

One in five older teenage girls have eating disorders, NHS figures reveal

One in five older teenage girls in England have been diagnosed with eating disorders, according to NHS figures. The prevalence of eating disorders among 11 to 16-year-olds has increased from 0.5% to 2.6%, and among 17 to 19-year-olds from 0.8% to 12.5%. Tom Quinn, director of external affairs at the eating disorder charity Beat, said: "These figures have brought into sharp focus the devastating scale of eating disorders in children and young people in England." He advised against looking for a simple reason for the sharp increase, but said: "The impact of the pandemic cannot be understated. During lockdown many young people went without social interaction for weeks or months, with vital safeguards such as teachers and school nurses unable to spot the earliest signs." The survey showed that overall one in five children and young people in England aged eight to 25 had a probable mental disorder this year, a similar level to last year after a rise since 2017.

[The Daily Telegraph](#) [The Times](#) /

New NHS rules require parental consent for children's referral to transgender clinics

Children will only be referred to transgender clinics if their parents agree, according to new NHS rules. The health service aims to tighten referral processes to prevent incidents like children being sent to the Tavistock clinic without parental consent. Under the new plans, outlined in a public consultation document published last night, children will only be referred to one of the new gender services if they, their parents, and a specialist agree it is in the best interests of the child in two separate reviews. It is the latest in a series of proposals to overhaul the children's services borne out of a damning review by Dr Hilary Cass, former president of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. She found that the approach under the Tavistock, which was the sole NHS gender clinic for children, put its patients "at considerable risk" of poor mental health and was not "a safe or viable long-term option".

[The Daily Telegraph](#)

Children as young as 11 reported to anti-terror programme

Children as young as 11 are being reported to the Government's anti-terror programme, with hundreds aged 14 and under. In the year to March, there were 6,817 referrals to Prevent, a 6% increase from the previous year. Analysis showed that children aged between 11 and 15 accounted for 2,628 - or 39% - of referrals, where age is recorded. People aged 15 to 20 accounted for the largest proportion of referrals (2,203 or 32%). But those aged 14 and under were the second largest (2,119 or 31%). The majority of referrals were related to boys and men, accounting for 90% of cases. The number of referrals for extreme Right-wing concerns was higher than that for Islamist ideology. Ken McCallum, director general of MI5, revealed that agents were investigating teenagers as young as 13 in relation to extreme Right-wing terrorism.

[The Daily Telegraph](#)

NSPCC calls for action as child cruelty offences double

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) has warned that cases of adults neglecting, mistreating or assaulting children have doubled in England over the last five years - from 14,263 offences recorded in 2017/18 to 29,405 recorded in 2022/23. NSPCC chief executive Sir Peter Wanless said the police figures are a "stark wake-up call that our current system is struggling to prevent the horrifying abuse and neglect happening to some of the youngest and most vulnerable in our society", and says the Government must urgently deliver promised reforms of the child protection system "to provide earlier support for babies, children and young people and stop families' problems escalating to crisis point".

BBC News

NCA calls for tougher sentencing and crackdown on abuse websites

Eight out of 10 people in the UK caught with images of children being sexually abused avoid going to jail, according to the head of the National Crime Agency. The NCA is calling for tougher sentences and a new offence of running abuse websites. The agency also expressed concerns about the introduction of end-to-end encryption by Meta, which could result in lost referrals related to potential threats to children. The NCA estimates that around 830,000 adults in the UK pose a threat to children. The director of operations emphasised that there is no distinction between the online and real world, and that viewing child abuse images victimises children and leads to new victims. The NCA is in discussions with the Home Office for stronger measures.

The Guardian