

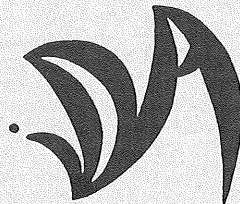
Reports from the project

Individual Development and Adaptation

**SELF-PERCEIVED PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH
AMONG SWEDISH TEENAGE GIRLS**

1. Adjustment problems in a 1996 school cohort

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The research program Individual Development and Adaptation (IDA) was initiated by David Magnusson in 1964 and was led by him until 1996 when Lars R. Bergman became the principal investigator.

Reports from the project Individual Development and Adaptation published from 2000 and onwards:

- No. 70 Bergman, L.R. Women's health, work, and education in a life-span perspective. Technical report 1: Theoretical background and overview of the data collection. (*January 2000*)
- No. 71 Isaksson, K., Johansson, G., Lindroth, S., & Sverke, M. Women's health, work, and education in a life-span perspective. Technical report 2: The coding of work biographies. (*November 2000*)
- No. 72 Publications 1961 - 2000. (*December 2000*)
- No. 73 Zettergren, P. Peer rejection and future school adjustment. A longitudinal study. (*October 2001*)
- Nr. 74 Wulff, C. Begåvningsprofiler som avviker från vad som anses könstypiskt. Betydelse för anpassning och yrkespreferenser. (*Oktober 2001*)
- No. 75 Wångby, M., & Stattin, H. Self-perceived psychological health among Swedish teenage girls: 1. Adjustment problems in a 1996 school cohort. (*November 2001*)

Foreword

This report concerns the study of self-perceived psychological health among Swedish teenage girls. It deals with adjustment problems in a 1996 school cohort. Håkan Stattin has been responsible for the data collection.

Stockholm, November 8, 2001

Lars R. Bergman
Professor

Abstract

This is the first report from a research project aimed at studying change and stability over the past decades in self-perceived psychological health among Swedish teenage girls. Data are taken from a survey among all children in Grade 8 (approximately 15 years of age) in the Swedish town Örebro in 1996, performed by professor Håkan Stattin. This survey was a replication of an earlier survey among all girls in Grade 8 in Örebro in 1970 carried out by Karin Crafoord, Licentiate of Philosophy, and professor David Magnusson. Data were collected with the Symptom Questionnaire that was developed for the first survey by Crafoord and Magnusson.

The most common type of problems reported by the girls was physical symptoms, and it was more common for the girls to report at least one of these symptoms than none. Emotional disturbances and disturbances in self-esteem were also fairly common, whereas antisocial problems were less frequent. The frequencies of disturbances in girls' relations to others suggested that these relations in most cases function well, especially the girls' relations to peers. It was not uncommon for the girls to feel anger and to quarrel with mother and father, but perceptions of negative feelings from parents were rare.

Introduction *

This is the first report from a research project aimed at studying change and stability over the past decades in self-perceived psychological health among Swedish teenage girls. Data for the comparison are taken from two surveys of self-perceived psychological health among teenage girls performed in the same community, using the same measurement procedure, but with 26 years in between.

In the early 70s Karin Crafoord, Licentiate of Philosophy, and professor David Magnusson made a survey of self-perceived psychological health among all Grade-8 girls in Örebro, a middle-sized Swedish town. That survey was part of the longitudinal research program *Individual Development and Adaptation* (IDA). Data from the survey have been presented in several publications from the IDA program (Bergman & Wångby, 1995; Crafoord, 1972; Crafoord, 1986; Magnusson, Zetterblom & Dunér, 1975; Stattin & Magnusson, 1990).

A second survey of all Grade-8 girls in Örebro was made in the mid-90s by professor Håkan Stattin. This screening was designed as an exact replication of the first survey, using the same instruments and procedures. In the following report, data will be presented from this second survey on the psychological health of teenage girls in Sweden today.

The study of girls' adjustment problems

The development of adjustment problems in girls was a rather neglected area before the 80s, and still there is a want of knowledge in many areas of female development and adjustment. The earlier neglect of the development of female adjustment problems is most probably related to the "quiet" nature of many female adjustment problems. Among females, subjectively experienced problems, such as depressive feelings, somatic complaints, anxiety and social withdrawal, tend to predominate over behavior problems that are disruptive to the environment, such as overt aggression, antisocial behavior and hyperactivity (see e.g. Eme, 1979; Graham & Rutter, 1985). The first type of problems, usually labeled *internalizing problems*, are less easy to detect and have been of less concern, quite simply because they are non-disruptive by nature (Rubin & Mills, 1991). Girls' out-directed or *externalizing problems*, on the other hand, have been neglected, largely because of the male predominance with regard to these types of disturbances (Miller, 1979).

The teenage years

An additional reason for the neglect of adjustment problems in girls probably is that girls appear less vulnerable than boys during childhood. For girls, many problems appear for the first time in early adolescence. In the Isle of Wight study, approximately two thirds of adolescent girls with psychiatric disorders experienced onset of disturbance after age 10 (Rutter, Graham, Chadwick, & Yule, 1976). Epidemiological studies have also identified a shift in the sex ratio for emotional disorders, especially depression, during puberty; before puberty the sex ratio is about one, while the adult pattern, with a female preponderance, appears after puberty (Graham & Rutter, 1985). Some authors have suggested that

* This research was supported by grants to Håkan Stattin from the Axel and Margaret Ax:son Johnson's Foundation and to Margit Wångby from the Swedish Council for Social Research.

adolescence involves increased vulnerability on the part of girls in a way that is comparable to that experienced by boys in the preschool years (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Coleman & Hendry, 1990).

The importance of self-reports

Since girls' adjustment problems are often of an internalizing kind, self-reports become an essential data source. By definition, internalizing problems are problems that are subjectively experienced by the person who have them. Whatever other informant is used, he or she is dependent on what is communicated (through body language, facial expressions, emotional reactions, verbal communication and so on) to the informant by the person that is experiencing the problems. In adolescence, children may increasingly keep inner feelings to themselves and also spend increasing amounts of time away from home, which give parents fewer opportunities to observe their children's social, emotional, and behavioral functioning (Edelbrock, Costello, Dulcan, Kalas, & Calabro Conover, 1985; Verhulst & van der Ende, 1992).

In several studies of behavior problems and psychiatric symptoms among children, researchers have found a rather low agreement between what is reported by the children and adolescents themselves and what is described by others in their surroundings (e.g. Achenbach, McConaughy, & Howell, 1987; Offord, Boyle, & Racine, 1990; Phares, Compas, & Howell, 1989; Rutter, Tizard, Yule, Graham, & Whitmore, 1976; Verhulst & van der Ende, 1992). Several studies have shown that other informants such as parents tend to underreport many problems experienced by adolescents (Costello & Angold, 1988; Edelbrock, Costello, Dulcan, Calabro Conover, & Kalas, 1986; Rutter, Tizard et al., 1976; Verhulst & van der Ende, 1992). Some findings suggest that this is especially a risk with internalizing adjustment problems in girls (Graham & Rutter, 1973; Rutter et al., 1976; Verhulst & van der Ende, 1992). In the Isle of Wight study, a survey of all 14- to 15-year-old children resident on the island was first made by means of parent and teacher questionnaires. All children with deviant scores on either questionnaire were studied intensively by means of interviews with parents, teachers and the adolescents themselves. Besides the children selected through this procedure, a random sample of children was also drawn for the intensive study. It was found that the children in the random sample who were diagnosed in the intensive study, but was not identified on the screening procedure, were mostly girls with emotional disorder. Many of them were diagnosed largely on the basis of the interviews with the adolescents themselves.

In a general population sample of 11- to 19-year-olds, Verhulst and van der Ende (1992) also found that parents reported fewer problems than adolescents did about themselves. These discrepancies tended to be larger for externalizing than for internalizing problems, and larger for girls than for boys. The discrepancies between parents and youths also increased with age. For internalizing problems such as anxiety, depression, somatic complaints and withdrawn behavior, the increase in informant discrepancy with age could be attributed largely to the increase with age in girls' self-reports of these problems.

This means that many problems experienced by the adolescents themselves are not noticed by parents, and that adolescents are indispensable informants concerning their own problem behaviors (Achenbach et al, 1987; Phares et al, 1989; Verhulst & van der Ende, 1992).

The Symptom Questionnaire

The aim of the first survey of self-perceived psychological health among Grade-8 girls in Örebro in 1970 was to map the occurrence of, and the covariation among, symptoms and

adjustment problems in a normal population of female adolescents. A new questionnaire was constructed for this survey (Crafoord, 1972; Magnusson et al., 1975).

The questionnaire has three parts:

1. Symptoms and adjustment problems (122 items)
2. Questions about living conditions (1970: 6 items; 1996: 8 items)
3. Questions about the questions (4 items)

Symptoms and adjustment problems

The initial symptom categorization was based on a functional division often used in practical clinical work at the child and youth mental welfare boards in Sweden in the 60s and 70s. Eight areas were covered: (1) *physical symptoms*, (2) *emotional disturbances*, (3) *disturbances in self-esteem*, (4) *antisocial behaviors*, (5) *disturbances in relations to parents* (6) *disturbances in relations to teachers*, (7) *disturbances in relations to peers*, (8) *sexuality* and (9) *unclassified items* (Table 1).

Reference period for the questions was the time the girls had spent in Grade 8 (eight months at the time of the data collection). This time frame most often was not specified in the questions but it was repeated as a memorandum at the top of each page in the questionnaire.

Physical symptoms. Under the heading of physical symptoms are included different disturbances in physical functioning: (a) psychosomatic symptoms such as headaches and stomach problems; and (b) habitual manipulations and psychomotor symptoms such as nail biting and stuttering. Both types of disturbances were considered to express or to be the result of underlying mental and emotional strain. The wordings of the questions and the scale for each item are presented in Appendix 1 (Table A1).

Emotional disturbances. Three affective dimensions are covered by the items measuring disturbances in emotional life: (a) anxiousness (e.g., fear without knowing the reason, worries about the future); (b) depressive feelings (e.g. sadness and feelings of not wanting to live anymore); and (c) feelings of aggressiveness, and control and inhibition of these feelings (e.g. feeling angry without showing it; Table A2).

Disturbances in self-esteem. The items in this group covered mainly three areas: (a) self-acceptance and positive evaluations of self (e.g. wanting to change oneself, satisfied with looks); (b) acceptance and evaluation of female sex role (e.g., boys are better off, looking forward to having children); and (c) acceptance of own age (wants to be older, wants to be younger; Table A3).

Antisocial behavior. The antisocial behavior category includes behaviors contrary to the Swedish child welfare legislation at the time; i.e., behaviors that, if detected, might lead to different types of interventions by the child welfare board. Among these were different kinds of criminal actions, alcohol and drug abuse, loitering, running away, and truancy (Table A4a-b).

