



BWRDD PARTNERIAETH RHANBARTHOL
GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES
REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Statistics about the key indicators of mental health in children and young people in North Wales

August 2023

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is available in Welsh.



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Introduction

This piece of work was produced by the North Wales Regional Innovation Coordination Hub in August 2023. It was developed from a piece of work undertaken in March 2023 to help North Wales Children and Young Adult Mental Health Services understand need within our population, and to help them plan and monitor their services. It will form part of the programme of updates to the Population Needs Analysis and a copy will be available on the North Wales Regional Partnership Board's website. We aim to review this bulletin every year and add new data as it becomes available.

Where possible we have looked at the latest data and provided a comparison with what was happening 10 years previously, to help measure changes over time. The time periods that are measured by different data sources do not match. The age range that is defined as 'child' or 'young person' also differs between sources – where possible any denominators (for example population base when working out a percentage) have been matched to the source data.

Estimates of population numbers have been revised following the release of results from the 2021 Census, so what we understand about population trends has changed since the 2022 Population Needs Assessment was published. This means that some numbers, rates and percentages will look significantly different from what we have seen before, and some data sources that we have used previously are no longer considered reliable (in particular projections and forecasts based on past trends).

The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted data continuity and comparability for some datasets – either because data collection changed or stopped altogether, or because people behaved differently and so weren't counted in the same way or in the same places. We have noted where this is likely to have affected the data in this report.

Number of young people in the population

Figure 1: number of young people aged 0-17 in North Wales local authorities

Area	2021 number	2021 percent	2011 number	2011 percent	Change 2011-21
Anglesey	13,150	19.1%	13,500	19.3%	-350
Gwynedd	21,800	18.6%	23,700	19.5%	-1,850
Conwy	20,750	18.1%	21,950	19.0%	-1,200
Denbighshire	19,200	20.0%	19,500	20.8%	-350
Flintshire	30,950	20.0%	32,650	21.4%	-1,650
Wrexham	27,900	20.6%	29,050	21.5%	-1,150
North Wales	133,750	19.5%	140,350	20.4%	-6,600

Numbers have been rounded so may not sum to total.

Percentage is of the total population of the area.

Source: mid-year population estimates, Office for National Statistics

Overall, the number of young people in the population has been decreasing across North Wales in the past decade. In all areas young people also make up a smaller proportion of the population in 2021 than in 2011. Birth rates have fallen in all local authority areas. Net out-migration of young adults in some areas has also had an impact on the number of children, as it reduces the number of women of child-bearing age in the population. These are trends that are likely to continue in the future.

Key influences on mental health

There are a some social, economic and environmental factors which are considered key influences – or determinants – of mental health. Looking at data about some of these factors can give us a better understanding of what may impact on young people’s mental health in North Wales, how we may need to plan our support services, and what we may need to address in the wider environment to help with these issues.

Care experienced young people

We do not have figures for the total number of care experienced young people in the population – only for those who are currently being cared for, or for those care leavers who are still in contact with or known to social services. This measure is

therefore an undercount. Contact generally diminishes with time since the end of duty of care responsibilities, so this measure is most likely to be a better count of care experienced young people at the younger end of the age range.

Figure 2: care experienced young people (aged 16-24), March 31 2022

Area	Number	Rate
Anglesey	80	14.0
Gwynedd	165	11.9
Conwy	140	14.7
Denbighshire	80	9.3
Flintshire	110	7.7
Wrexham	150	11.7
North Wales	725	11.2
Wales	3,960	12.2

Numbers have been rounded so may not sum to total.

Rate is per 1,000 young people aged 16-24 in the population of the area.

Sources: Performance and Improvement Framework for Social Services, StatsWales; mid-year population estimates, Office for National Statistics.

For the most recently reported period (March 2022) there were about 725 care experienced young people aged between 16 and 24 in North Wales who were known to social services. This is a rate of 11.7 for every 1,000 people in that age group in the region, which is lower than the all-Wales average. Rates vary significantly across the region.

Under the current definition, figures for this measure have only been collected for two years, so it is not possible to provide any time series analysis.

Children and young people who are receiving care and support from social services

Local authorities in Wales keep a register of the number of young people who are receiving care and support from social services.

The numbers of children who are looked after have generally been on an upward trend, increasing by about 300 across North Wales since 2017 (when the current reporting system was adopted). The number of children who are not looked after and are not on the child protection register has decreased by a similar amount in the same time period.

