



Results from the 2023 BC Adolescent Health Survey

Youth Health Survey

Can you tell me about the BC Adolescent Health Survey?

Sure! This survey is voluntary. You can stop any time and skip questions you don't want to answer.

Young people helped design the survey and it is used to improve services and supports for youth in BC.

No one at school or home will see your answers.

Please don't write your name on it.

Thank you!

McCreary Centre Society

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

SCHOOL DISTRICT	SCHOOL	GRADE LEVEL	GRADE	MONTH	DAY	DAY OF WEEK
□ □ □ □	□ □ □ □	□ □ □ □	□ □ □ □	□ □ □ □	□ □ □ □	□ □ □ □

SCHOOL DISTRICT 72: CAMPBELL RIVER

Photo: Driftwood carving with Quadra Island and the Georgia Strait in the background, Campbell River, British Columbia, Canada.

2023 BC Adolescent Health Survey Results

School District 72 – Campbell River

McCreary Centre Society

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you to all the students and school district staff who supported the data collection for the 2023 BC Adolescent Health Survey (BC AHS). This report provides an overview of the findings from the 2023 survey for this district.

To accompany this report, we have created an infographic which shares some key findings, highlights the role of protective factors, and compares a few 2023 results to results in 2018.

This report is the property of your school district and will not be released by McCreary to any other party, unless written permission is received from the school district. You may receive direct requests from the Ministry of Education, other government ministries, and public health agencies to access this report. It is the decision of the school district whether or not you release this information.

We have produced a provincial report using the data from this and the 58 other participating school districts, and will shortly begin the process of producing local Health Service Delivery Area (HSDA) reports. No direct comparisons between school districts will be released.

Your school district data cannot be directly compared to data from the provincial or regional reports, or to other school districts without additional statistical tests. Comparing data between survey years (e.g., between 2023 and 2018) also requires statistical testing. We would be happy to support you in conducting additional analysis of your data, if we are able to.

When reading the report please note that the 2023 BC AHS included some questions which students only answered if they had answered 'yes' to a screening question. For example, if they answered 'no' to the question 'Have you ever vaped', they would not answer the vaping specific questions that followed. In these cases, the tables are labelled to indicate this occurred (e.g., the table headline would include 'among students who had ever vaped').

If "NR" appears instead of a percentage this means that the percentage was not releasable due to the risk of deductive disclosure.

Due to rounding, percentages for a survey item may not always total 100%.

If you have any queries relating to this report or the BC AHS, please contact Karen (karen@mcs.bc.ca) or Annie (annie@mcs.bc.ca).

We would be happy to visit and share the survey findings with school administrators, students, and/or parents.

Finally, McCreary's Youth Action and Advisory Council offers grant funding up to \$750 for students who wish to deliver projects to address youth health issues identified in the 2023 BC AHS. For more details, please contact yag@mcs.bc.ca or visit https://www.mcs.bc.ca/youth_action_grants.

STUDENTS IN SD 72 WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE BC AHS

Students in Grades 7–12 in this district participated in the 2023 BC Adolescent Health Survey. They provided demographic information such as age, race, and gender.

Age

Age of survey participants	
12 or younger	10%
13 years	18%
14 years	19%
15 years	17%
16 years	16%
17 years	17%
18 years or older	3%

Gender identity and sexual orientation

In this school district, 51% of students identified as male, 44% as female, 2% as non-binary, and the remainder were not yet sure of their gender identity. For 94% of students, their gender identity matched their sex assigned at birth.

Most students identified their sexual orientation as straight.

Sexual orientation	
Straight	70%
Mostly straight	8%
Bisexual or pansexual	14%
Gay or lesbian	3%
Asexual	1%
Not sure	4%
Other	0%

Ethnic background

Students came from a range of backgrounds. The most common background was European.

Family background	
Indigenous	19%
African	1%
Caribbean	NR
European	61%
East Asian	4%
South Asian	NR
Southeast Asian	2%
Middle Eastern	1%
Latin American, South American, Central American	3%
Australian, Pacific Islander	1%
Other	5%
Don't know	24%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

Indigenous students

Among Indigenous students:

- 63% identified as First Nations, 30% as Métis, and 10% as another Indigenous background (they could mark all that applied).
- 8% had previously lived on reserve and 20% were currently living on reserve.
- 34% could speak at least a few words of an Indigenous language.

Indigenous students were also asked about their family history of residential school: 34% did not know their family history but 49% reported that a family member had been in residential school.

Racial identity and religious affiliation

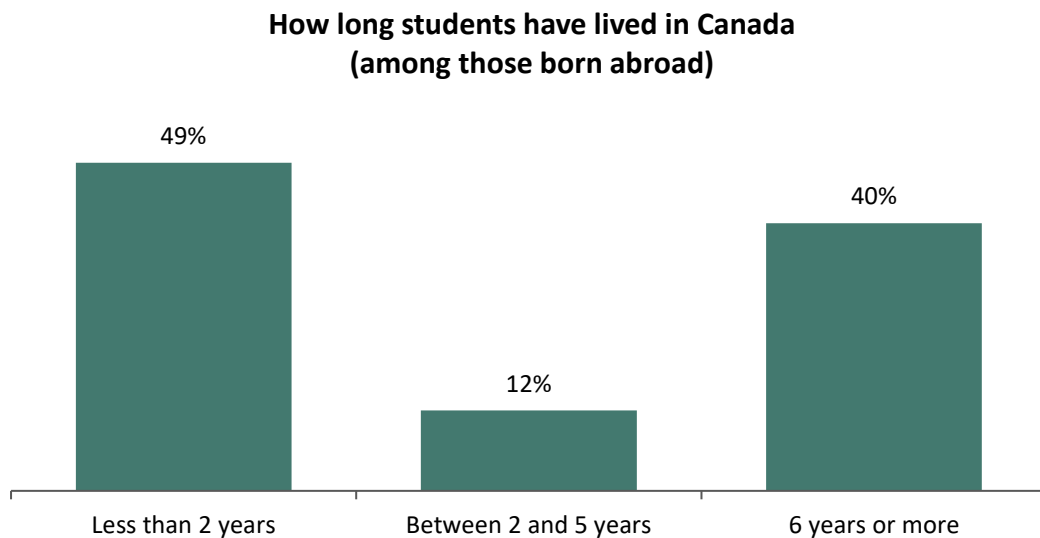
For the first time, the BC AHS asked students about their racial identity and religious affiliation. Around two thirds of students (66%) did not have any religious affiliation, and 11% did not know if they had one. The most common affiliations were Christian (16%), traditional (Indigenous) spirituality (2%), and Buddhism (1%).

Racial identity	
White	87%
Black	2%
Asian	5%
Indigenous	12%
Latin American/Hispanic	1%
Mixed race	4%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

Time in Canada

Most students in this school district were born in Canada (89%), and 5% had arrived as an international student.



Note: Percentages do not total to 100% due to rounding.