Disturbances in relations. Three aspects of the girl's relations to others were covered in the questionnaire: (a) own feelings and attitudes towards others (e.g., wants to defy parents); (b) own perceptions of other's feelings and attitudes towards self (e.g., feels criticized by parents); and (c) mutual feelings and experiences in the relations (e.g., understanding in mother-relation). These aspects were covered for five types of relations: *mother*, *father*, *parents* collectively, *teachers* and *peers* (Table A5-7).

Sexuality. The items included in the sexuality category did not only cover questions about problems and risk behaviors. Items concerned with maturity, relations to boys and sexual and emotional experiences were also included (Table A8).

Table 1. The Symptom Questionnaire: Initial symptom categorization and number of items.

Content	Number of items	
	1970	1996
Symptoms and adjustment problems	122	122
Physical symptoms	15	14
Emotional disturbances	14	14
Disturbances in self-esteem	13	13
Antisocial behaviors	16	17
Disturbances in relations to parents	23	23
Disturbances in relations to teachers	7	7
Disturbances in relations to peers	16	16
Sexuality	11	11
Other items	7	7
Questions about living conditions	6	8
Questions about the questions	4	4
Total	132	134

Questions about living conditions

Six questions covered current living conditions of the girl: which adult persons she was living with, number of sisters and brothers, if parents were divorced, and, if that was the case, how often she saw the absent parent. A question about having a room of her own was also included.

In the 1996 version of the questionnaire, two additional questions were included: One about the country of birth for the girl herself, and one about the country of birth for her mother and father.

Questions about the questions

At the last page in the questionnaire, there were four questions asking about the girl's feelings and attitudes towards the questionnaire: Whether it had been difficult to answer the questions, and in that case why; what it had felt like to answer the questions; and whether it had been difficult to answer the questions honestly.

Differences between the 1970 and 1996 version of the symptom questionnaire

Although the symptom survey performed in 1996 on the whole was an exact replication of the 1970 survey, a few minor differences occurred between the two versions of the questionnaire.

Item 94. In the original questionnaire the girls were asked about thumb sucking. In 1996, this question was considered as too childish for 15-year-olds, and it was replaced by a new item: "Have you ever taken money that did not belong to you at home where you live?"

Item 102. This item concerns running away from home. By mistake the fourth scale step on the five-point scale was left out in the 1970 version of the questionnaire. This item was not included in the 26-year comparison.

Living conditions. As already mentioned, two questions about country of birth for the girl herself and for her parents were included in the 1996 but not in the 1970 version.

Questions about the questions, item 4. This item concerned how many of the questions the girls had found difficult to answer in an honest way. By mistake the last scale step on the five-point scale has been left out in the 1996 version of the questionnaire. This item was not included in the 26-year comparison.

The 1996 data collection

Sample

Data from a Swedish school-cohort was used in the present study. The school-cohort included all girls attending Grade 8 in Örebro in the spring term 1996. In Sweden, children in Grade 8 are normally aged 15. The school-cohort included 602 girls, and 529 (87.9%) of them were present at school to fill out the questionnaire when the data were collected.

Procedure

The data collection was carried out in April 1996 and it was a replication of the 1970 survey. Specially trained test leaders who were earlier unknown to the participants conducted the data collection. To reduce information effects, all classes in the same schools were examined during the same day. The students were informed both orally and in writing how to fill out the questionnaire. The girls were instructed to respond in a way that best expressed how they felt about the question, and that all questions referred only to the period in grade 8. If the participants had any questions these were answered by the test leaders after the work with the questionnaire had started. The classes were divided according to sex to avoid disturbances, to get smaller groups and to reduce student interactions. The filling out of the questionnaire took about one hour and a half. Those who finished earlier were set to do other work. To secure anonymity, the students were told to put the questionnaire, when filled out, in an envelope, which they were to seal themselves.

This report

This report presents full-scale item frequencies, means and standard deviations from the second symptom survey performed in 1996. Since the focus is on poor adjustment, items also have been dichotomized at the negative end of the continuum, and prevalences of adjustment behaviors considered as problematic are presented. Comparisons with the survey in 1970 will be presented in a forthcoming report.

Results

Adjustment problems

The full frequency distributions as well as means and standard deviations for each item in the nine symptom categories are presented in Appendix 1, Table A1 - 9.

Each item also was dichotomized in the following way: ratings of 1, 2, or 3 on the five-point item scales were recoded as "0", meaning *absence of a problem*; and ratings of 4 or 5 were recoded as "1", signifying *presence of a problem*. For three items with four-point scales (item 55 in the mother-relations category, item 85 in the sexuality category, and item 107 in the physical-symptoms category) ratings of 1 and 2 were recoded as "0" and ratings of 3 and 4 were recoded as "1". The problem frequency of each dichotomized item is presented in

figures 1 - 9. To increase the readability of the figures, the items in each category have been sorted into subgroups of relevance for the specific item category.

Physical symptoms

Fourteen items cover different forms of physical symptoms. Included here are also habitual manipulations (such as nail biting) and psychomotor symptoms (such as stuttering). The frequencies of problems (ratings 4 or 5 on the five-point item scales) in this category are shown in Figure 1; the full frequency distributions, means and standard deviations of the items are presented in Table A1.

Five physical symptoms were reported on scales measuring actual frequencies, from "never" to "several times a week" (first item group in Figure 1). These are *headaches*, *bad appetite*, *"nervous" stomach*, *difficulties falling asleep*, and *restless sleep*. Most common were having a bad appetite, difficulties falling asleep and headaches, each of which were reported by about a third of the girls at a frequency of at least once a week (scale steps 4 or 5).

The remaining physical symptoms (second item group in Figure 1) were measured on scales ranging from "seldom" or "never" to "very often". *Nail biting* was a common symptom, reported to occur fairly often or very often by a third of the girls. Almost every fourth girl reported *feeling restless* fairly often or very often. About 15% reported *feeling tense in new situations* and *concentration difficulties*.

Emotional disturbances

Fourteen items covered different affective symptoms. Three different types of emotions were covered: (1) anxiousness (worries), (2) depressive feelings, and (3) (inhibition of) aggressiveness. Their frequency distributions are presented in Figure 2 (dichotomized scales) and Table A2 (full scales).

Among the most common affective disturbances were different types of worries (first item group in Figure 2). More than every fourth girl reported that fairly or very often she was *worried about her future*. *Worries about the body* and about *serious diseases* were also fairly common, reported by 13-14% of the girls. Feelings of *anxiety* (defined as feelings of fear without a reason) at a similar frequency were only reported by 3% of the girls, but another 11% experienced these types of feelings at least sometimes.

Depressive feelings (second item group) were less common than different types of worries, but clearly more common than feelings of anxiety. Approximately one in ten girls reported that fairly or very often she had felt *sad without knowing why*, and as if she *did not want to live anymore*.

Disturbances in self-esteem

Thirteen items in the questionnaire cover different aspects of self-acceptance and self-esteem (Figure 3 and Table A3). Of these items, eight are directly concerned with the girl's feelings about herself (first and third group). Disturbances in these aspects were quite common. Most obvious is the low frequency of a stable *satisfaction with one's looks*. Only 14% of the girls reported being most often satisfied with their looks; another 28% were satisfied fairly often. Nearly two in five girls, however, reported only occasionally or hardly ever being satisfied with their looks.

Lack of satisfaction with one's physical appearance might be one of the reasons why almost every fourth girl reported *wanting to change herself* fairly or very much. About one in ten (fairly or very) often thought she was *not good enough*, felt *ashamed* of herself and *wanted to be someone else*.

Physical symptoms

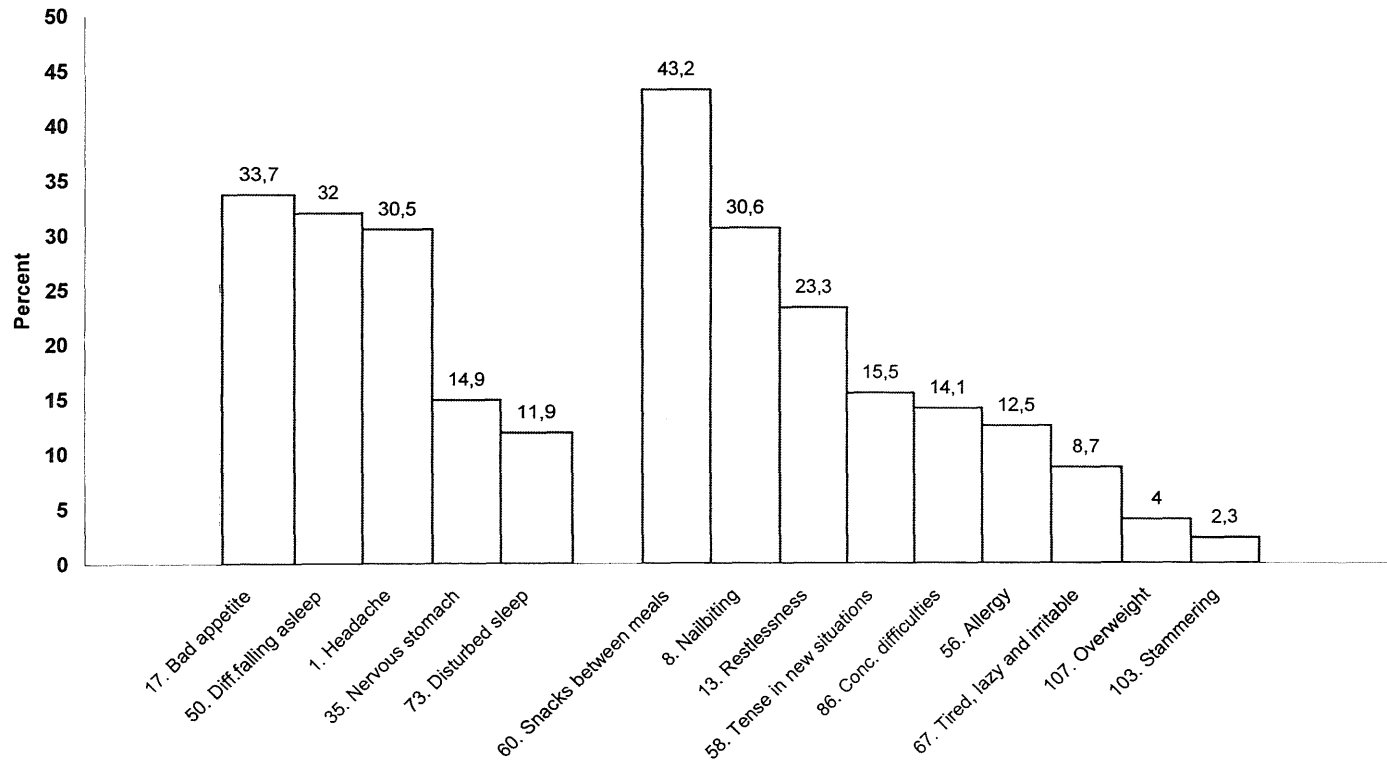


Figure 1. Frequencies of physical symptoms.

