

2017

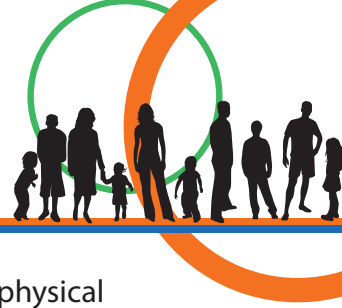
Student & Parent Census Overall Findings



November 2018

2017 Student and Parent Census

Executive Summary



Knowing who our students are, about their school experiences, relationships in school, physical health and well-being allows the Toronto District School Board to make informed and meaningful decisions that support their achievement and well-being.

The TDSB is a leader in collecting system-wide student and parent demographic, experiential and well-being data. This TDSB Census is the third census for parents of students in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6, and for students in Grades 7 to 12. It is the first time for students in Grades 4 to 6 to participate in the Student Census. More than 220,000 completed surveys were returned, representing about 90% of the total student population and almost two-thirds of the JK-Grade 6 parents.

The data collected is analyzed and compared to the previous TDSB Census and to national and international data to gain a comprehensive picture of students within the system but also in a more global context.

By gathering this data every four to five years, we can identify the changes, trends and ongoing needs of our diverse community. The value of this rich data is unparalleled and is a critical tool in determining where support should be focused, where change is required, and also, what is working well. Taking action on the data allows the TDSB to respond directly to student and parent voices to develop learning environments that are engaging, inclusive, opportunity-driven and lead to increased learning outcomes.

Key Findings

- Demographically, the proportion of TDSB students from the highest income bracket has risen since the 2012 Census, yet more than 40% of the population was from the lower income/socioeconomic status background.
- An overwhelming majority of parents were highly satisfied with their child's school experience. They felt that their child received the help and support they need, that their child's teacher was a good fit for their child, that school rules were applied fairly and that importantly, parents felt welcome in their child's school.
- Regardless of grade level, students generally found their schools safe, and that all or most of their teachers were respectful of their background and had high expectations of their success.
- While more Grade 7-12 students agreed that rules were applied fairly to them compared to the 2012 data, fewer reported enjoying school or having a sense of belonging at school.
- Grade 4-6 students were more positive about their relationships with school adults and teachers than students in Grades 7-12. High school students especially felt less connected to their teachers.
- Grade 7-12 students felt less physically active and healthy (which includes eating and sleeping habits), and spent more time on screen activity such as watching videos and on social media, than the cohort from the 2011-12 Student Census.
- Students' emotional well-being has dropped incrementally with age and over time. Many more middle and high school students compared to the last Census felt nervous and under a lot of stress and pressure often or all the time, and had multiple worries especially about their own future and their school marks.
- Gender identity has a significant impact on students' feelings of well-being. There was little difference among students' well-being according to racial identity in Grades 4-6, however identity plays a bigger role in well-being as students' age.



Moving Forward

Every student deserves a great education and student well-being and learning must be at the centre of every decision we make. The Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan outlines how each and every student will be supported and sets direction to provide support for how we work. Transforming Student Learning and Creating a Culture for Student Well-Being are the key areas that will drive the work in support of this data and when they are examined together, the learning environment improves for all students.

But the real change happens when each unique school examines their specific data, determines their action for improvement, measures impact and communicates progress. The entire system improves when classrooms and schools focus their improvement in the context of system direction.

To support students' achievement and well-being, we will:

- Ensure schools are working towards developing well-being goals that are effective and carefully adapted to their school community and take into consideration building stronger relationships with students and improving the overall school climate to create inviting and engaging learning environments where students want to be.
- Continue commitment to equity, anti-racism and anti-oppression, leading to more inclusive and welcoming spaces for students. Understanding identity and its impact on mental health and developing and encouraging a sense of agency for students are key components of that commitment and will be embedded throughout professional learning.
- Embed a focus on well-being into all professional learning opportunities to bring attention to the whole student in all areas. For example, math cannot be discussed in the absence of considering math anxiety as a barrier to success.
- Engage students in various ways to provide more in-depth insights into the data, identify trends and provide insights and ideas on how to move forward to support the community.
- Engage parents in meaningful ways, including through the School Improvement Process, to build stronger relationships with parents and families and increase involvement.
- Bring specialized resources closer to schools and enhance relationship between school staff and professional supports including mental health leads, social workers, psychologists and elementary itinerant guidance counsellors.
- Partner with unions, agencies and community-based programs such as Toronto Public Health and School Mental Health Assist, to enhance ongoing learning and school-based supports.

