



Generation Unlimited: the Well-being of Young People in Barbados

FACT SHEET

July 2021

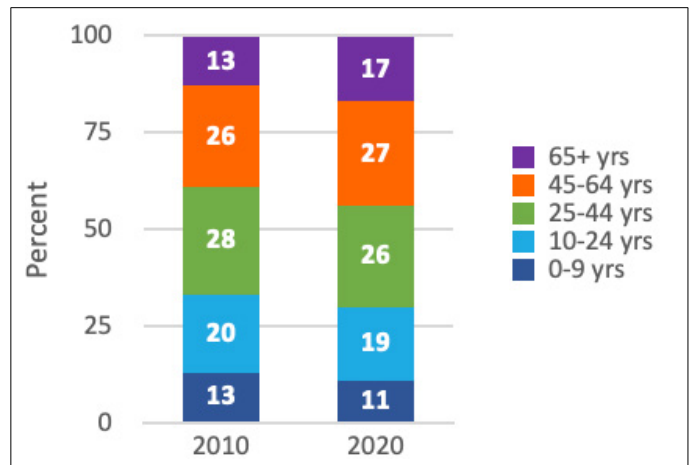
The age from 10-24 is an important transitional period in the life cycle of young people: from dependence to independence; from childhood to adulthood; from primary to secondary school and onto tertiary education and/or the labour market; and from pre-pubescence to sexual maturity. Few young people are likely to pass through this period without some reversals or feelings of uncertainty, such as: not doing well at school; examination failures; parental discord; problems with friends and partners; and/or difficulties in finding their first job. In most cases, these experiences will be transitory and have little influence on their future lives. But for others, these experiences can be more severe and have long-lasting impacts on one's well-being, on that of their families and, if widespread, on national, social and economic development. In 2020 and 2021, the COVID-19 global pandemic and its economic and social impacts have disrupted nearly all aspects of life for all groups in society, but young people, and especially for vulnerable youth, the COVID-19 crisis poses considerable risks to their education, employment, mental health and disposable income. While young people will shoulder much of the long-term economic and social consequences of the crisis, their well-being may be superseded by short-term economic and equity considerations.

Young People in Barbados



In 2020, according to UN population projections, there were around 55,000 young people (10-24 years) in Barbados; about 3,800 (7%) fewer than in 2010. Young people accounted for about 19% of the population. This proportion is likely to decrease in the future as the population continues to age and fertility remains constant or declines.

Population distribution by age groups



Source: Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC).



EVERY YOUNG PERSON HAS A FAIR CHANCE IN LIFE

Ending poverty – or its dramatic reduction – is an overarching objective of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Adolescence and young adulthood are times when growing up in poverty can hamper educational performance, increase the risk of unemployment and lead to risky behaviours, such as substance abuse, involvement in gangs and other criminal activities. These can have a detrimental impact on the physical, emotional and social development of young people, threatening their life chances and risking the creation of inter-generational poverty.

Poverty and Young People



Poverty is at the heart of a considerable amount of vulnerability, social discrimination and exclusion: Households with inadequate income are more vulnerable to changing economic, social and environmental circumstances and to reduced income-earning potential. People in poverty also tend to live in inadequate and unsanitary housing in less desirable neighbourhoods, which are especially vulnerable to weather-related damage. They are also more prone to live in communities with high rates of crime and violence, which can be unsafe environments for adolescents and young people.

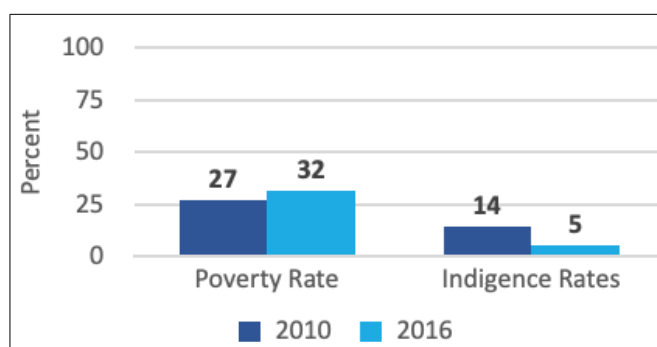
Poverty is a problem in the ECA even though countries and territories have reached a level of development that should allow a significant proportion of people living in poverty to escape poverty.

In 2016, 18% of people in Dominica were living in poverty and 5% were indigent (indigence entails living in a level of poverty in which real hardship and

deprivation are suffered and comforts of life are wholly lacking). Barbados's poverty rate is lower than the average of 23% for the Eastern Caribbean, but the indigent rate is higher than the average of 2%.

In 2016, 32% of young people in Barbados were living in poverty, which is higher than the poverty rate for adults age 25+ years (21%). Poverty rates increased for all age groups between 2010 and 2016. In 2016, young people accounted for one quarter of the poor population in Barbados, which was slightly lower than in 2010, due to changes in the demographic structure.

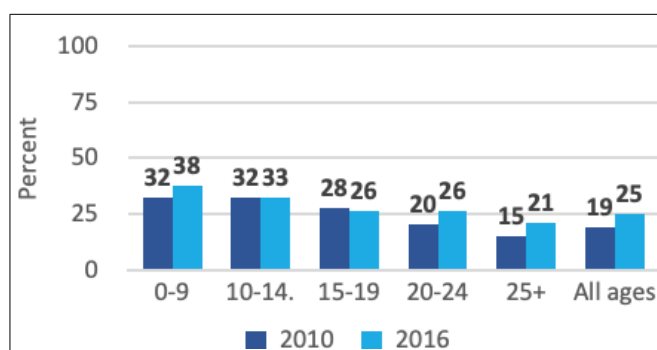
Poverty and indigence rates, 10-24 years



Source: UNICEF (2020). *Generation Unlimited: The Well-being of Young People in Barbados*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados

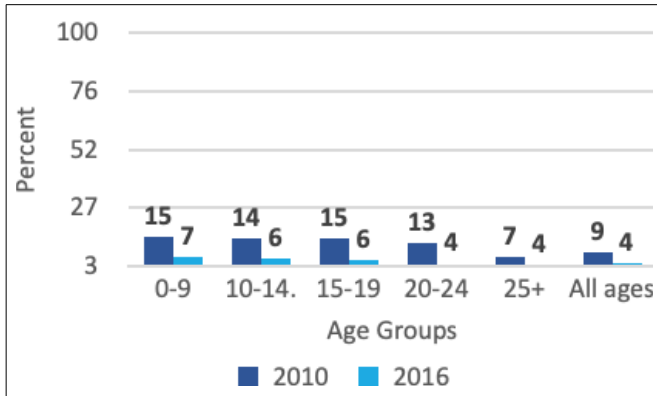
There was nearly a threefold decrease from 14% in 2010 to 5% in 2016 in the severe poverty or indigence rate among young people (indigence entails living in a level of poverty in which real hardship and deprivation are suffered and comforts of life are wholly lacking). As a result, in 2016, young people accounted for under a quarter of the severely poor population compared to 30% in 2010.

Poverty rates by age groups



Source: UNICEF (2020). *Generation Unlimited: The Well-being of Young People in Barbados*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados

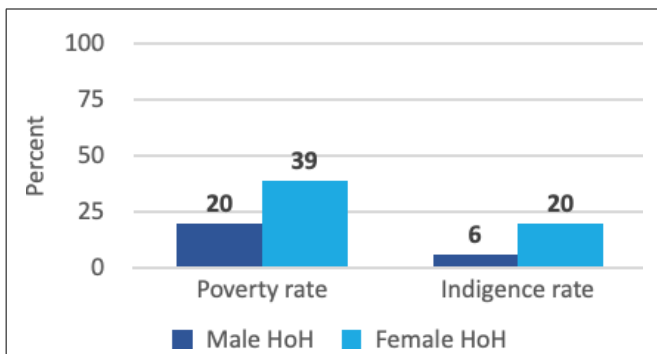
Indigence rates by age groups



Source: UNICEF (2020). *Generation Unlimited: The Well-being of Young People in Barbados*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados

Adolescents (ages 10-19) living in female-headed households were nearly twice as likely to live in poverty (39%) and three times more likely to live in indigence, compared to adolescents living in male headed-households (20% and 6% respectively).