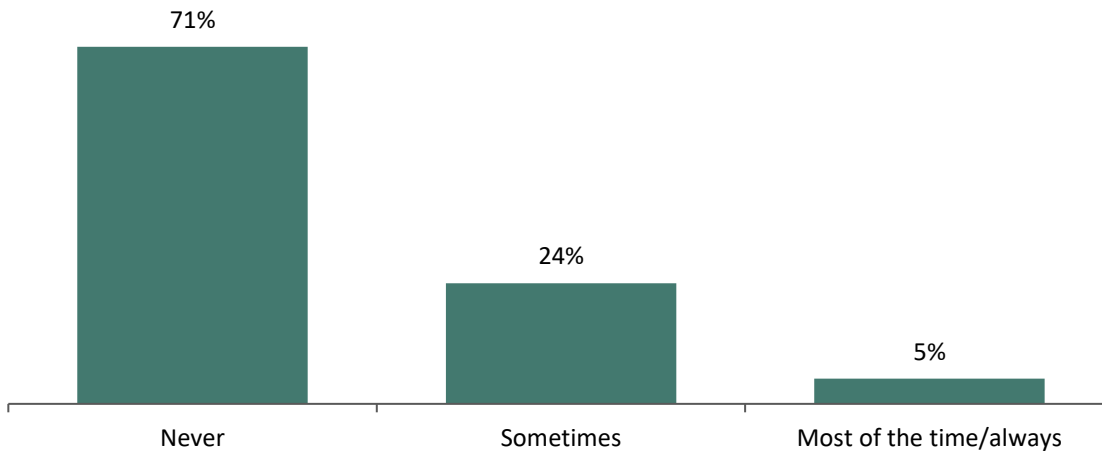
HOME LIFE

Students in this school district reported a range of living situations.

Who students most commonly lived with	
Mother/stepmother	88%
Father/stepfather	79%
Sibling(s)/stepsibling(s)	66%
Grandparent(s)	9%
Other adults related to them	3%
Other adults not related to them	3%
Other children or youth	2%
Two mothers or two fathers	2%
Lived with both parents at different times	9%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

How often students speak a language other than English at home



Caretaking responsibilities

On an average school day, 24% of students took care of a relative (e.g., a relative with a disability, or their younger siblings), and 72% took care of a pet or other animal.

Government care experience

Students had experienced a variety of different types of government care (including through a delegated agency), as well as alternatives to government care, such as a Youth Agreement.

Types of care students had experienced	
Foster home	4%
Group home	2%
Youth Agreement	NR
Extended Family Program or Out of Care Order	3%
Custody centre/detention centre	NR

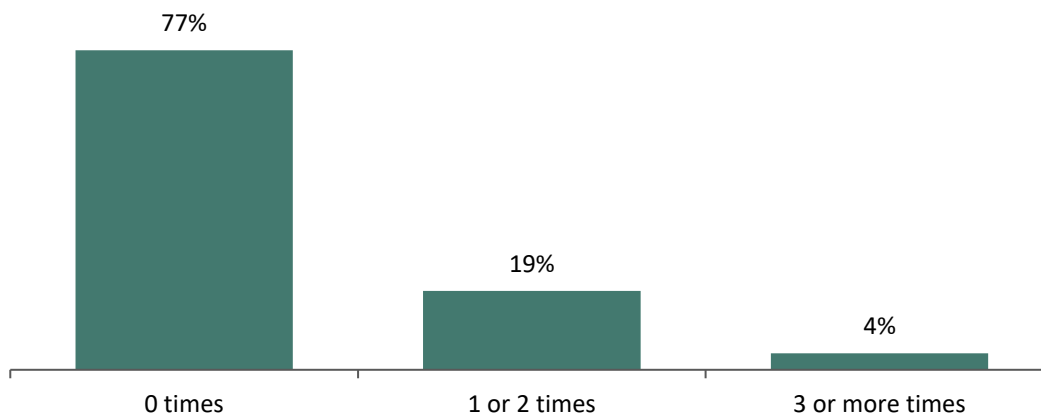
Note: Youth could mark all that applied.

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

Unstable housing

In the past 12 months, 8% of students in this school district ran away from home, 6% were kicked out, and 1% were homeless.

Times students moved in the past 12 months



Parental monitoring

Students were asked how much they felt their parents monitored what they were doing in their free time and online in the past 30 days. Parents were more likely to know what students were doing with their free time than their time online.

How much students felt their parents knew what they were doing ...			
	Never/ rarely	Sometimes	Most of the time/ always
With their free time	12%	15%	74%
Online	41%	19%	40%

Note: Percentages in each row may not total to 100% due to rounding.

MATERIAL WELL-BEING

Employment

During the school year, 40% of students worked at a paid job, including 3% who worked 21 or more hours a week.

Students' reasons for working (among those who worked)	
Needed the money	52%
Wanted spending money	54%
To contribute to family income	6%
To build their résumé	36%
To learn skills	36%
To save for school	43%
Other	13%

Note: Youth could mark all that applied.

Material deprivation

In 2018, McCreary developed a 10-item Youth Deprivation Index with the help of 800 students across the province. In preparation for the 2023 BC AHS, over 500 students reviewed the Index to determine if it was still relevant. They confirmed that the 10 items still captured deprivation from a youth's perspective but they also indicated the need for the addition of an 11th item – personal hygiene products.

Most students had each of the items in the Index.

Students who lacked but wished they had ...	
Money to spend on themselves	13%
Clothes to fit in	5%
Access to transportation	2%
Smartphone	4%
Lunch for school/money to buy lunch	6%
Access to the Internet	NR
Space of their own to hang out in	3%
Equipment/clothes for extracurricular activities	3%
Money for school supplies, school trips, and extracurricular activities	3%
A quiet place to sleep	2%
Personal hygiene products (e.g., soap, deodorant)	NR

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

Food security

In the past 12 months, 7% of students had cut the size of meals or skipped meals because there was not enough money for food. Also, 11% went to bed hungry at least sometimes because there was not enough money for food.

SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

Students were asked how much they agreed with a series of statements about their school experience.

Students' feelings about their school experience			
	Disagreed/ Strongly disagreed	Neither agreed nor disagreed	Agreed/ Strongly agreed
Felt like a part of their school	15%	31%	54%
Happy to be at school	23%	30%	47%
Felt school staff treated them fairly	13%	22%	64%
Felt school staff expected them to do well	7%	18%	75%
Felt safe at school	15%	27%	58%
Felt teachers cared about them	13%	24%	63%
Felt other school staff cared about them	15%	32%	53%

Note: Percentages in each row may not total to 100% due to rounding.

School absences

They were also asked about their reasons for missing school in the past 30 days.

Reasons for missing school in the past 30 days		
	Missed 1 or 2 days	Missed 3 or more days
Illness	38%	24%
Skipping	15%	8%
Bullying	3%	1%
Suspension	2%	NR
Family responsibilities	16%	8%
Work	4%	NR
Sleeping in	19%	6%
No transportation	6%	NR
Appointments	38%	10%
Own mental health (e.g., anxiety, depression)	16%	11%

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

Education plans

The majority of youth planned to finish high school and pursue post-secondary education.

School plans	
Did not expect to finish high school	1%
Planned to finish high school but not go to post-secondary	8%
Planned to go to post-secondary	69%
Hadn't thought about it	14%
Didn't know	8%

School safety

Students generally felt safe at school, and getting to and from school. However, they were more likely to feel safe in supervised locations such as classrooms and libraries, than in less supervised spaces.

How often students felt safe			
	Never/rarely	Sometimes	Usually/always
Classrooms	4%	8%	88%
Washrooms	18%	22%	61%
Changing rooms	15%	18%	67%
Hallways and stairwells	6%	12%	82%
Library	4%	3%	94%
Cafeteria	6%	5%	88%
Outside on school grounds	8%	12%	80%
Getting to and from school	4%	9%	87%

Note: Percentages in each row may not total to 100% due to rounding.

Sex education at school

For the first time, the BC AHS asked students about their views on the sexual health education they received at school. Nine out of 10 students reported receiving sex education at school, including 53% who had found it helpful and 38% who had not found it helpful.

