

Children Rehabilitation Programme (CREP) Uganda

A survey of street children and adolescents in Uganda: Health status of the children and the determinants of migration to the streets.

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Background

- There have been great changes in African socioeconomic life that have affected the youth.
- The increasing number of unwanted pregnancies results from factors like poverty, poor family planning and breakdown of traditional rules.
- The children and young people who live in the streets are related to these issues.

Background

- Young people may leave their homes hoping to get better life in the cities.
- Also HIV/Aids epidemic can be one reason for children to leave their homes, if their parents have died of AIDS.
- Sometimes parental discipline may be too much for children to bear. In cases like child sexual abuse it is even understandable that a child leaves the home.

Aim of the study

- The purpose of this study was to estimate the health status of the street children and adolescents in Uganda, Mbale and
- what are the main reasons behind this adverse lifestyle in order to determine what could be done in the most effective manner to improve the health of the children and also to determine what could be done to prevent children leaving their homes.

Materials and methods

- A descriptive, cross-sectional study was carried out during October and November 2009 in Uganda.
- The data were collected in Mbale through individual, semi-structured questionnaires, with 52 street children and adolescents (7-17 years).
- The sampling was convenience based because of the challenges of tracking the street children.
- All respondents participated to the interview with semi-structured questionnaire including questions about their background, demographic factors, living standards, health status, and lifestyle behavior.

Analysis

- The interviews were coded, categorized and entered into SPSS 14.0 for analysis.
- Percentages of the responses were calculated accordingly.

Results

- Respondent's background
- The majority of respondents were male children and adolescents (98.1%), with the mean age of 13.6 years (SD +/- 2.6, Range:11;7-17 years). 40.8 % of the respondents reported having one sibling whereas 16.3% reported having two siblings, 8.2% having 3 and 4 siblings.
- Mistreatment and conflicts at home was reported as the main reason to be on the street according to 42.6 % of the respondents. Other reasons were to earn living (18.5 %), and the death of the parents (14.8%).

Parental status

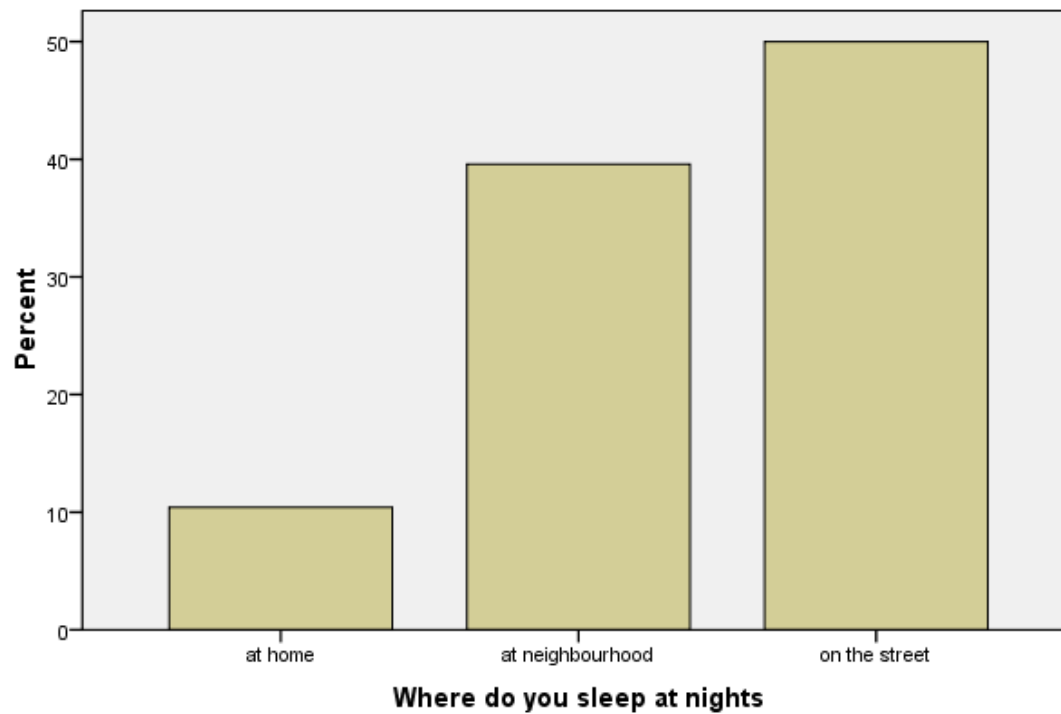
- 64.4% reported having parents alive and 40.5 % also saw their parents daily, but 38.1% saw their parents only once a year.
- 74.5% knew where their parents lived.
- 51.4% of the parents of the respondents were at work.