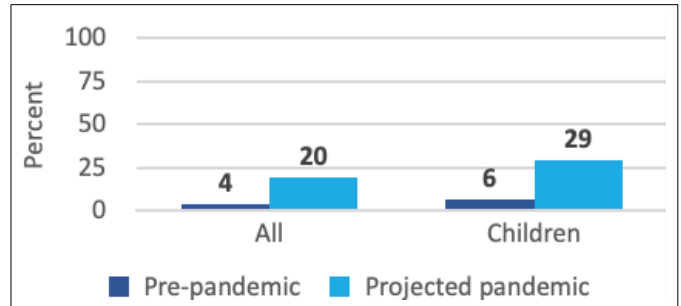
Adolescent poverty and indigence rate by sex of HoH



Sources: OECS Commission/UNICEF (2017). *Child Poverty in the Eastern Caribbean Area, Final Report*. OECS Commission/UNICEF: Castries, Saint Lucia

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been projected that severe poverty rates will increase in the ECA, impacting the societies at-large, but children in particular. For children in Barbados, the severe poverty is projected to increase nearly fivefold to 20% for all and to 29% for children, as result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Projected changes in severe poverty due to COVID-19

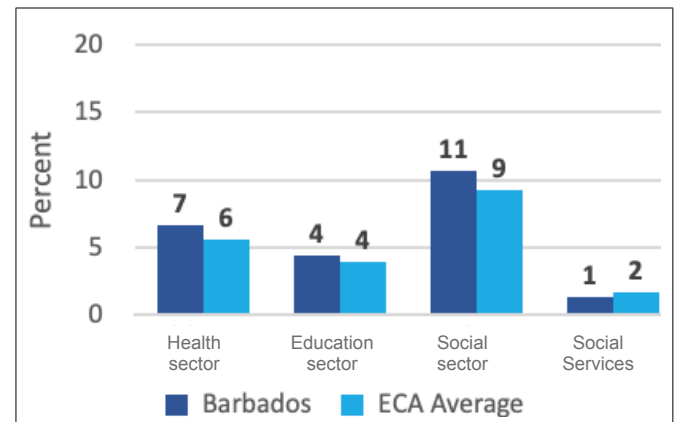


Source: USAID/UNICEF (2020). *The socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on children and young people in the ECA*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados, p. 13.

Public Finance for Children and Young People

Public financing varies across sectors – health, education, social protection and social services – that are particularly important to children and young people. Mobilizing national resources for children and young people in Barbados is critical to ensuring a sustainable and equitable impact on their lives.

Public expenditures (% of GDP) allocated to sector (%)



Source: Nabinger, S. (2017). *Review of Social Sector Expenditures in the Eastern Caribbean Area*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados



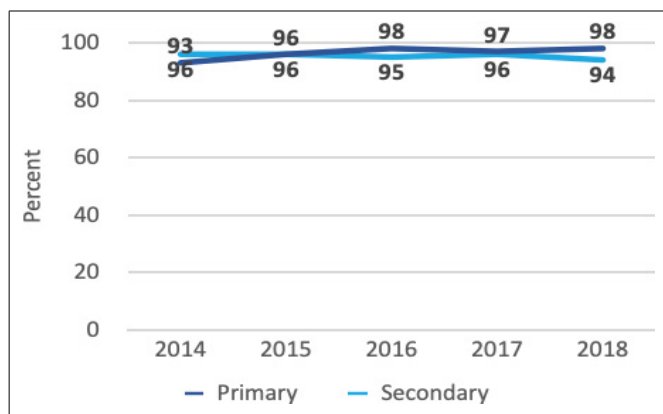
EVERY YOUNG PERSON LEARNS

Access to quality education is crucial if young people are to acquire the knowledge and skills to function in and contribute to society. Experiences at school have far-reaching effects on their development and well-being, encompassing physical and mental health, safety, civic engagement and social development. Education in various forms is a vital prerequisite for combating poverty, empowering young people, protecting them from hazardous and exploitative practices, promoting human rights and democracy and protecting the environment.

Primary and Secondary School Enrolment

In 2018, the primary school enrolment rate approached 100%; the proportion of over-age students in primary schools was 2%. In addition, the secondary school enrolment rate was 94%; the secondary school enrolment rate was higher for girls (97%) than boys (91%). In 2018-2019, 5% of adolescents were out-of-school at the lower secondary level, and 7% of boys and 3% of girls were out-of-school at the upper secondary level.

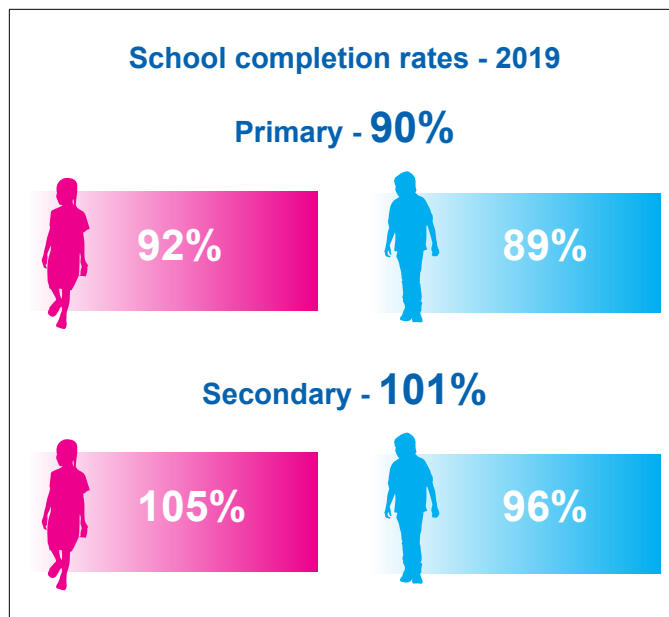
Primary and secondary net enrolment rates



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018.

Primary and Secondary Completion Rates

In 2019, the primary education completion rate was 90% (92% for girls and 89% for boys). That same year, the lower secondary education completion rate was much higher at 101% (105% for girls and 96% for boys).

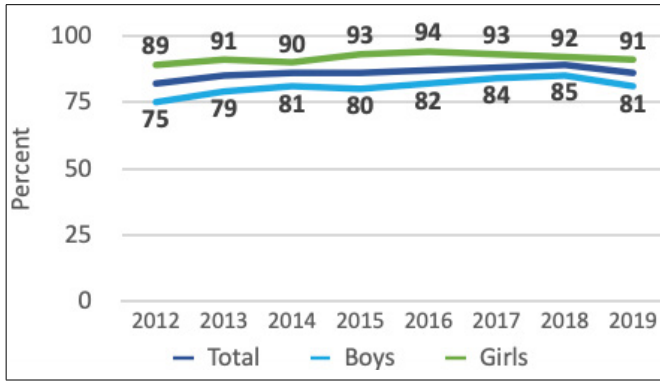


Skills and Learning Outcomes

The overall goals of the education system are twofold: (i) to provide students with the skills necessary for them to maximize their life chances; and (ii) to provide the country with the expertise needed for its sustainable development. These goals cannot be achieved through high school attendance rates alone, but depend to a large extent on education outputs. Education system outputs can be examined through trends in grade-specific examination results, particularly in English and mathematics, which lay the foundation for achieving a sound education.

Performance rates in BBSE English have improved consistently since 2012. In 2019, 86% of student achieved a satisfactory performance in English. The gender differences are notable with a 10-percentage point difference between girls (91%) and boys (81%) in a satisfactory performance in English.

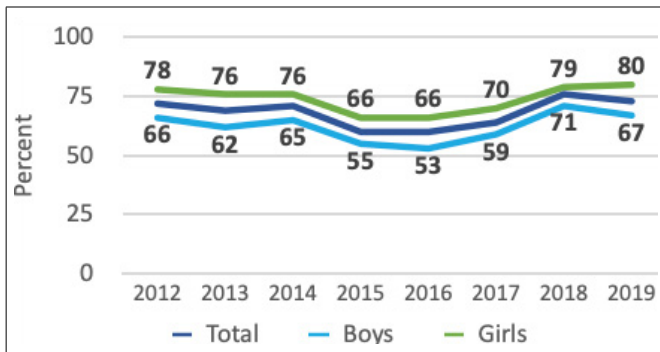
BSSE performance rates in English by gender



Source: METVT, 2019

In 2019, 73% of students achieved a satisfactory performance in BBSE mathematics. Results have generally improved since 2015, but there is no obvious long-term trend. Girls have consistently outperformed boys, with a 13-percentage point difference between girls and boys in a satisfactory performance in mathematics in 2019.

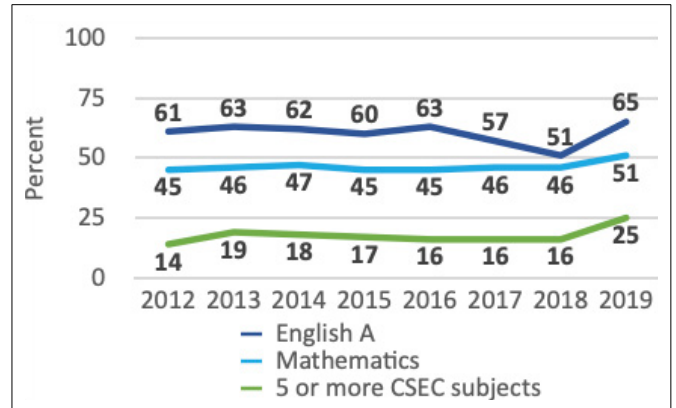
BBSE performance rate in mathematics by gender



Source: METVT, 2019

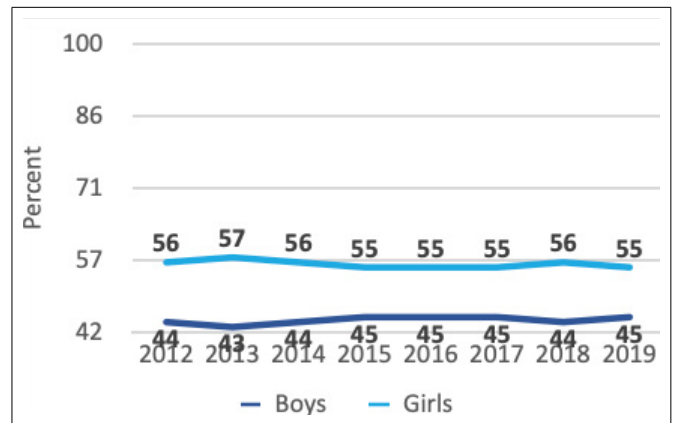
CSEC sitting rates have changed little over the past 10 years. In 2019, 65% of candidates sat for English A exam, 51% sat for mathematics exams and 25% sat for five or more CSEC subjects. From year-to-year, girls were more likely than boys to sit for CSEC exams.