Emotional disturbances

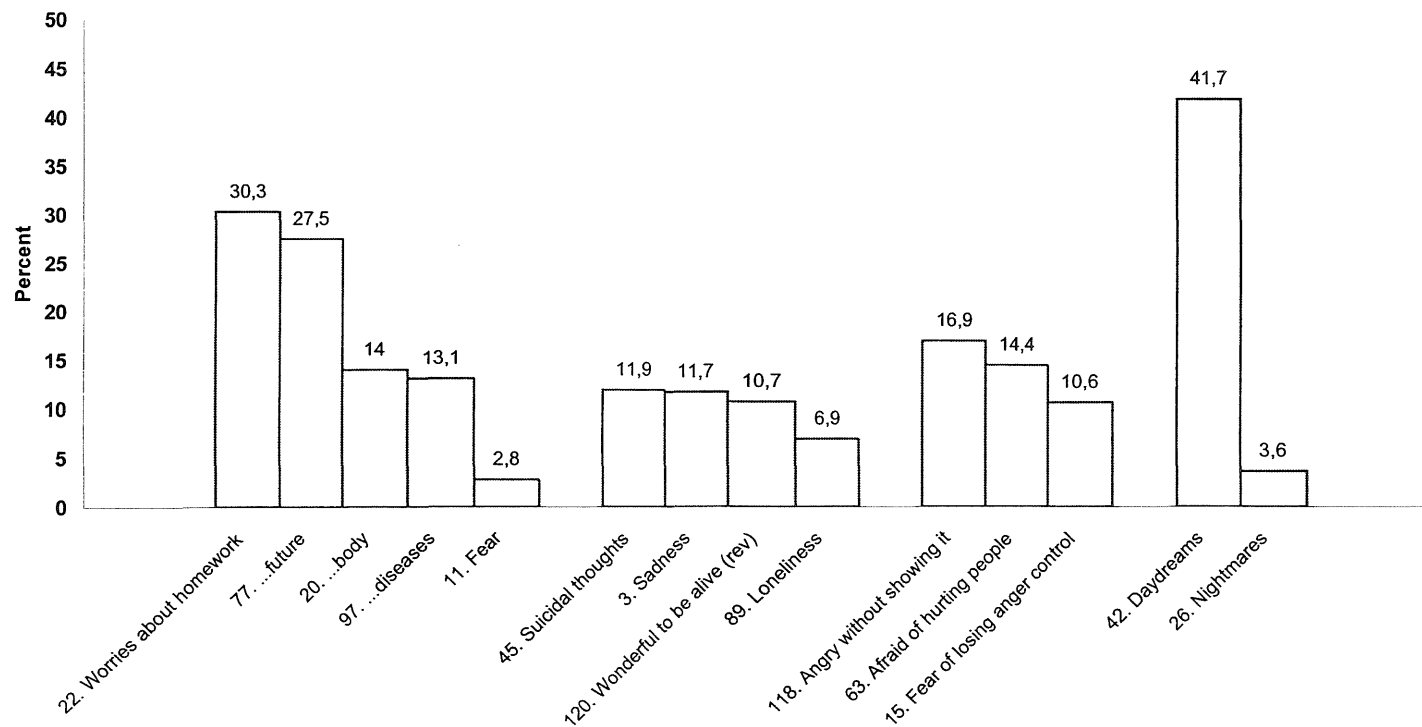


Figure 2. Frequencies of emotional disturbances.

Disturbances in self-esteem

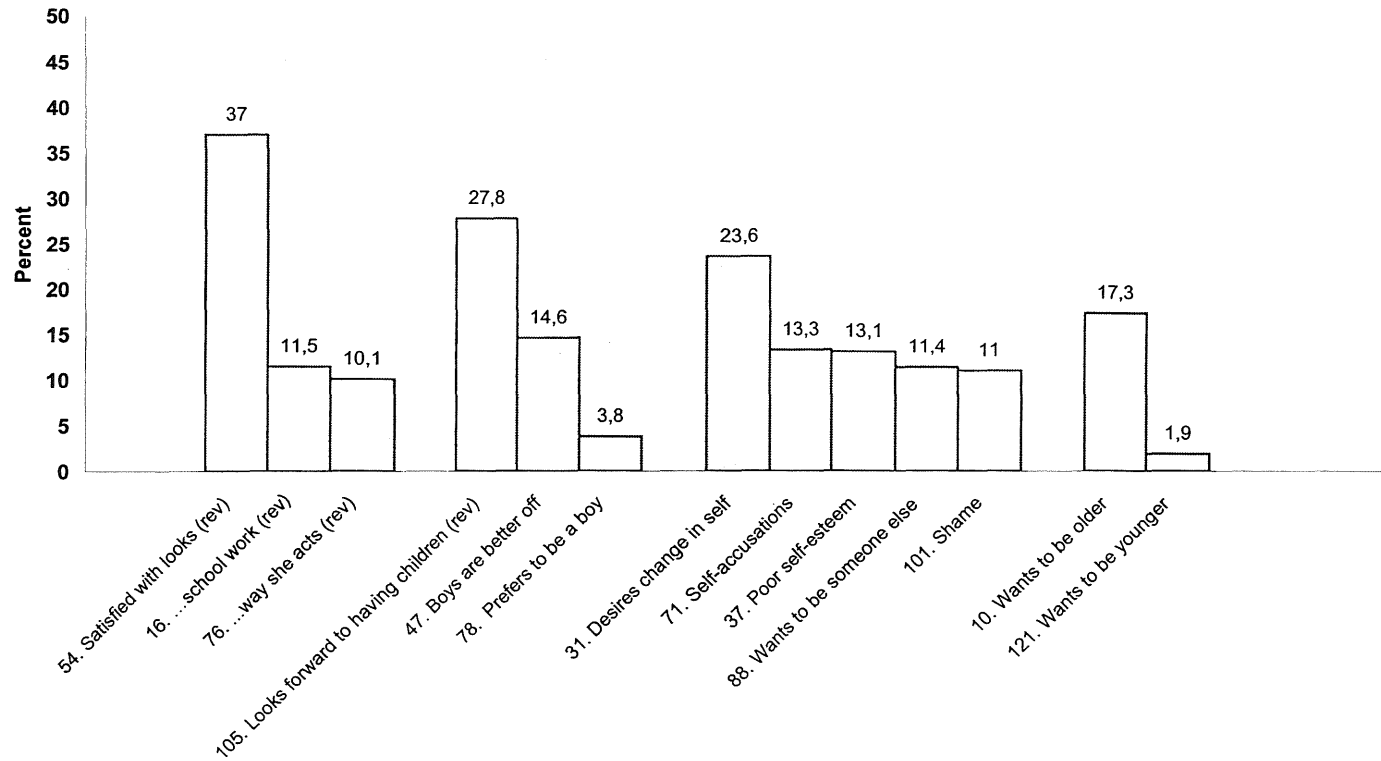


Figure 3. Frequencies of disturbances in self-esteem.

Antisocial behavior

Seventeen items covered different types of antisocial behaviors, including substance abuse, school problems and some (minor) criminal offences. Most of the items were measured on frequency scales ranging from "never" to "more than 10 times" (Figure 4 and Table A4a and b).

Experiences with alcohol were fairly common among girls at this age. Two in five girls had consumed enough alcohol to *feel drunk* at least once. Nearly one in five girls had been drunk four times or more. The use of other types of drugs, however, was low-frequent.

Among the criminal offences, *shoplifting* was the most common law-breaking behavior. Forty-three percent of the girls had tried this at least once, and 18 % had done it four or more times. Shoplifting actually was more common according to these self-reports than playing *truant from school*, which 39% of the girls had done at least once, and less than 10% had done four or more times. Other types of thefts from persons outside the family were much less common (Item 34, Table A4b).

Disturbances in parental relations

Twenty-three items in the questionnaire cover different aspects of the girl's relationship to her parents (Table A5a, b). Six items concern her relationship with her mother, and six corresponding items concern her relationship with her father (Fig. 5). Eleven items concern her relationship to her "parents", without further specification (Fig. 6).

Mother. At a general level, most girls appeared to have warm and understanding relationships to their parents. Three in four girls reported that they and their mothers understood each other well, and only 6 % reported a *poor understanding* between them and their mothers. A fifth of the girls reported that they often had *quarrels* with their mothers and the same percentage reported often *feeling angry* with their mothers.

Father. About three in five girls reported that they and their fathers understood each other well. Fourteen percent of the girls reported a *poor understanding* between them and their fathers, which is more than twice as many as reported a poor understanding with their mothers.

As with mothers, a fifth of the girls reported often being *angry* with their fathers. However, actually *quarreling* with him was much less common. This might in part be related to many fathers being absent (see below).

Parents. Of the items concerned with the relationship between the girl and her parents taken together, five items cover how the girl relates to her parents (first group in Figure 6) and another five items are concerned with how the girl perceives her parents' feelings and behavior towards her (second group). In the first item group, more than two in five girls reported often feeling that their *parents were the ones they cared for the most*, and another third admitted to having these feelings at least sometimes. However, one in five girls reported feeling this only a few times or seldom. More than every fourth girl (27%) often wanted to *defy* her parents, but only one in ten reported often doing this.

The girl's own feelings towards her parents were more often reported as problematic, than were the feelings and attitudes the girl perceived in her parents. Every tenth girl reported that her parents often were *angry and irritated* with her, but other types of perceived negative feelings from the parents were less common: About five to six percent reported that their parents *listened to their opinions* only a few times or hardly ever, that they often felt that their *parents were disappointed* in them and *criticized* them. A little more than three percent often felt that they were *a bother at home*.