Figure 3a: young people receiving care and support from social services in North Wales, at March 31 2021 - number

Area	Children who are looked after	Children on the child protection register but not looked after	Other children receiving care and support	All children receiving care and support
Anglesey	160	65	100	320
Gwynedd	280	95	375	750
Conwy	205	30	305	540
Denbighshire	175	40	95	305
Flintshire	245	110	135	495
Wrexham	360	130	220	710
North Wales	1,425	470	1,230	3,120

Figure 3b young people receiving care and support from social services in North Wales, at March 31 2021 – rate per 1,000 young people aged 0-17

Area	Children who are looked after	Children on the child protection register but not looked after	Other children receiving care and support	All children receiving care and support
Anglesey	12.1	4.9	7.6	24.3
Gwynedd	12.8	4.4	17.2	34.4
Conwy	9.9	1.4	14.7	26.0
Denbighshire	9.1	2.1	5.0	15.9
Flintshire	7.9	3.6	4.4	16.0
Wrexham	12.9	4.7	7.9	25.5
North Wales	10.7	3.5	9.2	23.3
Wales	11.7	4.0	11.9	27.6

Categories are exclusive. Children who are looked after may also be on the child protection register, but are only counted in the looked after children category in this table.

Numbers have been rounded so may not sum to total.

Rate is per 1,000 young people aged 0-17 in the population of the area.

Due to independent rounding of numbers at local authority level, the calculated North Wales figures will be affected by compound rounding errors, so should be treated with caution.

Sources: Children Receiving Care and Support Census, StatsWales; mid-year population estimates, Office for National Statistics.

About 20% of children who are receiving care and support from local authority social services in North Wales are known to have mental ill health (Source: mental health

status of children receiving care and support, Children Receiving Care and Support Census, StatsWales).

Young people living in deprived areas

Using the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) to identify those areas which fall into the top 10% most deprived in Wales, we can see that in North Wales about 9,900 young people aged 0-17 and 3,250 aged 18-24 live in deprived areas. This is about 7.4% of all 0-17 year olds in the region and 6.6% of 18-24 year olds.

Denbighshire has a particularly high proportion of young people living in deprived areas. This is mainly concentrated in Rhyl, which contains the two highest ranked (most deprived) lower super output areas in Wales, and has a total of six LSOAs in the top 10% most deprived in the country.

Figure 4: young people living in the 10% most deprived lower super output areas in North Wales, 2021

	Aged 0-17 number	Aged 0-17 percent	Aged 18-24 number	Aged 18-24 percent
Anglesey	250	2.0%	150	3.1%
Gwynedd	1,050	4.9%	300	2.7%
Conwy	1,200	5.8%	500	7.2%
Denbighshire	3,100	16.3%	1,000	16.3%
Flintshire	1,300	4.1%	450	4.2%
Wrexham	2,950	10.6%	850	9.0%
North Wales	9,900	7.4%	3,250	6.6%

This table uses 2021 Census population estimates rather than the more recently published mid-year population estimate used in figure 1, as this is the only currently available source for small area populations.

Lower super output areas (LSOAs) are geographical areas used by the Office for National Statistics and other official bodies to report on statistics at the small area level.

Numbers have been rounded so may not sum to totals.

Percentage is of the total number of people in that age group in the area.

Sources: 2021 Census, Office for National Statistics; Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019, Welsh Government

WIMD is the Welsh Government's official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in Wales. It identifies areas with the highest concentrations of several different types of deprivation. Area measures of deprivation can mask individual experiences – not everyone who suffers deprivation lives in an area of high deprivation, and not everyone living in an area of high deprivation will experience deprivation. The index

works best in more urban contexts, and can underestimate deprivation in rural or less densely populated areas.

Because of this, it is worth looking at other measures of poverty and deprivation to get a fuller picture of how this may be affecting young in the region. Though it only looks at the income domain of deprivation, figures for children living in low income households may present additional insight into the number of children living with poverty.

Figure 5: children aged 0-15 in low income families in North Wales, 2021/22

Area	Children in in-work families	Children in out-of-work families	All children in low income families - number	All children in low income families - percent
Anglesey	2,900	600	3,450	29.7%
Gwynedd	4,750	950	5,700	29.3%
Conwy	4,300	950	5,250	28.7%
Denbighshire	3,800	950	4,750	28.2%
Flintshire	4,900	1,350	6,300	23.0%
Wrexham	5,250	1,250	6,500	26.3%
North Wales	25,900	6,050	31,950	27.0%

Relative low-income is defined as a family in low income Before Housing Costs (BHC) in the reference year. A family must have claimed Child Benefit and at least one other household benefit (Universal Credit, tax credits, or Housing Benefit) at any point in the year to be classed as low income in these statistics.

Numbers have been rounded so may not sum to totals.