CSEC sitting rates by subject



Source: METVT, 2019

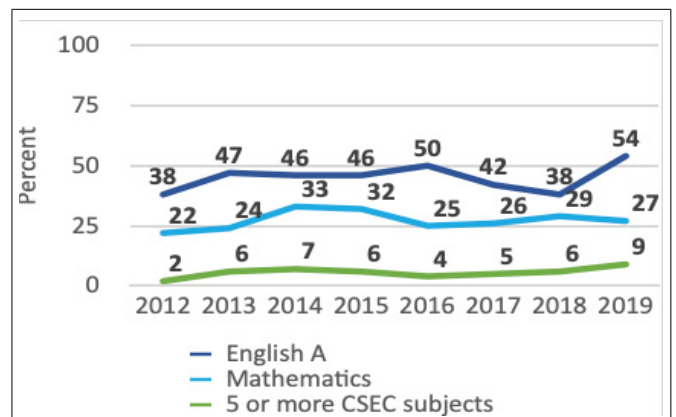
CSEC sitting rates by gender



Source: METVT, 2019

CSEC passing rates have been higher from year-to-year in English A, than passing rates in Mathematics. Passing rates for five or more CSEC subjects have been consistently low from year-to-year.

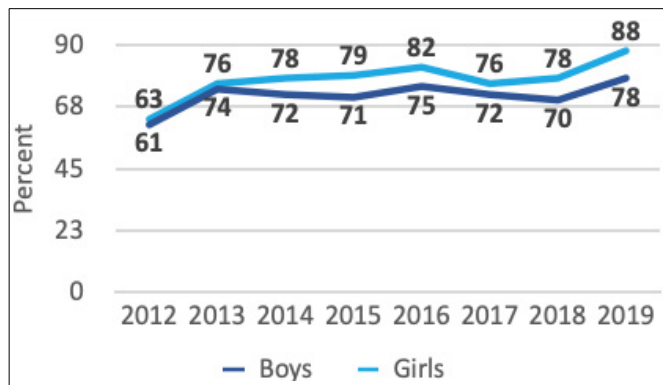
CSEC passing rates by subject



Source: METVT, 2019

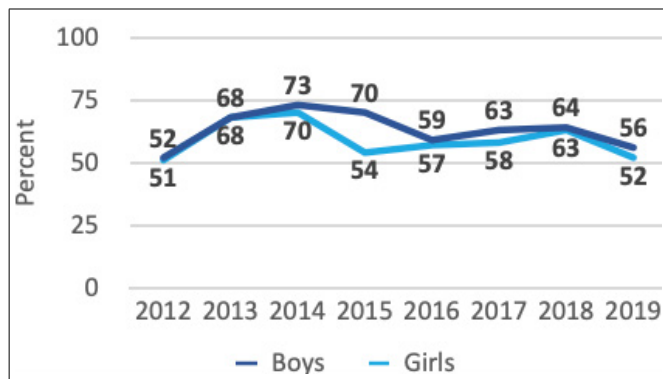
From year-to-year, girls have had higher CSEC passing rates in English A than boys; whereas boys have sometimes had higher CSEC passing rates in mathematics.

CSEC passing rates in English A by gender



Source: METVT, 2019

CSEC passing rates in mathematics by gender



Source: METVT, 2019

Trained Teachers

A trained teacher is one who has received at least the minimum organized pedagogical teacher training pre-service and in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in Suriname. Training of teachers can have a great impact on student learning outcome; yet this only happens when the teachers apply new knowledge and skills in their classroom.

In Barbados, in 2018-2019, the proportion of trained teachers was 75% at the primary education level and 52% at the secondary education level. This is similar to the average for OECS Member States and the Eastern Caribbean Area at the primary education level

(72% and 70% respectively), however, lower than the average for the secondary education level 60% and 61% respectively).

Trained teachers



Tertiary Education

Access to tertiary education for youth is crucial to learning outcomes and skills development, human development of a population and poverty reduction in a country. Summary data on transition rates and net enrolment rates, as well as numbers of youth in tertiary education are limited. In 2011, the gross enrolment rate for tertiary education was 65% in Barbados; higher than the ECA average (44%) and the average for Caribbean Small States (23%).

EVERY YOUNG PERSON PARTICIPATES

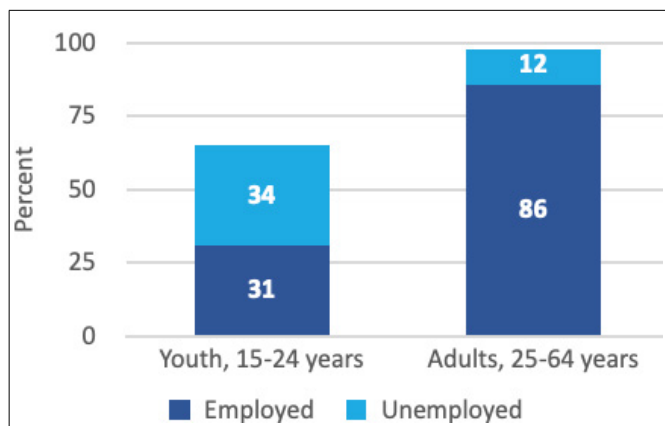
For young people, the path to a successful future goes through quality education that equips them – and empowers them – with the skills they need to thrive into today’s work force. This transition is not always so straight forward, especially when young people are unable to find suitable jobs. This can have a negative impact on their self-esteem, mental health and well-being, contribute to engagement in anti-social or risk behaviours, and can be a financial strain on the household and affect their relationship with family members.

Youth Employment and Unemployment

In the OECS subregion, the total youth population (ages 15-24) is estimated at 103,000, of which 34% were employed in the labour force and 26% were unemployed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; in comparison, 85% of adults ages 25-64 were employed and 9% were unemployed prior to the pandemic.

In Barbados, 31% of youth were employed in the labour force, compared to 86% of adults; whereas 34% of youth and only 12% of adults were unemployed.

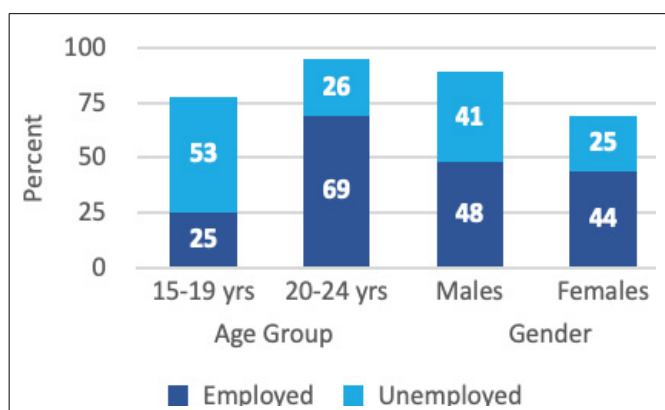
Labour force participation by age groups



Source: OECS/UNICEF/ILO (2020). *Youth Unemployment in Barbados and the OECS Area: A Statistical Compendium*. OECS Commission: Castries, Saint Lucia

Youth ages 20-24 (69%) were nearly three times more likely to be employed than youth aged 15-19 (25%); whereas, youth ages 15-19 (53%) were twice as likely to be unemployed as youth aged 20-24 years (26%). In terms of gender, male youth (48%) were slightly more likely to participate in the labour force than female youth (44%); however, male youth (41%) were far more likely to be unemployed than female youth (25%).