Antisocial behaviors

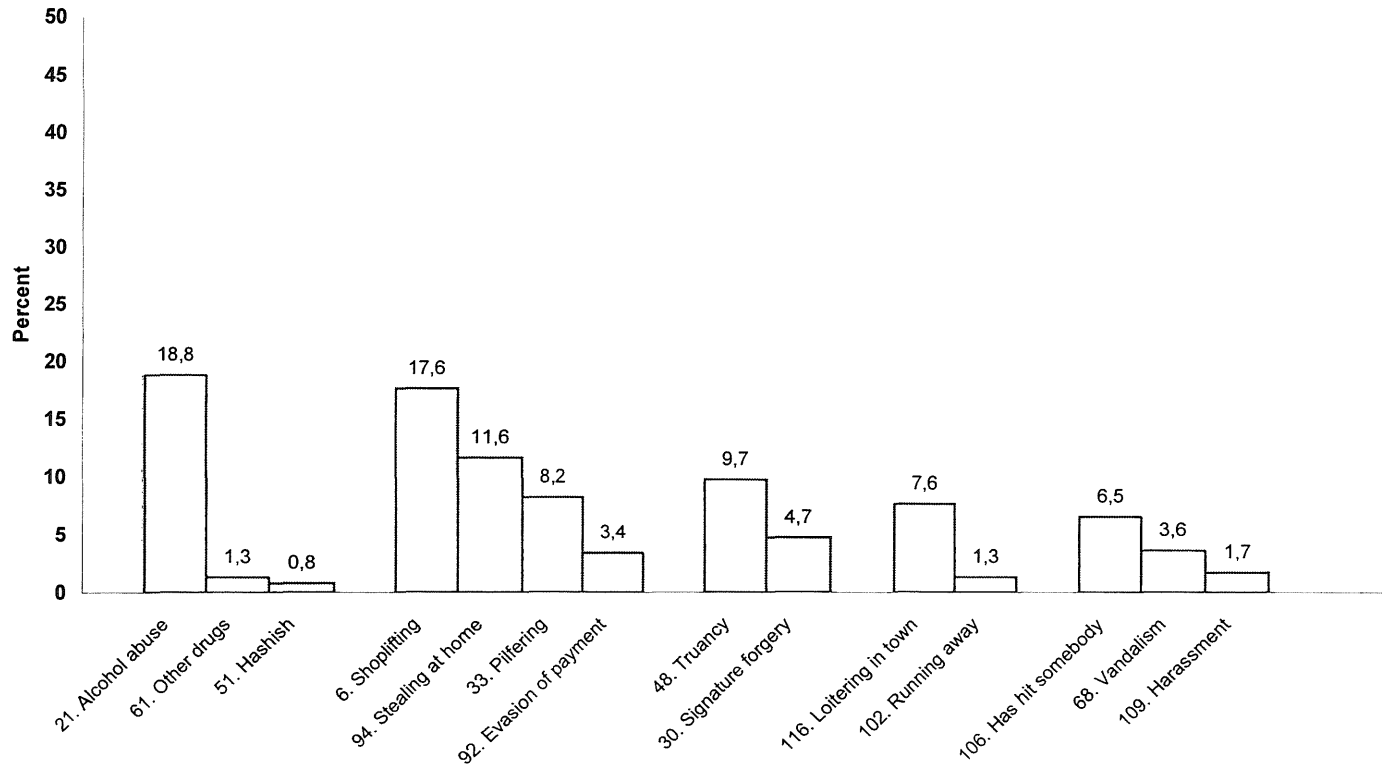


Figure 4. Frequencies of antisocial behaviors.

Disturbances in relations to mother and father

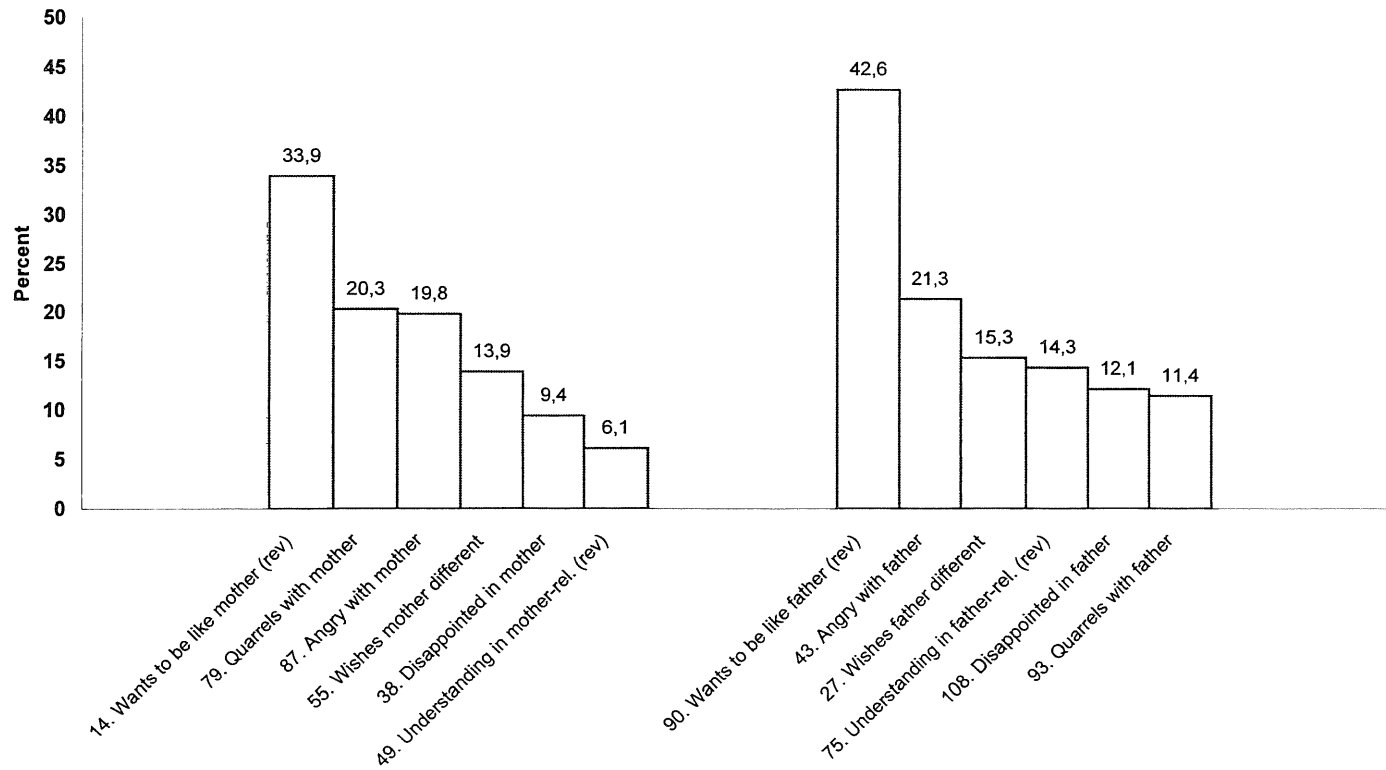


Figure 5. Frequencies of disturbances in relations to mother and to father.

Disturbances in relations to parents

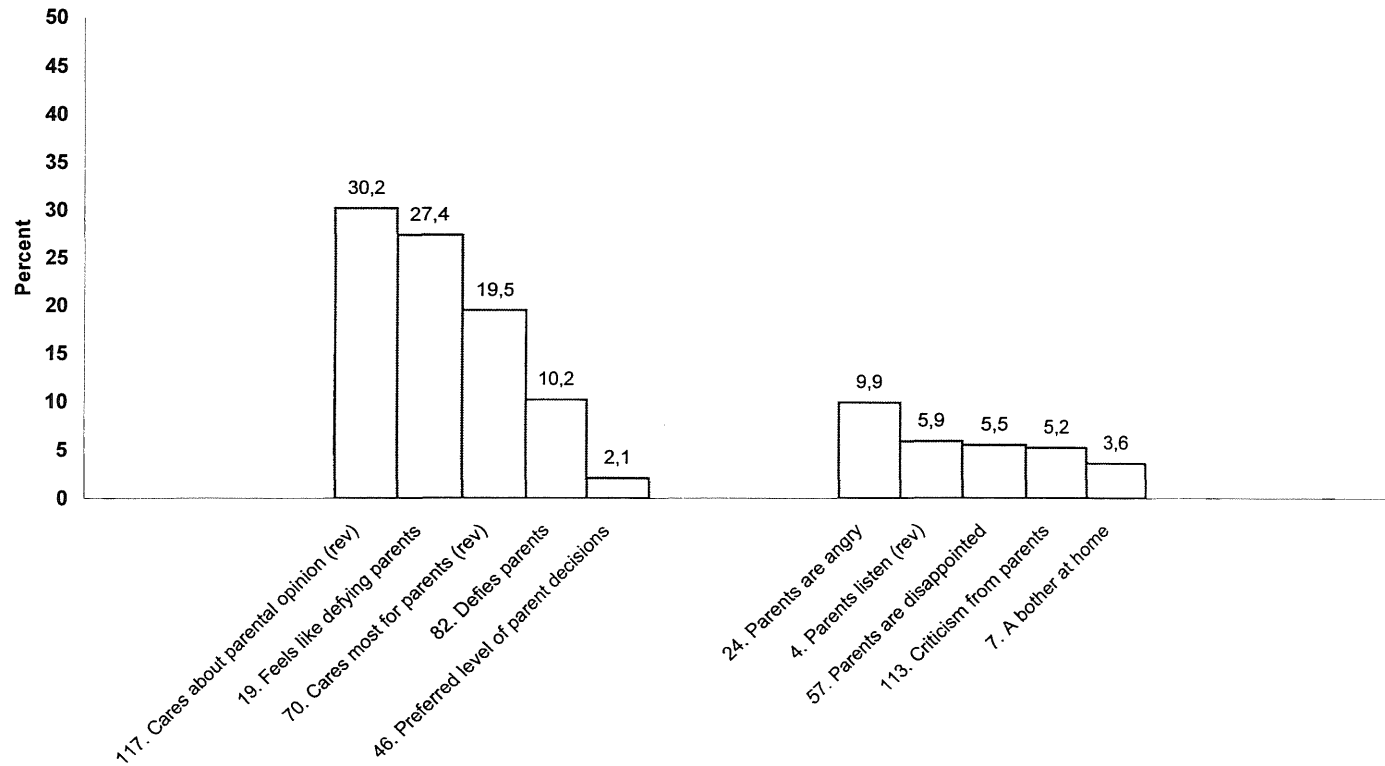


Figure 6. Frequencies of disturbances in relations to parents.

Disturbances in teacher relations

About one in seven girls felt that only one or none of her teachers *understood* her (Figure 7). One in ten girls often *talked back* to her teachers. The remaining problems were less frequent. Most girls for example liked and felt liked by at least some of their teachers (Table A6); only six percent reported that they hardly *liked* or *felt liked* by any teacher.