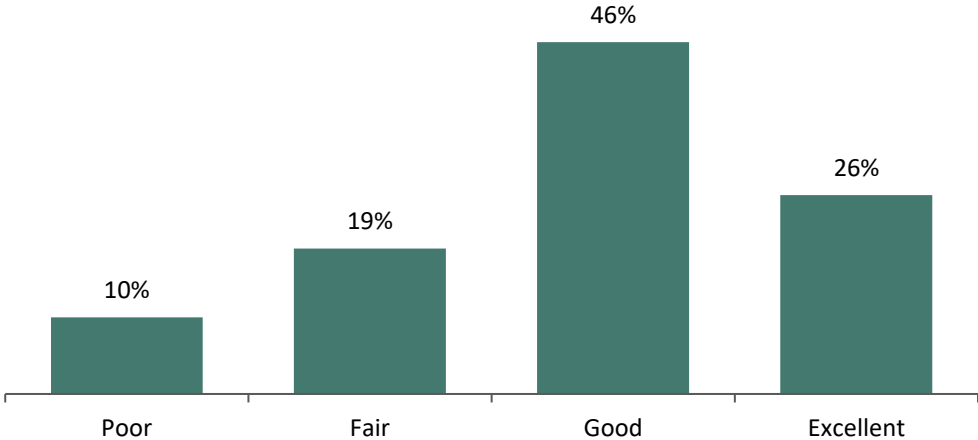
Students who received sex education were asked whether this education had met their needs:

- 81% felt the sex education they received had started at the right age for them.
- 78% felt it was relevant to their gender identity.
- 76% felt it was relevant to their sexual orientation.
- 53% felt it was relevant to any disability or health condition they had.
- 85% felt it was respectful of their culture/religion.

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The majority of students rated their health as good or excellent.

How students rated their mental health



Note: Percentages do not total to 100% due to rounding.

Sleep

The night before completing the survey, 42% of students slept for at least eight hours. The majority of students were able to sleep undisturbed that night. However, 34% reported that their sleep was interrupted.

Hours that students slept the night before completing the survey	
4 hours or less	10%
5 hours	9%
6 hours	17%
7 hours	22%
8 hours	30%
9 hours or more	12%

Most students engaged in at least one activity after they were expected to be asleep. Around 4 in 10 (42%) reported that they went offline (e.g., they put their phone on silent, turned it off, or put it in another room), including 9% who went offline exclusively and did not engage in any other activity.

Activities students were engaging in after they were expected to be asleep	
Chatting or texting	59%
Playing/watching esports	20%
Gaming (other than esports)	33%
Doing homework	49%
Scrolling through social media	66%
Doing other things online (e.g., watching videos)	62%

Health conditions and disabilities

When asked about any health conditions and disabilities, students most commonly reported having a mental health condition.

Health conditions and disabilities	
A mental health condition (e.g., depression, bipolar disorder, eating disorder, OCD)	26%
A physical disability (e.g., cerebral palsy, use a wheelchair)	2%
Deaf or hard of hearing	1%
Blind or visual impairment which cannot be corrected with glasses/contact lenses	1%
A long-term/chronic medical condition	6%
A learning disability (e.g., dyslexia)	11%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

Students were also asked about some specific conditions and disabilities.

Specific conditions and disabilities	
FASD/FAS/FAE	1%
Autism Spectrum Disorder	4%
Depression	16%
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	8%
Anxiety disorder	28%
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD/ADD)	23%
Eating disorder	11%
Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)	7%
Alcohol or other substance use addiction	10%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

Among students with a health condition or disability, 32% did not experience any barriers because of their condition, 43% had what they needed to overcome the barriers they experienced, and 25% did not have what they needed to overcome the barriers they faced.

Injuries

In the past 12 months, 35% of students had been injured seriously enough to require medical attention. Also, 17% had experienced one or more concussions where they had lost consciousness, or were dazed, confused, or suffered a gap in memory during this time period.

Students who had experienced at least one concussion in the past 12 months were asked whether they had received medical treatment for their most serious head injury, and 42% indicated they had. They were also asked what they were doing when they got their concussion.

Most common ways students got a serious concussion in the past 12 months	
Playing/training for organized sports	30%
Using alcohol or other substances	16%
Playing recreational sports (without a coach)	15%
Fighting with another person	14%
Riding a bike	12%
Riding/driving in a motor vehicle	6%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

Access to health care

In the past 12 months, students had accessed a range of health care options. However, not all students got the care they needed.

Where students got health care in the past 12 months	
Did not need health care	24%
Did not get the health care they needed	3%
Family doctor	48%
Specialist (e.g., dermatologist, psychiatrist, etc.)	25%
Nurse	11%
Walk-in clinic	31%
School wellness centre	2%
Youth clinic	3%
Emergency Room (ER)	19%
Traditional healer	NR
Counsellor/psychologist	15%
Foundry centre/Foundry Virtual BC	6%
Other	5%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

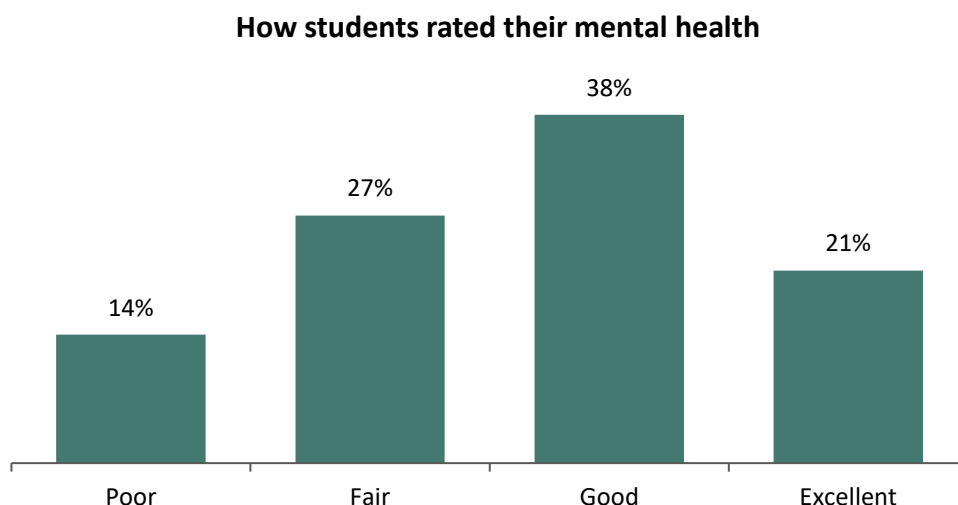
NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

In the past 12 months, the majority of students had not needed medical treatment specifically because they were physically sick or hurt. Among those who needed medical help, 80% had received the treatment they needed, and 20% had not.

Most students had seen a dentist within the past two years, including 84% who had been within the past year. However, 4% had last been to the dentist more than two years ago.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Students were asked to rate their mental health.



Students also rated their quality of life (subjective well-being).

How much students ...			
	Disagreed/ Strongly disagreed	Neither agreed nor disagreed	Agreed/ Strongly agreed
Felt their life was going well	13%	21%	66%
Wished they had a different life	61%	19%	20%
Felt they had a good life	7%	19%	74%
Had what they wanted in life	19%	29%	52%
Felt life was going just right	22%	30%	49%

Note: Percentages in each row may not total to 100% due to rounding.

Around half of students (53%) felt good about themselves, and 73% could name something they were good at.

