

Sun Exposure Survey 2016

Youth Report

September 2016

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REVIEW

This report has not undergone external peer review.

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CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Key results | 5 |
| Introduction | 6 |
| Background | 6 |
| Methodology | 6 |
| Overview of this report | 7 |
| Other reports on the 2016 Sun Exposure Survey | 8 |
| Sun exposure | 9 |
| Sunburn | 11 |
| Sun protection behaviour | 13 |
| References | 22 |

KEY RESULTS

- Nine in 10 youth reported that they went outside for 15 minutes or longer on the weekend.
- Playing sport, walking/tramping and swimming were the most popular outdoor activities for youth. Swimming was the most risky outdoor activity for sunburn.

One in six youth who were outside on the weekend for 15 minutes or more got sunburnt.
- One in six youth (17%) who were outside on the weekend got sunburnt.
- Half of all youth used sunscreen when they were outside. Sunscreen was most commonly applied to the face, nose and neck.
- A third of youth wore a hat when they were outside on the weekend. Boys were more likely to wear a hat than girls.
- One in five youth wore sunglasses most of the time when they were outside on the weekend. Sunglasses were more popular among girls.
- Of all body parts, youth were less likely to use either clothing or sunscreen to protect their hands, forearms (arms below the elbows) and shins (legs below the knees) from the sun when outdoors.
- The body areas that were most often left uncovered by clothing were the hands, forearms and shins. Boys protected their thighs and feet with clothing more often than girls.
- Over three in 10 youth made a choice to stay in the shade when they were outside during the weekend.
- One in 17 youth used the Sun Protection Alert to prompt them about using sun protection.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Health Promotion Agency undertakes the Sun Exposure Survey (SES) every three years. The purpose of this ongoing research is to collect consistent information on attitudes and behaviours towards sun exposure, facilitate comparison with historical survey data, and inform future decision making in the sun safety and skin cancer prevention sector.

The SES was formerly known as the Triennial Sun Protection Survey (TSPS). The TSPS was conducted in 1994, 1997, 2000, 2003 and 2006. The SES was then developed in 2009, following a review of the TSPS. In addition to a number of new questions being included, many of the questions from the TSPS were maintained in the SES, to allow for the continued monitoring of trends over time. The age range of the SES sample was also expanded – previously the TSPS included only adults aged 18 to 54 years and the revised SES included youth aged 13 to 17 years. The first SES was conducted in 2010 and subsequently in 2013. The sample age range was further expanded in 2016 to include older adults (aged 55 years and over).

2,272 interviews with 1,270 adults, 486 youth and 516 older adults.

METHODOLOGY

In 2016, the survey sample included everyone aged 13 years and over. Data collection comprised a total of 2,272 interviews with 1,270 adults (aged 18 to 54 years), 486 youth (aged 13 to 17 years) and 516 older adults (aged 55 years and over). The sample frame was based on Random Digit Dialling (RDD) using Exchange Information Numbers (EINs). Each EIN is attached to a specific geographic area in the country. EINs were combined with a string of four randomised numbers to give the number used for RDD. This method avoids selecting respondents from the White Pages Directory, thereby minimising any selection bias due to incomplete, unlisted and disconnected phone numbers. The use of RDD allows accurate representation of the geographic area surveyed since calls are scattered across the entire area and responses, therefore, reflect the underlying population characteristics.

Quota targets were established based on known population distributions from the 2013 census data. Quota targets were established as 'hard' targets that had to be achieved and 'soft' targets that permitted a variation of +/-10%. Hard targets were set for broad geographic region and soft targets were set for regional council boundary, age group and gender.

Refer to the *Sun Exposure Survey 2016 Methodology Report* (Health Promotion Agency, 2016) for a full account of the methodology used for the SES.

Data Collection

The data collection method was over the telephone. Interviewing was undertaken by Digipoll interviewers, who were trained in the questionnaire prior to commencing the work. The interviews were carried out between 11 January and 21 March 2016 on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday between the hours of 4:00pm and 8:30pm. Sixty-four interviews were conducted on a Thursday following a long weekend.

Interviews were only conducted in areas in which at least one day of the weekend met the 'fine weather' criteria. The fine weather criteria is a scoring system based on regional meteorological data for the weekend where the survey fieldwork takes place. The scoring system takes into account the temperature, sky conditions and Ultraviolet Index. Only those regions with scores greater than 10 on at least one weekend day were eligible for interviews. The interviews were then conducted the following week in relation to the eligible day when a respondent reported being outdoors for 15 minutes or more between 10:00am and 4:00pm.

Weighting

Data from this survey were weighted so that no specific population was over or under-represented in the survey sample. This was done by calculating selection weights and by benchmarking using census data.

Response Rate

Of the 29,683 telephone calls made using RDD, a total of 8,556 respondents were identified as being eligible for inclusion in the survey. Of these eligible respondents, 2,272 completed the survey interviews, yielding a total response rate of 27% ($2,272 \div 8,556$).

OVERVIEW OF THIS REPORT

This report provides an overview of key findings from the 2016 SES on the sample of youth aged between 13 and 17-years-old. It is intended to provide a technical summary of the survey findings rather than a detailed discussion of the results in the context of existing research and literature.

Results are reported for all respondents (total), and also broken down into subgroups of gender (female or male), age group (13 to 15 years or 16 to 17 years), area where the respondent lives (rural or city/town), and skin type (fair or medium/dark). For some of the subgroups there were missing responses, which means some of the subgroup totals do not add up to the total responses.

The fair skin type includes people who described their skin as "very fair" or "fair", the medium/dark skin type includes people who described their skin as "medium", "olive", "dark" or "very dark or black".

Only differences that are statistically significant, for which the p-value is less than 0.05, have been commented on in the text of this report. Statistical significance was measured either by looking at 95% confidence intervals or using t-tests.

Some graphs in this report include error bars that represent the 95% confidence intervals. The caption of the graphs includes a note on the “base” – this relates to the group of respondents for which the responses are being presented (eg, “outside during the previous weekend” or “sunburnt the previous weekend”). The number of respondents in the base is stated in the value of ‘n’ in the caption of each graph and this is an unweighted count.

