every day; 14% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they get along with most of their teachers; 34% agreed or strongly agreed that they would leave school now if they could get a job; 7% agreed or strongly agreed that they regularly skip school; and 11% agreed or strongly agreed that they get into a lot of trouble at school.



Figure 15. Responses to risk of school disengagement questions (n=4,645)

^{*} n = 4,660

¹¹ Australian Index of Adolescent Development 2017 (AIAD 2017)

¹² All 5 statements are adapted from AIAD 2017.

Pupils were asked a sixth question about whether they had ever been excluded from school (either temporarily or permanently). Figure 2 shows that whilst most did not report having been excluded (88%), more than one in ten (12%) had been excluded.





Pupils were asked an additional question about experiences of bullying¹³. This question does not inform the overall risk of school disengagement measure, however, it was deemed important by teachers and pupils and included in the survey to help schools identify potentially vulnerable students. Pupils were asked; *'During the past year, how often were you bullied, or picked on by other students?'*. Students were presented with possible frequencies and asked to select the one that applied to them. Figure 17 shows that 63% of pupils never experienced bullying, 15% experienced bullying 1-2 times in the past year, 7% experienced it 1-2 times per month, 7% faced it 1-2 times per week, and a further 8% almost every day.

Figure 17. Proportion of pupils by frequency of being bullied or picked on by other students (n=3,970)



A pupil's overall risk of school disengagement was calculated by summing the number of negative responses to the six questions described above. These scores were then categorised into no risk, low, medium and high risk of school disengagement¹⁴. Figure 18 shows that 85% of pupils were considered no or low risk of school disengagement. 12% were considered medium risk of school disengagement, and 2% were considered at high risk.

Figure 18. Overall risk of school disengagement (n=4,665)



¹³ This question is adapted from the Upstream US Survey (Chapin Hall Student Needs Survey 2019)

¹⁴ The risk of school disengagement measure was developed by the Upstream Cymru team by combining the 5 AIAD questions and the single exclusion from school question. Zero negative responses equate to no risk, 1-2 low risk, 3-4 medium risk, and 5-6 high risk.

School disengagement & risk of youth homelessness

It is often assumed that young people at risk of youth homelessness will disengage from school, and therefore that school disengagement can be used to identify pupils for intervention¹⁵. Figure 19 shows that in general, risk of school disengagement appears to be associated with risk of youth homelessness. As the risk of youth homelessness increases, so does the proportion of pupils who were deemed medium to high risk of school disengagement. A chi-squared test¹⁶ found a significant association between risk of youth homelessness and school disengagement categories (χ^2 = 335.8521, p < 0.01). Strikingly, however, where pupils were flagged by the Llamau team as needing immediate intervention for youth homelessness, 66% were either considered at low or no risk of school disengagement.





 ¹⁵ https://www.gov.wales/youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-guidance-early-identification-html
 ¹⁶ Data were treated as unordered as the difference between categories was not deemed consistent enough to warrant an ordinal approach.

Resilience

Key findings

- Pupils were most likely to report 'yes' to having an adult in their lives they could trust and talk to about personal problems (66%).
- Pupils were least likely to report 'yes' (47%) to being able to fix things without hurting themselves or other people when things don't go their way.
- Resilience scores for pupils at low risk of youth homelessness were greater than pupils experiencing medium/high/immediate risk.

Pupils were asked to rate a series of statements related to 'resilience'. By resilience we mean the ability to meet challenges and cope with adverse situations¹⁷. Statements were primarily drawn from the Children and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM)¹⁸. The purpose of the CYRM is to explore resources available to children and young people that may support their resilience, such as individual and community ties. Figure 20 shows responses to the 12 statements which make up the CYRM, and an additional statement on the presence of a trusted adult. We asked this additional statement as prior research conducted by Public Health Wales has demonstrated the importance of trusted adults in young people's resilience to homelessness¹⁹.