In the past month, the majority of students experienced at least a little happiness, stress, and despair:

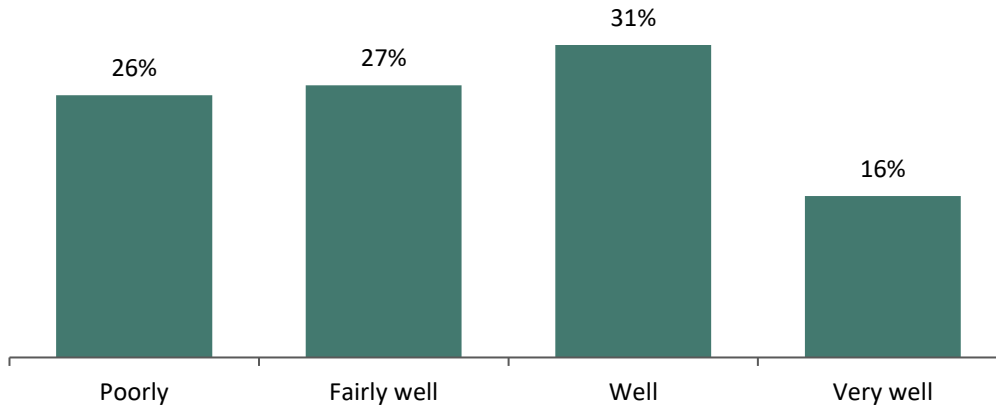
- 58% felt happy most or all of the time, and 2% never felt happy.
- 88% experienced at least a little stress, including 17% who were so stressed they could not function properly.
- 59% experienced some level of despair, including 10% who felt so sad, hopeless, or discouraged that they wondered if anything was worthwhile.

Also, 27% felt lonely often or always, and 12% never felt lonely.

The majority of students reported feeling hopeful for their future, with 60% feeling quite or very hopeful. However, 17% were not at all or only a little hopeful.

Around three quarters of students who experienced stress felt that they handled their stress at least fairly well.

**How well students manage their stress
(among those who experienced stress)**



Self-harm and suicidality

Students were asked about various forms of self-harm. In total, 28% had cut or injured themselves on purpose in the past 12 months without the intention of killing themselves, including 22% who had done so on multiple occasions.

Types of self-harm students engaged in during the past 12 months, beyond cutting	
Got into a physical fight	5%
Overdosed	2%
Used alcohol or other substances	15%
Drove recklessly	2%
Made a medical situation worse	5%
Had unsafe sex	3%
Over-exercised or exercised while injured	10%
Starved self	19%
Overused laxatives	NR

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

In the past 12 months, 21% of students had seriously considered killing themselves, and 7% had attempted suicide. Also, 40% had a relative or close friend who had attempted suicide, including 19% who had this experience within the past 12 months.

Bereavement

When asked whether someone close to them had died, 81% of students had had this experience.

Reasons someone close to them had died ...	
COVID-19	5%
Other illness	53%
Accident	13%
Old age/natural death	53%
Overdose	13%
Violence	4%
Suicide	14%
Other	2%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

Access to mental health services

In the past 12 months, 69% of students had not felt that they needed mental health services, 11% were able to access the services they needed, and 20% did not access the services they needed.

Students offered a variety of reasons for not accessing the mental health services they needed.

Reasons students did not access mental health services in the past 12 months (among those who felt they needed these services)	
Didn't know where to go	43%
Had no transportation	11%
Didn't think they could afford it	20%
Couldn't go when it was open	NR
Parent/guardian wouldn't take them	17%
Afraid someone they knew might see them	31%
Worried their information would not be kept confidential	44%
Didn't want parent/guardian to know	59%
Afraid of what they would be told	37%
Thought or hoped the problem would go away	57%
The service was not available in their community	NR
On a waiting list	6%
Had negative experience(s) before	20%
Too busy to go	54%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

Students were asked about accessing professional counselling or treatment for their mental health over the phone, by email, or through video calling, as well as where they went for reliable information on mental health.

In the past 12 months, 14% of students had accessed virtual counselling or treatment for their mental health. This included 11% who preferred this to in-person counselling, and 3% who would have preferred to access in-person counselling.

Where students go to access reliable information on mental health	
A friend/peer	37%
A family member	45%
School staff	15%
Mental health professional	16%
Website/online resource	20%
Another source	NR
Don't know where to go for reliable information on mental health	8%
Don't go anywhere for this information	32%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

EATING BEHAVIOURS AND BODY IMAGE

Food consumption

Students were asked about meals and snacks they had consumed on the day before taking the survey, and about where these came from (including food they took home from a school food program).

Ate or drank at least once yesterday	
Fruit, vegetables, and salad	82%
Sweets (cookies, cakes, candies, etc.)	78%
Fast food (pizza, hot dogs, fries, etc.)	45%
Traditional food from their background	18%
Energy drinks	20%

Source of meals and snacks yesterday	
Prepared themselves	72%
Prepared by parent/caregiver	78%
Restaurant, food court, or delivery service	36%
Food bank	2%
Taken home from a school food program	4%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

Meals eaten in the past 7 days					
	0 days	1-2 days	3-4 days	5-6 days	All 7 days
Breakfast	20%	20%	10%	11%	39%
Lunch	10%	11%	13%	17%	50%
Dinner	1%	1%	7%	16%	75%

Note: Percentages for each type of meal may not total to 100% due to rounding.

Where students get breakfast on school days	
Don't eat breakfast on school days	38%
At home	59%
At school	5%
On the way to school	6%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

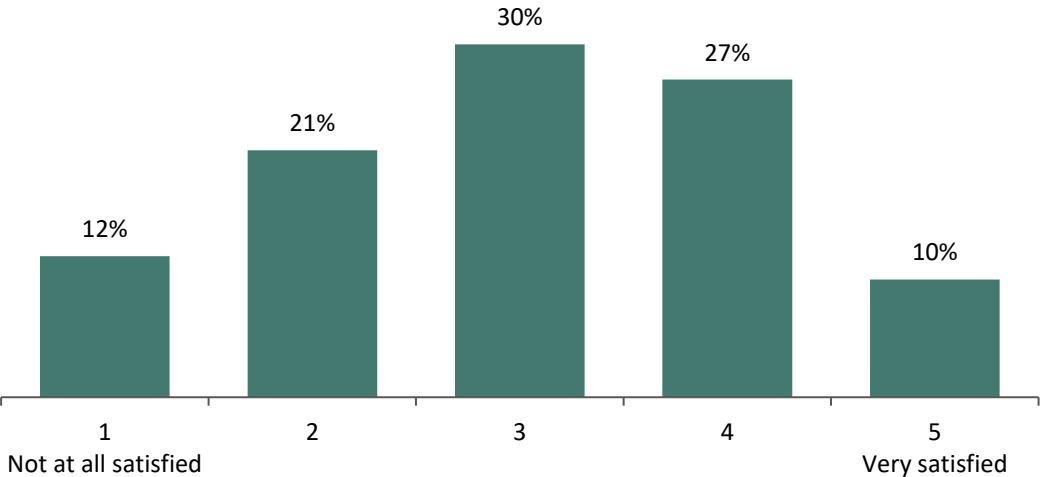
Disordered eating and body image

In the past 30 days, 34% of students worried that they had lost control of how much they ate.

In the past 12 months, 16% of students had vomited on purpose after eating, including 2% who did so at least weekly.

Students were asked to rate how satisfied they were with how their body looked.