Living standards

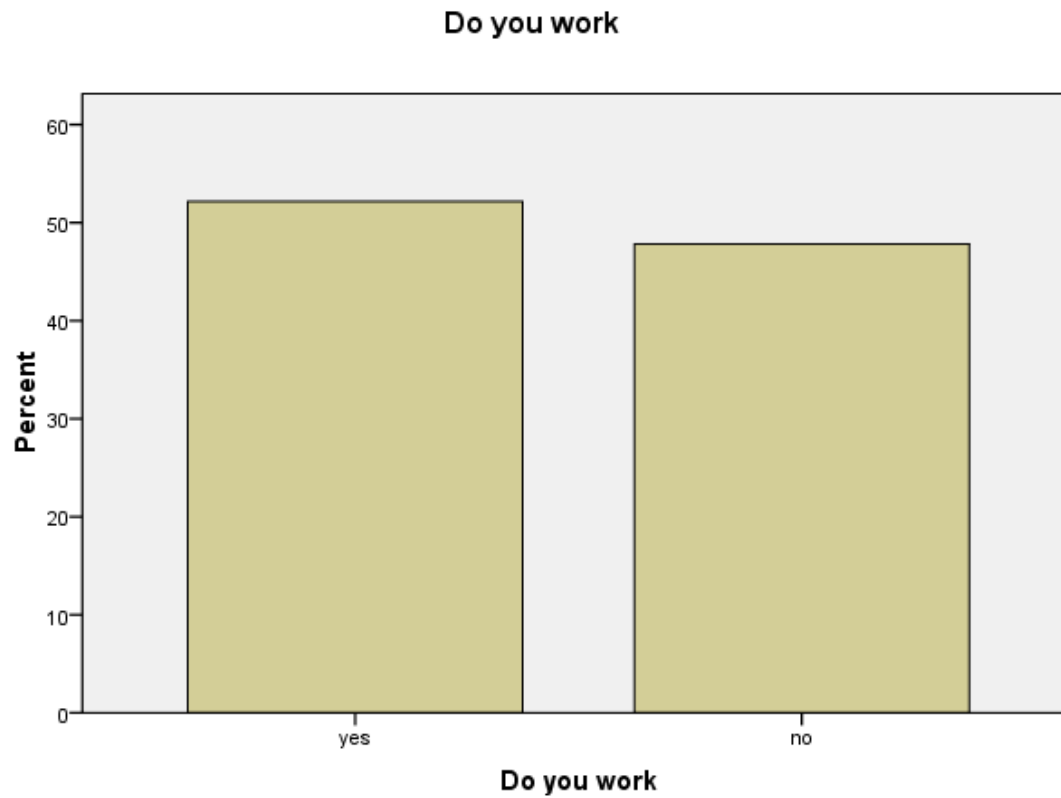
- 84.3 % of the respondents reported living in the streets. Of those, 60.0% have lived one year or more in the streets.
- Majority (70.8%) didn't like living in the streets.
- 54.2% didn't attend school.
- 63.0% reported they can read and write.