Youth labour for participation by age and gender



Source: OECS/UNICEF/ILO (2020). *Youth Unemployment in Barbados and the OECS Area: A Statistical Compendium*. OECS Commission: Castries, Saint Lucia

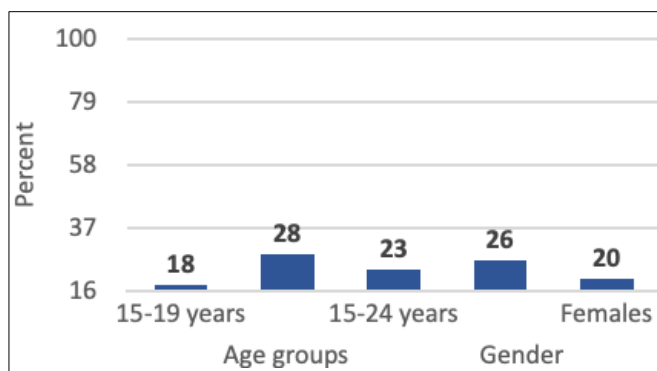
Youth Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)

The NEET indicator is the percentage of youth population that are neither working, nor in education or training. It includes those youth who are unemployed and those who are inactive for other reasons. This indicator is the result of a recognition that unemployment is strictly defined as those who are not in employment and are actively seeking work and are available for work. As a consequence, this definition excludes a potentially significant proportion of the youth population who are not working, but are not actively seeking employment for a variety of reasons.

Youth NEETs are likely at-risk from the adverse impacts of unemployment, including marginalisation, exclusion and engagement in anti-social behaviours. The need to incorporate this group of youth into the analysis of youth issues led to the NEET indicator becoming the sole youth-specific target for post-2015 SDGs.

In Barbados, 47% of youth are in education, 31% are employed and 23% are NEETs. Youth NEETs are more likely to be aged 20-24 (28%) than 15-19 years (18%); they are also more likely to be male (26%) than female (20%).

Youth NEET rate by age groups and gender



Source: OECS/UNICEF/ILO (2020). *Youth Unemployment in Barbados and the OECS Area: A Statistical Compendium*. OECS Commission: Castries, Saint Lucia

It has been projected that the youth unemployment rate can be expected to double due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the majority of unemployed youth live with their families, this can only further exacerbate the financial situations of families/households and increase the risks of volatile family situations. Further

analysis is needed to understand the short- and long-term impacts of COVID-19 on youth unemployment and labour force participation.

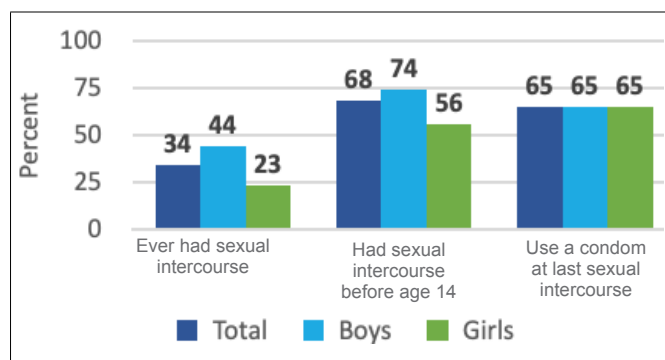
EVERY YOUNG PERSON THRIVES

The rights of adolescents and youth to survive, grow and develop are enshrined in international conventions, including the CRC. In keeping states are obliged to recognize the special health and development needs and rights of young people, including adolescents and youth. Young people will thrive when they continue to eat well, are stimulated and cared for at home and in their communities, and enjoy access to quality education that gives them opportunities to learn and grow into adulthood.

Sexual Behaviours

Data on the sexual behaviours of adolescents in Barbados are limited to adolescent ages 13-15 and three indicators – ever had sexual intercourse, had sexual intercourse before the age of 14, and condom use during the last act of sexual intercourse. Among adolescents ages 13-15, 34% ever had sexual intercourse; boys (44%) were nearly twice as likely as girls (23%) to have had sexual intercourse. Among adolescents who ever had sexual intercourse, 68% did so before 14 years of age; boys (74%) were more likely to have sexual intercourse before age 14 than girls (56%). Among sexually active adolescent, 65% used a condom at last sexual intercourse.

Sexual behaviours among adolescents ages 13-15



Source: Barbados GSHS, 2011

Exposure to HIV/AIDS

In the ECA, data related to HIV/AIDS are limited. Among data that are available, Barbados had approximately 3,000 people (age 15+ years) who were living with HIV/AIDS, of which two-thirds are males. The estimated prevalence rate is 1.6%, which puts Barbados on par with other Caribbean Small States. In addition, an estimated 18% of HIV cases remain undiagnosed and there are around 100 new cases of HIV and 50 new cases of AIDS annually. Over 40 percent of HIV persons are not on ART.

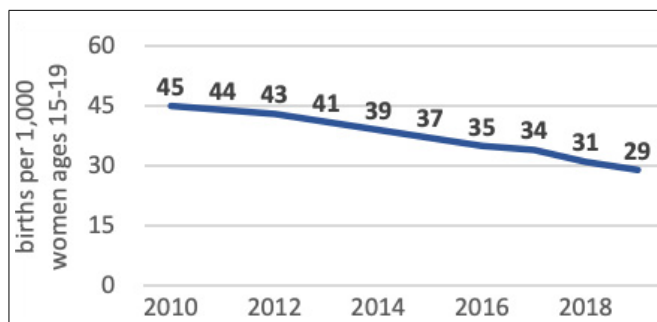
From 1990 to 2019, Barbados reported fewer than one percent of females and males ages 15-24 were HIV positive. In addition, 100 young people ages 15-24 were newly infected with HIV.

In 2016, UNAIDS reported that Barbados was among one of the Caribbean countries that was closest to achieving control of HIV; this was validated by the Pan American Health Organisation's conclusion that Barbados had successfully eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Thus, Barbados was on track to achieve the 90-90-90 targets of 90% living with HIV knowing their HIV status, 90% knowing their HIV-positive status accessing ART, and 90% on ART having suppressed viral loads.

Teenage Pregnancy and Childbirth

There has been a steady decrease in the adolescent fertility rate in Barbados from 45 per 1,000 births in 2010 to 29 per 1,000 births among women ages 15-19 in 2019.

Adolescent fertility rate

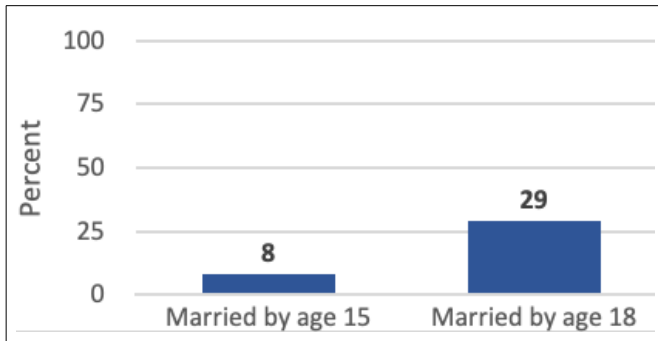


Source: United Nations Population Division, World Population Prospects.

Early Marriage

SDG 5 includes a target aimed at eliminating all harmful practices, including child, early and forced marriage. In 2012, 8% of women ages 20-24 were first married or in a union before the age of 15; whereas 29% of women ages 20-24 were married before the age of 18.

Women ages 20-24 first married before ages 15 and 18



Source: Barbados MICS, 2012

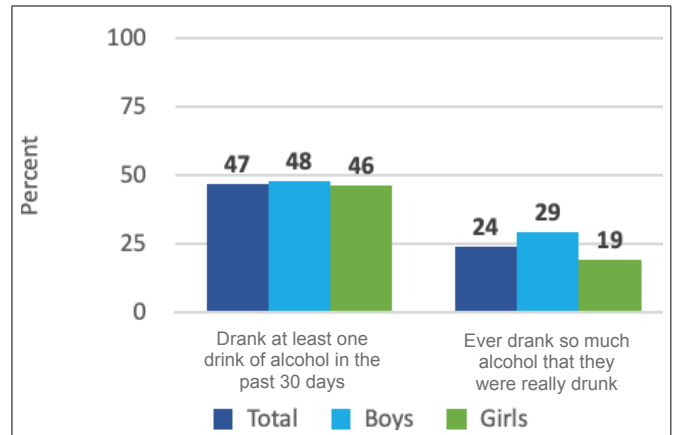
Girls who marry before the age of 18 are more likely to experience domestic violence and less likely to remain in school. As a result, they have worse economic and health outcomes than their unmarried peers, which are eventually passed down to their own children. In addition, girls who marry as children often become pregnant during adolescence, when the risk of complications during pregnancy and childbirth increases – for themselves and their infants. The practice can also isolate girls from family and friends and exclude them from participating in their communities, taking a heavy toll on their physical and psychological well-being. Because child marriage impacts a girl's health, future and family, it imposes substantial economic costs at the national level, too, with major implications for development and prosperity.

Alcohol and Tobacco Use

Alcohol and tobacco use typically have their onset in adolescence and young adulthood, and are major risk factors for adverse health and social outcomes, as well as for non-communicable diseases later in life. During adolescence and young adulthood, young people are less able to anticipate the negative effects of alcohol and tobacco use on their health and well-being, including risks of abusing such substance and developing addictions.

In Barbados, 47% of adolescents ages 13-15 drank at least one drink of alcohol in the past 30 days, and 24% ever drank so much alcohol that they were really drunk. Boys (29%) were more likely than girls (19%) to ever drink so much alcohol that they were really drunk.

