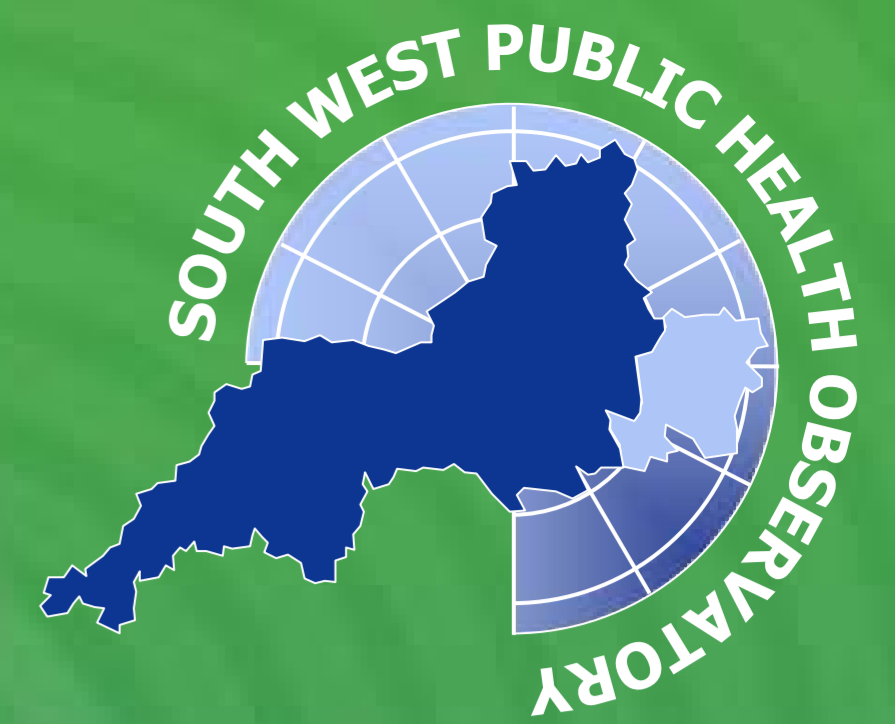


# Evaluating School-based Public Health Interventions



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## 1. Background

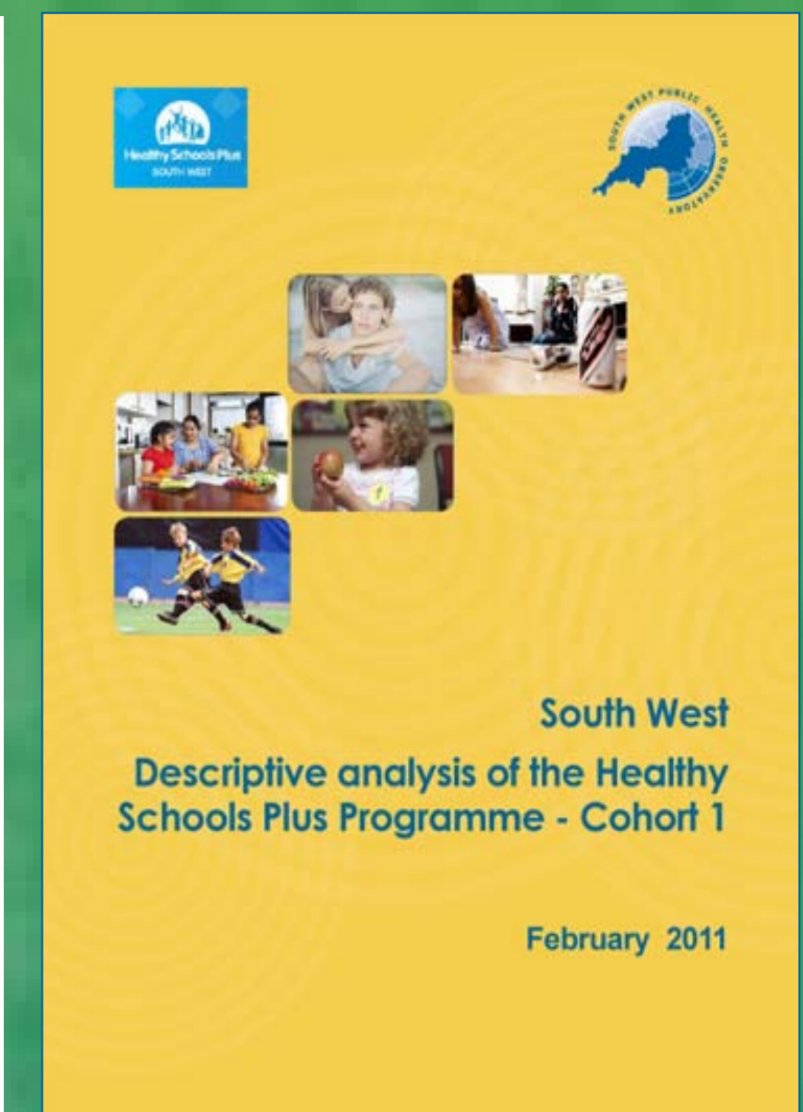
The Healthy Schools Plus Programme (HSPP) is an innovative NHS-led Programme that aims to address locally defined inequalities. It was launched in 2009 and will conclude in Autumn 2012. It has built on the success of the Healthy Schools Programme but is different in that it aims to bring about school-led identifiable outcomes in schools with the greatest need. The Programme comprises three cohorts. Reflecting data availability, we present findings from Cohort 1.