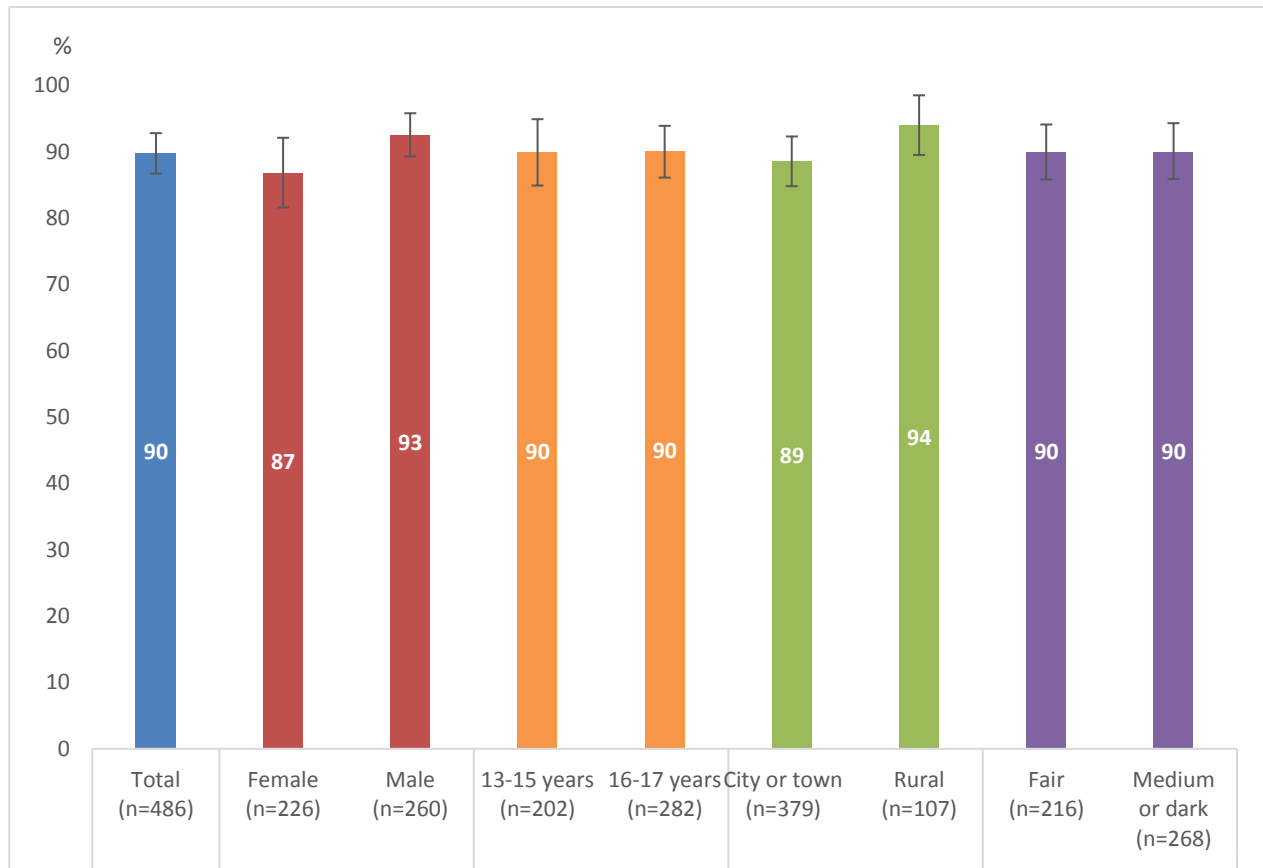
OTHER REPORTS ON THE 2016 SUN EXPOSURE SURVEY

- For a more comprehensive discussion of the results and time trend analysis from the adult sample, see *Sun Exposure Survey 2016: Adult topline time series report* (Trowland et al., 2016).
- For an overview of key findings for the entire sample, see *Sun Exposure Survey 2016: Demographic report* (Health Promotion Agency [HPA], 2016a).
- For an overview of key findings the older adult sample, see *Sun Exposure Survey 2016: Older adult report* (HPA, 2016b).
- For a full account of the methodology used refer to the methodology report: *Sun Exposure Survey 2016 Methodology Report*, prepared by Key Research Ltd (HPA, 2016).
- To review the full set of questions included in the 2016 SES refer to: *Health Promotion Agency Sun Exposure Survey 2016 Questionnaire* (HPA, 2016c).

SUN EXPOSURE

Nine in 10 youth go outdoors on the weekend

Nine in 10 youth (90%) were outside for 15 minutes or more between 10:00am and 4:00pm during the previous weekend. This proportion was not significantly different for any of the subgroups tested.

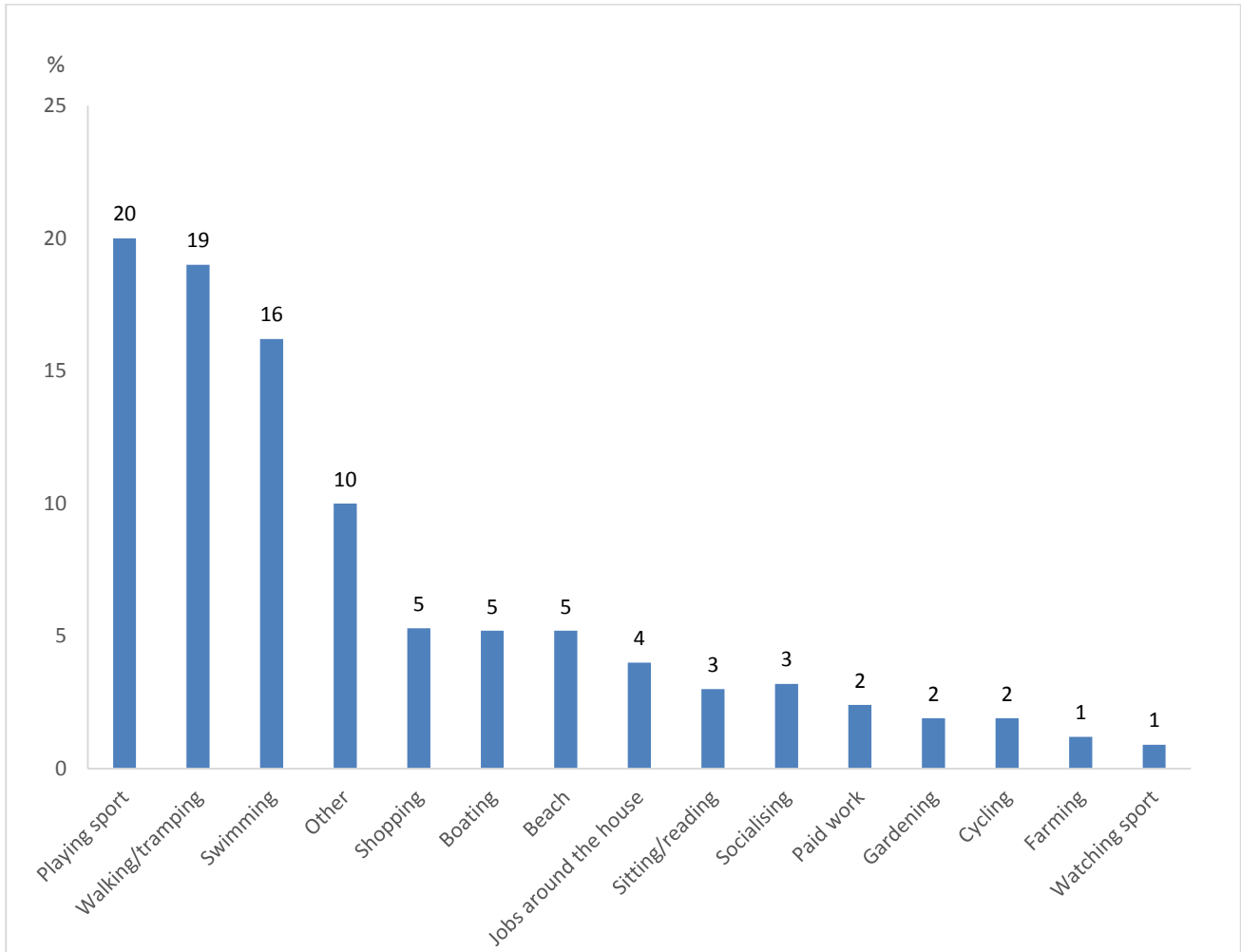


Respondents who spent 15 minutes or more outside during the previous weekend

Base: all youth, 13 to 17 years

Popular outdoor activities among youth

Playing sport (20%), walking/tramping (19%) and swimming (16%) were the most popular outdoor activities that youth participated in during the previous weekend.