How satisfied students felt with how their body looked

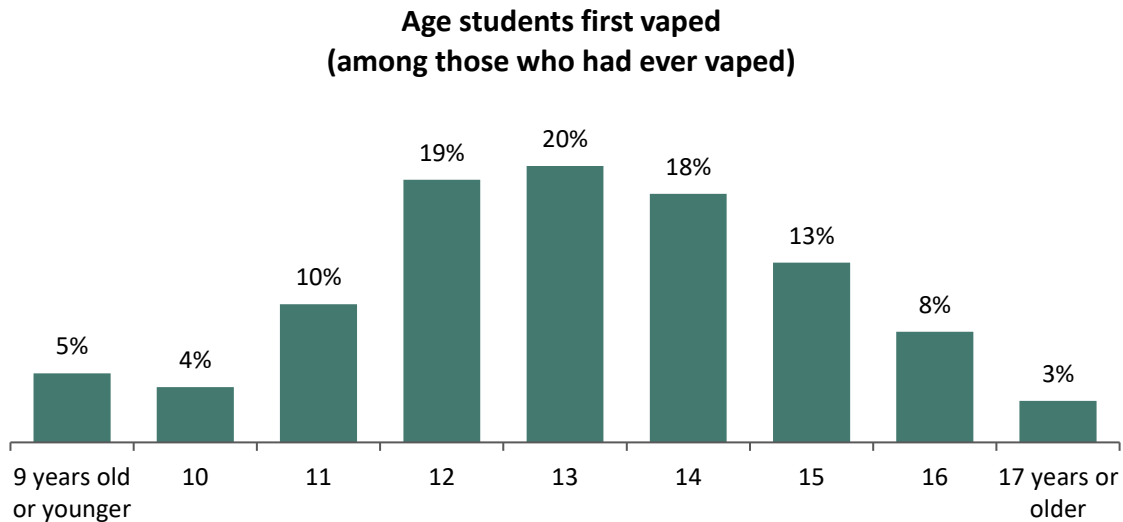


SUBSTANCE USE

Students were asked about their vaping and smoking, as well as their use of alcohol, cannabis, and other substances. They were also asked about their reasons for using substances and the consequences of their use.

Vaping

In this school district, 35% of students had ever vaped.



The majority of students who had tried vaping, had vaped in the past 30 days.

Number of days students vaped in the past 30 days (among those who had ever vaped)	
0 days	36%
1 or 2 days	12%
3 to 9 days	5%
10 to 19 days	9%
20 to 29 days	9%
All 30 days	28%

Note: Percentages do not total to 100% due to rounding.

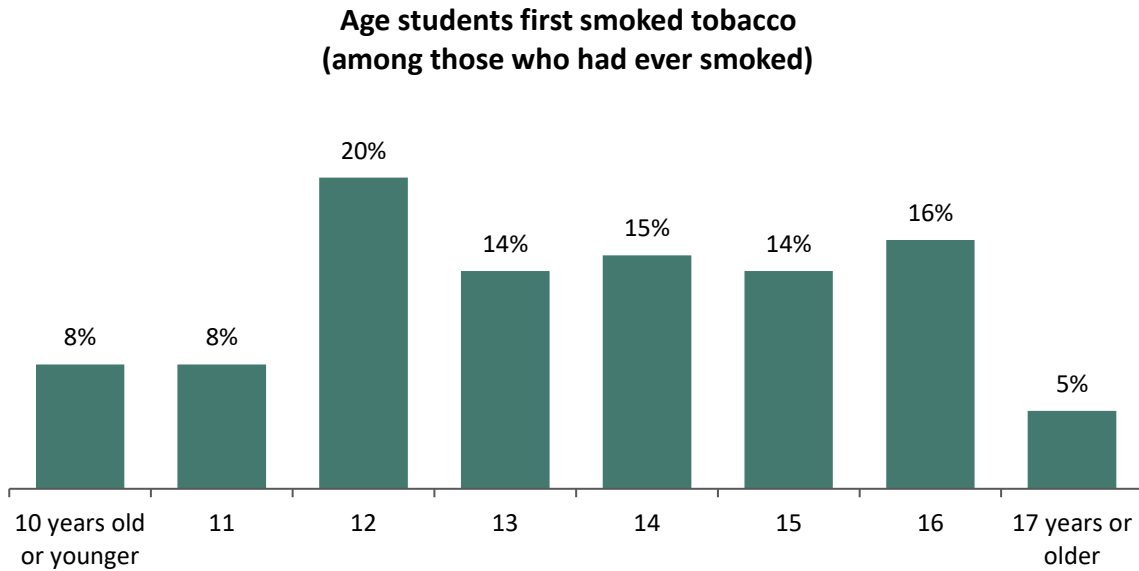
Students who vaped were asked how soon after waking up they had their first vape.

How soon after waking up students had their first vape (among those who vaped every day in the past 30 days)	
Within 5 minutes	56%
Between 6 and 60 minutes	22%
After 60 minutes	22%

Among students who had vaped in the past 30 days, 8% had used a product to help them stop vaping during this time.

Smoking

Locally, 20% of students had smoked tobacco (excluding ceremonial tobacco).



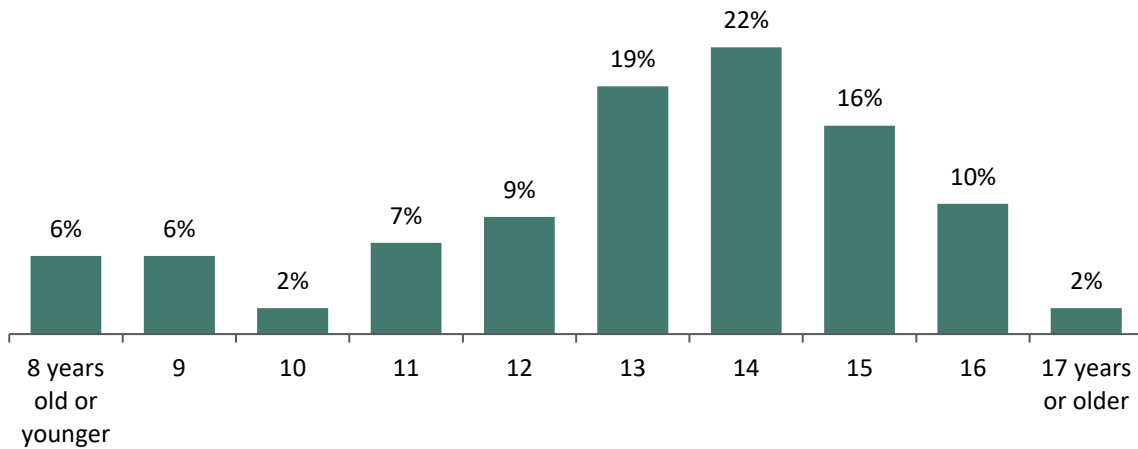
Number of days students smoked in the past 30 days (among those who had ever smoked)	
0 days	55%
1 or 2 days	20%
3 to 9 days	15%
10 or more days	9%

Note: Percentages do not total to 100% due to rounding.

Alcohol

Students were more likely to have tried alcohol than to have smoked or vaped, as 49% of students had ever drunk alcohol (beyond just trying a few sips).

**Age students first drank alcohol
(among those who had ever used alcohol)**



Note: Percentages do not total to 100% due to rounding.

The Canadian Low Risk Drinking Guidelines recommend that youth do not drink until they are of legal drinking age. However, if they decide to drink, the guidelines suggest they should not drink alcohol more than once or twice a week, and that they should never have more than two drinks on any one occasion.

Number of days students drank alcohol in the past 30 days (among those who had ever used alcohol)	
0 days	40%
1 or 2 days	37%
3 to 5 days	13%
6 to 9 days	6%
10 or more days	4%

Number of days students drank 5 or more drinks within a few hours in the past 30 days (among those who had ever used alcohol)	
0 days	64%
1 or 2 days	21%
3 to 5 days	7%
6 to 9 days	4%
10 or more days	4%

Number of days students had more than 2 drinks in the past 7 days (among those who had ever used alcohol)	
0 days	75%
1 day	17%
2 days	4%
3 or more days	4%

Students who had used alcohol were asked about the types of alcohol they had drunk on the Saturday before taking the survey.