Knowing who our students are allows us to create learning environments that connect directly with their experiences and needs. This data shows a lot of great detail about how students and parents feel but it also shows some urgent areas for change that cannot be ignored. Data helps the TDSB make decisions based on evidence. It is an important tool that must be considered as part of every decision we make in support of student success.



Focus on Well-Being & Student Engagement



In a world that is quickly changing well-being among young people is a growing focus. In TDSB, the Multi-Year Strategic Plan and Action Plans prioritize well-being. Every school has developed a school improvement goal directly related to improving well-being.



Multiple Definitions of Student Well-being

Cognitive- General ability to apply knowledge to problems, or experiences in the world,
Social- opportunity and capacity to generate and support positive relationships with peers and adults,
Psychological- Personal sense of purpose, self-awareness, and life satisfaction,
Physical- Consisting of sleep, diet, and exercise or physical activity. (OECD, 2017)

Cognitive: critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and the ability to be flexible and innovative,
Emotional: experiencing emotions, and understanding how to recognize, manage and cope with them,
Social: self-awareness, the sense of belonging, collaboration, relationships with others, and communication skills,
Physical: physical activity, sleep patterns, healthy eating, and healthy life choices. (Ontario, 2016)

Promote physical activity,
Enable social connections,
Improve productivity, learning and overall health,
Reduce financial stress of housing and transportation costs,
Foster equity by creating a barrier-free campus. (UBC Wellbeing Design Lab, 2018)



Background

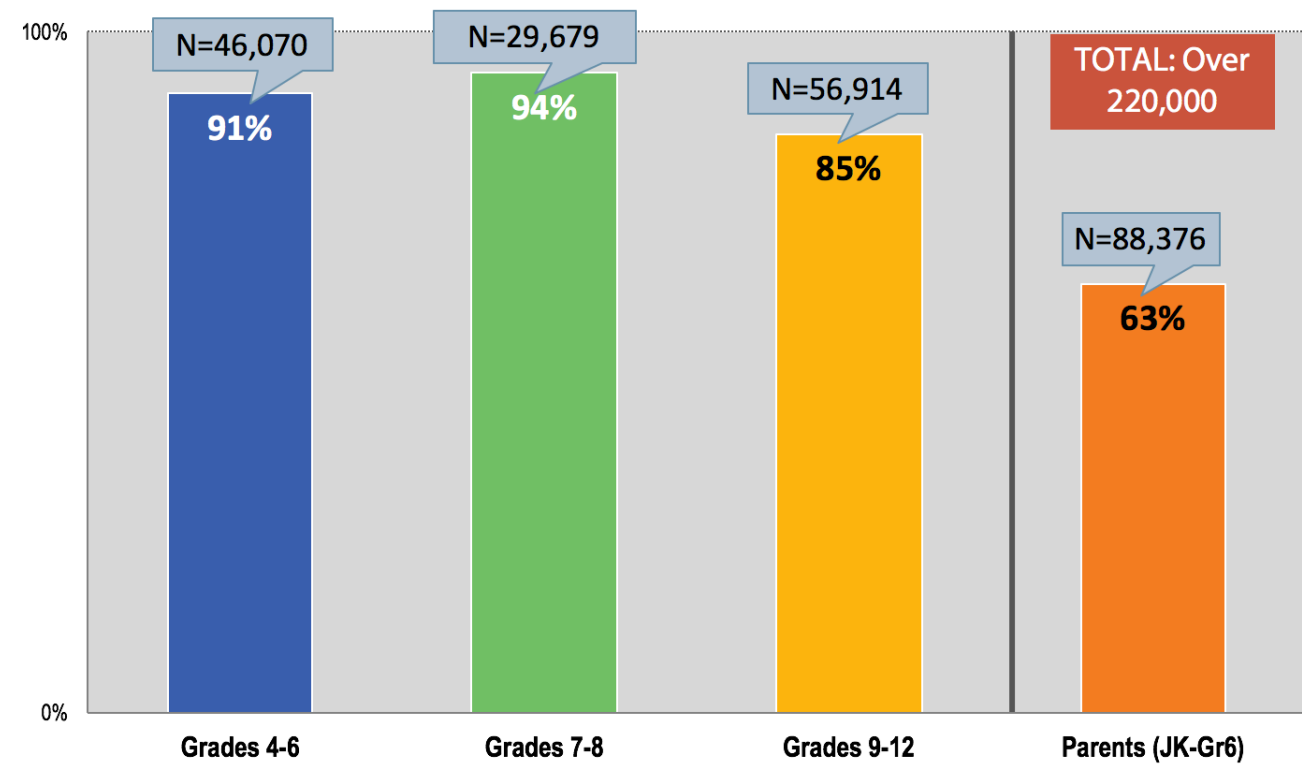
In April 2017, the TDSB conducted its:

- third *Parent Census* for parents of JK-Grade 6 students
- third *Student Census* for Grades 7-8 /Grades 9-12 students
- first *Student Census* for Grade 4-6 students.

Over 220,000 completed Census survey forms were received.



2016-17 Student & Parent Census: Return Rates



Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



Key Findings

1. **Demographic Characteristics**
2. **Parent Perceptions**
3. **Student Perceptions**
 - a) About School
 - b) About Well-being

Historical, national and international comparisons are noted where appropriate.

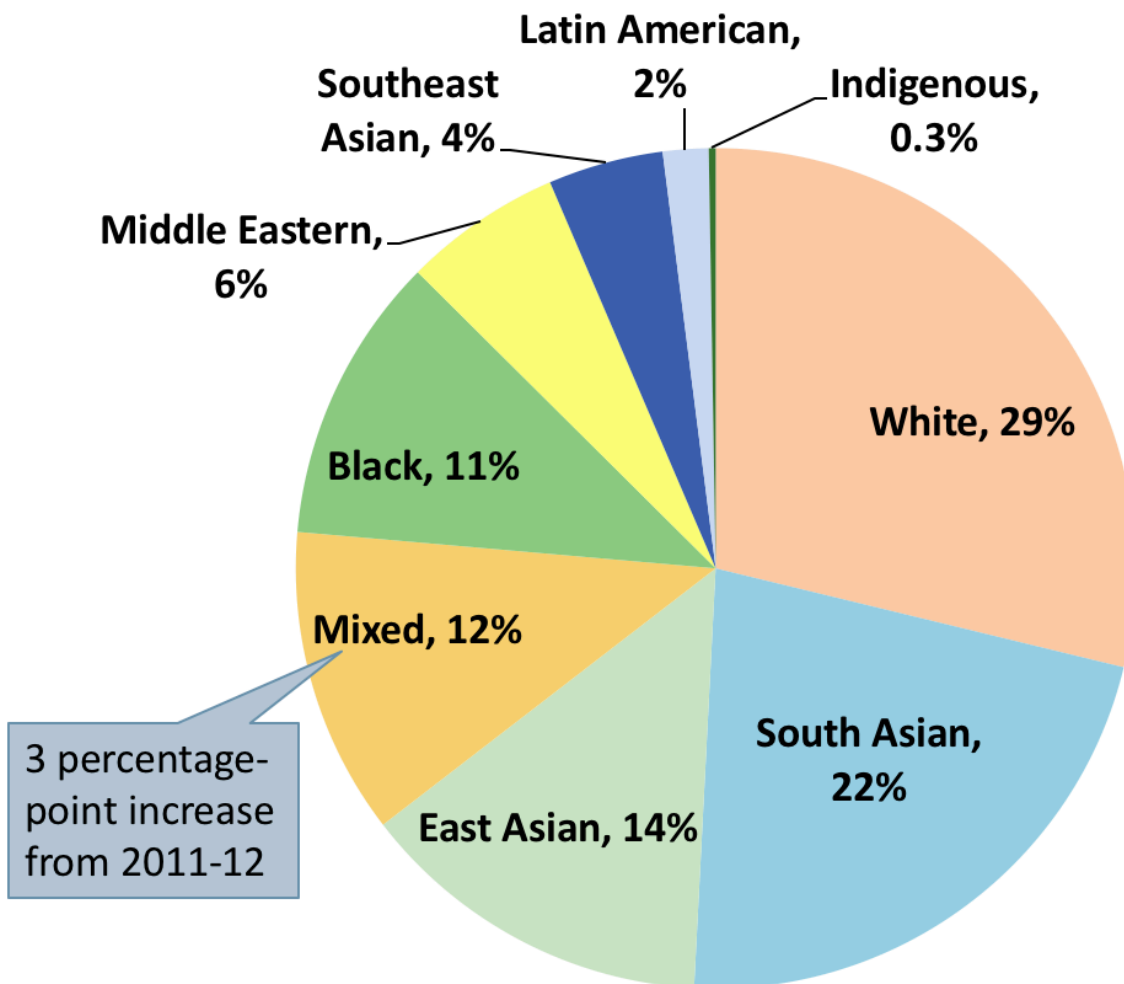


Demographic Characteristics

- Racial Background
- Faith/Religion/Creed
- Sexual Orientation
- Socio-economic Status



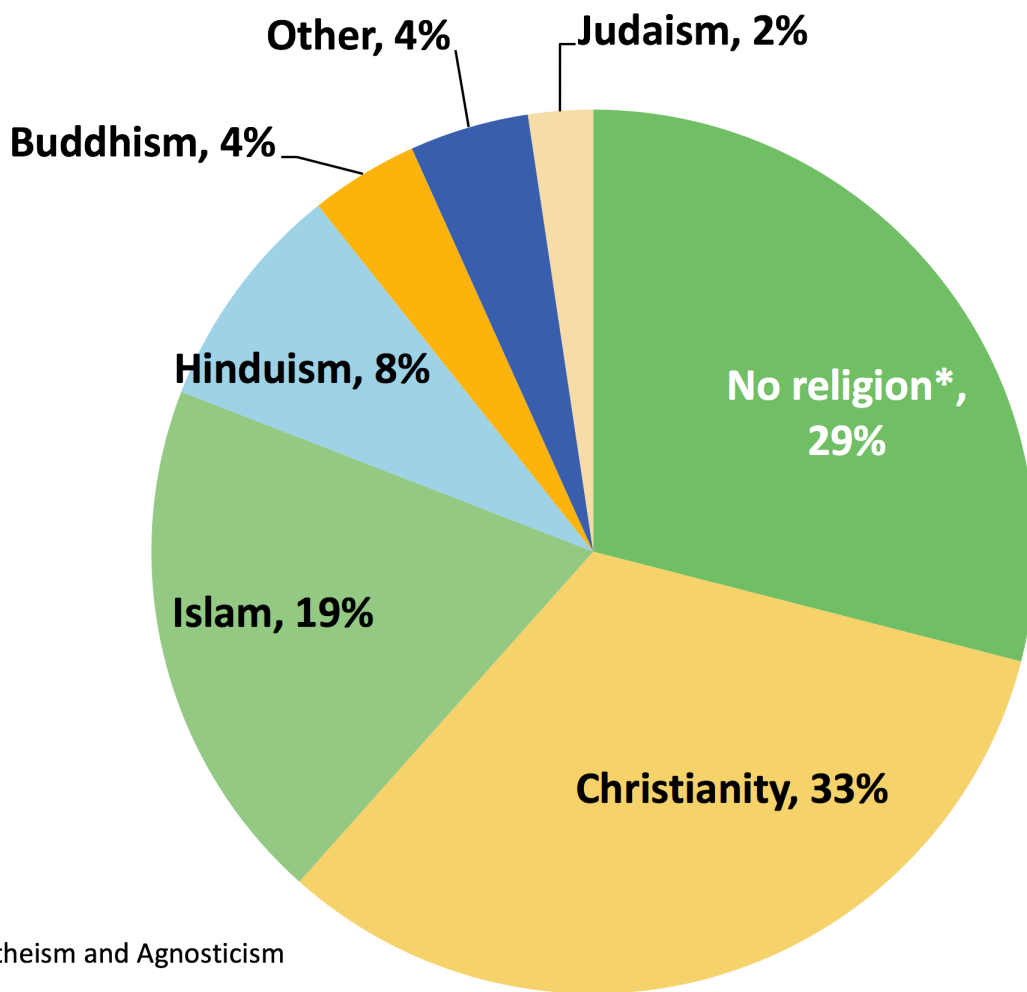
Racial Background (JK–Grade 12)



Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



Faith/Religion/Creed (Grades 7- 12)

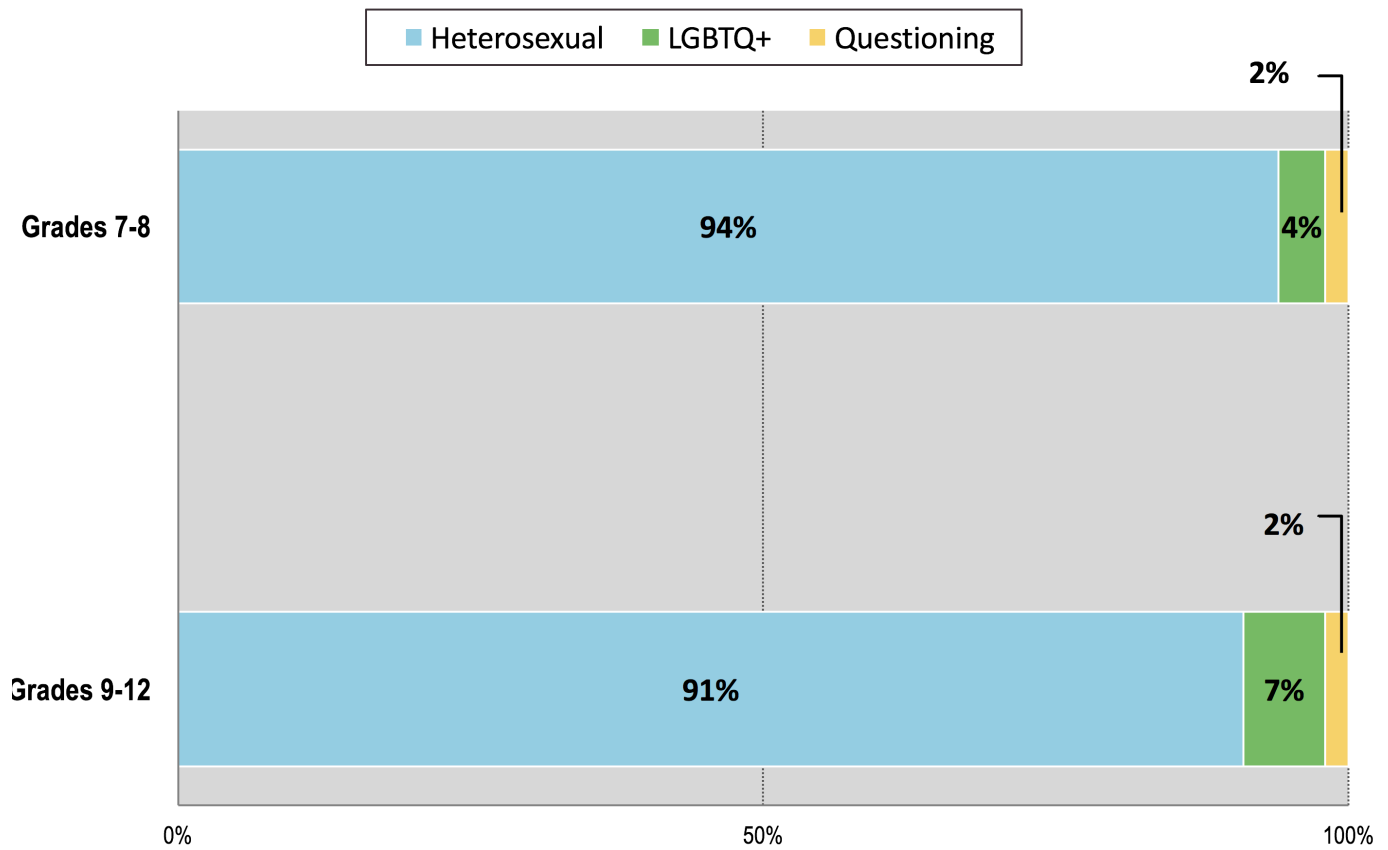


*includes Atheism and Agnosticism

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



Sexual Orientation

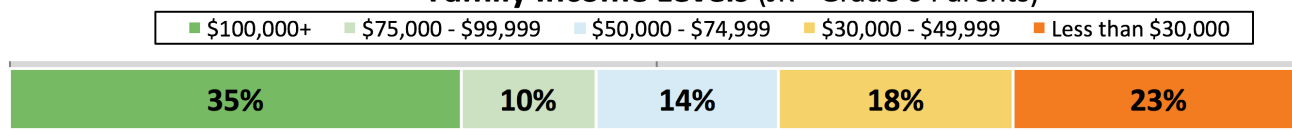


Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census

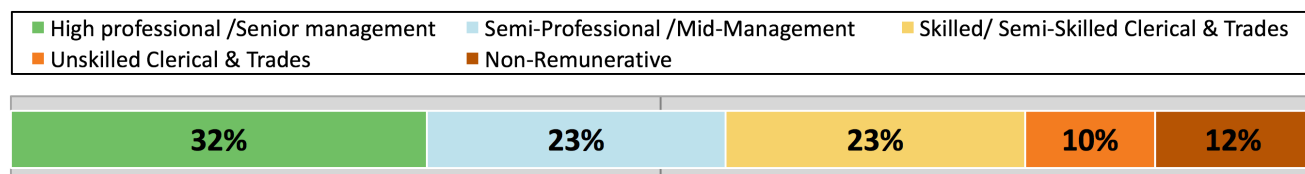


Family Socio-economic Status (SES)

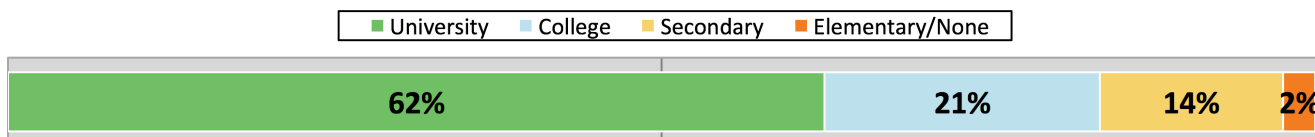
Family Income Levels (JK - Grade 6 Parents)