Main outdoor activity participated in during the previous weekend

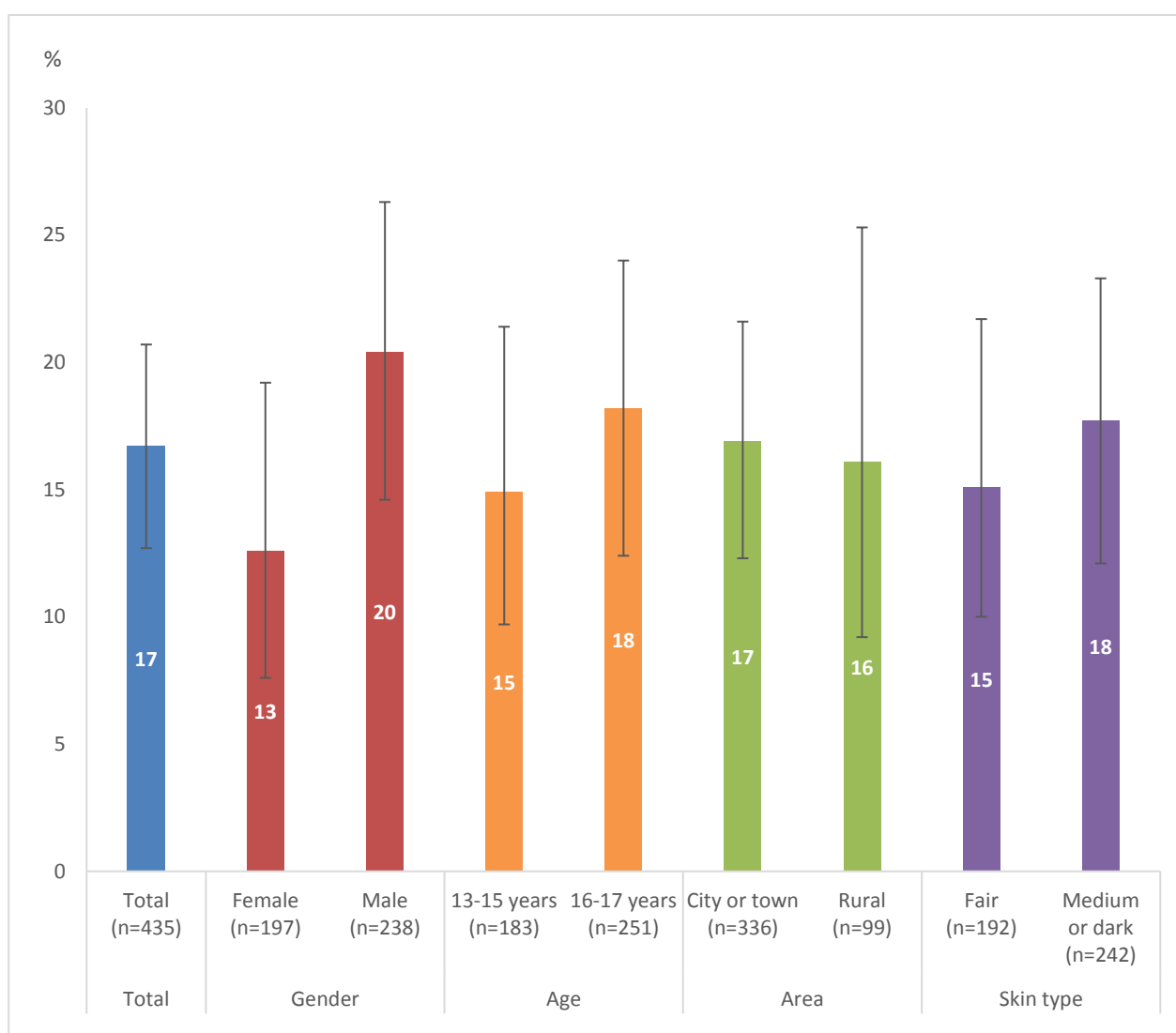
Base: outdoors during the previous weekend, 13 to 17 years (n=423)

SUNBURN

One in six youth who spend time outdoors during the weekend get sunburnt

One in six (17%) youth, who were outdoors for 15 minutes or more during the previous weekend, reported that they were sunburnt. Sunburn was defined as having experienced any amount of reddening of the skin after being in the sun.

Females reported being sunburnt at a lower rate than males (13% for females and 20% for males), although this difference was not significant. There were no significant differences between the other subgroups.