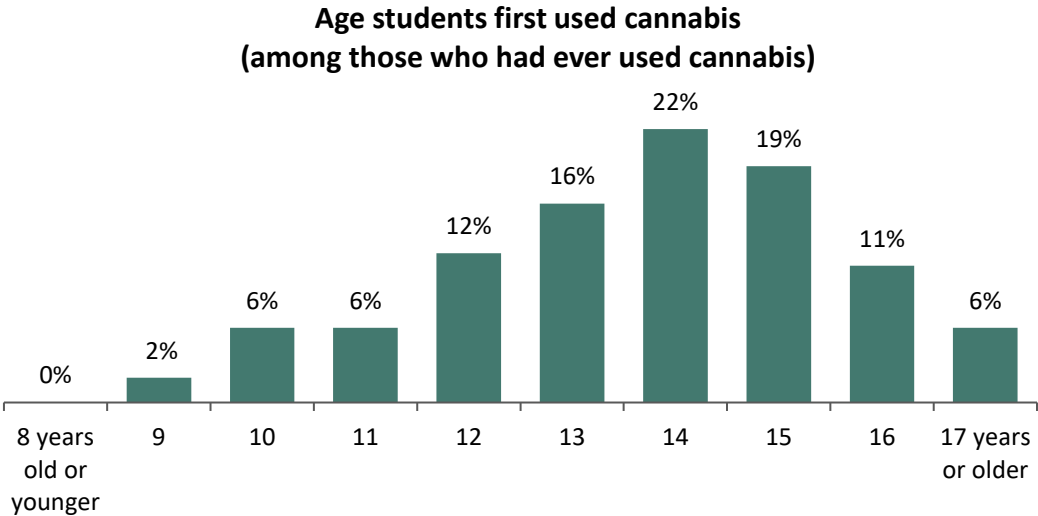
Types of alcohol used last Saturday (among those who had ever used alcohol)	
Did not drink last Saturday	68%
Beer	6%
Wine	3%
Coolers	15%
Liquor	23%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

Cannabis

Lower risk cannabis use guidelines for youth were recently developed by researchers at the University of Victoria (Card et al., 2023: <https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/cisur/assets/docs/youth-cannabis-guidelines.pdf>). The researchers’ suggestions included recommending youth consider waiting until they are older before using; “starting low and going slow” with the amount of cannabis they consume; being aware of the source of their cannabis and what it might contain; and knowing the different health risks associated with the various modes of cannabis consumption.

In this school district, 33% of students had ever used cannabis. Among those who used cannabis, 35% used it on the Saturday before taking the survey.



Number of days students used cannabis in the past 30 days (among those who had ever used cannabis)	
0 days	43%
1 or 2 days	15%
3 to 5 days	7%
6 to 9 days	9%
10 to 19 days	4%
20 to 29 days	8%
All 30 days	13%

Note: Percentages do not total to 100% due to rounding.

Most recent method of cannabis use (among those who had ever used cannabis)	
Smoked it	85%
Vaped it	25%
Ate it	21%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

Most recent source of cannabis (among those who had ever used cannabis)	
It was shared among a group of friends	65%
Friend or family member gave it to them	31%
Someone they did not know gave it to them	NR
Bought it from friend or family	9%
Bought it from someone they did not know	4%
Bought it from a website	NR
Bought it from a cannabis store	12%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

Other substances

Students were asked about their lifetime use of other substances, including their misuse of prescription medications.

Substances students had ever used	
Benzodiazepines without a doctor's consent	3%
Other prescription pills without a doctor's consent	7%
Cocaine	3%
Ecstasy/MDMA	2%
Mushrooms	9%
Other hallucinogens	4%
Inhalants	2%
Amphetamines	NR
Crystal meth	NR
Heroin, fentanyl, or other opioids	1%
Ketamine, GHB	NR
More of their own prescription than prescribed	8%

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

Reasons for using and consequences of substance use

Students reported using substances for a variety of reasons, including to manage their emotions.

Reasons students used substances the last time (among those who had used alcohol or other substances)	
Friends were doing it	32%
To manage physical pain	9%
Because of stress	25%
Thought it would help them focus	7%
Felt down or sad	22%
Wanted to have fun	67%
Wanted to experiment	31%
Felt pressured into doing it to fit in	NR
Didn't mean to (e.g., drink was spiked)	NR
There was nothing else to do	15%
To change the effect of another substance	6%
Because of an addiction	7%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

The majority of students (60%) had not used alcohol or other substances in the past 12 months. However, over half of those who had used substances reported negative consequences of their use.

Consequences of substance use experienced in the past 12 months (among students who had used alcohol or other substances)	
Passed out	29%
Got injured	17%
School work or grades changed	10%
Argued with family members	19%
Got into a physical fight	6%
Damaged property	11%
Lost friends or broke up with romantic partner	10%
Got in trouble with police	7%
Had to get medical treatment	NR
Had sex when they didn't want to	6%
Overdosed	NR
Was told they did something they couldn't remember	36%
Used alcohol or other substances but none of these happened	46%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

The majority of students had not mixed substance use with driving, and had not been a passenger in a vehicle with a driver who had been using substances.

Students who had ...		
	Driven a vehicle after using	Been a passenger in a vehicle with a driver who had been using
Alcohol	3%	21%
Cannabis	5%	22%
Other substances	NR	9%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

Students were asked whether they felt or had been told that they needed help for their substance use and other potentially addictive behaviours (gambling, gaming, and social media use). The most common area students needed help with was social media use.

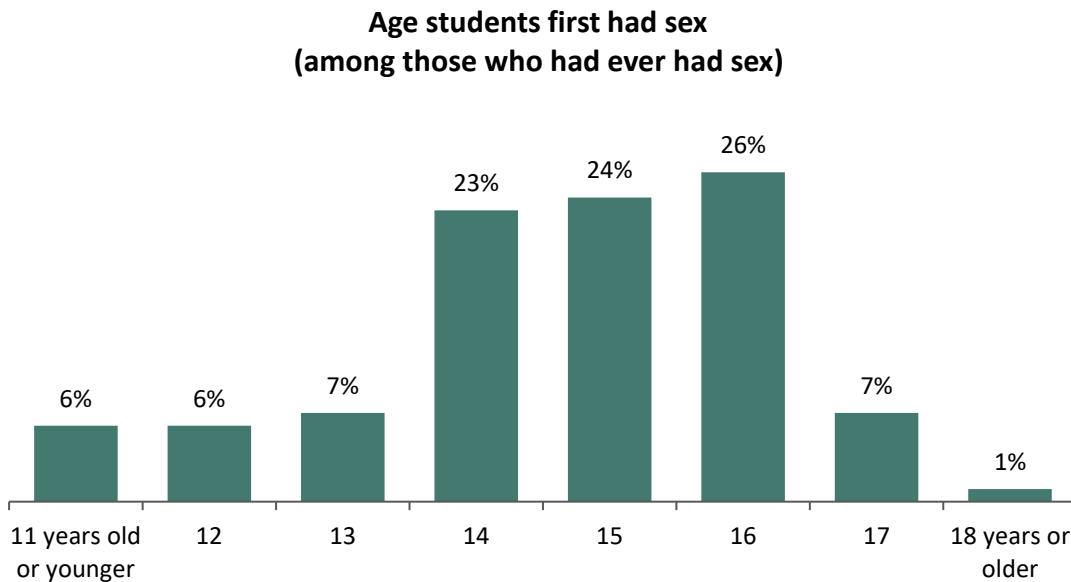
In the past 12 months, students felt or were told they needed help for ...	
Vaping	9%
Alcohol use	5%
Cannabis use	7%
Other substance use	2%
Social media use	15%
Video gaming	10%
Gambling	NR

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

SEXUAL HEALTH

In this school district, 24% of students had ever had oral sex, and 23% of these students had used a condom or other barrier the last time they had oral sex.

Also, 25% had ever had sexual intercourse, and 67% of these students had used a condom or other barrier/protection the last time they had intercourse.