Adolescents ages 13-15 who drank alcohol

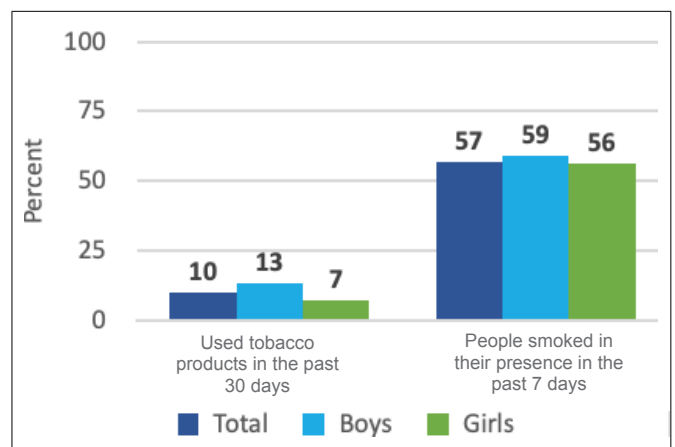


Source: Barbados GSHS, 2011

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable disease and death, and nearly all tobacco use begins during adolescents and young adulthood. Adolescents and youth who use tobacco products are at higher risk for developing nicotine dependence and might be more likely to continue using tobacco into adulthood.

Although 57% of adolescents had people smoke in their presence during the past 7 days, only 10% used any tobacco product in the past 30 days.

Adolescents ages 13-15 who used tobacco products



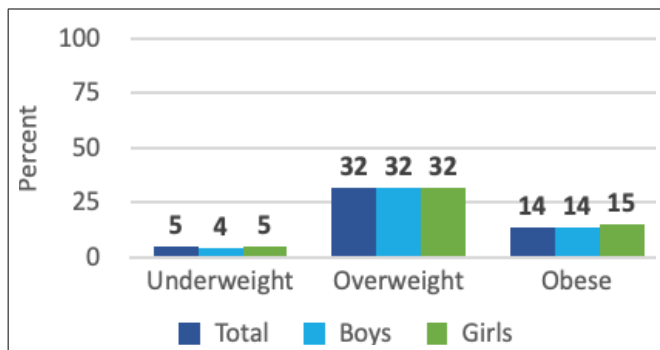
Source: Barbados GSHS, 2011

Nutrition

Adolescence is the period of development that begins at puberty and ends in early adulthood, and is characterized by a rapid pace of growth that is second only to that of infancy. Rapid physical growth during adolescence creates a high demand for energy and certain nutrients. Nutrition is a critical factor for appropriate adolescent development and an important element for prevention of disease development, especially for chronic disease. Over the past decade, nutrition has been identified as a major global priority, and the increase in worldwide overweight and obesity has been highlighted.

In Barbados, only 5% of adolescents ages 13-15 were underweight (≤ 2 SD from median for BMI), whereas 32% were overweight ($>+1$ SD from median for BMI by age and sex) and 14% were obese ($>+2$ SD from median for BMI by age and sex).

Underweight and overweight adolescents ages 13-15



Source: Barbados GSHS, 2011

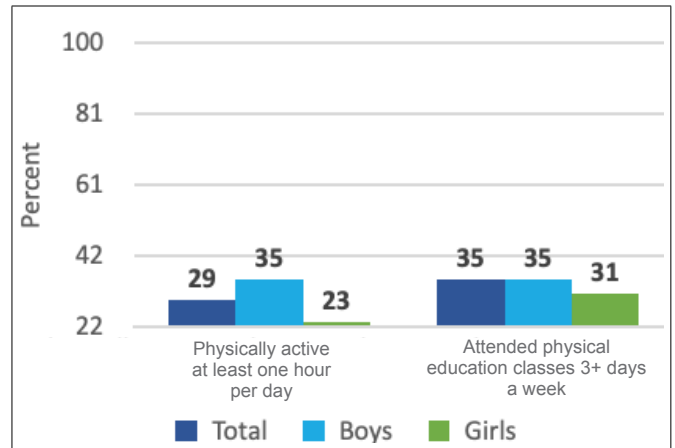
It is notable that 73% of adolescents ages 13-15 reported they drink carbonated soft drink one or more times per day. In the ECA, soft drink consumption was highest among adolescents in Barbados. The consumption of soft drinks with high sugar content and acidity can have harmful effects on oral and general health (e.g., diabetes, high blood pressure and other non-communicable diseases).

Physical Activity

Regular physical activity in adolescence promotes health and fitness; thus, it is important to provide young people with opportunities and encouragement to participate in physical activities that are appropriate

for their age and are enjoyable. Adolescents should engage in at least one hour or more of moderate to vigorous aerobic physical activity each day, and muscle and bone-strengthening physical activity at least three days a week.

Physical activity among adolescents ages 13-15



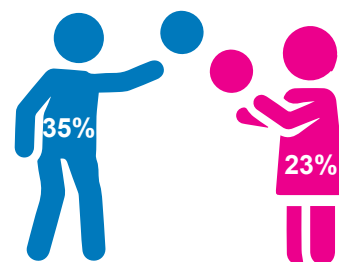
Source: Barbados GSHS, 2011



In Barbados, 29% of adolescents ages 13-15 were physically active at least one hour per day; boys (35%) were more physically active than girls (23%). In addition, 35% of adolescents attended physical education classes three or more days a week.

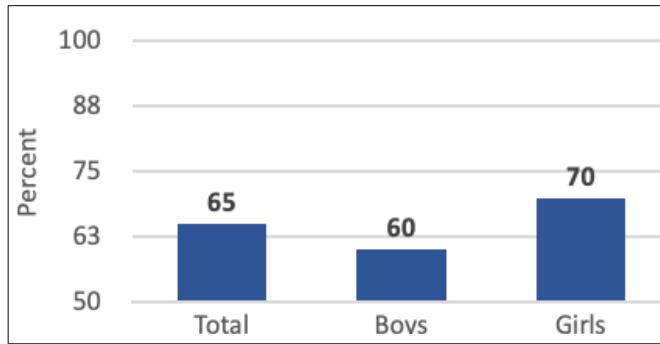
Physically active 1+ hours/day

13-15 years of age - 29%



At the same time, 65% of adolescents ages 13-15 were physically inactive, i.e., spend three or more hours per day sitting and watching television, playing computer games or talking with friends, when not in school or doing homework during a typical or usual day. Girls (70%) were more likely than boys (60%) to spend three or more hours per day sitting.

Adolescents ages 13-15 who spent 3+ hrs per day sitting



Source: Barbados GSHS, 2011

Mental Health

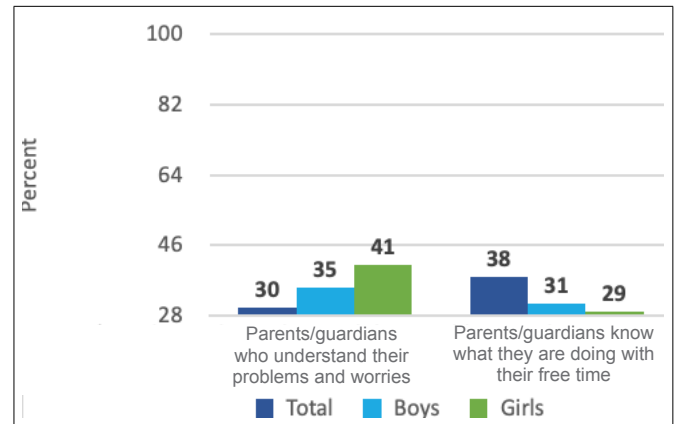
Most adolescents have good mental health, however, physical, emotional and social changes that occur during adolescence, coupled with exposure to poverty, physical and/or sexual violence, harsh parenting, and peer bullying can make adolescents vulnerable to mental health problems. Other risk factors that contribute to stress during adolescence include the quality of one's home life, relationships with peers, pressure to conform to peers, exploration of sexual and/or gender identity, and negative impacts of social media. Some adolescents are at greater risk of experiencing mental health problems because they experience stigmatisation, discrimination and exclusion, and lack access to quality support and mental health services.

Parental and peer relationships are very important to adolescent mental health. Teenagers with friendship and close ties to their parents/guardians tend to be more adaptive to stress, report being happier due to an increased feeling of uniqueness, and are likely to do better academically. In addition, they tend to have higher self-esteem and self-confidence and may be more assertive.

In Barbados, only 6% of adolescents ages 13-15 reported they had no close friends. At the same time, only 30% of adolescents had parents/guardians who

understood their problems and worries, and 38% had parents/guardians who knew what they are doing with their free time.