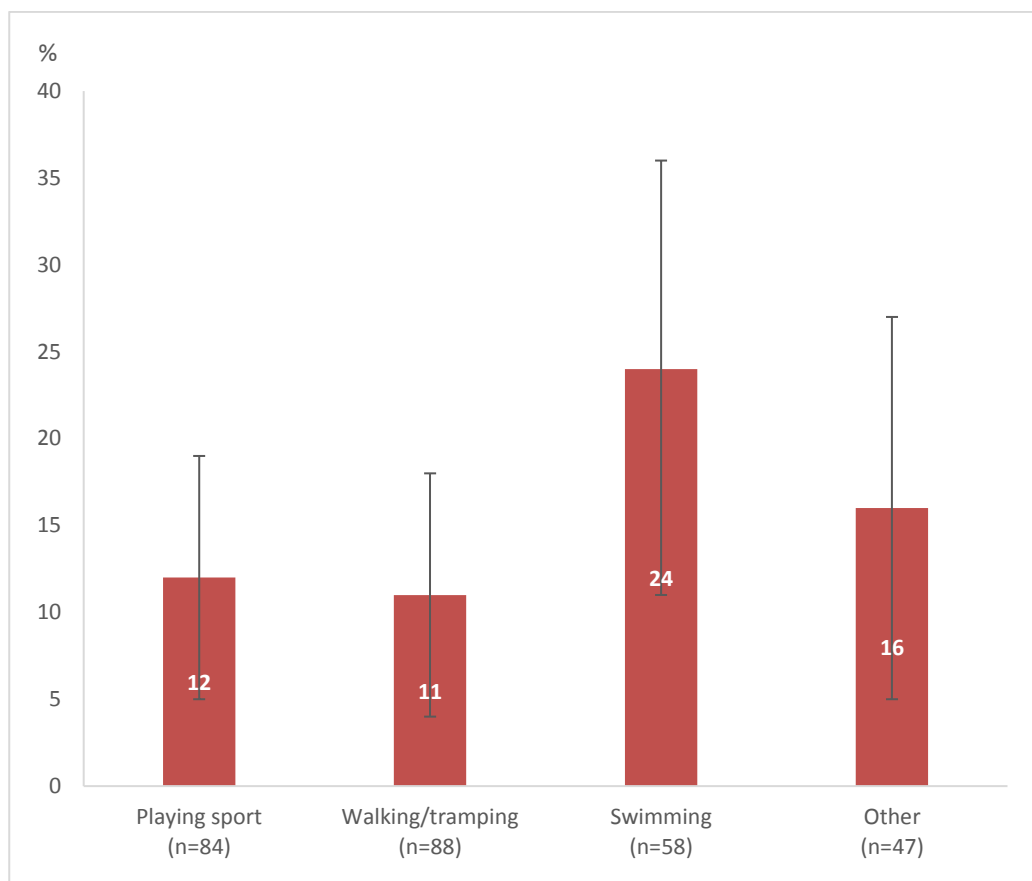


Respondents who reported getting sunburnt during the previous weekend

Base: outdoors during the previous weekend, 13 to 17 years

Around a quarter of youth are sunburnt while swimming

Almost a quarter (24%) of youth whose main weekend outdoor activity was swimming got sunburnt. Youth who were playing sport (12%) or walking/tramping (11%) had a slightly lower prevalence of sunburn than those who were swimming and the overall rate of sunburn (17%), but these differences were not statistically significant.



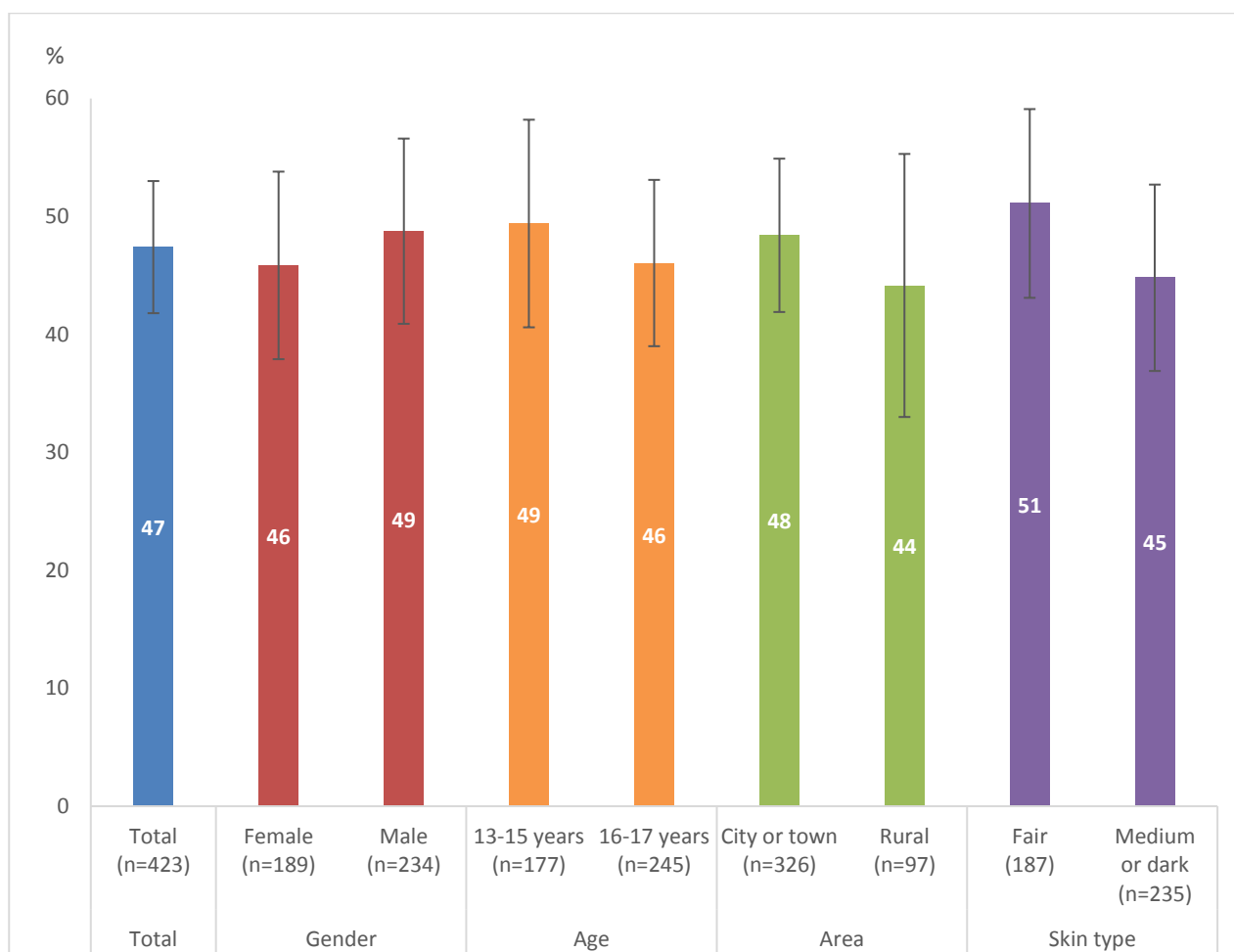
Main outdoor activity participated in when sunburnt during the previous weekend

Base: main outdoor activity during the previous weekend, 13 to 17 years. Note: Activities with fewer than 30 participants are not shown because of high uncertainty associated with the proportions.

SUN PROTECTION BEHAVIOUR

One in two youth use sunscreen when outdoors

Almost half of the youth (47%) wore sunscreen while they were outdoors during the previous weekend. There were no significant differences in this rate for any of the subgroups tested.