Parent Occupation (Grade 7-12 Students)



Parent Education (JK – 12 Students)



Compared to 2011-12 Census:

- There has been an increase in the highest income/occupational category (7-9 percentage points), and a small increase in the proportion of parents with university education (3 percentage points).
- Yet, a significant proportion (41-45%) of students were from lower income bracket groups.

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census

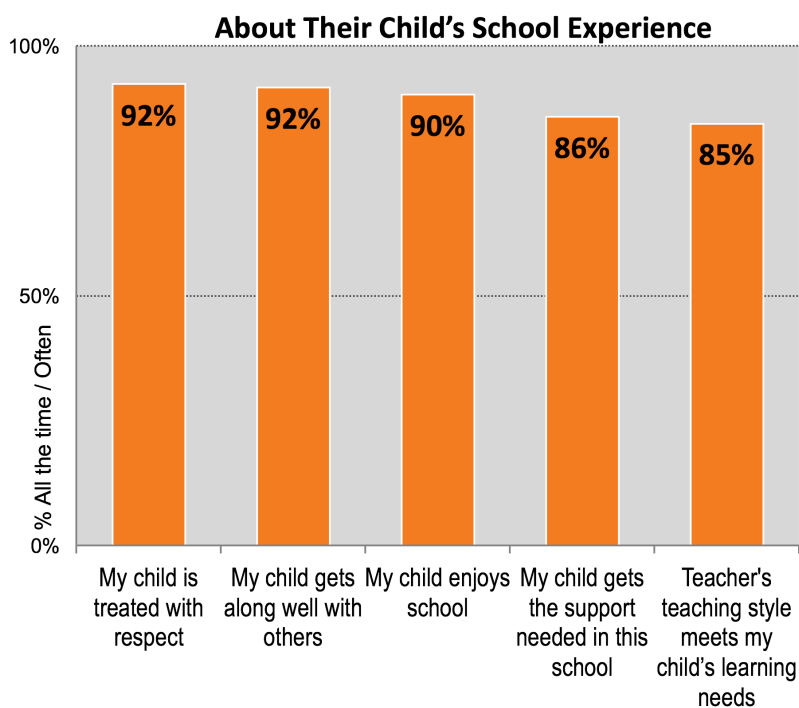
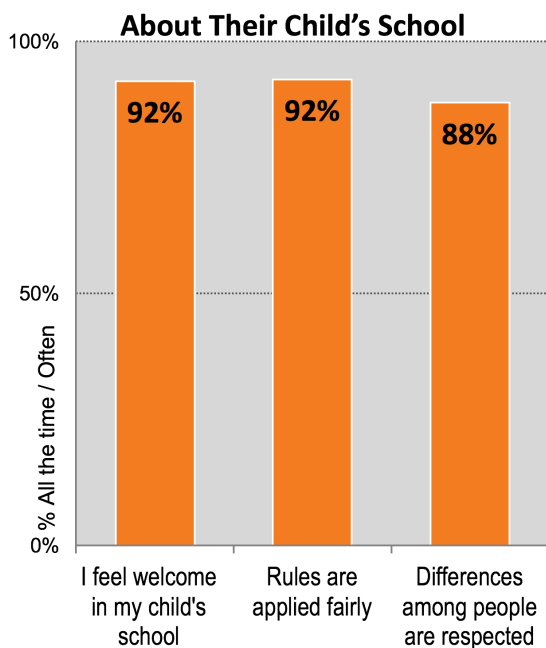