Percentage is of the total number of people in that age group in the area.

Source: children in low income families (relative measure), Department of Work and Pensions

The proportion of children living in low income families in North Wales is high when compared to the Great British average of 24.7%. Figures saw a significant spike in 2020/21 as a result of the impact of Covid-19 on earnings and employment, and though they have since fallen numbers have been on a generally upward trend since 2016/17. Across North Wales, more than four out of every five children identified by this measure are in in-work families.

Young carers

Census data is the most comprehensive data we have about unpaid care providers at the unitary authority level. It is however likely to be an undercount as it relies on self-identification, and we know that unpaid carers do not always recognise themselves as being in that role.

The question about the provision of unpaid care was only asked of people aged 5 years old or over, so we do not have data about very young carers.

The 2021 Census suggests there were about 4,410 young carers in North Wales (1,200 aged 5-15 and 3,210 aged 16-24). This was a ratio of 14.0 out of every 1,000 young people aged 5-15 and 49.8 out of every 1,000 young people aged 16-24.

Figure 6: number of young carers in North Wales 2021

Area	Aged 5-15 Number	Aged 5-15 Rate	Aged 16-24 Number	Aged 16-24 Rate	Total aged 0-24 Number
Anglesey	120	14.0	300	52.0	420
Gwynedd	150	10.7	515	36.2	665
Conwy	190	14.3	520	55.9	710
Denbighshire	255	20.8	455	53.5	710
Flintshire	280	14.2	725	52.5	1,005
Wrexham	205	11.5	690	54.5	900
North Wales	1,200	14.0	3,210	49.8	4,410
Wales	5,325	13.5	17,235	52.4	22,555
England & Wales	84,135	10.8	272,730	43.2	356,865

Numbers have been rounded so may not sum to totals.

Rate is per 1,000 people in that age group in the area.

Sources: 2021 Census of Population, Office for National Statistics

The rates vary across the region, perhaps reflecting differences at a local level in services to support young carers which raise awareness of what might count as caring responsibilities. Rates for young carers aged 16-24 are likely to be lower in Gwynedd due to the term-time student population – who are concentrated within this age group – being less likely to be undertaking caring duties whilst away from the family home.

[Data in this section is an update on an information pack produced for the North Wales Regional Partnership Board Children's Sub-Group for their meeting on 22 October 2022, which focussed on young carers.](#)

Young people not in education, employment or training

Data for this measure comes from the Annual Population Survey which is a sample survey. Sample sizes are not statistically robust enough to provide a unitary authority level analysis, and have limited reliability even at a North Wales regional level. The latest update was released in April 2023.

The latest data for North Wales is for the two-year period from quarter 4 2020 to quarter 4 2022. It estimates an average of 13.4% of people aged 16-24 are not in education, employment or training. This estimate has a 2% confidence margin which means the range could reasonably be expected to be anywhere between 2% higher or lower. The 13.4% is estimated to be equal about 8,700 young people aged 16-24.

Young people from ethnic minority backgrounds (including Gypsy, Traveller and Roma backgrounds)

Data from the 2021 Census shows the following ethnic breakdown of the population for young people aged 0-17.

Children from Gypsy, Traveller or Roma families and backgrounds are recognised as being particularly at risk of poor mental health, so are specifically listed within the tables even though they are a relatively small population.

The number of young people from ethnic backgrounds other than white Welsh or other white British identities was relatively low in North Wales in 2021 – 10,700 in total across the region, or 8.0% of the population aged 0-17. This compared to the Welsh average of 12.5% or an average of 32.1% for England and Wales. Wrexham is the North Wales unitary authority area with the greatest ethnic diversity amongst young people, and Anglesey has the least diversity. The mixed or multiple ethnic group identity is the largest group other than white Welsh or other white British in all areas and for the region as a whole.

Figure 7a: ethnic group of people aged 0-17 in North Wales, 2021 – numbers

Ethnic group	Anglesey	Gwynedd	Conwy	Denbigh-shire	Flint-shire	Wrexham	North Wales
Total population aged 0-17	13,215	21,875	20,785	19,150	30,975	27,960	133,960
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	12,680	20,425	19,220	17,720	28,435	24,755	123,235
White: Gypsy, Irish Traveller or Roma	20	35	35	25	60	50	220
White: other white	125	320	395	275	1,245	1,415	3,780
Mixed/multiple ethnic group	250	485	615	500	685	735	3,265
Asian/Asian British	90	355	385	485	340	540	2,205
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	15	95	50	50	75	240	520
Other ethnic group	45	155	90	95	125	225	730

Numbers have been rounded so may not sum to totals.