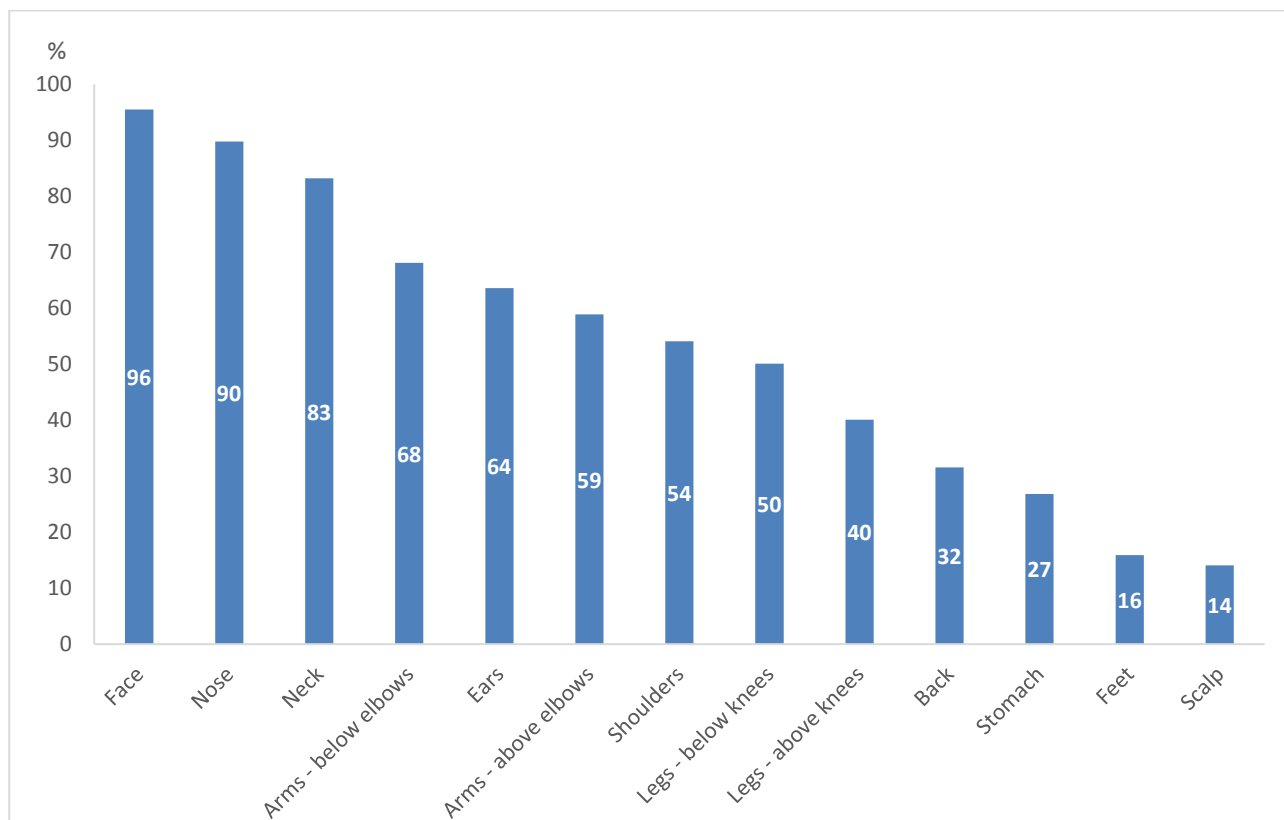
Use of sunscreen while outdoors during the previous weekend

Base: outdoors during the previous weekend, 13 to 17 years

Youth usually apply sunscreen to the face, nose and neck

Nearly all youth who used sunscreen on the previous weekend had applied it to their face (96%). Sunscreen was also commonly applied to the nose (90%), neck (83%) and the arms below the elbows (68%). Youth from rural areas were more likely to say they applied sunscreen to their nose while outdoors. Almost all (97%) youth from rural areas applied sunscreen to their nose, whereas 88% of youth from cities or towns applied sunscreen to their nose.

Males (88%) were more likely to apply sunscreen to their neck than females (77%). Males were also more likely to apply sunscreen to their scalp (21%) than females (5%). Youth with fair skin (91%) were more likely to apply sunscreen to their neck than those with medium/dark skin (77%). Youth with fair skin (74%) were also more likely to apply sunscreen to their ears than those youth with medium/dark skin (55%). In addition, younger youth aged 13 to 15 years (25%) were more likely to apply sunscreen to their feet than older youth aged 16 to 17 years (9%).



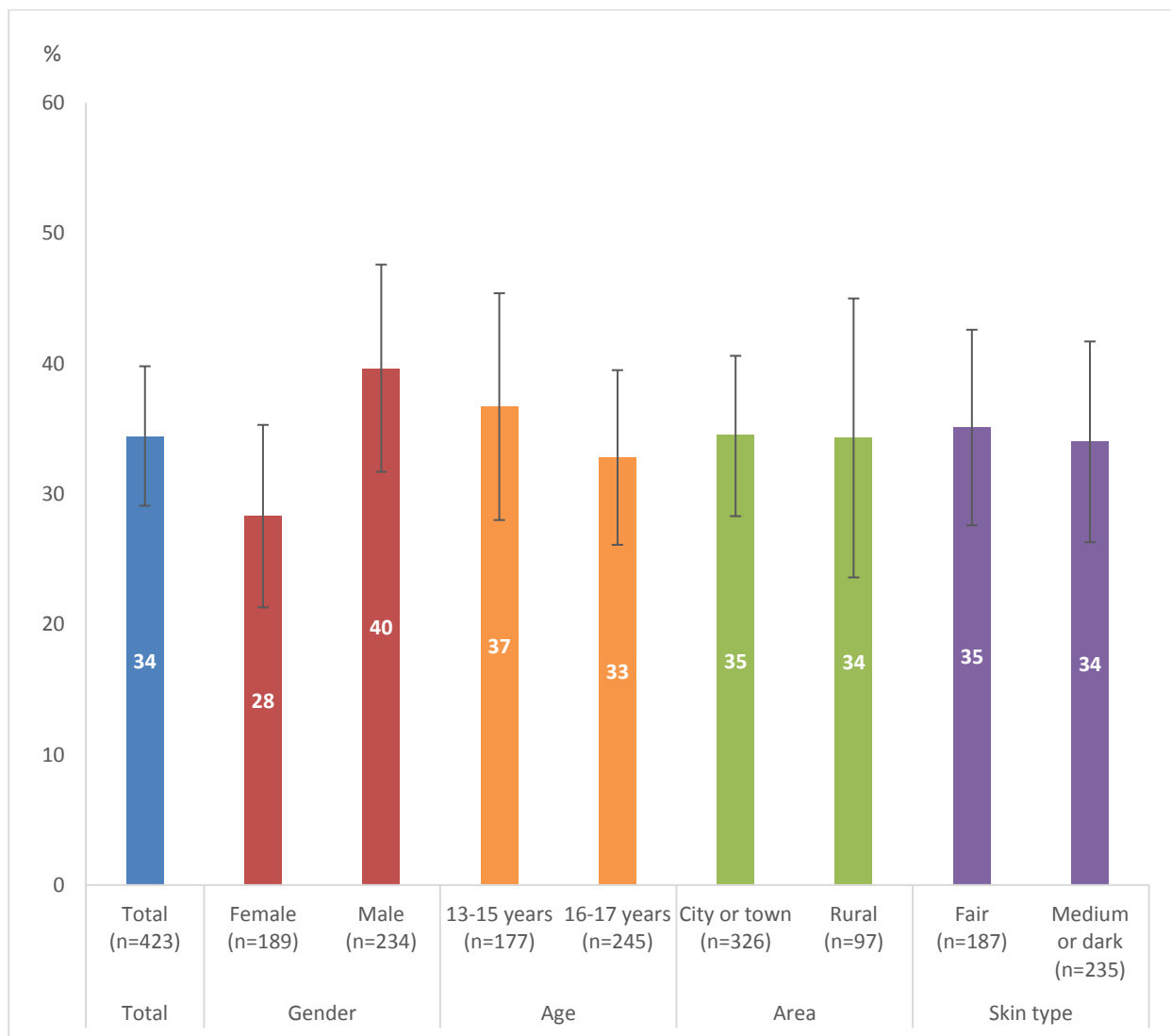
Body parts covered by sunscreen during the previous weekend

Base: applied sunscreen while outdoors, 13 to 17 years (n=202)

A third of youth wear a hat when outdoors

Youth who went outdoors during the previous weekend were asked whether they were wearing something on their head most of the time, such as a hat, cap, scarf, visor, or helmet. All those who reported wearing some kind of head covering were combined into a yes/no “wore a hat” response.