Disturbances in peer relations

Most girls also appeared to have well-functioning relationships to their peers (Fig. 8; Table A7). Sixteen items covered this area. Almost nine in ten girls felt that they and their peers understood each other at least fairly well; about one in ten girls thought that the understanding between her and her peers was neither bad nor good; only 1.5% stated that the *understanding* was fairly bad. About one in ten girls (11%) reported often *feeling angry and irritated* with her peers and a similar percentage (9%) reported often being afraid *that her peers would get tired* of her. About five to six percent reported often *being displeased* with their peers; *trusting* their peers fairly little or not at all; often *feeling like an outsider*; and feeling that *peers often were unfair* to them.

Sexuality and relations to boys

Eleven items in the questionnaire concerned the girl's relations with boys and different sexual matters (Figure 9 and Table A8). One group of five items concerned different feelings and experiences in relation to boys. For most of these items the good-poor adjustment dimension is of less relevance. However, it should be observed that as many as every second girl (50%) reported feeling *very little* or *not at all popular among boys*.

Problems related to sexuality, which were covered by the second item group, were not very common. A little more than 4% of the girls felt *sexually less experienced* than their peers and 7% reported that they thought *sex seemed frightening and unpleasant*. Just below 3% were *afraid of going further sexually than they really wanted to*. Four percent reported having had *sex with a boy at the first date*, which could be considered as a risk behavior.

Other items

Table A9 presents a small number of items that were not classified into any particular problem area. Item 29 asked about *how many evenings the girls spent at home*, and the answers were rather evenly distributed; 9% spent all evenings at home, while only 5% spent all their evenings away from home. About 80% of the girls preferred to spend their *leisure time* together with peers (item 100); only 4% preferred to spend it with their parents and 2.3% stated that they wanted to be alone.

The last item in the main part of the questionnaire asked the girls if they ever felt that they wanted to *talk to an outsider* about their problems. The majority of the girls (61%) never or hardly ever felt that they did. Six percent stated that they (fairly or very) often felt this need.

Biological maturation. A couple of questions about the girls' menarche were also included in the questionnaire. The vast majority of the girls had reached menarche at the time they filled out the questionnaire (at a mean age of approximately 15 years); only 5% had not reached their menarche yet. About 10% of the girls were early maturers, reaching menarche before the age of 11.

Disturbances in relations to teachers

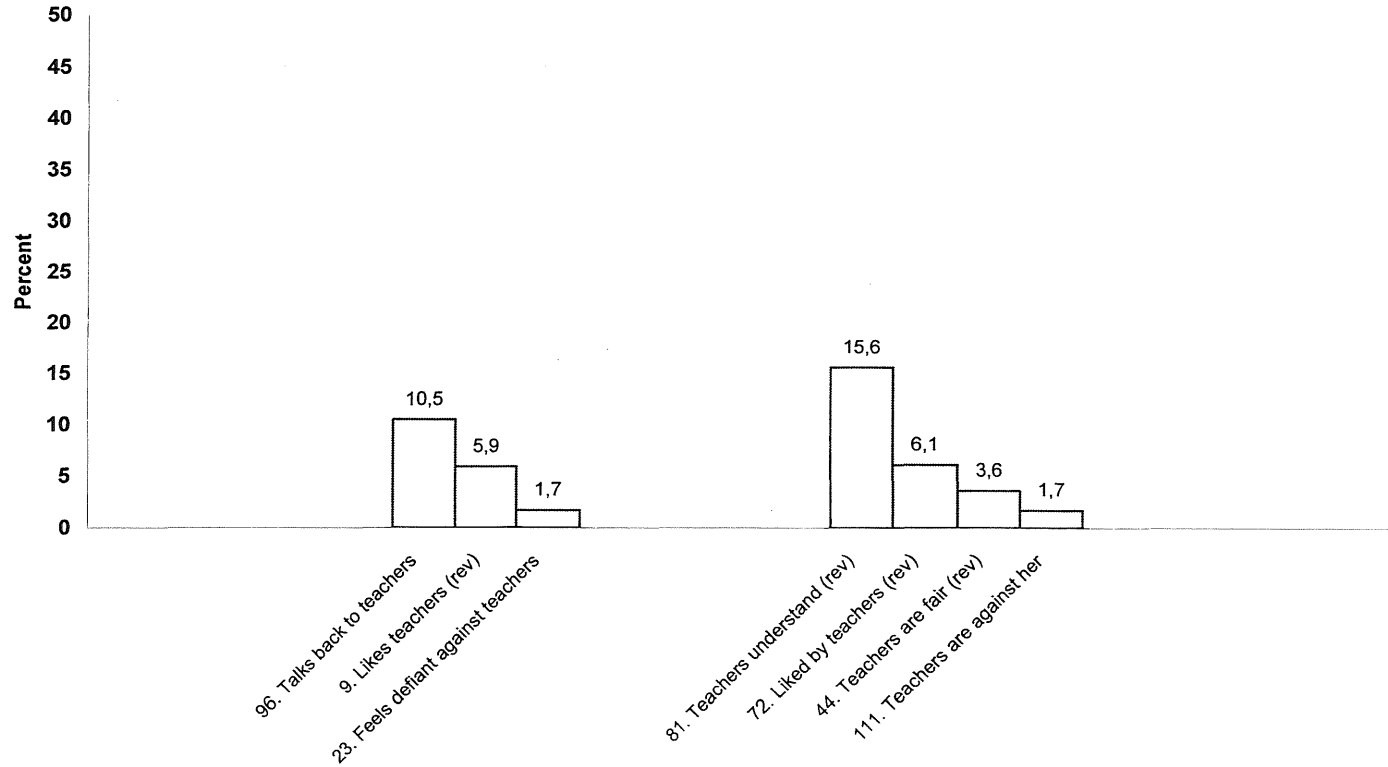


Figure 7. Frequencies of disturbances in relations to teachers.

Disturbances in relations to peers

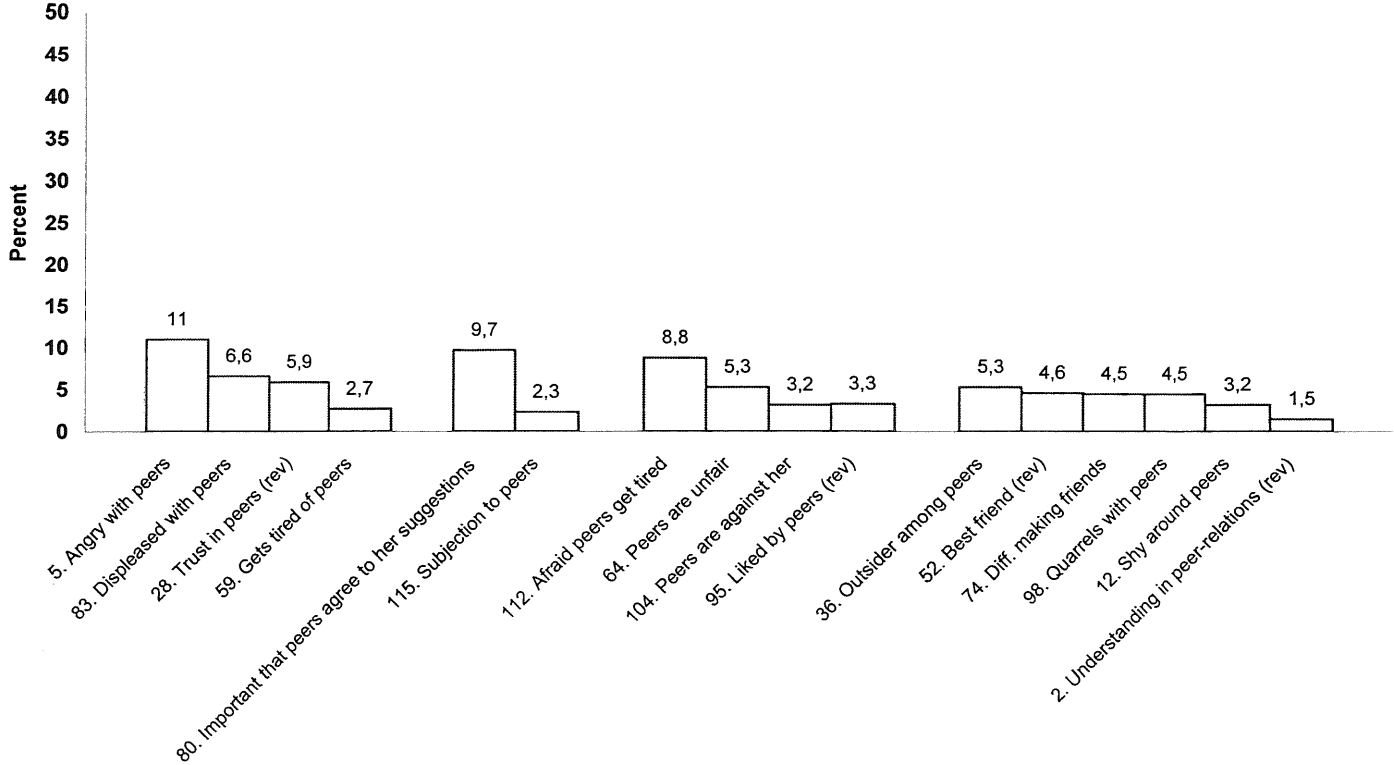


Figure 8. Frequencies of disturbances in relations to peers.