Sleeping

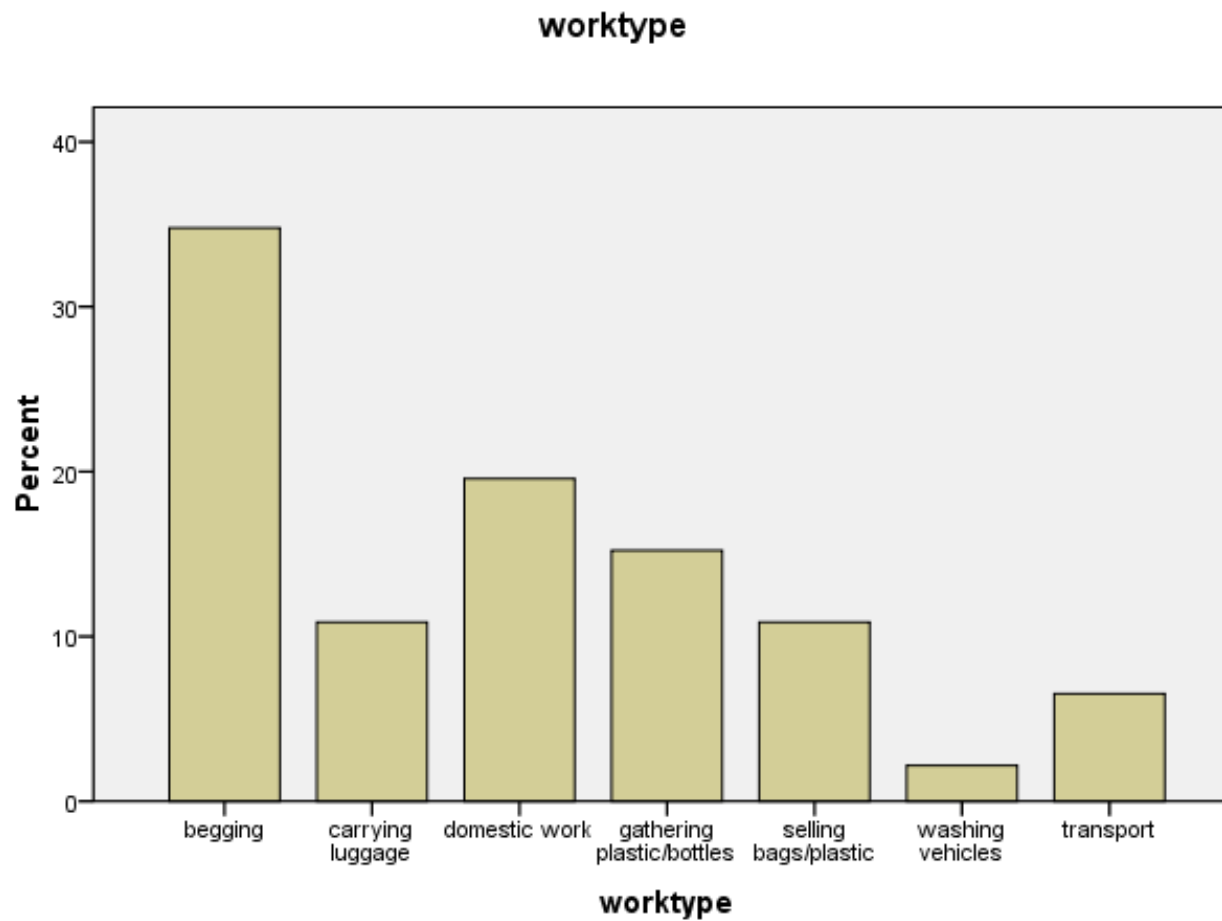
Where do you sleep at nights



working

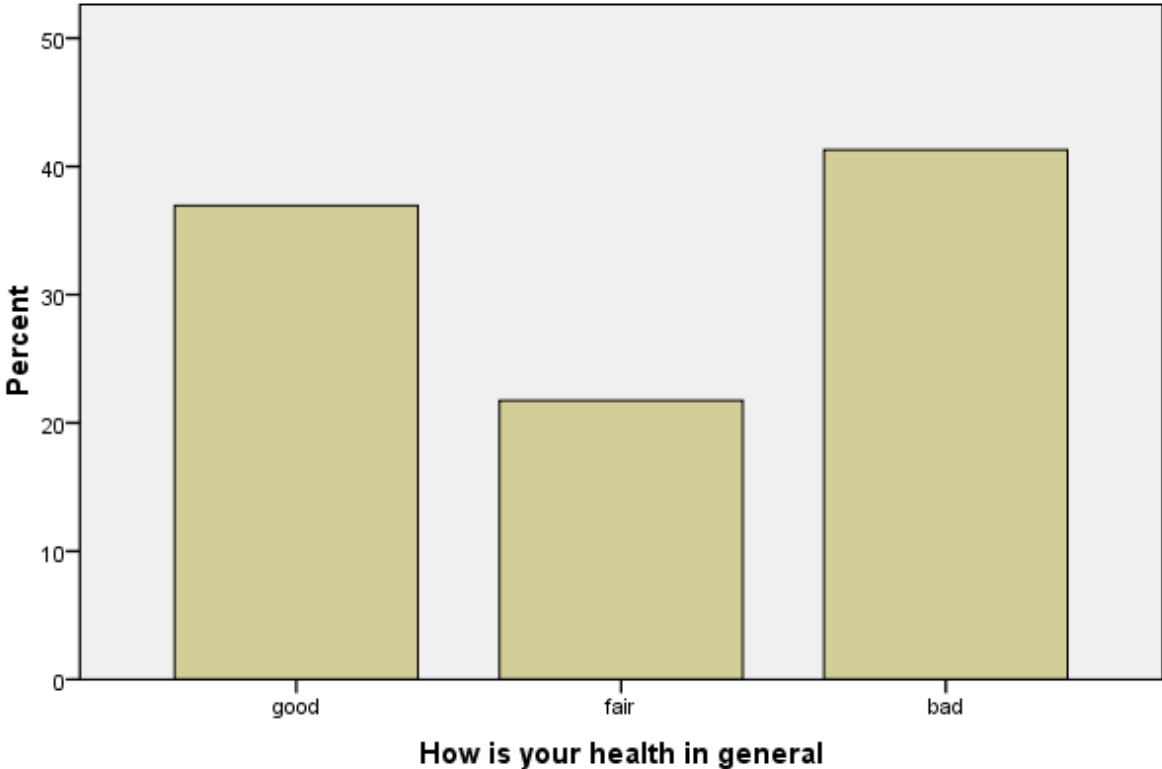


What kind of work



Health status

How is your health in general