One-third of youth (34%) wore a hat when they were outdoors during the previous weekend. Females were less likely to wear a hat than males. Almost three in 10 females (28%) reported that they wore a hat while outdoors, compared to four in 10 males (40%).

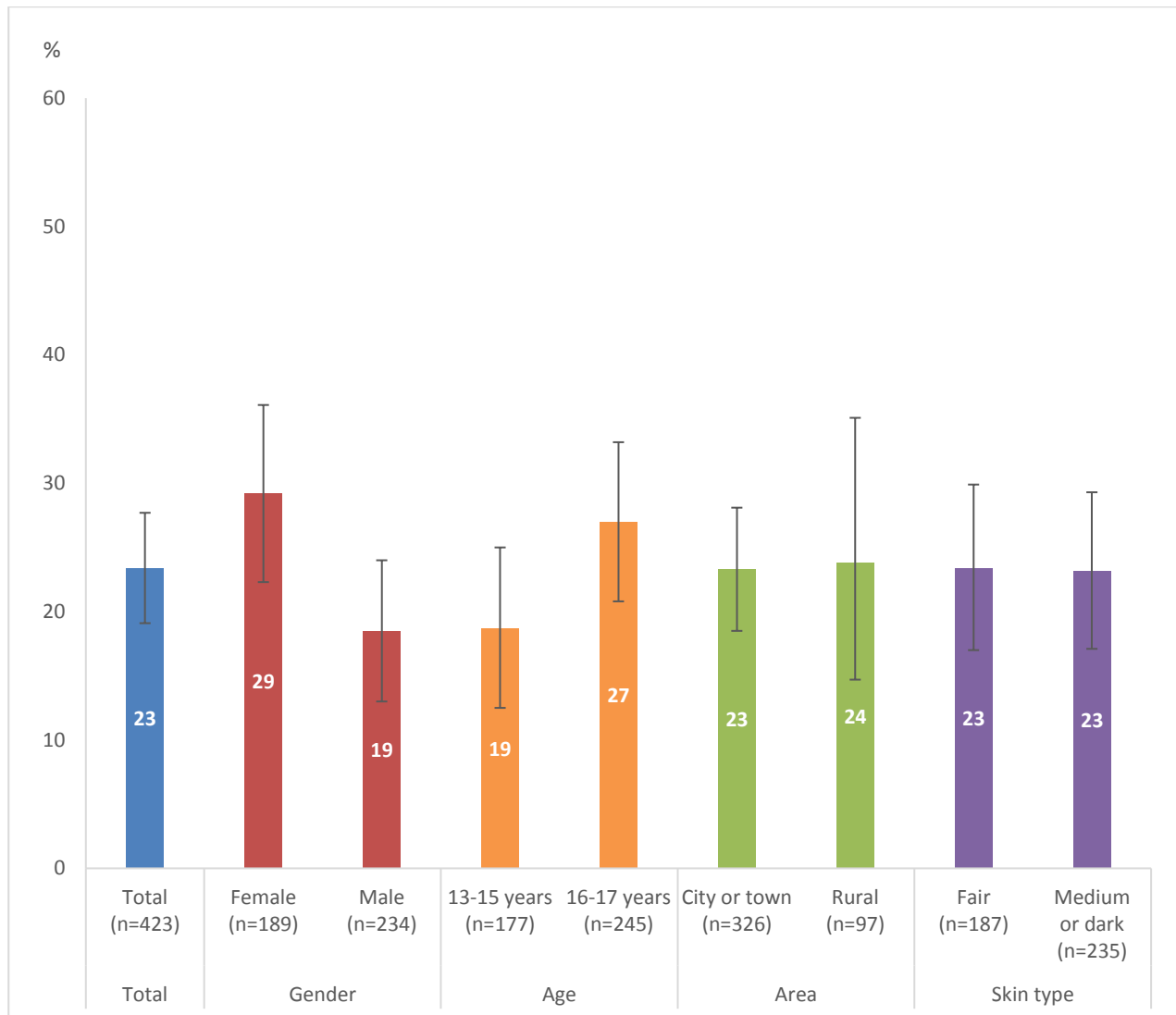


Hat use while outdoors during the previous weekend

Base: outdoors during the previous weekend, 13 to 17 years

Sunglasses are more popular for girls than boys

Just over two in 10 youth (23%) wore sunglasses most of the time when they were outdoors during the previous weekend. Females were more likely than males to wear sunglasses. Three in 10 girls (29%) reported wearing sunglasses while outdoors, compared to two in 10 boys (19%).