Sexuality

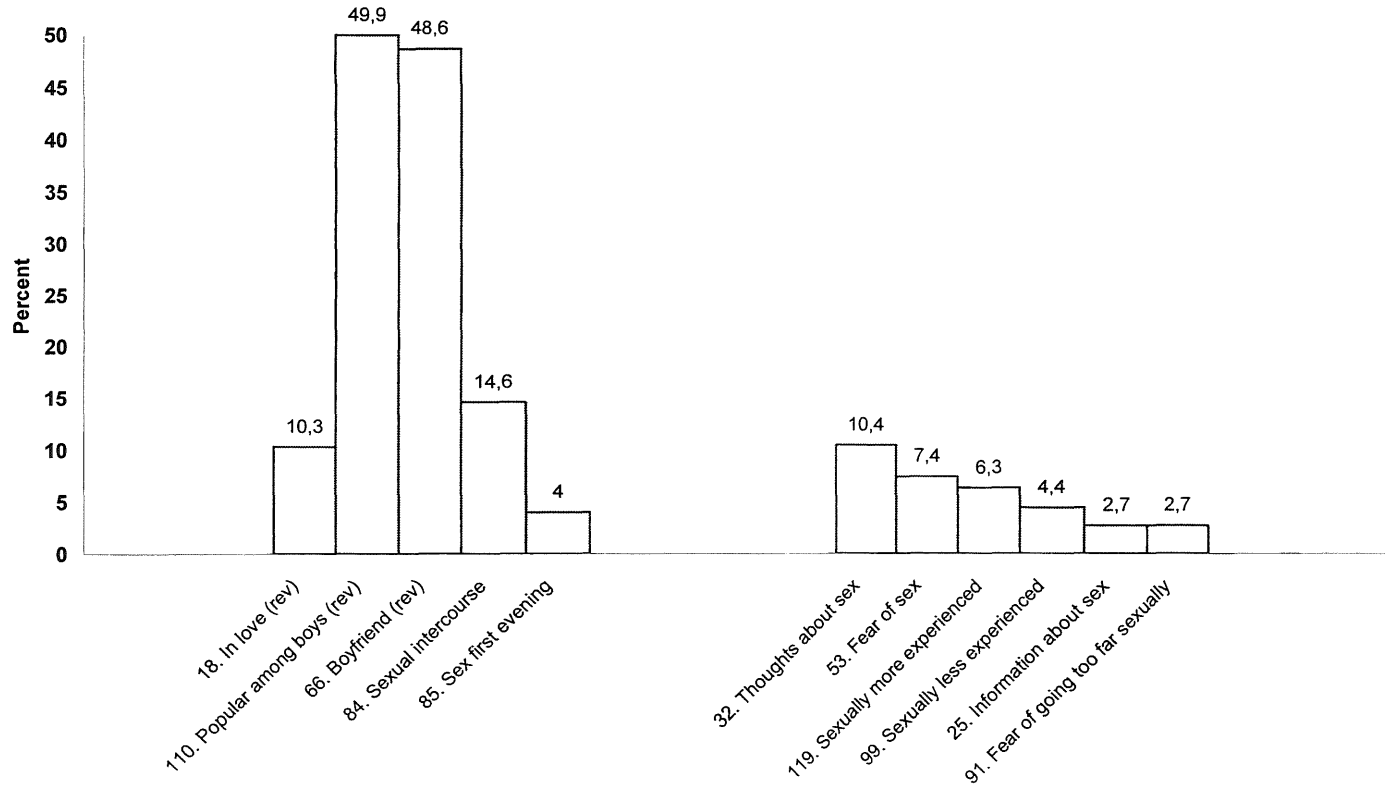


Figure 9. Frequencies of sexual problems.

Number of adjustment problems in each problem category

Statistics concerning the frequency distributions for number of problems within each category are presented in Table 2. Some items were excluded from the problem count since they would not easily fit into the good-poor adjustment dimension. This concerns item 117 in the parental category, and items 18, 66 and 84 concerning sexuality.

The highest mean number of problems were found for *physical symptoms* (2.76), followed by the two other types of internalizing problems, *emotional disturbances* (2.15) and *disturbances in self-esteem* (1.96). The majority of girls (approximately 75-85%) reported at least some adjustment problems for each of the internalizing categories, respectively. Concerning physical symptoms, almost a third of the girls reported four or more symptoms; for the other two internalizing problems one in five girls reported four or more disturbances.

Antisocial problems were not as common as the different types of internalizing problems. The mean number of adjustment problems reported was 0.96. The majority of girls (63%) did not report any antisocial problems. The same was true for most types of relational problems. The mean number of relational problems varied between 0.45 and 1.15, depending on category. Reports of multiple problems in relation to peers, for example, were quite uncommon (6%), as were reports of multiple problems in relation to parents collectively (6%). Problems in relation to father were somewhat more common than problems in relation to mother (four or more problems reported by 11 and 8%, respectively). It should be noted, though, that some of the comparisons between different relational categories are hampered by differences between the categories in number of items.

Least common among the different types of adjustment problems were teacher problems. With the cut-off points used here, the majority of girls (74%) reported no problems in relation to teachers. Only counting ratings of 4 and 5 on the teacher items as presence of a problem might be somewhat conservative, however. To reach an item rating of 4, the girl had to include most of the teachers if the item expressed a negative teacher evaluation, and hardly anyone of the teachers if the item expressed a positive teacher evaluation.

Living conditions

Family situation

Eight items covered the girls' family situations and possible immigrant background. As presented in Table A10, about two thirds of the girls lived with both mother and father. The next most common family constellation was for the girl to live with a single mother (18%), followed by a family with a mother and a stepfather (8%). About one third of the girls with divorced parents saw the parent they did not live with (usually the father) at least once a week. However, more than two fifths of them only saw the absent parent once a month or less.

Immigrant status

One in ten girls was not born in Sweden. Fourteen percent of the girls had a mother and/or a father that were born in a non-Nordic country. Five percent of the sample had both parents born in non-Nordic countries and were themselves born abroad.

Table 2. Statistics on number of problems in each problem category. N=529.

Problem category	Number of items	Mean	Median	Sd	No. of problems		
					0	1 – 3	≥ 4
Internalizing							
Physical	14	2.76	2	2.14	13.8	55.4	30.8
Emotional	14	2.15	2	2.16	25.0	52.7	22.3
Self-esteem	13	1.96	1	2.05	26.8	53.7	19.5
Externalizing							
Antisocial	14	0.96	0	1.81	63.1	27.8	9.1
Relational							
Mother	6	1.03	0	1.50	52.6	39.1	8.3
Father	6	1.15	1	1.62	47.8	41.4	10.8
Parents	9	0.89	0	1.45	57.7	36.1	6.2
Teachers	7	0.45	0	0.95	73.9	23.4	2.6
Peers	16	0.82	0	1.72	63.1	31.0	5.9
Sexuality	8	0.87	1	0.82	36.1	63.3	0.6

Questions about the questions

The final part of the questionnaire included four "questions about the questions". These were added for two reasons: to give the girls a possibility to express different feelings that the questionnaire might have initiated; and to render an estimation of the girls' positive/negative attitudes towards the questionnaire (Crafoord, 1971).

As can be seen in Table A11, most of the girls found it fairly easy or even very easy to answer the questions (61 and 23% respectively). Sixteen percent of the girls thought the questions were difficult to answer because they were about things that they had not thought about, and another 8% found the questions difficult to understand. About 8% thought the questions were too personal. When asked about what it had felt like answering the questions, the majority of the girls stated that they felt nothing special about it. About five percent or less confirmed each of the different negative reactions suggested in the questionnaire, such as feeling worried or that it was unpleasant. The vast majority only found some of the questions difficult to answer in an honest way (95%).

Summary

This report presents the results of a symptom survey of eight different areas of self-perceived adjustment problems in a school-grade cohort of 15-year-old girls.

Internalizing problems

The most common type of problems reported by the girls was physical symptoms. Actually, it was more common for the girls to have these problems than to be free of them. The mean number of problems in this area reported by the girls was 2.8. Most common were

headaches, bad appetite and difficulties falling asleep, which each was reported by about a third of the girls at a frequency of at least once a week.

Problems in the other two internalizing areas were also fairly common: emotional disturbances and disturbances in self-esteem. Most common in the emotional area were different types of worries that were reported by between 13 and 30% of the girls. Each of the different depressive feelings (feeling as if not wanting to live anymore, sadness and seldom feeling that life is wonderful) was reported by about 10% of the girls.

Concerning self-esteem, satisfaction with looks has a special position. Almost two in five girls reported rarely being satisfied with their appearance, which made this lack of satisfaction more than three times as common as lack of satisfaction with manners or school work. Almost one in four girls wanted to change herself fairly or very much, while each of the other negative feelings towards self (self-accusations, not being good enough, wanting to be someone else, shame) were reported by 11-13%. None of these questions were specified to any particular aspect of self. However, appearance may be playing an important part in these frequent negative feelings.

Externalizing problems

While having at least some internalizing problems was quite common and occurred more often than not, antisocial problems (with the cut-off points used here) were much less frequent phenomena. The majority of the girls (63%) did not report any antisocial behaviors at a frequency of four times or more. For half of the antisocial behaviors the reported prevalence of problems at this frequency was well below 5%, and only a few items passed 10%. Most common among the antisocial behaviors were having been drunk; almost one in five girls claimed to have been drunk four times or more. Most common among the criminal offenses was shoplifting, which was also reported at this frequency by almost one in five girls.

Relational problems

The general impression when considering the frequencies of disturbances in the girls' relations to others is that these relations in most cases seem to function well. This is especially true of the girls' relations to peers. Sixty-three percent of the girls reported no frequent problems in relation to their peers. The most common peer problem was to be angry with one's peers often, which was reported by one in ten girls. Peer problems that involved feeling or being left out of the peer group were even less common than negative feelings towards peers; feeling like an outsider, having difficulties making friends and feeling that peers are against her were reported by 5% or less. Only 1.5% reported a poor understanding between themselves and their peers.

Relations to boys is a special case here, since half of the girls stated that they felt very little or not at all popular among boys. However, one in five girls were involved in a permanent relation with a boy at the time of the data collection, and another third had been earlier.

Concerning disturbances in relation to parents, it is probably important to differentiate between the girl's feelings and attitudes towards her parents, and the parents' feelings and attitudes as the girl perceives them. Not wanting parents to decide about personal things, wanting to defy them, not caring very much about their opinions, and not wanting to be much similar to them as a grown-up are quite common and part of normal strivings for independence. The same is true for feeling angry and quarreling with mother or father once and again.

For the girl to perceive a lot of negative feelings from her parents, on the other hand, is much less frequent. Only about five or six percent of the girls reported that their parents did not listen to them, were disappointed in them, often criticized them, or that there was a poor understanding between them and their mothers. These figures suggest that the vast majority of parents manage to preserve a good and supportive relationship with their girls through the adolescent years of strivings for independence. It probably is a reason of concern when they do not.

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Appendix

Table A1. Physical symptoms.