Adolescent's age 13-17 with involved parents

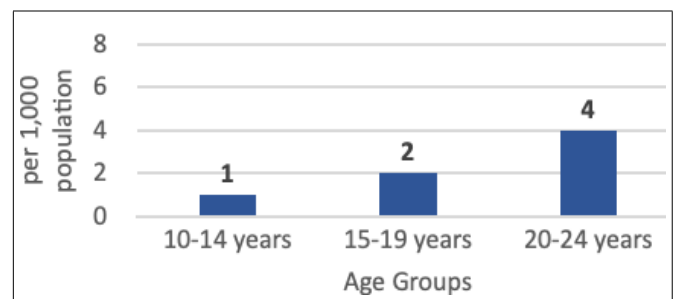


Source: Barbados GSHS, 2011

Mortality of Young People

In Barbados, the probability of young people dying varies by age. The probability of mortality is highest among youth ages 20-24 (4 per 1,000 youth) and lowest among adolescent ages 10-14 (1 per 1,000 adolescents).

Probability of dying among young people by age group



Source: Estimates developed by the UN Inter-agency Group for child Mortality Estimation (UNICEF, WHO, World Bank, UN DESA Population Division).

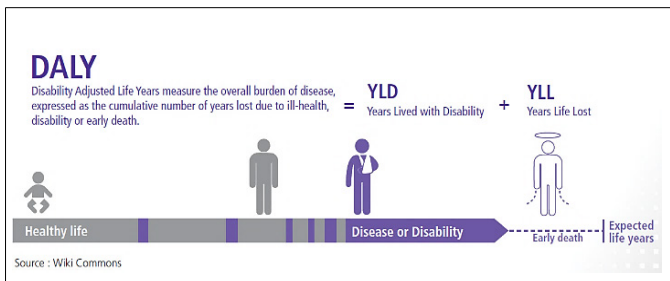
The leading causes of death among adolescents ages 10-19 is noncommunicable diseases (NCDs, 61%) and injuries (32%); whereas only 7% of deaths were related to communicable, maternal, perinatal and nutritional conditions. The leading causes of mortality varied by gender.

Adolescents ages 10-19 leading causes of mortality	
Boys	Girls
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leukaemia • Intimate partner violence • Brain and nervous system cancers • Road injury • Congenital anomalies • Kidney cancer • Asthma • Drowning • Cardiomyopathy, myocarditis, endocarditis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leukaemia • Congenital anomalies • Ovary cancer • Road injury • Cardiomyopathy, myocarditis, endocarditis • Lower respiratory infections • Anxiety disorders • Maternal conditions • Whooping cough • Interpersonal violence

Source: UNICEF Adolescent Health Dashboards, 2020

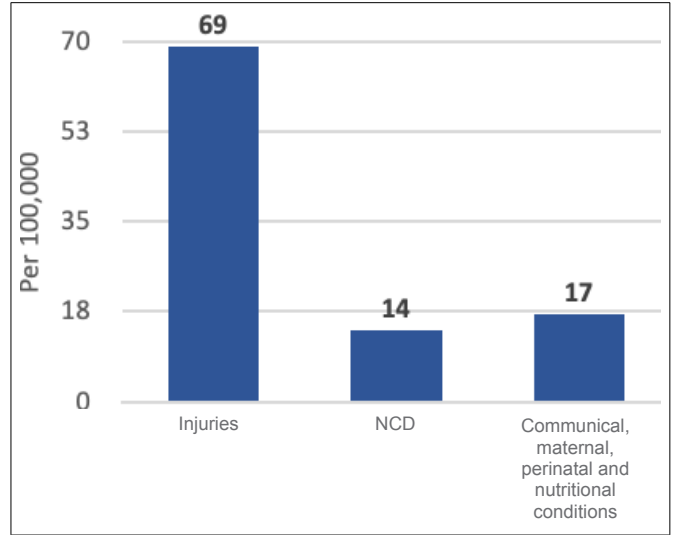
Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs)

The disability-adjusted life year (DALY) is a summary measure of overall disease burden, expressed as the number of years lost due to ill-health, disability or early death. DALYs were developed in the 1990s by the World Bank and World Health Organisation (WHO) as a measure of the global impact of disease on individual illness status, i.e., a way of quantifying the global burden of disease and a way of comparing the overall health and life expectancy across countries. DALY combines information about morbidity and mortality and is expressed in terms of numbers of healthy years lost.



In Barbados, NCD was the main cause of DALY at 69 per 100,000, followed by communicable, maternal, perinatal and nutritional conditions (17 per 100,000) and injuries (14 per 100,000). The leading causes of DALYs varied by gender.

DALY by cause among adolescents ages 10-19



Source: UNICEF Adolescent Health Dashboards

Leading causes of DALYs, adolescents ages 10-19	
Boys	Girls
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child behavioural disorders • Intimate partner violence • Neonatal conditions • Road injury • Asthma • Iron-deficiency anaemia • Congenital anomalies • Leukaemia • Neonatal conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leukaemia • Congenital anomalies • Neonatal conditions • Depressive disorders • Anxiety disorders • Road injury • Migraine • Iron-deficiency anaemia

Source: UNICEF Adolescent Health Dashboards, 2020

National Policies/Plans on Child/Adolescent Health

Barbados has adopted some national policies and plans on child and adolescent health, such as those related to NCDs, physical activity and healthy foods, alcohol and tobacco, and mental health.



National policies and plans on child/adolescent health		
Operational, multi-sectoral national NCD policy, strategy or action plan that integrates several NCDs and their risk factors	Green	
National adolescent health programme	Red	
Operational policy/strategy/action plan to reduce physical inactivity	Green	
National policy to prohibit the selling of unhealthy foods and sweetened beverages in or close to schools	Red	
National policy/laws designating an appropriate minimum age for purchase or consumption of alcoholic beverages	Green	
National policy/law to prohibit sale of tobacco products to minors	Green	
Plan or strategy for child and/or adolescent mental health	Red	
Colour Code	Yes	Green
	No	Red
	Unknown	Grey

Source: UNICEF Adolescent Health Dashboards, 2020

Barbados has some user fee exemptions for adolescents as it relates to accessing health and well-being services, including sexual and reproductive health, mental health and substance abuse services.

User fee exemptions for adolescents using health and well-being services		
Contraceptives	Red	
Vaccination for HPV	Green	
Testing and treatment of STIs	Green	
HIV testing and counselling	Green	
Mental health care	Yellow	
Rehab for substance abuse	Green	
Colour Code	Yes	Green
	Yes, for select groups	Yellow
	No	Red

Source: UNICEF Adolescent Health Dashboards, 2020

Barbados does not have legal age limits for unmarried adolescents to access services without parental/legal consent, including sexual and reproductive health, and mental health services. A good practice is for countries to have no legal age limits for unmarried adolescents to use these services.

No legal age limits for unmarried adolescents to access services		
Contraceptive services (except sterilisation)	Red	
HIV testing and counselling	Red	
Mental health services	Red	
Colour Code	Yes	Green
	No	Red

Source: UNICEF Adolescent Health Dashboards, 2020

Barbados also has taxation for sugar-sweetened beverages and alcohol.

Taxation of sugar-sweetened beverages and alcohol		
Sugar-sweetened beverages	Green	
Beer	Green	
Spirits	Green	
Wine	Green	
Colour Code	Yes	Green
	No	Red

Source: UNICEF Adolescent Health Dashboards, 2020

EVERY YOUNG PERSON IS PROTECTED FROM VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION

Violence is a pervasive violation of children's rights. Many children and young people are exposed to violence because they grow up in violent households and communities. Violence occurs in many settings, including the home, school, community and over the Internet. As young people pass through adolescence and become young adults, they begin to spend more time outside their homes and interact more intimately with a wider range of people. These interactions are crucial to their development, but can also expose them to new form of violence and exploitation. These threats can have implications for their physical and mental health lasting into adolescence, young adulthood and older age with indirect, but equally potential severe impact on their families, communities and wider society.

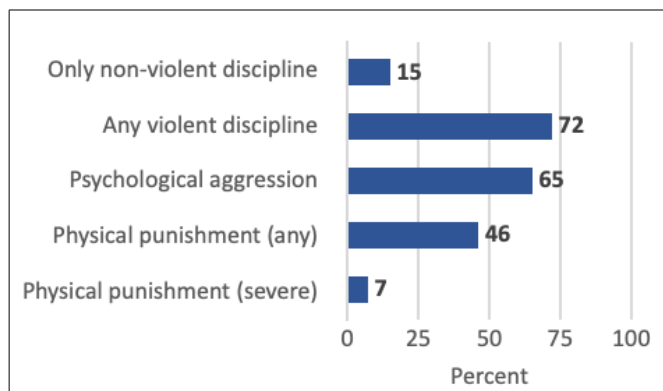
Protection of children and young people from all forms of violence and exploitation are fundamental rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child

(CRC) and its Optional Protocols, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). SDGs include specific targets to: end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children (SDG 16.2); end all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation (SDG 5.2); and eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage (SDG 5.3). Violence against children (VAC), including gender-based violence (GBV), knows no boundaries of culture, socio-economic status, education, income or ethnic origin; however, gender, disability, poverty and national/ethnic origin are some of the risk factors that can place children and young people at increased risk of experiencing violence and exploitation.

Corporal Punishment

In Barbados, in 2012, it was found that 72% of adolescents ages 10-14 experienced violent discipline (46% experienced physical punishment, 7% experienced severe physical punishment and 65% experienced psychological aggression).