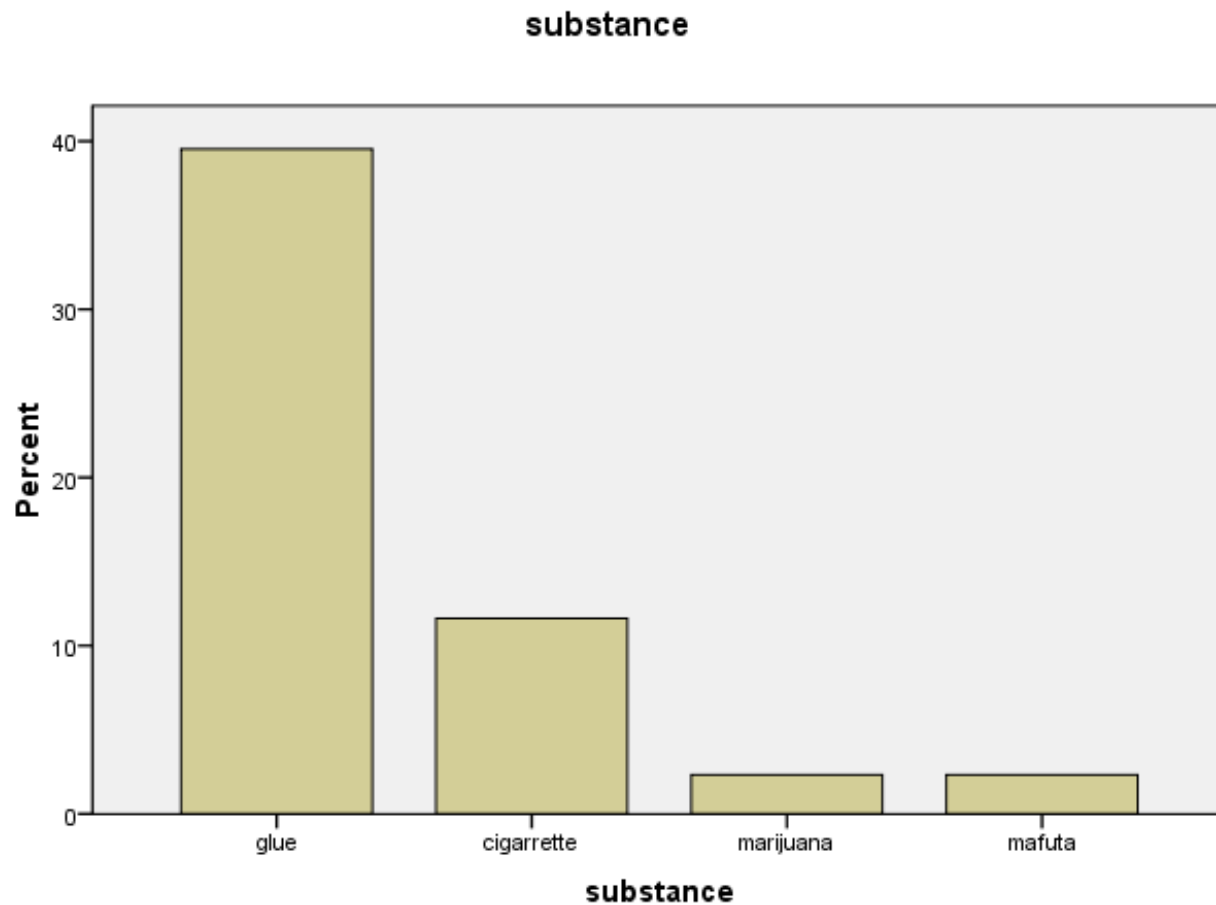
Health status

- 52% of the respondents told they have had some disease. Most common reported disease was malaria (11%). Wounds were reported by 11% of the respondents.
- Only 28% of the respondents go to hospital when they are ill. Most common reason for not going there is lack of money (38%).
- 38.9% of the children reported having only one meal per day.