	Ratings					M	sd	N
	1	2	3	4	5			
1. How often have you had a heachache during this school year?	never	about once / semester	about once / month	about once / week	several times / week			
	8.1	25.9	35.4	20.8	9.7	3.0	1.1	528
8. Do you bite your nails?	never or almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
	36.6	15.9	16.9	14.8	15.7	2.6	1.5	527
13. How often are you restless and find it difficult to keep still?	seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
	14.2	29.4	33.0	16.3	7.0	2.7	1.1	527
17. How often do you have a bad appetite?	never	about once / semester	about once / month	about once / week	several times / week			
	18.6	22.8	24.9	23.8	10.0	2.8	1.3	522
35. How often have you had a "nervous" stomach during this school year (for example stomach ache, stomach cramp, anxious stomach, feeling sick, wind, constipation or diarrhea)?	never	about once / semester	about once / month	about once / week	several times / week			
	21.4	35.5	28.2	9.0	5.9	2.4	1.1	524
50. How often during this school-year have you had difficulties falling asleep?	never	about 1 evening / semester	about 1 evening / month	about 1 evening / week	several evenings / week			
	15.9	24.2	27.8	21.4	10.6	2.9	1.2	528
56. Do you have problems with allergy (for example asthma, hay-fever, eczema etc.)?	never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
	57.4	18.2	11.9	8.9	3.6	1.8	1.2	528

table cont.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
58. Do you feel tense and anxious together with new people?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
19.9	29.7	34.8	10.4	5.1	2.5	1.1	528
60. Do you usually have snacks between meals?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
6.8	16.5	33.5	27.1	16.1	3.3	1.1	528
67. Do you feel tired, lazy and irritable?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
25.4	34.1	31.8	7.6	1.1	2.2	1.0	528
73. How often has it happened during this school-year that you have slept anxiously and woken up during the night?							
never	about 1 night / semester	about 1 night / month	about 1 night / week	several nights / week			
25.2	37.1	25.8	8.5	3.4	2.3	1.0	528
86. Is it difficult for you to concentrate?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
16.2	30.0	39.7	11.0	3.0	2.5	1.0	526
103. How often do you stammer when you talk?							
never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
54.5	37.7	5.5	1.9	0.4	1.6	0.7	525
107. Do you weigh too much according to your school nurse, your school doctor, or another doctor's opinion?							
no	yes, a little too much	yes, somewhat too much	yes, much too much				
87.7	8.2	2.5	1.5		1.2	0.5	522

Table A2. Emotional disturbances.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
3. Do you feel unhappy and depressed without knowing why?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
26.8	29.1	32.3	8.7	3.0	2.3	1.1	529
11. Do you ever feel afraid without knowing why?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
69.3	16.9	11.0	2.5	0.4	1.5	0.8	527
15. Are you afraid of doing something really stupid when you get angry?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
43.3	22.7	23.4	6.0	4.5	2.1	1.1	529
20. Do you worry about there being something wrong with your body, that it doesn't function as it should?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
26.7	32.4	26.9	9.7	4.4	2.3	1.1	528
22. Do you worry that you will not manage to get your homework done properly?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
12.1	23.5	34.1	21.8	8.5	2.9	1.1	528
26. Do you have nightmares?							
almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
44.0	30.2	22.2	3.0	0.6	1.9	0.9	527
42. Do you fantasize and daydream?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
9.9	15.2	33.2	18.2	23.5	3.3	1.3	527

table cont.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
45. Have you ever felt as if you didn't want to go on living?							
never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
39.0	34.3	14.8	8.3	3.6	2.0	1.1	528
63. Are you usually afraid of saying things that can hurt people?							
never or almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
18.4	37.1	30.1	7.6	6.8	2.5	1.1	528
77. Do you worry about what will happen to you in the future?							
never or almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
14.2	26.7	31.6	18.2	9.3	2.8	1.2	528
89. Do you feel lonely?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
45.4	28.3	19.4	4.6	2.3	1.9	1.0	520
97. Do you worry about getting dangerous diseases?							
never or almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
27.5	28.2	31.3	8.3	4.7	2.3	1.1	528
118. Do you ever feel angry but not show it?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
12.9	28.1	42.1	13.5	3.4	2.7	1.0	527
120. How often do you think that it is really wonderful to be alive?							
very often	fairly often	sometimes	it's happened a few times	seldom			
22.9	41.0	25.5	8.2	2.5	2.3	1.0	525

Table A3. Disturbances in self-esteem.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
10. Would you like to be older than you are?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
27.2	18.9	36.6	9.9	7.4	2.5	1.2	525
16. Are you satisfied with your school work?							
most often	fairly often	sometimes	it's happened a few times	almost never			
26.3	31.6	30.6	8.3	3.2	2.3	1.0	529
31. How much would you like to change yourself?							
not at all	not much	some	fairly much	very much			
7.9	31.9	36.5	13.8	9.8	2.9	1.1	529
37. How often do you think you are no use at all?							
almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
37.5	27.7	21.8	8.5	4.5	2.1	1.2	528
47. Do you sometimes think that boys are better off than girls?							
never or almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
31.4	23.8	30.2	9.8	4.7	2.3	1.2	529
54. Are you satisfied with your looks?							
most often	fairly often	sometimes	it's happened a few times	almost never			
13.5	27.3	22.2	26.2	10.8	2.9	1.2	527
71. Do you blame yourself for things you know you really cannot help?							
never or almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
25.4	32.6	28.8	10.4	2.8	2.3	1.1	528
76. Are you satisfied with the way you typically act?							
most often	fairly often	sometimes	it's happened a few times	almost never			
20.0	38.2	31.7	5.9	4.2	2.4	1.0	526

table cont.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
78. Do you ever think that you'd rather be a boy?							
never or almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
62.1	22.0	12.1	3.0	0.8	1.6	0.9	528
88. Do you ever wish you were someone else than you are?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
34.9	30.6	23.1	8.0	3.4	2.1	1.1	527
101. Do you ever feel ashamed of yourself?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
24.9	33.4	30.7	7.0	4.0	2.3	1.0	527
105. Do you look forward to having and bringing up children?							
very much	fairly much	some	only a little	not at all			
31.0	22.1	19.2	17.9	9.9	2.5	1.4	526
121. Would you like to be younger than you are?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
80.8	11.0	6.3	1.1	0.8	1.3	0.7	527

Table A4a. Antisocial behavior.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
6. Have you ever taken goods from a store, kiosk or shop without paying?							
never	once	2 - 3 times	4 - 10 times	more than 10 times			
57.1	14.6	10.8	8.3	9.3	2.0	1.4	529
21. Have you drunk so much beer, spirits or wine that you felt drunk?							
never	once	2 - 3 times	4 - 10 times	more than 10 times			
60.4	8.9	11.9	8.7	10.0	2.0	1.4	528
30. Have you ever forged someone else's signature in order to get some kind of benefit, for example written a certificate of illness or something similar?							
never	once	2 - 3 times	4 - 10 times	more than 10 times			
72.8	13.6	8.9	3.0	1.7	1.5	0.9	529
33. Have you on purpose taken things or money that you knew belonged to someone else?							
never	once	2 - 3 times	4 - 10 times	more than 10 times			
51.2	22.4	18.2	3.8	4.4	1.9	1.1	527
48. Have you been away from school without permission during this school-year (played truant)?							
never	once	2 - 3 times	4 - 10 times	more than 10 times			
60.6	14.4	15.3	6.6	3.0	1.8	1.1	528
51. Have you smoked hashish?							
never	once	2 - 3 times	4 - 10 times	more than 10 times			
96.4	1.5	1.3	0.6	0.2	1.1	0.4	529
61. Have you used other drugs than hashish?							
never	once	2 - 3 times	4 - 10 times	more than 10 times			
94.9	2.1	1.7	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.5	527
68. Have you deliberately destroyed or helped to destroy things not belonging to you (windows, cars, telephone booths, benches, gardens, etc.)?							
never	once	2-3 times	4-10 times	more than 10 times			
78.9	9.5	8.0	2.7	1.0	1.4	0.8	526
92. Have you avoided paying (e.g. at a cinema, café, train, bus or elsewhere)?							
never	once	2 - 3 times	4 - 10 times	more than 10 times			
76.7	12.0	7.8	2.1	1.3	1.4	0.8	524

table cont.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
94. Have you ever taken money that did not belong to you at home where you live?							
no never	yes, once	yes, 2 - 3 times	yes, 4-10 times	yes, more than 10 times			
48.3	23.5	16.6	6.1	5.5	2.0	1.2	524
102. Have you ever run away from home?							
never	once	2 - 3 times	4 - 10 times	more than 10 times			
84.8	9.5	4.4	1.1	0.2	1.2	0.6	525
106. Have you hit somebody?							
never or almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
48.0	29.7	15.8	4.0	2.5	1.8	1.0	525
109. Have you ever taken part in teasing and tormenting small children or old people?							
never	once	2 - 3 times	4 - 10 times	more than 10 times			
87.6	8.4	2.3	1.3	0.4	1.2	0.6	523
116. Do you usually wander about town in the evening, hang out on street corners or in the square?							
never	about 1 evening / month	about 1 evening / week	a number of evenings / week	every evening			
57.7	24.6	10.1	6.3	1.3	1.7	1.0	525

Table A4b. Follow-up questions to some antisocial behavior items.

Ratings						N
1	2	3	4	5	6	
34. If so, from whom and what? (cf. item 33)						
never taken anything	from mother	from father	from brothers or sisters	from peer	from somebody else	
49.8	20.2	10.0	12.7	2.3	5.0	480
62. In what way? (cf. item 61)						
never done	sniffed	eaten	with syringe	smoked		
94.3	1.6	1.2	0	2.9		512
69. Have you destroyed things yourself or have you only participated in destroying things? (cf. item 68)						
neither of them	only participated	did it myself	both of them			
77.5	10.7	4.5	7.4			516

Table A5a. Disturbances in relations to parents.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
<i>Mother</i>							
14. How much would you as adult like to be similar to your mother?							
very much	fairly much	somewhat	very little	not at all			
6.3	16.8	43.0	22.1	11.8	3.2	1.0	525
38. How often do you feel disappointed in your mother?							
almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
43.5	30.7	16.4	6.3	3.1	1.9	1.1	524
49. How well do you think that you and your mother understand each other?							
very well	fairly well	neither well nor badly	fairly badly	very badly			
36.2	38.5	19.2	4.2	1.9	2.0	0.9	527
55. Do you wish your mother were different?							
never or almost never	it's happened a few times	fairly often	very often				
45.2	41.0	9.3	4.6		1.7	0.8	527
79. Do you and your mother quarrel with each other?							
almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
26.2	23.7	29.8	14.0	6.3	2.5	1.2	527
87. How often do you feel angry or irritated with your mother?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
18.1	30.9	31.2	12.2	7.6	2.6	1.1	525
<i>Father</i>							
27. Do you wish your father were different?							
never or almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
42.2	25.6	17.0	5.7	9.5	2.1	1.3	524
43. How often do you feel angry or irritated with your father?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
28.7	25.1	24.9	13.2	8.0	2.5	1.3	522

table cont.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
75. How well do you think that you and your father understand each other?							
very well	fairly well	neither well nor badly	fairly badly	very badly			
24.1	37.6	24.1	7.5	6.7	2.4	1.1	519
90. How much would you as adult like to be similar to your father?							
very much	fairly much	somewhat	very little	not at all			
5.6	15.9	36.0	26.3	16.2	3.3	1.1	517
93. Do you and your father quarrel with each other?							
almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
44.9	24.6	19.1	7.0	4.4	2.0	1.1	517
108. How often do you feel disappointed in your father?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
49.3	23.9	14.6	7.1	5.0	1.9	1.2	519
<i>Parents</i>							
4. Do you think that your parents listen to what you have to say and care about what you think?							
most often	fairly often	sometimes	it's happened a few times	seldom			
52.2	26.8	15.1	4.0	1.9	1.8	1.0	529
7. Do you feel that you are in the way or a bother at home?							
never or almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
68.2	18.9	9.3	2.7	0.9	1.5	0.8	528
19. Do you ever feel like doing the opposite of what your parents want?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
10.2	21.2	41.2	15.3	12.1	3.0	1.1	529
24. Do you think your parents are angry or irritated with you?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
41.9	24.7	23.5	7.4	2.5	2.0	1.1	527