Among students who had ever had sexual intercourse, 84% had engaged in sexual intercourse within the past 12 months. Also, 20% reported they had used substances before they had sex the last time.

Pregnancy involvement and prevention

Locally, 2% of students reported they had been pregnant or had gotten somebody pregnant, and 2% were unsure if they had been involved in a pregnancy.

Students who had engaged in sexual intercourse were asked if they had made any efforts to prevent pregnancy the last time they had sex.

Efforts students made to prevent pregnancy the last time they had sex (among those who had ever had sex)	
Did not try to prevent pregnancy	0%
Withdrawal	33%
Emergency contraception	5%
Condoms	60%
Birth control pills/patch/ring	47%
Depo-Provera	NR
IUD	10%
Last time they had sex was with a same-sex partner	6%
Not sure	NR

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

Sources of information about sexual health

Students who wanted reliable information about sexual health commonly approached their peers and family for this information. However, some also approached school staff and other in-person and online sources.

Where students go to access reliable information about sexual health	
A same-aged friend or peer	27%
An older youth	16%
Parent/guardian	35%
Other family member	10%
Adult outside their family	5%
Pornography	2%
School staff	10%
Sexual health professional	10%
Other professional	3%
Website/online resource	17%
Printed resource (e.g., book, brochure, poster)	2%
Did not know where to go	4%
Did not go anywhere	37%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

SAFETY, VIOLENCE, HARASSMENT, AND ABUSE

The majority of students felt safe in their school, home, and community. (School safety is discussed in the 'School Experience' section.)

How often students felt safe			
	Never/rarely	Sometimes	Often/always
In their neighbourhood during the day	6%	4%	90%
In their neighbourhood at night	13%	21%	66%
Inside their home	5%	6%	89%
On transit (among those who used transit)	15%	31%	55%

Note: Percentages in each row may not total to 100% due to rounding.

During the past 12 months, 43% of students had experienced verbal sexual harassment, and 30% had experienced physical sexual harassment.

Students were also asked specifically if they had been forced into sexual activity against their will. Locally, 11% had been forced into sexual activity by another youth and 2% by an adult.

In their lifetime, 16% of students had been physically abused and 13% reported they had been sexually abused. The percentage of students who had experienced sexual abuse increased to 15% when experiences of forced sexual activity, and being the younger of an illegal age pairing the first time they had sex, were included.

Dating violence

The majority of students who had been in a dating relationship in the past 12 months had not experienced physical or online abuse within that relationship. However, 13% of those who had been in a relationship reported they had experienced physical violence (such as being hit, punched, or slapped), and 14% reported that the person they dated had used social media to try to control, embarrass, or hurt them.

Discrimination

In addition to asking about reasons youth might have experienced discrimination, new questions were added to the 2023 BC AHS to determine the locations and regularity of discrimination students experienced.

Where students experienced discrimination in the past 12 months	
At school	29%
On the street	8%
In store/restaurant	2%
At work	4%
On public transit	5%
In hospital or other health care setting	1%
On social media/online	17%
In extracurricular activities (e.g., sports)	3%
Other	2%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

Reasons students perceived they had been discriminated against in the past 12 months	
Race, ethnicity, or skin colour	9%
Religion	3%
Sexual orientation	11%
Gender/sex	15%
Disability	5%
Health condition	4%
Physical appearance	24%
How much money they/their family has	9%
Weight	20%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

The majority of students who had experienced discrimination had this experience rarely. However, 7% who had experienced discrimination in the past 12 months reported that it happened regularly.

Victimization

Students were asked about their experiences of victimization as a victim and as a perpetrator in the past 12 months.

In-person victimization experiences in the past 12 months while at school or on the way to/from school	
As victim	
Teased to the point of feeling extreme discomfort	36%
Socially excluded	43%
Physically attacked or assaulted	11%
As perpetrator	
Teased, socially excluded, or physically attacked another youth	8%

In addition to in-person victimization, 21% of students reported they had been cyberbullied (including through texts and social media), and 12% had perpetrated online bullying.

RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS

When asked whether they got along with the people around them, 74% of students agreed, 20% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 6% disagreed.

Friendships

Most students had at least one close friend in their school or neighbourhood, and 70% had three or more such friends. Also, 15% had three or more close friends online whom they had never met in person.

The majority of students reported that they had friends whom they could share their ups and downs with (76%).

In this district, 9% of students had dated someone online in the past 12 months whom they had never met in person.

Supportive adults

Youth were asked about the roles that adults played in their life. (Results for school-based adults are in the 'School Experience' section.)

- 79% had at least one adult in their neighbourhood or community (outside of their family and school) who they felt cared about them.
- 74% had an adult inside their family who they would feel comfortable talking to if they had a serious problem, and 35% had such an adult outside their family.

Students who had an adult to help with ... (among those who needed help)	
Homework	81%
Making/getting to appointments	96%
Preparing for university, college, or trade school	87%
Getting a job	86%
Learning life skills (e.g., cooking, budgeting)	90%

Family connectedness

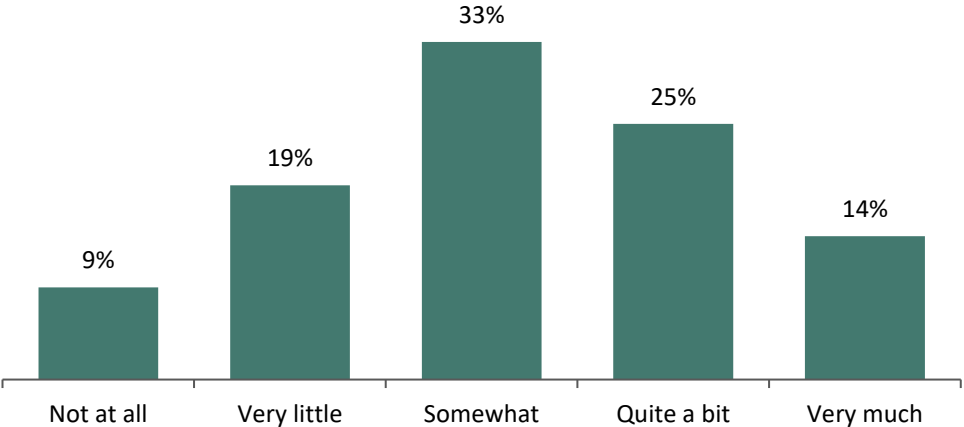
The majority of students felt connected to their family.

How much students felt their family ...			
	Not at all/ very little	Somewhat	Quite a bit/ very much
Understood them	22%	27%	51%
Had fun together	11%	18%	71%
Paid attention to them	11%	18%	71%
Respected them	9%	17%	74%

Community connectedness

Most students felt at least a little connected to their community.

How much students felt like a part of their community

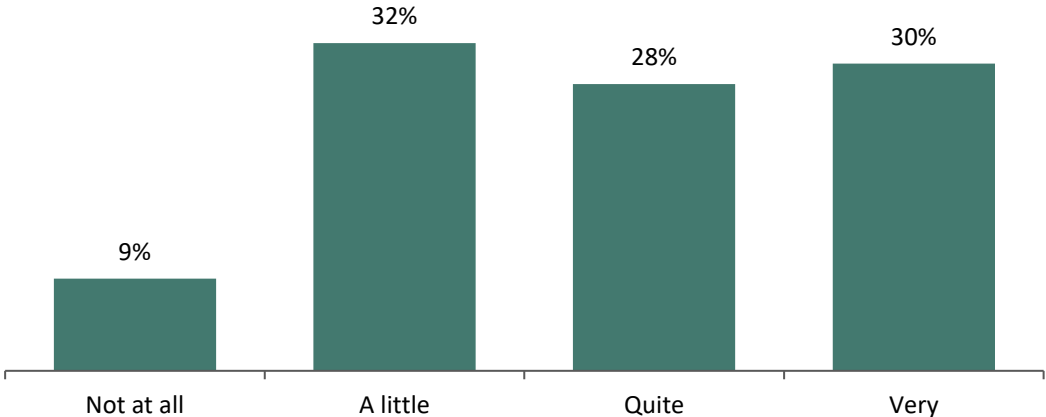


Other types of connectedness

Cultural pride

Students were asked how proud they felt to be part of the background(s) they identified with.