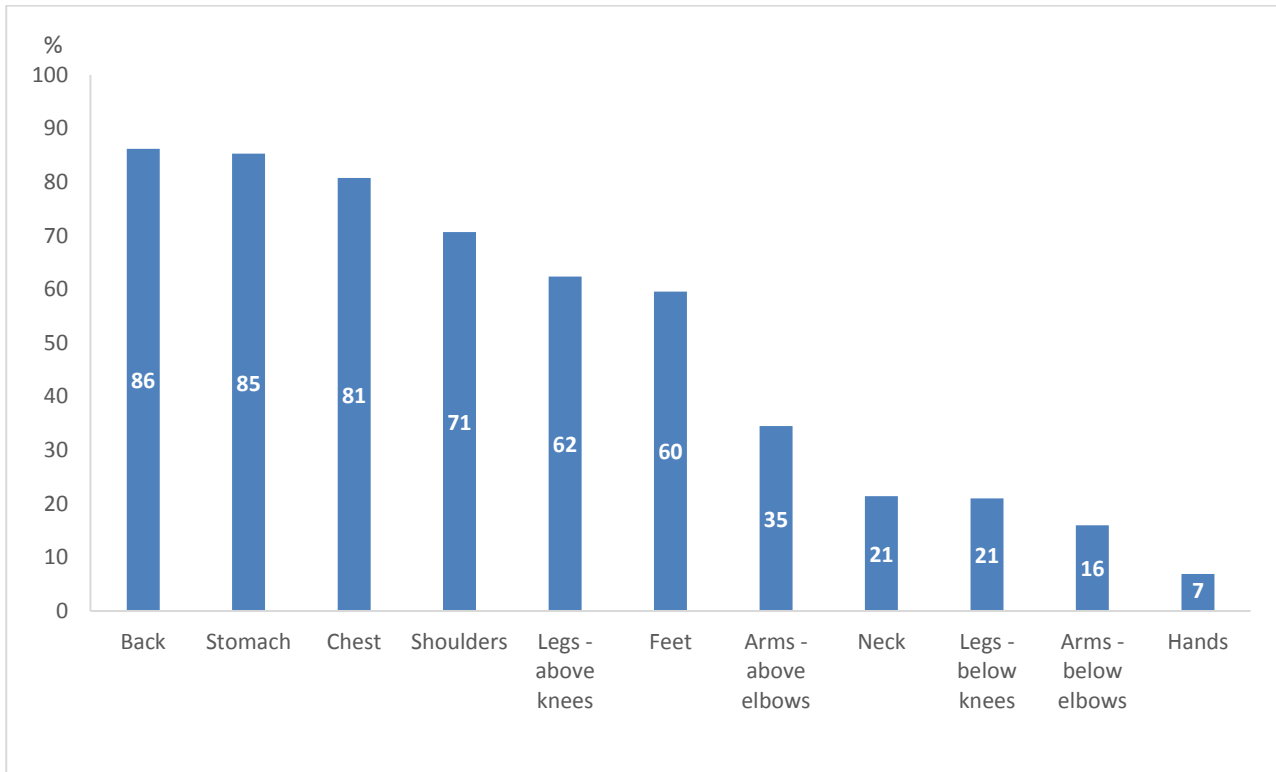


Wore sunglasses most of the time while outdoors during the previous weekend

Base: outdoors during the previous weekend, 13 to 17 years

Hands, forearms and shins are less likely to be covered by clothing than other body parts

Over 80% of youth were wearing clothing that covered their back, stomach and chest while they were outdoors on the weekend. The parts of the body that were most commonly left uncovered by clothing were the hands (7%), arms below the elbows (16%), legs below the knees (21%) and the neck (21%).

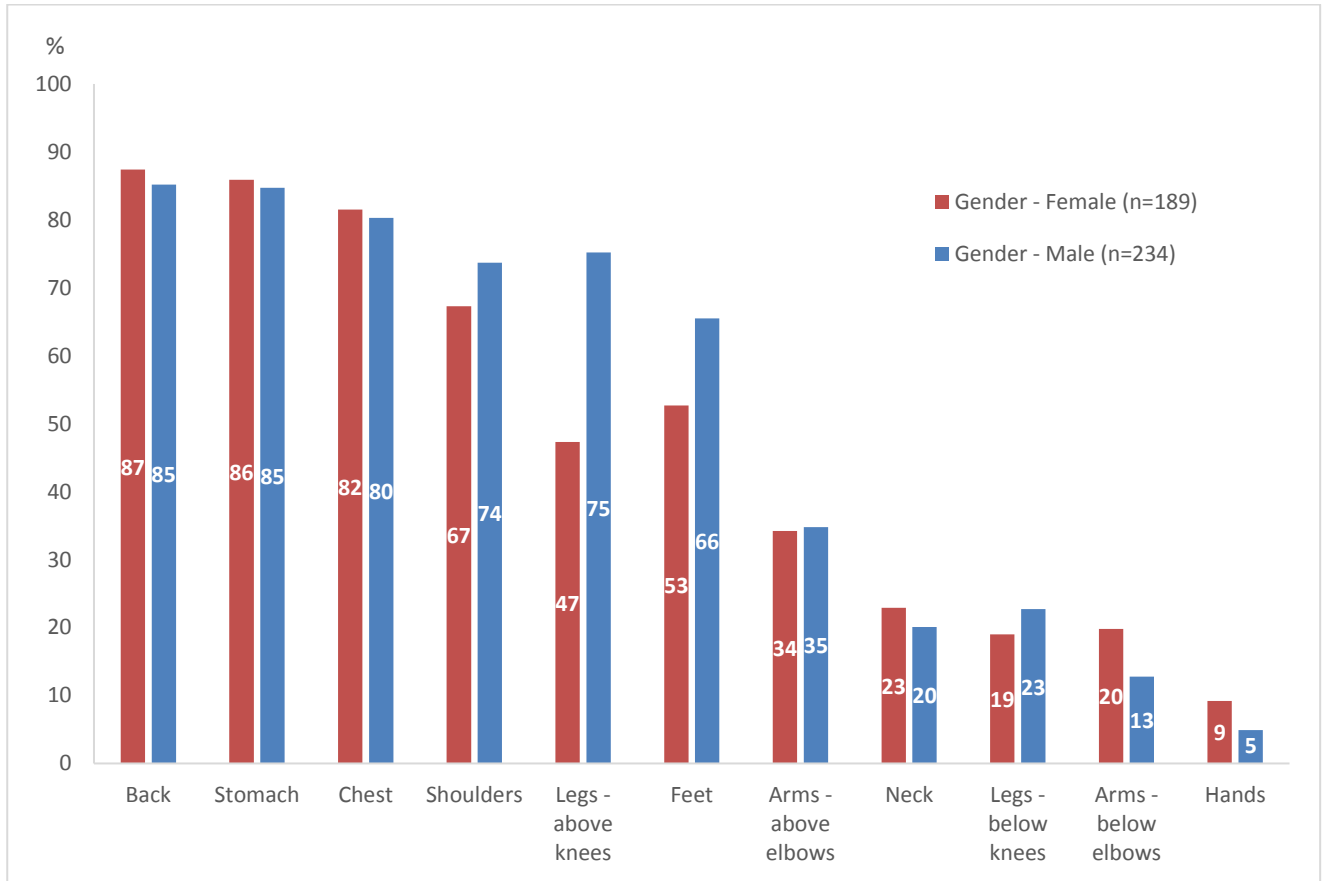


Body parts covered by clothing while outdoors during the previous weekend

Base: outdoors during the previous weekend, 13 to 17 years (n=423)

Boys protect their thighs and feet with clothing more than girls

Girls were less likely to have their legs above the knees covered by clothing (47%) than boys (75%). Girls were also less likely to have their feet covered by clothing (53%) than boys (66%). Girls were also less likely to have their feet covered by clothing (53%) than boys (66%).

