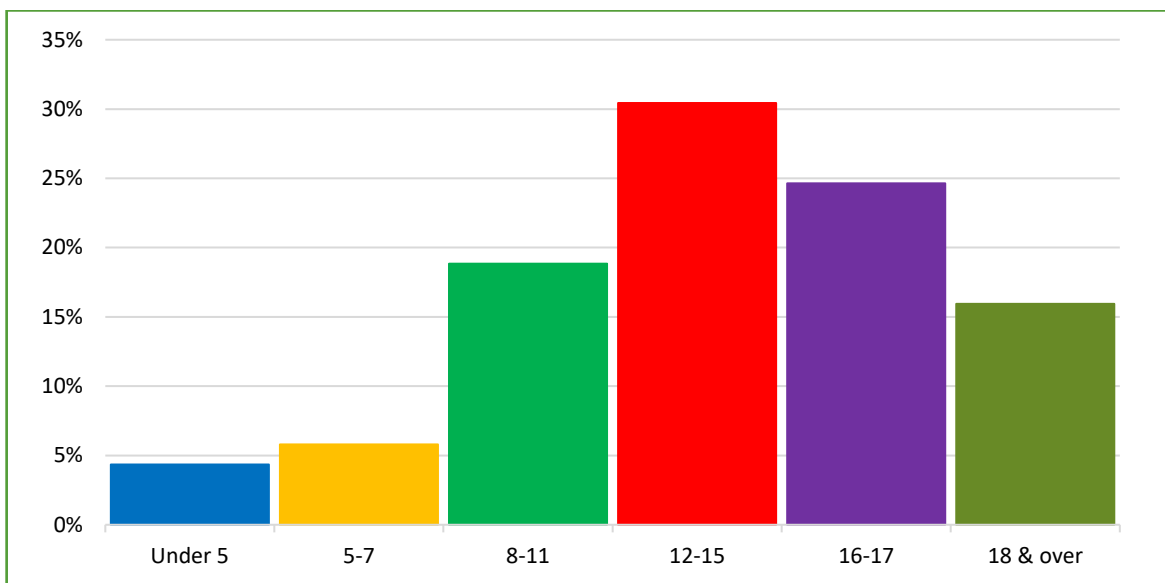


## Youth worker survey report

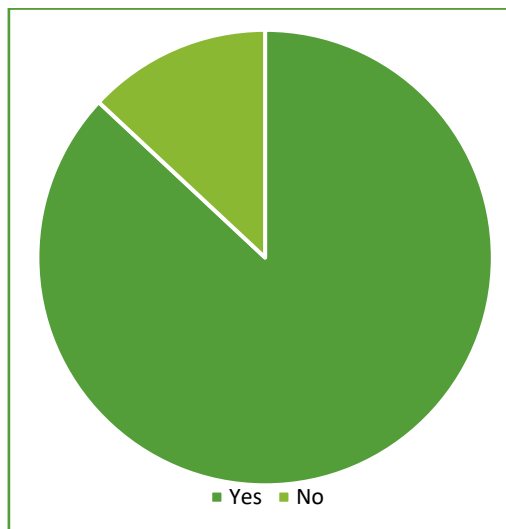
At the National Youth Ministry Weekend in November 2023, we surveyed visitors to our stand. We asked them a series of questions relating to their work context and their experience of drug use amongst the young people they work with.

Of the respondents, approximately one-third were male, and two-thirds female. Just over one-half were employed youth workers, about one-quarter were volunteers and the remainder responded as 'other'.