Source: 2021 Census of Population, Office for National Statistics

Figure 7b: ethnic group of people aged 0-17 in North Wales, 2021 – percent

Ethnic group	Anglesey	Gwynedd	Conwy	Denbigh-shire	Flint-shire	Wrexham	North Wales
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	95.9%	93.4%	92.5%	92.5%	91.8%	88.5%	92.0%
White: Gypsy, Irish Traveller or Roma	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%
White: other white	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Mixed/multiple ethnic group	1.9%	2.2%	2.9%	2.6%	2.2%	2.6%	2.4%
Asian/Asian British	0.7%	1.6%	1.9%	2.5%	1.1%	1.9%	1.6%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	0.1%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.9%	0.4%
Other ethnic group	0.3%	0.7%	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%	0.8%	0.5%

Percentage is of the total number of people in that age group in the area.

Source: 2021 Census of Population, Office for National Statistics

The number and proportion of people aged 0-17 from ethnic background other than white Welsh or other white British identities has increased since the 2011 Census, when the proportion was 5.4% or about 7,550 people. The majority of this growth was in the 'other white' group and the mixed/multiple ethnic group.

Sexual orientation and gender identity

There is no reliable data about the sexual orientation or gender identity of young people, particularly at a local level. There are national surveys which provide data about these topics – including the 2021 Census and the Annual Population Survey– but they do not ask these questions of people under the age of 16.

[A research bulletin is available which looks at the 2021 Census topic summary data about sexual orientation and gender identity for people aged 16 and over in North Wales.](#)

Extrapolating the latest national estimates from the Annual Population Survey (2020) gives the following estimate of population breakdown by sexual identity for 16 to 24 year olds in North Wales.

Figure 8: estimate of sexual identity of young people aged 16-24 in North Wales

Sexual identity	UK estimated percentage 2020	Extrapolated for North Wales population 2021
Heterosexual or straight	87.3%	56,300
Gay or lesbian	2.7%	1,750
Bisexual	5.3%	3,400
Other	1.3%	850
Don't know or refuse	3.4%	2,200

'Other' means that the respondent did not consider themselves to fit into the heterosexual or straight, bisexual, gay or lesbian categories.

Numbers have been rounded so may not sum to totals.

Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics; mid-year population estimates, Office for National Statistics

Welsh Government's Local Authority School Counselling Services data collection records up to three main presenting and predominant issues for each of the young people who access the service in North Wales. In 2020/21, for the region as a whole transgender issues were recorded as a main presenting issue for 21 young people,

and as a predominant issue for 24 young people. Sexual issues (including orientation) was recorded as a main presenting issue for 15 young people, and as a predominant issue for 15 young people. (Note: each of these totals may include the same people). Data is available at unitary authority level, but numbers are very small.

Young migrants and refugees

Though the number of unaccompanied young asylum seekers in North Wales is relatively low, it looks as though numbers have risen since we reported in the Population Needs Assessment, which used September 2021 data. (Data was not available for all areas for the PNA report.)

Figure 9: number of young asylum seekers in North Wales, November 2022

County	Looked after children	Care leavers	LAC 2021
Anglesey	5	5	<5
Gwynedd	10	<5	0
Conwy	<5	<5	0
Denbighshire	10	0	
Flintshire	10	<5	0
Wrexham	<5	5	
North Wales	40	10	<5

Figures for care leavers only counts those unaccompanied young asylum seekers who, after reaching the age of 18, choose to stay in contact with the local authority.

Numbers have been rounded so may not sum to totals.

The North Wales totals are for those areas for which we have data.

Source: Local authority data collection

Where we have this data (it is not available for all local authorities) we can see that unaccompanied young asylum seekers who are looked after children:

- are mostly aged 15-17.
- usually started using our services within the last two years.
- may be in a foster care setting, in supported lodgings, or living semi-independently.
- may be placed out-of-county.

Unaccompanied young asylum seekers who are care leavers:

- range in age from 18 to 25.
- may have been using our services for more than five years.
- are likely to be living in accommodation under their own tenancy.

The countries of origin for unaccompanied children seeking asylum include:

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Egypt
- Eritrea
- Ethiopian
- Iran
- Iraq
- Morocco
- Pakistan
- Sudan
- Syria
- Ukraine
- Vietnam

We do not have this data for all local authorities.

Consideration also needs to be given to young refugees who arrive as part of a family. As well as established programmes such as the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Scheme and the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Programme, 2022 also saw the introduction of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. Though they may not need the same level of social care as unaccompanied young asylum seekers they will still have contact with welfare services provided in the area, including health, education and housing services.