## 2. Aims

To present findings from the rapid assessment of the HSPP; demonstrate the importance of using rapid assessment tools; and discuss the invaluable data held by HSPP.

## 3. Methods

A rapid evaluative process. This included: a desktop review; matched needs assessment; and an assessment of the reporting database.

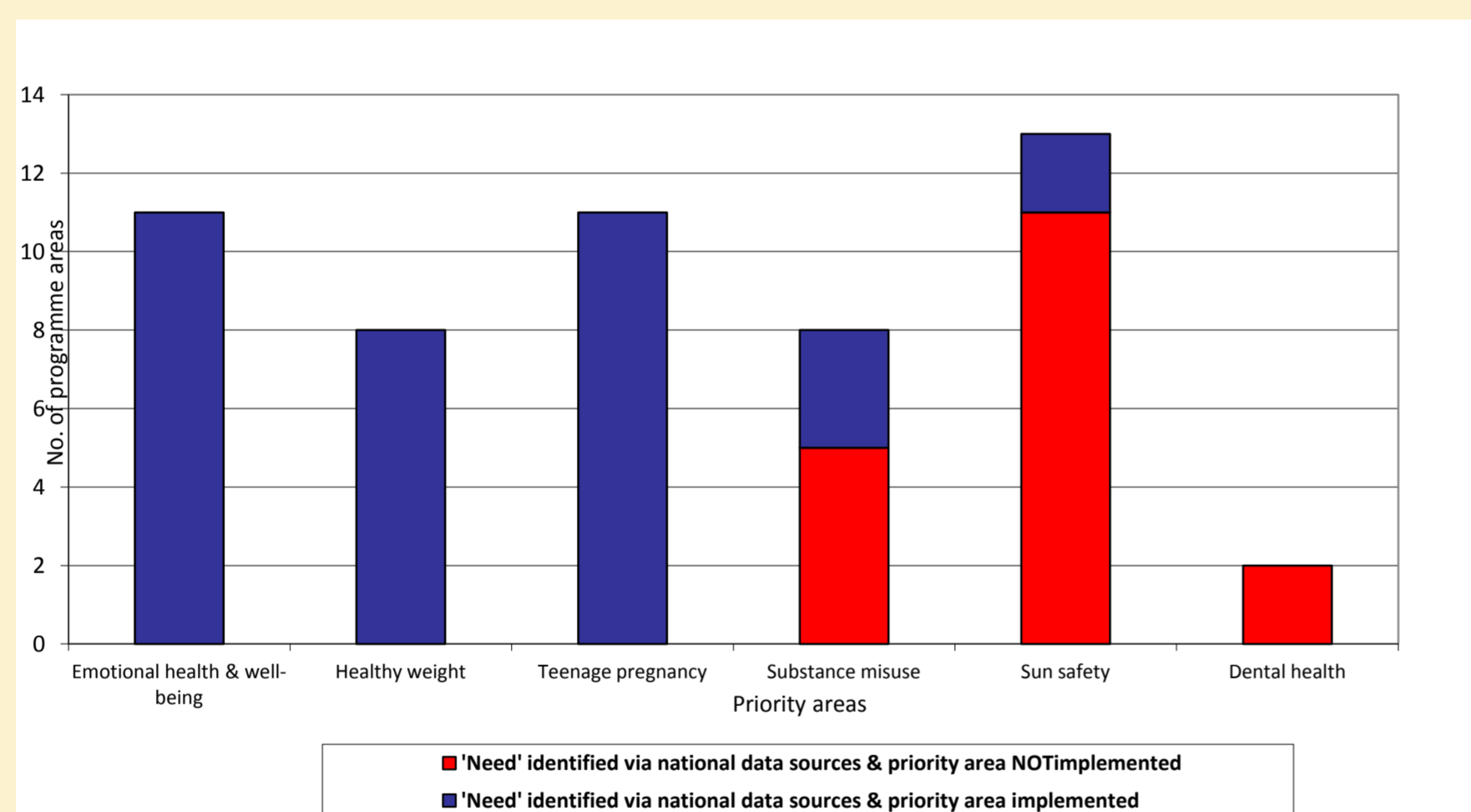


## 4. Results

### a) Need

Most identified needs had been prioritised. The nationally identified areas: emotional health and well being, teenage pregnancy and healthy weight, were addressed well. Less well targeted areas included substance misuse, dental health and sun safety (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Need identified through national data sources and how these compare to the Healthy Schools Plus Priority areas implemented



Source: Healthy Schools Plus evaluative database (November 2010)

### b) Interventions

Over one thousand interventions (1,311) were implemented. Table 1 looks at the types of intervention used across the six HSPP priority areas.

Table 1: Top 3 intervention types, South West Healthy Schools Plus Programme, Cohort 1

Healthy Schools Plus Priority area	Top 3 most frequently used intervention types (number of interventions)		
Emotional health and well-being	New class external provider support (63)	Family approach (52)	New peer-led intervention & new extra-curricular club (45)
Healthy weight	New extra-curricular club (133)	Family approach (80)	Marketing (66)
Substance misuse	New peer-led intervention (5)	New class external provider support (5)	Staff training (5)
Sun safety	New equipment school (1)	New policy (1)	Changes to the school environment (1)
Teenage pregnancy	Staff training (24)	Family approach (18)	New class external provider support & New course (17)
Dental health	Marketing (2)	Numbers too small to include 2nd and 3rd rankings	

Source: Healthy Schools Plus evaluate database (November 2010)