Discipline experienced by adolescents ages 10-14

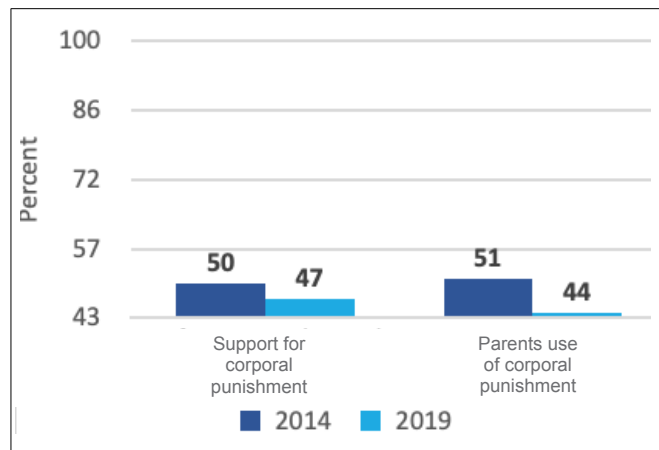


Source: MICS Barbados, 2012

Understanding children’s risks of experiencing corporal punishment requires understanding the extent to which such violence is a social norm tolerated in families and communities. In Barbados, support for corporal punishment has remained fairly consistent from 50% in 2014 to 47% in 2019. A large proportion of adults believe that corporal punishment curbs misbehaviour (55%), instils discipline (51%) and encourages

obedience (40%). Some adults also believe that corporal punishment establishes authority (27%), encourages children to perform well in school (13%) or allows adults to vent frustration (4%).

Support for corporal punishment



Source: Caribbean Development Research Services, (2019). *Social Survey Report*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados.

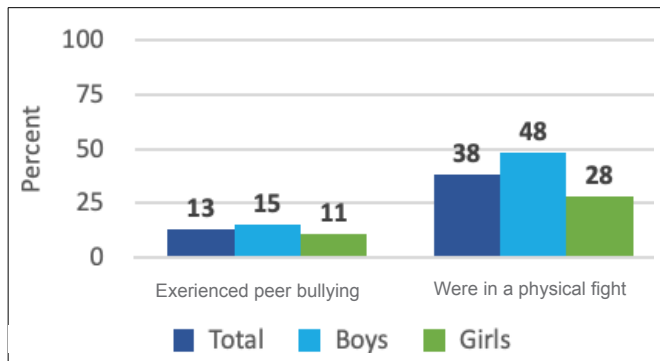
There has been a slight decrease in the proportion of parents who use corporal punishment, from 51% in 2014 to 44% in 2019. In 2019, only 40% of adults supported banning corporal punishment in schools and 23% supported banning corporal punishment in the home.

Peer Violence

Once children enter school, friendships and interactions with peers take on an important role in the lives of children and adolescents. These relationships have the potential to contribute to a child’s sense of well-being and social competence, but are also associated with exposure to new forms of violence and victimisation. Peer violence can take many forms, but available data suggests that bullying by peers and/or schoolmates is the most common form of peer violence.

In Barbados, 13% of adolescents ages 13-15 experienced peer bullying, and 38% were in a physical fight one or more times during the past 12 months. Boys (48%) were more likely than girls (28%) be in a physical fight one or more times during the past 12 months.

Adolescents ages 13-15 who experienced peer violence



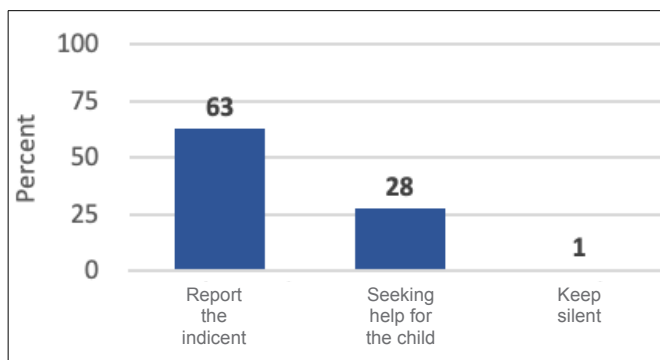
Source: 2011 Barbados GSHS

Child Sexual Abuse

Understanding children’s risks of experiencing child sexual abuse requires understanding the extent to which such violence is a social norm tolerated in families and communities. In Barbados, 58% of adults viewed child sexual abuse as a major problem in the country, whereas 21% viewed it as a minor problem and 1% thought it was not a problem at all. It is notable that nearly 3 out of 5 or 59% of adults engaged in victim-blaming and believed the myth that girls invite sexual abuse by the way they dress.

When asked what they would do if they had knowledge of child sexual abuse, 63% of adults would report the incident of child sexual abuse, 28% would seek help for the child and 1% would remain silent.

Reaction of adults to child sexual abuse

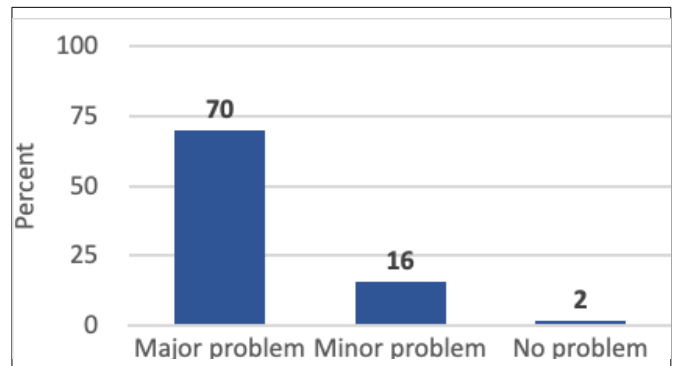


Source: Caribbean Development Research Services, (2019). *Social Survey Report*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados.

Domestic Violence

Understanding children’s risks of experiencing domestic violence requires understanding the extent to which such violence is a social norm tolerated in families and communities. In Barbados, 70% of adults considered domestic violence a major problem in the country; only 16% considered it a minor problem and 2% thought it was not a problem.

Attitudes toward domestic violence in one’s country



Source: Caribbean Development Research Services, (2019). *Social Survey Report*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados.

Child Labour

As a signatory to the CRC and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention on Worst Forms of Child Labour and the Convention on Minimum Age, the Government of Barbados has made efforts to eradicate child labour. Despite such efforts, in 2012, it was found that 2% of children ages 5-14 were involved in child labour. More, specifically 3% of children ages 5–11 worked at least one-hour of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week, and less than 1% of adolescents ages 12-14 worked at least 114 hours of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work. Bear in mind, the data are a decade old and outdated.

Human Trafficking

There is a lack of data and information about trafficking and exploitation of young people in the ECA. In Barbados, documented and undocumented migrants from Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, and Venezuela are at high risk for trafficking, although individuals from Colombia, Dominican Republic, and Saint Vincent and

the Grenadines are increasingly vulnerable. Traffickers often sexually exploit foreign women. There are also anecdotal reports of parents and caregivers exploiting children in sex trafficking. Previously, traffickers operated as part of an organisation; however, more recently, traffickers appear to operate individually. In addition, authorities have noticed an increase in use of social media as a means of recruiting victims of human trafficking.

Child Protection and Justice for Children

Governments across the Caribbean, including the OECS region, have stepped up efforts to improve responses to child protection, particularly for children who are vulnerable to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation, and children in conflict with the law. All ECA countries have ratified the CRC, but in several cases, this was not followed by passing the Optional Protocols needed for an efficient child protection environment.

The Government of Barbados has taken steps to translate international normative frameworks into national law by passing and implementing a Domestic Violence Bill, Status of Children Bill, Child Maintenance Bill and Guardianship, Custody and Access Bill. A Child Justice Bill has been passed, but has not yet taken effect, and a Child Care and Adoption Bill has not yet passed

National child protection legislation		
Domestic Violence Bill		Green
Child Care and Adoption Bill		Red
Child Justice Bill		Yellow
Status of Children Bill		Green
Child Maintenance Bill		Green
Guardianship, Custody & Access Bill		Green
Colour Code	Passed, taken effect	Green
	Passed, not taken effect	Yellow
	Not passed	Red

Source: Caribbean Development Research Services, (2019). *Social Survey Report*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados.

Status of legal abolition of corporal punishment		
Home		Red
Alternative Care		Red
Day Care		Yellow
Schools		Orange
Penal Institutions		Red
Sentencing		Red
Colour Code	Abolished in laws	Green
	Existing law providing partial abolition	Yellow
	Stated policy, ministerial statement or draft law under consideration for abolition	Orange
	Not abolished	Red

Source: Caribbean Development Research Services, (2019). *Social Survey Report*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados.

Barbados has yet to abolish corporal punishment across settings, except a law does exist that partially abolishes the use of corporal punishment in day care settings. There is also a stated policy or draft law under consideration for abolition of corporal punishment in schools.