Data at a North Wales level is incomplete but national figures suggest 25%-40% of people settled through these schemes are aged under 18.

From the data we have from Wrexham and Gwynedd we know there are:

- about 130 children aged under 18 settled under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and known to local authorities.

- about 60 children aged under 18 within other schemes (including children born after settlement).

[Data in this section was taken from an information pack produced for the North Wales Regional Partnership Board Children’s Sub-Group for their meeting on 16 December 2022, which focussed on young refugees and asylum seekers.](#)

Young people in the criminal justice system

Figure 10: children aged 10-17 who were cautioned or sentenced, by supervising Youth Justice Service – change over a 10 year period

Youth Justice Service	2011/12 number	2011/12 rate	2021/22 number	2021/22 rate	Change 2011/12 to 2021/22
Conwy and Denbighshire	235	12.0	60	3.2	-175
Flintshire	135	8.9	40	2.8	-90
Gwynedd Môn	185	11.0	45	2.8	-140
Wrexham	205	16.2	35	2.6	-170
North Wales	755	11.8	180	2.9	-575

Data is for financial year (April-March)

Numbers have been rounded so may not sum to totals.

Rate is per 1,000 people in that age group in the area.

Source: children cautioned or sentenced data, Youth Justice Board

Figure 11: children aged 10-17 who were cautioned or sentenced, by supervising Youth Justice Service – age and gender breakdown 2021/22

Youth Justice Service	All	Aged 10-14	Aged 15-17	Girls	Boys
Conwy and Denbighshire	60	10	50	10	50
Flintshire	40	<5	40	5	35
Gwynedd Môn	45	10	35	5	40
Wrexham	35	10	25	<5	30
North Wales	180	35	150	25	155

Data is for financial year (April-March)

Numbers have been rounded so may not sum to totals.

Source: children cautioned or sentenced data, Youth Justice Board

The latest available data shows 180 young people aged between 10-17 who are being supervised by the Youth Justice Service in North Wales. This was about three

young people for every 1,000 people aged 10-17 in the population. This data is for the 2021/22 financial year (April to March).

Numbers and rates have fallen significantly in the last ten years, and this appears to be a sustained trend.

Girls make up a much lower proportion of young offenders than boys – figures fluctuate considerably from area to area and between time periods due to the relatively low numbers, but in 2021/22 girls made up about 14% of young offenders across North Wales as a whole.

Data is also available about the ethnic group of children known to the Youth Justice Service. The numbers are very small at individual Youth Justice Service area level so have not been represented in the tables above. For 2021/22 there were about 170 young people from a White ethnic background, about five for who we do not know their ethnicity, and about five in total from all other ethnic backgrounds. This is around 3% of all young people known to Youth Justice Services and is a little lower than the 5% or so that we would expect if proportions were to match the ethnic make-up of children in North Wales as seen in the 2021 Census.

Separate datasets are available about the type of offences committed and about outcomes for the young people.

Appendices

Figure 11: list of North Wales lower super output areas (LSOAs) in the 10% most deprived in Wales

LSOA code	LSOA name	Local authority name	WIMD 2019 overall rank
W01000016	Holyhead Town	Isle of Anglesey	168
W01000091	Marchog 2	Gwynedd	167
W01000098	Peblig (Caernarfon)	Gwynedd	155
W01000127	Colwyn 2	Conwy	190
W01000144	Glyn (Conwy) 2	Conwy	20
W01000187	Tudno 2	Conwy	78
W01001928	Abergele Pensarn 2	Conwy	70
W01000198	Denbigh Upper/Henllan 1	Denbighshire	170
W01000228	Rhyl East 3	Denbighshire	133
W01000236	Rhyl South West 1	Denbighshire	57
W01000237	Rhyl South West 2	Denbighshire	19
W01000239	Rhyl West 1	Denbighshire	2
W01000240	Rhyl West 2	Denbighshire	1
W01000241	Rhyl West 3	Denbighshire	11
W01000304	Holywell Central	Flintshire	152
W01000333	Sealand 2	Flintshire	158
W01000336	Shotton Higher 2	Flintshire	98
W01000353	Cartrefle 2	Wrexham	156
W01000409	Plas Madoc	Wrexham	99
W01000413	Queensway 1	Wrexham	9
W01000414	Queensway 2	Wrexham	80
W01000425	Wynnstay	Wrexham	45
W01001931	Smithfield 3	Wrexham	163

W01000353 was merged with W01000352 in 2021 to form a new LSOA W01001969

Source: Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019, Welsh Government

LSOAs are named for the electoral division (ward) they sit within – these names are currently based on the pre-2022 electoral divisions, and are currently being reviewed.