Pupils were more likely to report 'yes' to; having an adult in their lives they could trust (79%), having family/caregiver(s) who stand by them when times are hard (77%), and having chances to learn things that will be useful when they are older (78%). Pupils were less likely to report 'yes' to; being able to fix things without hurting themselves of other people when things don't go their way (47%), finishing activities that they start (52%), and feeling that they belong at their school (49%).

¹⁷ https://phw.nhs.wales/files/research/resilience/resilience-understanding-the-interdependence-between-individualsand-communities/

¹⁸ L., Ungar, M., and LeBlanc, J. C. (2013). The CYRM-12: A brief measure of resilience. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 104(2), 131-135.

¹⁹ https://phw.nhs.wales/files/aces/voices-of-those-with-lived-experiences-of-homelessness-and-adversity-in-walesinforming-prevention-and-response-2019/PHW



Figure 20. Rating of resilience statements (n=4,415)

There is an adult in my life who I can trust and talk to about personal problems
I like the way my community celebrates things
I have chances to learn things that will be useful when I am older
I am treated fairly
My friends stand by me when times are hard
My family/caregiver(s) stand by me when times are hard
I feel that I belong at my school
I know where to go to get help
When things don't go my way, I can fix it without hurting myself or other people
I try to finish activities that I start
My parents/caregiver(s) know a lot about me
Getting an education is important to me

* n = 4,430



Overall resilience

Responses to the resilience statements were given a numerical value or score²⁰, enabling overall resilience to be calculated by summing scores across statements. Higher scores indicate greater resilience. In a departure from the previous Upstream survey report, we only use the 12 original CYRM statements to calculate the overall resilience score. Only the 12 CYRM statements have been validated for use as part of a composite measure. By using the approved CYRM methodology, findings in this report can be compared to other studies using the CYRM. Only pupils who responded to all 12 statements were included in the following analysis.

Figure 21 represents the distribution of overall resilience scores for pupils. The normal density curve is used to assess the actual distribution of the data compared to a hypothetical 'normal' distribution, and the extent of any deviations from this normality—also known as skew. The CYRM scores were skewed, with pupils generally rating themselves high in terms of their resilience. The mean resilience score for the sample was 30.7 points, with a standard deviation (SD) of 4.4 points—standard deviations tell you how spread-out data are.





Resilience & risk of youth homelessness

To explore whether resilience varied by risk of youth homelessness, we compared mean CYRM scores for the youth homelessness risk categories (Figure 22). One person was excluded from analysis as they had not been assigned a youth homelessness risk category. The mean CYRM score for those at immediate risk of youth homelessness was 27.8 points (SD: 5.6). The mean CYRM scores for those at high, medium, and low risk of youth homelessness were 27.6 (SD: 5.1), 27.6 (SD: 4.8), and 31.7 (SD: 3.7) points, respectively.



Figure 22. Mean CYRM score (n = 4,410)

Welch's Analysis of Variance found that there was a statistically significant difference in CYRM scores between the categories of youth homelessness risk (p < 0.01, F-statistic = 204.56). More detailed analysis comparing each risk category to all other risk categories in turn found that the CYRM scores for immediate priority, high, and medium risk, were significantly different from the low-risk category. However, mean CYRM scores were not found to differ significantly between immediate priority, high, and medium risk categories.

Wellbeing

Key findings

- Pupils were most likely to report feeling able to make up their own mind about things at least some of the time (85%)
- Pupils were least likely to report feeling useful at least some of the time (71%)
- Wellbeing scores for pupils at low risk of youth homelessness were higher than that of pupils facing any other level of youth homelessness risk

Pupils were asked to rate 7 statements about their mental wellbeing. By mental wellbeing we mean feeling good and functioning well²¹. The statements were drawn from the Shortened Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS)²². Figure 23 shows pupil responses to the individual statements of SWEMWBS. Pupils were asked to choose the response which best describes their experience of each statement over the last two weeks. Pupils were more likely to report often or always being able to make up their own mind about things (60%) or feeling close to other people (57%). They were less likely to report feeling useful (37%) or feeling optimistic about the future (37%) often or all of the time.