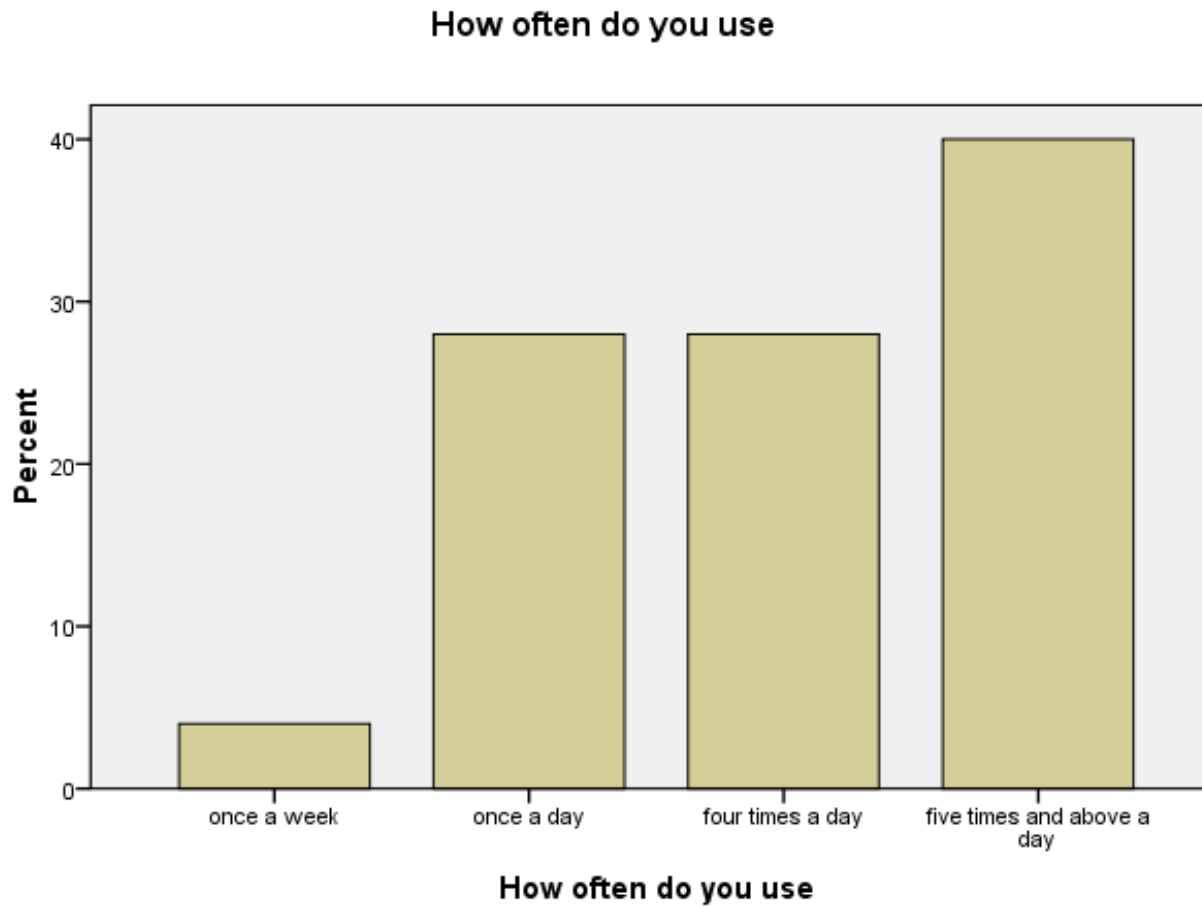
Lifestyle behaviour

- Substance use
 - 51.8% of the respondents reported using some substance

Substance use

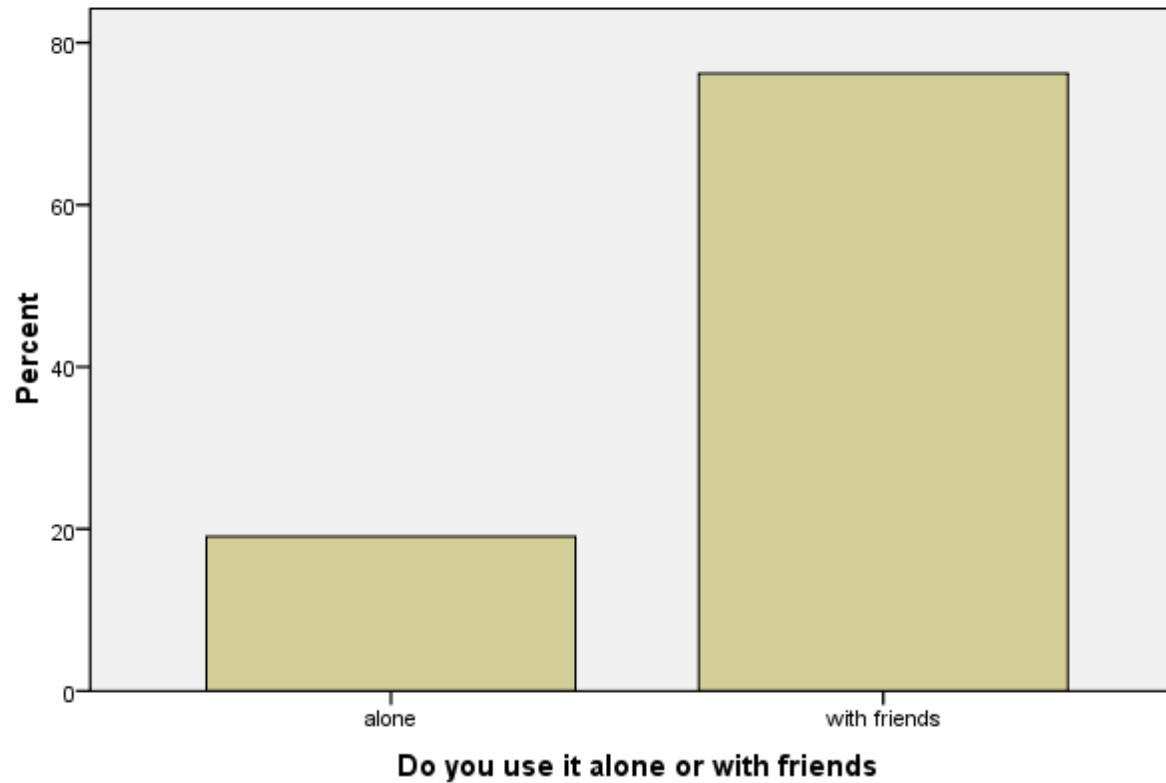


Substance use

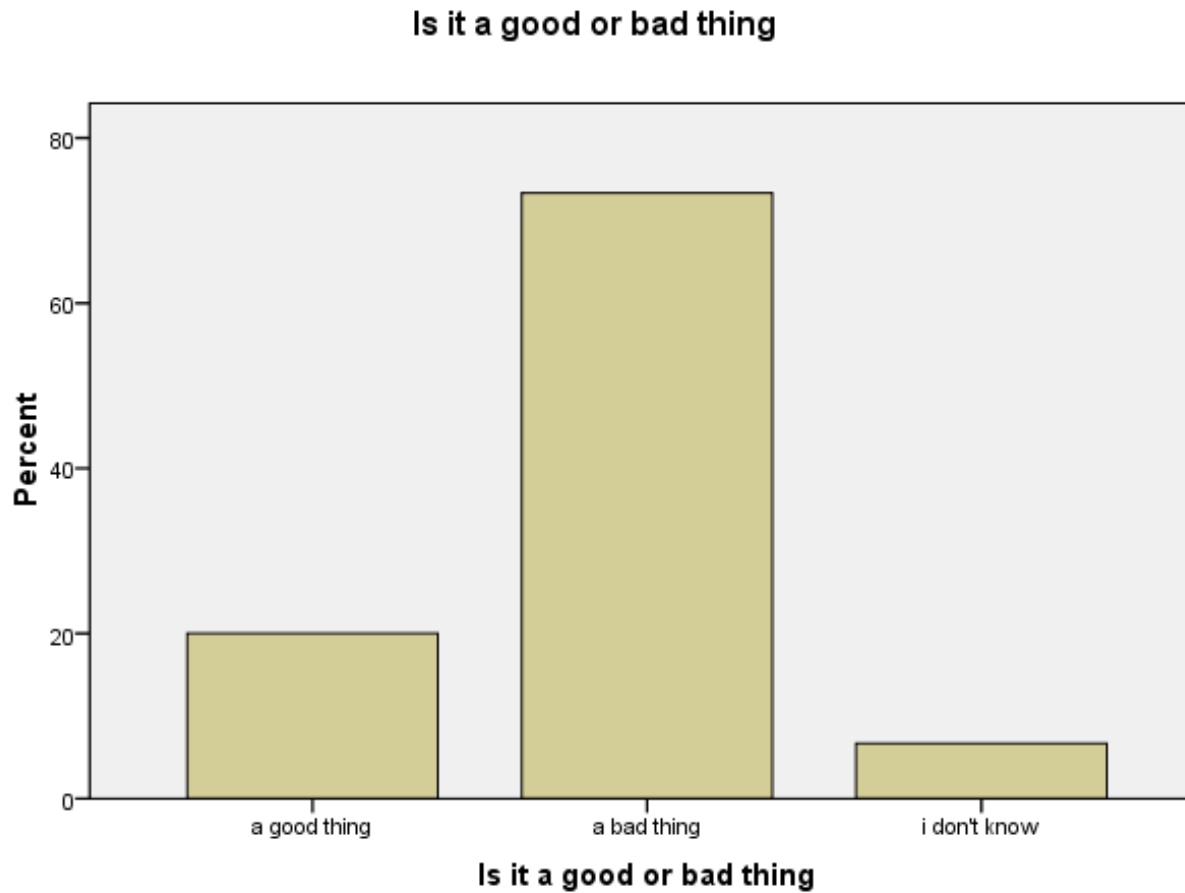


Substance use

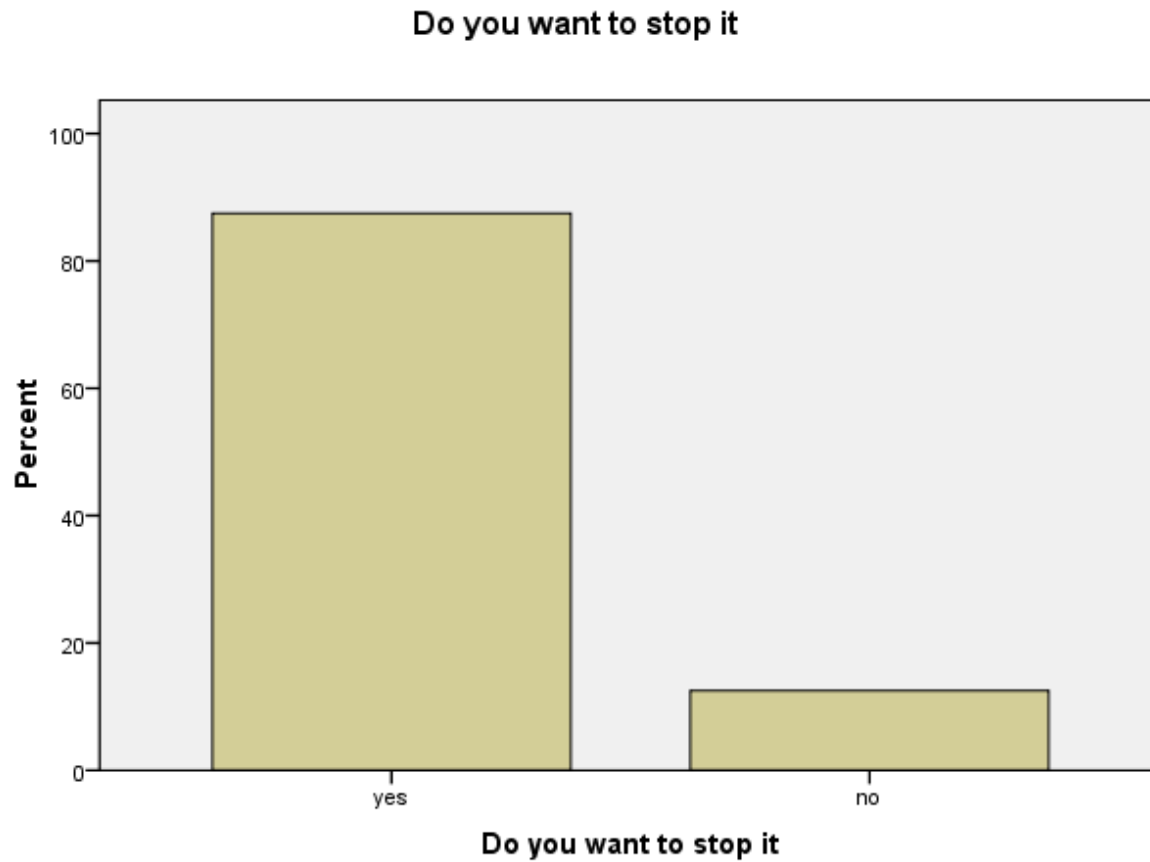
Do you use it alone or with friends



Substance use



Substance use



teasing



Future thoughts

- Majority of the respondents (96.2%) would like to change their life somehow:
- To be at home or at school
- To live a normal, happy, peaceful life
- To get a sponsor
- To become a footballer, a businessman, a driver or a doctor

Conclusions

- The street children and adolescents in Mbale, Uganda need help and assistance from the society.
- Their health is not good, they have substance abuse problems, they are teased in the streets.
- The society should no longer shut eyes from this problem, because in the children there is a future !
- Many societal problems could be solved if something is done to help the children and adolescents living in the streets
- Families need help early enough to prevent this problem.



Thank You!