Parent Perceptions

- About Their Child's School
- About Their Child's School Experience



Parent Perceptions (JK-Grade 6)



Compared to 2011-12 Census:

- Parents' perceptions of their child's school were similarly positive.
- This reflects the continued confidence parents have in the school their child attended.

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census

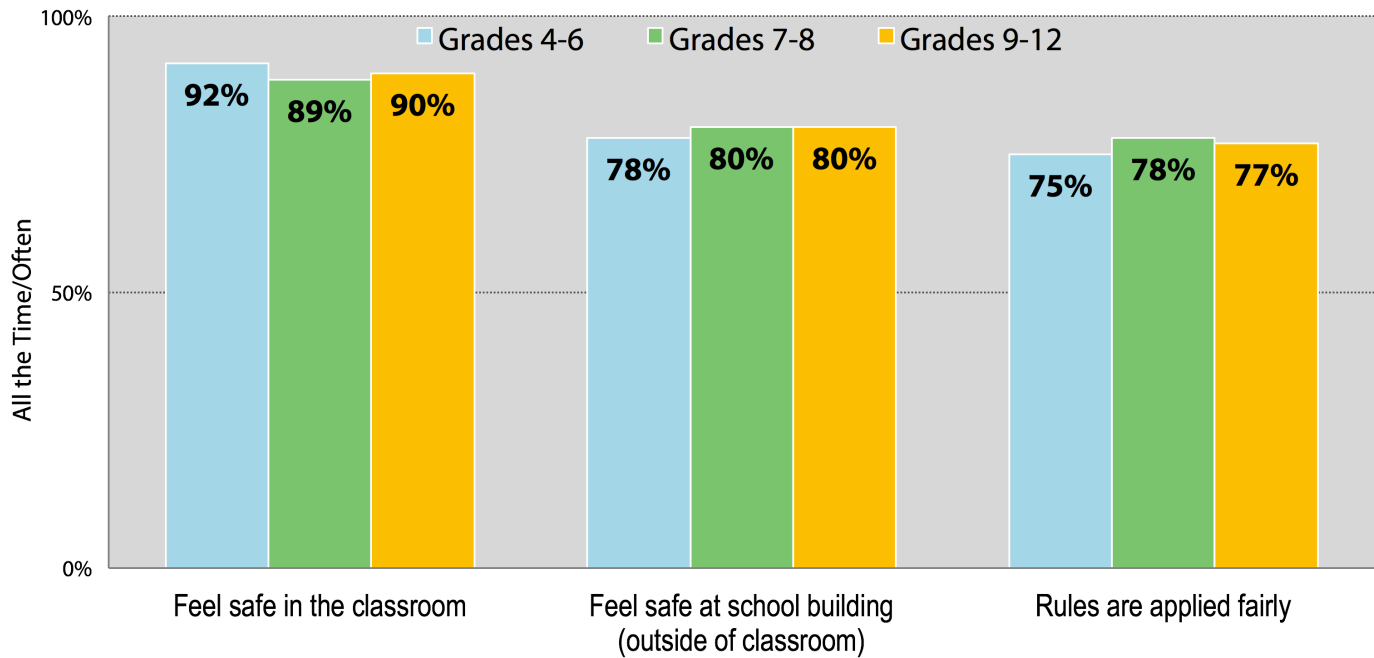


Student Perceptions

- Overall School Experience
- Peer Relationships at School
- Relationships with Teachers/School Adults