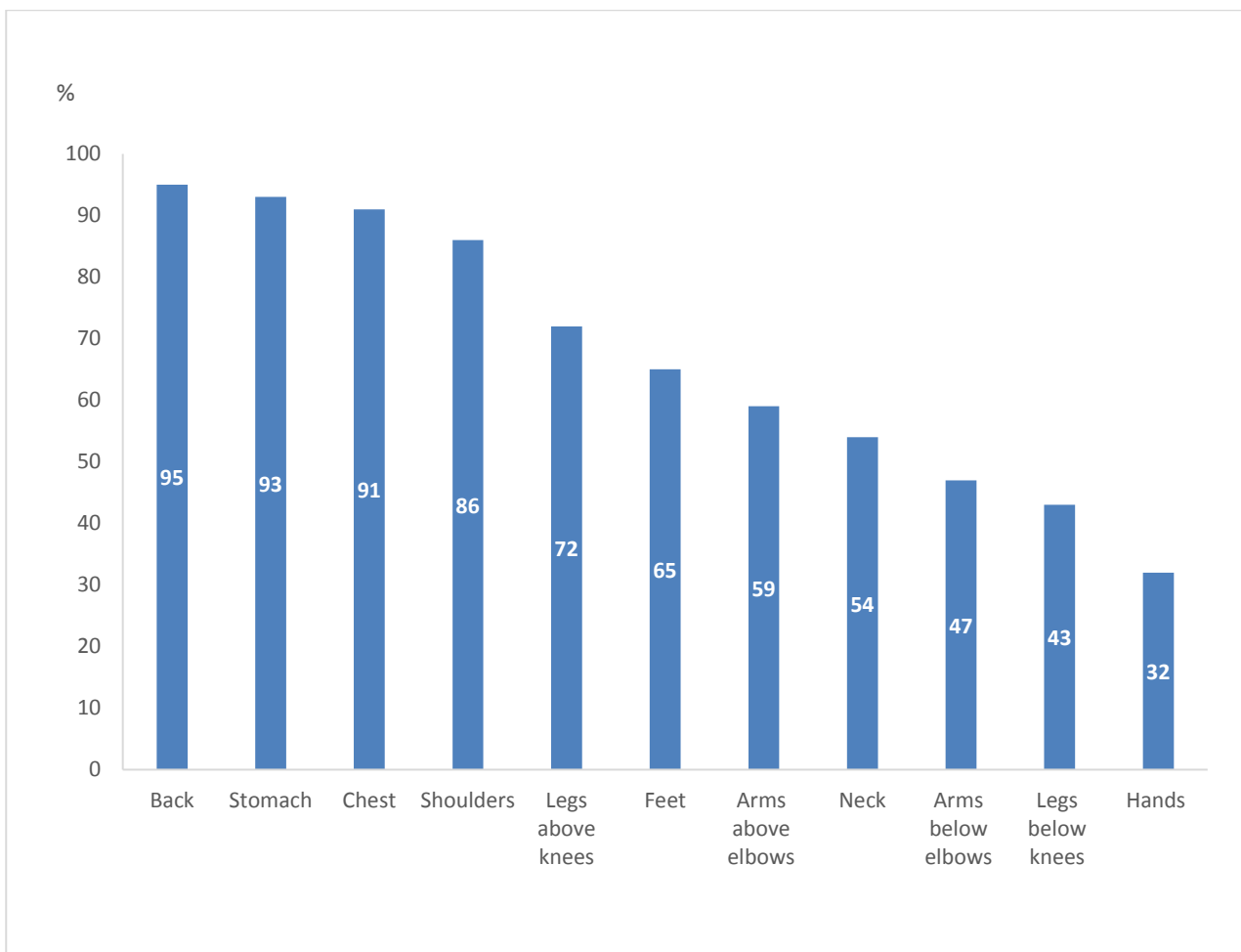


Body parts covered by clothing while outdoors during the previous weekend, by gender

Base: outdoors during the previous weekend, 13 to 17 years (n=423)

Hands, forearms and shins are less likely to be protected from the sun than other body parts

Over 80% of youth who were outdoors during the previous weekend protected their back, stomach, chest and shoulders from the sun using either clothing or sunscreen. Youth were less likely to use either clothing or sunscreen to protect their hands (32%), legs below knees (43%) and arms below elbows (47%) from the sun.



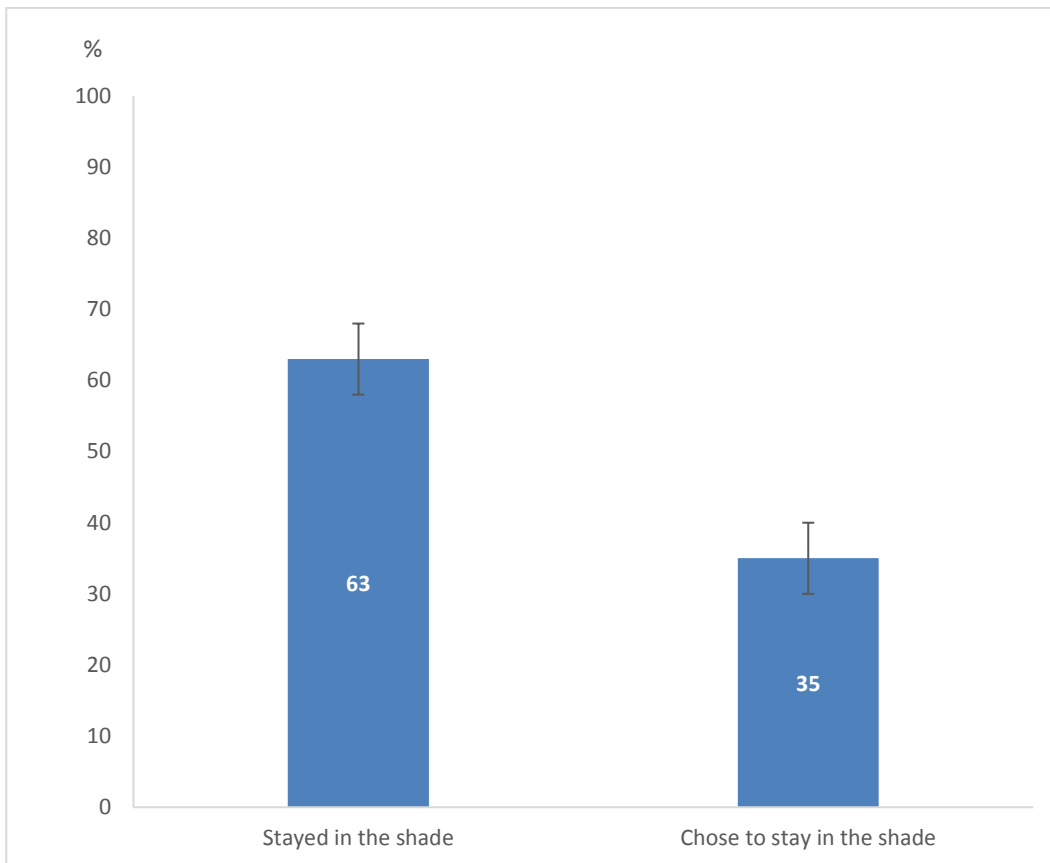
Body parts protected from the sun by either clothing or sunscreen while outdoors during the previous weekend

Base: outdoors during the previous weekend, 13 to 17 years (n=423)

A third of youth chose to spend time in the shade

More than six in 10 youth (63%) stayed in the shade at any time when they were outdoors during the previous weekend. More than a third of youth (35%) made a deliberate choice to stay in the shade, rather than it just happened.

There were no differences in the use of shade or the choice to seek shade between the subgroups.



Use of the shade while outdoors during the previous weekend

Base: outdoors during the previous weekend, 13 to 17 years (n=423)

One in 17 youth use the Sun Protection Alert

Over six in 10 youth (61%, n=306) reported that they typically look at the weather forecast ahead of outdoor activities. Of those youth who check the forecast, around one in 17 (6%) used the Sun Protection Alert to prompt them about using sun protection. There were no significant differences between subgroups. The 95% confidence intervals of this proportion were 3% to 9%.

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