**How proud students felt to be part of their background(s)
(among those who identified a background)**



Note: Percentages do not total to 100% due to rounding.

Spirituality

Just under half (45%) felt that spirituality was at least a little important to them, including 9% for whom it was very important.

Connection to the land/nature

The majority of students felt connected to the land at least sometimes (63%), including 6% who always felt this way.

Time to do the things they want

Students generally felt they got to spend the right amount of time with family, friends, on their own, and in nature.

How much time students get with ...			
	Not enough	Right amount	Too much
Family	17%	76%	7%
Friends	25%	70%	4%
On their own	22%	65%	13%
In nature	35%	62%	3%

Note: Percentages in each row may not total to 100% due to rounding.

SPORTS, GAMBLING, AND OTHER LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Participation in physical activity

Students were asked about their participation in a range of sports and exercise, including swimming. Locally, 3% of students reported they could not swim, 24% could swim but not confidently, and the remaining majority were confident swimmers.

Participated in sports and exercise at least weekly in the past 12 months	
Informal sports (without a coach)	56%
Organized sports (with a coach)	48%
Dance, yoga, or exercise classes with an instructor	15%
Extreme sports	15%
Exercise at a gym or rec centre	31%
Exercise to an online video or online class	10%

Youth aged 12-17 should participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise every day, and older youth should get at least 150 minutes a week. Most students in this district exercised for at least 60 minutes once a week or more.

Number of days in the past week students got at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise	
0 days	10%
1-2 days	17%
3-4 days	26%
5-6 days	24%
All 7 days	23%

Most students reported that they enjoyed exercising and being physically active at least somewhat (90%), including 36% who enjoyed exercising very much. However, students reported a number of barriers to participating in sports and exercise, with the most common being that they were too busy.

Barriers students experienced to participating in sports and exercise in the past 12 months	
Couldn't afford to	8%
Worried about being bullied by an adult	4%
Worried about being bullied by another youth	13%
Worried about catching something (e.g., COVID)	4%
Didn't feel welcome	10%
Thought it would be too competitive	15%
Couldn't get there or get home	11%
Was too busy	39%
Activity wasn't available in their community	7%
Too anxious/depressed	17%
Parents wouldn't allow it	5%
Health needs/disability could not be accommodated	NR
Was injured	22%

Note: Students could mark all that applied.

NR: The percentage could not be reported due to risk of deductive disclosure.

Participation in cultural and volunteer activities

Students were asked about their engagement in their community outside of school, and specifically about their engagement in cultural activities and volunteering without pay. Over the past 12 months, 7% had engaged in cultural activities at least weekly, and 13% had volunteered this frequently.

Connection to activities

Most students felt that the activities they engaged in were meaningful to them, including 56% who felt this way quite a bit or a lot. Also, 37% felt their ideas were listened to and valued quite a bit/a lot.

Gambling

The BC AHS has always asked students about gambling. Additional questions were added to the 2023 BC AHS to capture students' online gambling behaviours, as this has become an issue of increasing concern in BC. In addition to gambling for money in the past 12 months, 12% of students gambled for something of value other than money, and 31% gambled 'just for fun'.

Ways that students gambled <u>for money</u> in the past 12 months	
Played cards/dice in person	15%
Played cards/dice online	5%
Sports betting in person	6%
Sports betting online	3%
Bought lottery tickets/scratch cards	6%
Played in a gaming tournament	11%
Streamed video games (e.g., Twitch)	7%
Bought in-game items (e.g., loot boxes)	22%

There is some concern in BC that betting for virtual credits within video games can lead to gambling for money, and potentially problematic gambling. Students were therefore asked whether they had bet for virtual credits within the past 30 days (they could mark all that applied):

- 30% had not played video games in the past 30 days.
- 5% had bet with virtual credits they purchased using real money.
- 10% had bet with virtual credits they had won or earned in a video game.
- 5% had bet for prizes.
- 54% had not bet with virtual credits.

Phone use

Most students (97%) in this school district had a phone or tablet, and used it for a variety of activities.

What students used phone/tablet for on their last school day	
Gambling	2%
Playing/watching esports	14%
Gaming other than esports	24%
Sexting	1%
Watching porn	5%
Connecting with family and friends	64%
Scrolling through social media	73%
None of these	10%

TOPICS STUDENTS WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT

The final page of the survey offered students the opportunity to share anything about their health which they had not been asked about, and to identify any topics they would like to learn more about. In this district, 5% of students provided a comment and identified topics they wanted to learn more about.

Sexual health was the most common topic they wanted to learn more about.

“Sex education needs to be talked about more.” – Female, age 18

“Sexual health in general.” – Male, age 17

“Best form of pregnancy prevention, healthy practices.” – Male, age 17

“Sex ed for girls. Especially for young girls as it is not taught enough and I knew nothing as I grew up and started to go through puberty. Don't only focus on boys sexual organs.” – Female, age 18

A few students also highlighted other topics they wanted to learn more about.

“Cannabis usage in youth.” – Male, age 15

“Probably gender identity, even though that's a touchy subject.” – Male, age 14

“Nutrition.” – Female, age 18

“Pressures from peers to be in a relationship in high school.” – Male, age 16

“Peer pressure should be more talked about, also sexual assault.” – Female, age 17

RESOURCES

As noted in the introduction to this report, if you have any questions or would like to request additional data or dissemination materials, please contact Karen at karen@mcs.bc.ca or 604-291-1996, ext. 230. We would also be happy to visit and share the survey findings with school administrators, students, and/or parents.

Additional 2023 BC AHS results

The school district reports and infographics are the first materials to be produced from the 2023 BC AHS findings. These reports are not made public unless specifically requested by the district. The first public report of the 2023 BC AHS data will be the provincial highlights report, and will share an overview of the combined results for all participating school districts. It will include youth health trends, gender and grade differences, emerging issues, and risk and protective factors for healthy development. The report will be released in early 2024. Regional reports, special topic reports, posters, and fact sheets will follow. All resources will be available at: <https://mcs.bc.ca/ahs>.

To ensure you receive notification of all upcoming releases, please consider joining our community mailing list. Please contact mccreary@mcs.bc.ca to be added to the list.

Next Steps workshop toolkit

The Next Steps workshop toolkit is a resource that provides facilitators (e.g., teachers, Public Health Nurses, youth workers, and other adult supports) with a workshop template that can be used to share results of the survey with young people aged 12 to 19 in British Columbia. It includes an introduction to the results, activities to learn about risk and protective factors, and discussion questions to explore youth health in your school or community.

McCreary staff are also available to facilitate the workshop. To learn more about the Next Steps, or for support to adapt this resource to meet the needs of your school district, please email mccreary@mcs.bc.ca.

Youth Action Grants (YAGs)

YAGs are a project of McCreary Centre Society's Youth Advisory and Action Council (YAC). YAGs are available to BC youth (ages 12 to 19) in school districts that participated in the 2023 BC AHS. YAGs offer up to \$750 for projects which address findings from the BC AHS and which seek to support or improve youth health. For more information or to apply, please visit https://mcs.bc.ca/youth_action_grants.

Application forms and information for students are available in English and French. For youth wanting additional support with the application process, the YAC offers a grant writing workshop – please contact yag@mcs.bc.ca.



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