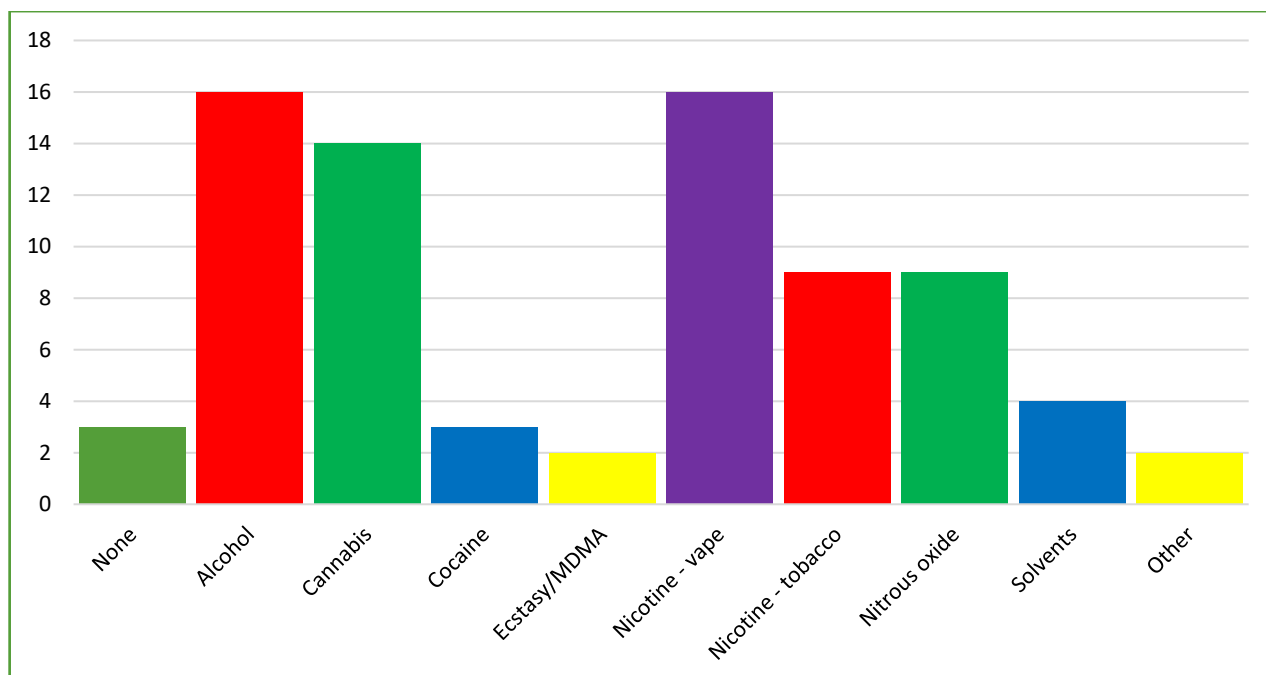
We found that the youth workers that completed our survey worked across the age ranges of young people.



When asked, we found that nearly 90% of youth workers think that the young people they work with use drugs.



We also found that most drugs were suspected of being used, with alcohol and nicotine vapes being the most common closely followed with cannabis, then tobacco and nitrous oxide.

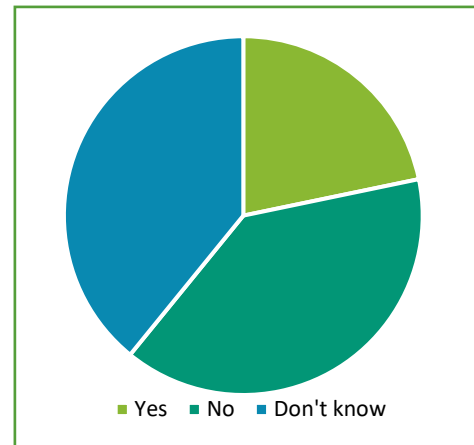


When asked if youth workers had discussed any drug-related issues with their young people in the last year about two-thirds confirmed that they had however, of those less than half felt equipped to have the conversation. Of those who had not spoken to young people, again fewer than half felt prepared to have a conversation.

We also asked respondents if they had led any drug-related or life skill activities in the last year and about 75% had not done anything. We also asked why no activities had been led, some of the responses included:

- Not having the resources/knowledge to feel comfortable leading an activity
- We have not covered that topic in our teaching programme.
- I think it may be training and time to educate volunteers because lots have full time jobs and fit youth work in on the side
- Not thought about it enough
- Not been right opportunity
- We are not sure where to start
- Lack of resource, but we are trying to develop a program
- Not equipped to do so
- Was not ready
- Lack of time, knowledge and competing priorities

Finally, we asked if the youth worker's church had a drug policy. Only around 20% were able to answer yes to this question. Whilst some churches may have one that the youth worker is unaware of around 40% did answer no.



## **Conclusions**

This survey and report shows us that:

1. Christian youth workers work with young people (they believe) use drugs. Very few thought that none of their young people used drugs.
2. The drugs used by young people Christian youth workers work with are the same as the general population, i.e. alcohol, vaping, cannabis, tobacco and nitrous oxide.
3. Most youth workers feel under-prepared to have drug-related conversations.
4. Most youth workers are not including drug prevention activities, or relevant life skills, in their programmes. Although some did identify that this was something they were working on.
5. Many churches do not have drug policies.