### c) Outcomes

The data on outcomes is based on the pre-and post-test outcome evaluations of HSPP interventions at individual school level. A **positive outcome** is defined by the additional number of pupils achieving the desired outcome (as defined by the school) at post intervention (post-test) compared to the number of pupils achieving the desired outcome at pre-intervention (pre-test).

Table 2 shows that across the South West 14,086 pupils achieved a positive outcome. The highest number of pupils achieving a positive outcome was observed in **healthy weight** and **teenage pregnancy**. This can be explained, in part, by the number of schools implementing these interventions.

A lower number of pupils achieved a positive outcome in **emotional health and well-being**, suggesting difficulties engaging pupils and in achieving observable behavioural change over short periods of time.

Table 2: Summary data for the South West Healthy Schools Plus Programme, Cohort 1

Healthy Schools Plus Priority area	Total number of schools implementing interventions	Number of interventions	Total number of schools with outcome data (proportion of total schools implementing interventions)	Number of interventions where positive outcome data available	Positive outcome (number of pupils)	Intervention to positive outcome ratio
Emotional health and well-being	165	455	61 (37%)	163	1,766	1:11
Healthy weight	203	676	143 (70%)	490	8,797	1:17
Substance misuse	12	31	5 (42%)	14	178	1:13
Sun safety	2	3	1 (50%)	1	55	1:55
Teenage pregnancy	57	139	23 (40%)	59	3,287	1:56
Dental health	2	7	0 (0%)	-	-	-
Total	-	1,311	-	727	14,086	1:19

Source: Healthy Schools Plus evaluative database (November 2010)

## 5. Conclusion

- Rapid assessments can provide useful data for both practitioners and commissioners, and can assist in the reconfiguration of services.
- The HSPP database probably holds the widest data on pre and post testing of school-based public health interventions.
- Lessons can be learnt not only from the success of different interventions, but also about which research tools best capture data.