EVERY YOUNG PERSON LIVES IN A SAFE AND CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

Children need a safe and clean environment to survive, grow and thrive (Article 24, CRC). The availability of safe and clean water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, and the quality of the physical environment in which children, adolescents and youth live, are important determinants of their health and well-being, and learning, safety and ability to take advantage of opportunities to reach their full potential. Inadequate WASH is primarily responsible for the transmission of diseases such as cholera, diarrhoea, dysentery, hepatitis A, typhoid and polio. Diarrheal diseases exacerbate malnutrition and remain a leading global cause of child deaths.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Access to safely managed drinking water and sanitation services, and good hygiene practices are considered core socio-economic and health determinants and

are key for survival and well-being. Everyone has the human right to safe drinking water. When children and young people do not have access to clean water, it negatively impacts all aspects of their lives, including their health, nutrition and education. In Barbados, 98% of the population has access to basic drinking water from an improved source.

Sanitation is about more than toilets, it is about the coupling of behaviours, facilities and services that provide the hygienic environment that children need to fight diseases and grow up healthy. Adequate sanitation is essential to childhood survival and development. Poor sanitation puts children at risk of childhood diseases and malnutrition that can impact their overall development and learning. In Barbados, 97% of the population has basic sanitation services (i.e., use of improved facilities which are not shared with other households).

Good hygiene is critical for preventing the spread of infectious diseases and helping children to lead long and healthy lives. Good hygiene can help to prevent children from missing school, which results in better learning outcomes. For families, good hygiene means avoiding illness and spending less on health care. In some contexts, good hygiene can also secure a family's social status and help individuals to maintain their self-confidence. Good hygiene, however, is difficult to practice without the right knowledge and skills, adequate community support and the belief that one's own behaviour can make a difference. In Barbados, 88% of the population use a hand-washing facility with soap and water.

Mortality Attributed to Unsafe WASH Services

Inadequate WASH are important risks to health, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. The impact of unsafe WASH on death rates of children under five and mothers in the year after childbirth is important to understand; unfortunately, these data are not available. Data are available, however, as it relates to mortality rate attributed to exposure to unsafe WASH (SDG 3.9.2). Barbados has a very low mortality rate attributed to exposure to unsafe WASH at 0.2 per 100,000 population.

Mortality Attributed to Air Pollution

The drivers of air pollution are closely related to those of climate change. In Barbados, mortality rates attributed to air pollution is 31 per 100,000 population; this is lower than the average for Caribbean Small States (42 per 100,000 population).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

There are a number of areas in which concerted and sustained action are needed to ensure the rights of all young people – both girls and boys – are realized in the Barbados. These general observations are being made with the acknowledgement that a complete equity-based analysis of the situation of young people in Barbados depends on the availability of data, particularly disaggregated data on different aspects that might influence their lives, including gender, age, nationality and socio-economic status; such data are not always readily available for Barbados. Data that are available are not real-time; in many cases, the data are several years or a decade old. Outdated data makes it difficult to analyse the current situation of young people and changes over time. Another data challenge was the lack of comparable data with other ECA countries and territories.

Although the Government of Barbados and development partners produce some very meaningful and relevant data related to young people, existing data does not capture the full range of issues that allow for an in-depth assessment of the situation of young people related to health, education, employment, poverty, social welfare, child protection and justice, among others. There appears to be little coordination of effort across ministries/ agencies and sectors to maximize data collection, and to collect and use data in a harmonized manner on an agreed upon set of indicators relevant to young people.

Limited data hinders opportunities for evidence-based programme and policy planning, and proper monitoring and analysis of the situation of young people, but also impacts the ability to plan and allocate resources to advance the needs and rights of young people. In addition, lack of data limits the ability to analyse whether the situation of young people has improved over time in the areas of poverty reduction, education and employment, protection from violence

and exploitation, improved access to health and proper nutrition, and more.

Similarly, sparse historical data limits the ability to do trend comparisons and to analyse whether the situation of young people has improved over time in the areas of poverty reduction, education and employment, protection from violence and exploitation, health and nutrition, and more. Due to the lack of longitudinal data on poverty, education and employment data, it is not possible to analyse whether the socio-economic situation of young people is better, worse or the same as it was five to ten years ago in Barbados.

As it relates to child protection and justice for children, government agencies responsible for child protection and justice for children do not collect and disseminate real-time data. Data that are collected are not disaggregated by age or focused on adolescents or youth, which does not allow for an in-depth assessment of the situation of violence, abuse and exploitation of young people, including gender-based violence.

Gender is a cross-cutting topic in this situation analysis. In some areas, differences between girls and boys are reported on by the government, especially in education; however, in other areas, gender differences are not reported. For instance, more girls than boys are finishing secondary education, while boys are more likely to repeat grades and to drop out of school which relegates them to accepting low-paying and low-skills jobs, impacting their future earning potential.

There is a need to better assess gender inequalities in Barbados, including as it relates to tertiary education, TVET, and employment, as well as exposure to different types of violence, abuse and exploitation, engagement in offending behaviours, and access to protection and social services, and health care. Data are needed to create evidence-based policies and programmes aimed at promoting the rights of young people as called for by the CRC, CEDAW and SDGs.

STRATEGIC THINKING

The idea behind the SDGs is to create a global movement to advance work on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; therefore, governments should frame their development plans and policies for the next years based on this globally agreed

upon development agenda. To maintain an enabling environment conducive to delivering equitable social and economic growth and effective poverty reduction, certain capacities must be put in place or strengthened. These include:

- **Mobilising and channelling resources** to the appropriate sectors at the appropriate time for optimal production
- **Enforcing standards and regulations**, specifically operationalizing legislation and policies identified and/or in draft form
- **Establishing a mix of social partnerships with key actors**, including local councils, civil society, research institutions, the private sector
- **Improving systems for generating, collating and managing data and information** so that it is easily accessible and shared across different agencies and with partners.

This situation analysis of young people in Barbados revealed there is a real need to strengthen cooperation around the needs and rights of young people. This requires a deep dive¹ into how to build better partnerships for smart planning, problem-solving and innovation to accelerate results for young people in the areas of:

- **Education**, with a focus on strengthening the quality of primary and secondary education, which requires improvements to teaching and learning materials, expanded coverage of information and communication technology, and human capital of school personnel.
- **TVET**, with a focus on partnering with the private sector to identify and develop market-driven TVET opportunities for young people.
- **Health and well-being**, with a focus on improving adolescent health, reducing teenage pregnancy and adolescent fertility rates, preventing drug and alcohol abuse, and addressing adolescent mental health to reduce suicide among young people.
- **Social protection**, with a focus on multidimensional child poverty and poverty among adolescents, and the impact of COVID-19 on multidimensional poverty, so that the Eastern

1 A deep dive is a more thorough or comprehensive assessment and analysis of a subject or issue.

Caribbean governments and development partners can more effectively focus on policy efforts to alleviate children’s deprivations and achieve sustainable poverty eradication.

- **Child protection**, with a focus on strengthening child protection systems and community-based services for child victims of violence, abuse and exploitation, and their families, particularly in countries/territories where child protection systems and services are lacking or few and far between.
- **Climate change**, with a focus on strengthening the capacities of the government to respond to climate change and climate crisis, to bring together specialized expertise to strengthen disaster risk reduction (DRR) to ensure that hazards do not become disasters, and to devote greater attention and resources to shielding children and young people from these risks, and to enhance their resilience. As a cross-cutting priority, particular attention must be paid to addressing the magnified risks faced by the most vulnerable children and young people, and to meeting their specific needs.

As Barbados begins planning for a post-pandemic recovery, it is important that the government seizes on the opportunity to “build back better” by creating a more sustainable, resilient and inclusive society. This requires a more risk informed programming and smart planning, problem-solving and innovation to address challenges facing young people.

Strengthening public-private partnerships should be a key intervention. Developing a strategic business for results (B4R) agenda and framework that engages the private sector is crucial; however, it must be coordinated and done in cooperation with both the

private and public sectors, including government partners. B4R and engagement with the private sector must be aligned with public policies and national agendas, including national action plans for the rights of young people.

Assessments and results-based monitoring are needed to better understand how B4R can be implemented in Barbados, and how B4R initiatives that engage the private sector contribute and lead to advancing the rights of young people and accelerating results for young people. This requires understanding how B4R initiatives impact the most vulnerable, including poor and marginalized populations, and contributes to improvements in systems of social protection.

Strengthen Administrative Data on Young People

There are administrative data gaps related to young people; thus, there is a real need for government ministries/agencies and service providers in Barbados to strengthen administrative data collection on young people’s issues. Strengthening administrative data is an important and useful investment in resources.

In recent years, globally, there has been increased interest among governments and development partners to explore ways to strengthen and use existing administrative data to monitor and report on young people’s health, education, employment, poverty, social welfare, protection and access to justice, as well as exposure to violence, exploitation and crime. Administrative data are an important source of information that can often be readily accessed and used to complement prevalence studies on a wide range of subject matter; in particular, young people’s access to education, health care, essential services, protection and justice. Administrative data can also be used to measure progress towards SDG targets and indicators that do not require survey data.

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