table cont.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
46. How much do you want your parents to make decisions for you, for example concerning clothes, make-up, leisure activities, choice of friends, summer- and occupational plans and so on?							
very little	not much	some	fairly much	very much			
53.4	28.5	16.0	1.3	0.8	1.7	0.8	526
57. Do you think your parents are disappointed in you?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
61.4	21.5	11.6	3.2	2.3	1.6	1.0	526
70. How often do you feel that your parents are the persons that you care for most of all right now?							
very often	fairly often	sometimes	it's happened a few times	seldom			
19.3	27.5	33.7	12.0	7.5	2.6	1.1	523
82. Do you often do the opposite of what your parents want?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
32.1	30.4	27.2	7.9	2.3	2.2	1.0	529
113. Do you feel criticized by your parents?							
almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
66.7	17.8	10.3	3.4	1.7	1.6	0.9	522
117. How often is what your parents think the thing that you care about most of all?							
very often	fairly often	sometimes	it's happened a few times	seldom			
8.9	21.1	39.8	18.9	11.4	3.0	1.1	493

Table A5b. Follow up-questions to parental-relation items.

Ratings				N
1	2	3	4	
114. Do you think their criticism is (cf. item 113)				
I don't feel criticized	fair	unfair	sometimes fair, sometimes unfair	
49.9	11.2	8.8	30.1	511

Table A6. Disturbances in relations to teachers.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
9. Do you like your teachers?							
all or almost all	most of them	some of them	hardly anyone	none			
13.8	39.3	41.0	5.5	0.4	2.4	0.8	529
23. Do you feel defiant against your teachers?							
hardly anyone	against some of them	against most of them	against almost all	against all			
67.0	28.8	2.5	1.3	0.4	1.4	0.6	521
44. Do you think your teachers are fair to you?							
all or almost all	most of them	some of them	hardly anyone	none			
30.1	44.4	21.9	3.4	0.2	2.0	0.8	529
72. Do you think your teachers like you?							
all or almost all	most of them	some of them	hardly anyone	none			
20.9	39.7	33.3	4.9	1.1	2.3	0.9	526
81. Do you think that your teachers understand you?							
all or almost all	most of them	some of them	only someone	none			
12.0	32.0	40.4	12.2	3.4	2.6	1.0	525
96. Do you usually talk back to your teachers?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
31.7	31.2	26.6	6.8	3.6	2.2	1.1	526
111. Do you think that your teachers are against you in particular?							
none	hardly anyone	some of them	most of them	all or almost all			
44.7	39.8	13.8	1.7	0	1.7	0.8	523

Table A7. Disturbances in relations to peers.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
2. How well do you and your peers understand each other?							
very well	fairly well	neither well nor badly	fairly badly	very badly			
46.2	42.8	9.5	1.5	0	1.7	0.7	528
5. How often do you feel angry and irritated with your peers?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
14.6	34.7	39.8	9.1	1.9	2.5	0.9	528
12. Do you feel shy and uncertain when you are with your peers?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
64.4	23.1	9.3	2.5	0.8	1.5	0.8	528
28. Do you trust your peers?							
totally	quite a lot	some	not much	not at all			
36.8	42.9	14.4	4.9	0.9	1.9	0.9	527
36. Do you feel like an outsider when you are together with your peers?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
50.9	32.1	11.8	3.2	2.1	1.7	0.9	527
52. Do you have or have you ever had a best friend?							
both have had before and have now	have now, but have not had before	have had before, but do not have now	have never had but want to have	have never had and do not want to have			
71.6	6.3	17.4	1.7	2.9			522
59. Do you usually get tired of your peers quickly?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
53.6	31.1	12.7	1.9	0.8	1.7	0.8	528
64. Do you think that your peers are unfair to you?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
49.1	31.8	13.8	3.6	1.7	1.8	0.9	528

table cont.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
74. Is it usually difficult for you to make friends?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
43.8	31.1	20.6	3.2	1.3	1.9	0.9	528
80. Is it important for you that your peers agree to do things that you have suggested?							
not important at all	not so important	fairly important	important	very important			
6.5	47.4	36.4	8.0	1.7	2.5	0.8	525
83. How often are you displeased with your peers?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
28.9	40.8	23.6	5.1	1.5	2.1	0.9	529
95. Do you think your peers like you?							
much	fairly much	some	not much	not at all			
27.8	48.5	20.5	2.1	1.1	2.0	0.8	522
98. How often do you quarrel with your peers?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
30.1	43.6	21.8	4.4	0.2	2.0	0.8	528
104. Do you think that your peers are "against" you?							
never or almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
54.2	32.3	10.3	2.9	0.4	1.6	0.8	526
112. Are you afraid that your peers will get tired of you?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
41.0	31.9	18.3	6.1	2.7	2.0	1.0	524
115. Have you ever done something you would really have preferred not to do only to be together with your peers?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
48.6	38.1	11.0	1.5	0.8	1.7	0.8	525

Table A8. Sexuality.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
18. Have you ever really been in love?							
never	once	several times					
10.3	43.0	46.7			2.4	0.7	523
25. Do you think you need to know more about sexual issues?							
nothing more at all	hardly anything more	some more	a fair amount more	very much more			
20.3	50.1	26.9	1.9	0.8	2.1	0.8	527
32. How often do you think about sexual issues?							
seldom	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
23.7	33.6	32.3	8.7	1.7	2.3	1.0	527
53. Do you think sex seems frightening and unpleasant?							
not at all	only a little	some	fairly much	very much			
52.3	33.5	6.8	7.2	0.2	1.7	0.9	526
66. Do you have or have you ever had a steady relation to a boy?							
have now and have had before	have now but have not had before	have had but do not have now	have never had but want to have	have never had and do not want to have			
10.6	8.1	32.8	44.0	4.6			521
84. Have you had sexual intercourse?							
no	once	a number of times					
85.4	2.9	11.8					526
85. If you have had sexual intercourse, have you ever slept with someone the first time you met him?							
have not had sexual intercourse	no	yes, once	yes, a number of times				
80.0	16.0	2.6	1.4				499
91. Are you afraid that you will go further sexually than you really want to?							
never or almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
69.4	17.1	10.8	2.3	0.4	1.5	0.8	520

table cont.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
99. Do you feel sexually less experienced than your peers?							
never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
52.6	27.2	15.9	2.5	1.9	1.7	0.9	523
110. Do you feel that you are popular among boys?							
very much	fairly much	some	very little	not at all			
1.7	9.0	39.3	33.0	16.9	3.5	0.9	521
119. Do you feel sexually more experienced than others of your age?							
never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often			
63.7	21.8	8.2	3.4	2.9	1.6	1.0	523

Table A9. Other items.

Ratings						M	sd	N	
1	2	3	4	5	6				
29. How many evenings a week do you usually spend at home?									
none	1-2	3-4	5-6	all					
4.8	24.6	35.0	26.7	9.0				525	
39. Have you gotten your first period?									
yes	no								
95.0	5.0								525
40. When did you get your first period?									
before 10 years of age	between 10-11 years of age	between 11- 12 years of age	between 12-13 years of age	after the age of 13	have not gotten one yet				
0.8	9.9	25.5	39.2	19.4	5.1			525	
41. How much pain do you have in connection with your periods?									
no pain at all	not much pain	some pain	fairly much pain	very much pain	have not gotten my first period yet				
12.9	31.7	28.1	15.2	8.5	3.7		2.7 ^a	1.1 ^a 520	
65. How important is it for you to do well at school?									
very important	fairly important	some	not especially important	not at all important					
25.8	48.8	17.8	6.3	1.3		2.1	0.9	527	
100. With whom do you prefer to spend your leisure time?									
parents	brothers and sisters	friends	nobody	other, who?					
4.0	3.4	79.1	2.3	11.1				522	
122. Do you ever want to talk to an outsider about your problems?									
never or almost never	it's happened a few times	sometimes	fairly often	very often					
61.1	15.4	17.5	4.2	1.7		1.7	1.0	525	

Note. ^a N=501, excluding girls with rating 6.

Table A10. Questions about living conditions.

Ratings							N
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1. Wich adult(s) do you live with?							
both mother and father	father and stepmother	mother and stepfather	mother	father	foster parents	another, who?	
68.8	1.9	8.2	17.7	1.3	1.3	0.8	526
2. How many sisters do you have?							
none	1	2	3	4 or more than 4			
32.2	40.2	18.7	4.2	4.8			525
3. How many brothers do you have?							
none	1	2	3	4 or more than 4			
30.8	42.9	19.5	5.0	1.7			522
4. Are your parents divorced?							
Yes	No						
28.7	71.3						523
5. If your parents are divorced, how often do you see the parent you are not living with?							
about once/week	about once/two weeks	about once/ month	about once/ semester	less than once/ semester	are not divorced		
9.7	6.5	6.9	3.2	4.1	69.7		465
6. Are you born in Sweden?							
Yes	No, in...						
90.6	9.4						522
7. Where are your parents born?							
Mother				Father			
In Sweden	In another Nordic country	In another country, namely...	N	In Sweden	In another Nordic country	In another country, namely...	N
87.3	2.5	10.0	517	85.3	2.2	12.5	511
8. Do you have your own room?							
No	Yes						
5.7	94.3						526

Table A11. Questions about the questions.

Ratings					M	sd	N
1	2	3	4	5			
1. How difficult do you think the questions were to answer?							
impossible	quite difficult	fairly difficult	fairly easy	very easy	4.0	0.8	523
1.0	4.4	11.3	60.8	22.6			
2. Why was it difficult to answer the questions?							
it was not difficult to answer the questions	it was difficult to understand them	dealt with too "personal" things	dealt with things you have not thought about	because you do not like to answer such questions			502
66.5	8.4	7.8	16.3	1.0			
3. What did it feel like to answer the questions?							
I felt nothing special	I felt uneasy	it was nice	it was boring	it was unpleasant			520
74.4	4.8	13.3	5.2	2.3			
4. How many questions do you think were difficult to answer honestly?							
all	almost all	some	one or a few		3.7	0.7	523
3.1	2.5	18.9	75.5				