Figure 23. Responses to SWEMWBS wellbeing statements (n=4,490)

^{*} n = 4,510

²¹ https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs/research/framework

²² © University of Warwick, 2006. S(WEMWBS) was developed by the Universities of Warwick, Edinburgh and Leeds in conjunction with NHS Health Scotland.

Overall wellbeing

As with the resilience measure, a pupil's overall wellbeing was calculated by assigning point scores to responses to each statement²³ and summing scores. Higher point scores indicate greater wellbeing. Total wellbeing scores have been transformed to make them metric, as indicated by SWEMWBS guidance²⁴. Only pupils who responded to all 7 SWEMWBS wellbeing statements are included in the following analysis.

Figure 24 represents the distribution of overall metric wellbeing scores for pupils. By comparing the normal density plot and the actual distribution of wellbeing scores, we see that scores were roughly normally distributed, with some slight skew towards lower scores. The mean wellbeing score for pupils was 21.4 points (SD: 4.4).





Wellbeing & risk of youth homelessness

Figure 25 compares the mean wellbeing scores for the youth homelessness risk categories. The mean SWEMWBS score for those at immediate risk of youth homelessness was 19.9 points (SD: 5.3). The mean SWEMWBS score for those at high, medium, and low risk of youth homelessness were 19.0 (SD: 4.2), 18.8 (SD: 3.7), and 22.1 (SD: 4.2) points, respectively.

²³ None of the time = 1; Rarely = 2; Some of the time = 3; Often = 4; All of the time = 5

²⁴ https://www.corc.uk.net/outcome-experience-measures/short-warwick-edinburgh-mental-wellbeing-scale-swemwbs/

Figure 25. Mean SWEMWBS score (n = 4,490)



Welch's Analysis of Variance found that there was a statistically significant difference in SWEMWBS scores between youth homelessness risk categories (p < 0.01, F-statistic = 156.36). More detailed analysis found that SWEMWBS scores for immediate priority, high and medium risk, all significantly differed from scores for the low-risk category. Mean SWEMWBS scores were not found to differ significantly between high and medium youth homelessness risk categories. However, SWEMWBS scores did differ significantly between medium and immediate risk categories.

Conclusion

This report updates earlier analysis of Upstream Cymru pupil surveys completed during the initial rollout of the intervention. Based upon a much larger dataset than the previous report, the findings provide important and robust insights into pupil experiences in relation to youth homelessness, family homelessness, educational engagement, resilience and wellbeing.

The analysis first provides an indication of the scale of homelessness risk; approximately 15% of pupils were at immediate or high risk of youth homelessness, and a similar proportion (16%) had one or more risk indicators for family homelessness. It also provides an improved understanding of the association between youth homelessness and educational disengagement, resilience and wellbeing. In relation to educational disengagement, 66% of pupils flagged for immediate intervention because of risk of youth homelessness, showed no or low levels of school disengagement. This finding reaffirms conclusions drawn from our previous analysis of Upstream survey data: explicitly asking young people about their experiences of youth homelessness may be a more effective means of targeting interventions, compared to inferring risk from measures of school disengagement. In relation to resilience and wellbeing, the analysis worryingly shows that pupils experiencing any degree of youth homelessness risk have lower levels of resilience and wellbeing.

Interestingly, for the first time since the commencement of Upstream Cymru, it has been possible to explore changes in levels of youth and family homelessness risk over time (between two surveys). Whilst most pupils start and remain in low risk categories, it is significant that approximately 7-8% of pupils who start in the low risk group, go on to enter the high/immediate risk groups. Levels of risk clearly change over time and this emphasises the importance of surveying pupils periodically.

We hope these insights prove useful to the Upstream Cymru coalition, and to others interested in early identification and intervention to prevent youth and family homelessness.