Student Overall School Experience (1)



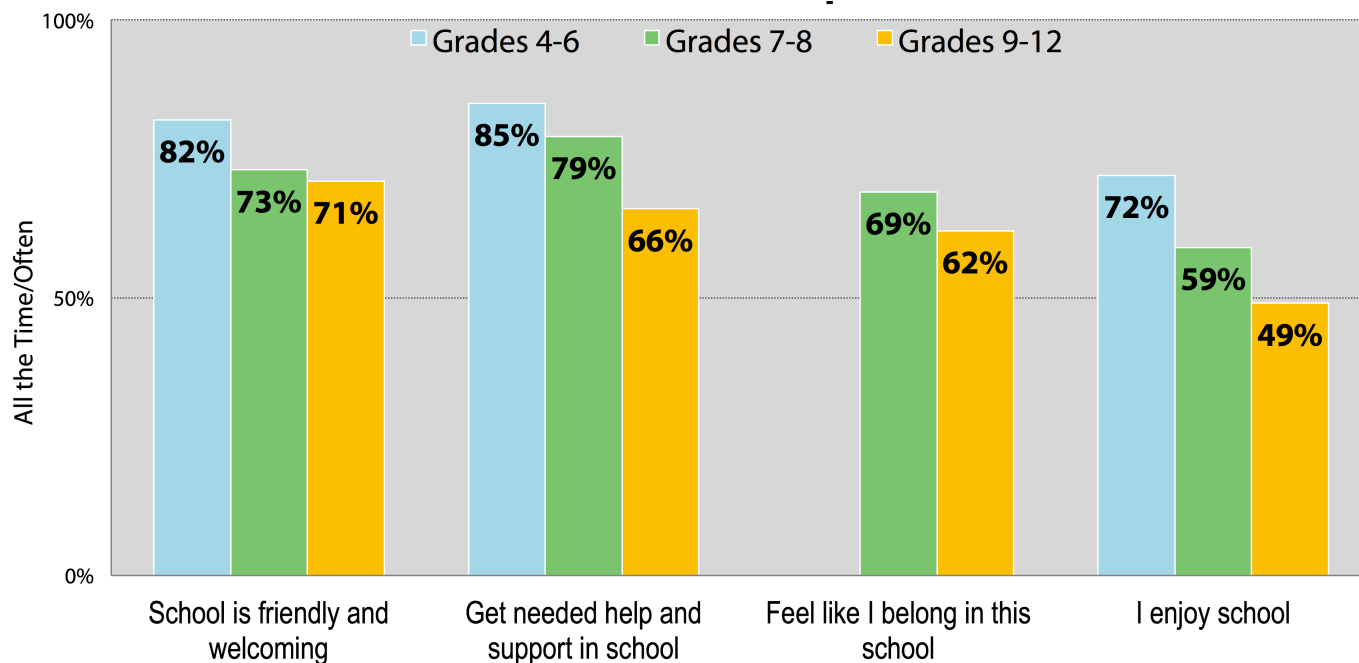
Compared to 2011-12 Census:

- Students' sense of school safety was about the same as in 2011-12.
- Significantly more Grade 7-12 students felt that school rules were applied fairly (9-14 percentage points).

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



Student Overall School Experience (2)



Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- There was a decline in the proportion of Grade 7-12 students reporting having a sense of belonging in school (4-7 percentage points) and enjoying school (10-14 percentage points).

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



School Engagement: National/International Comparisons

Similar age patterns and trends over time can be found in:

- BC Ministry of Education's annual province-wide *Satisfaction Survey of Grades 4, 7, 10 and 12 from 2011/12-2015/16*

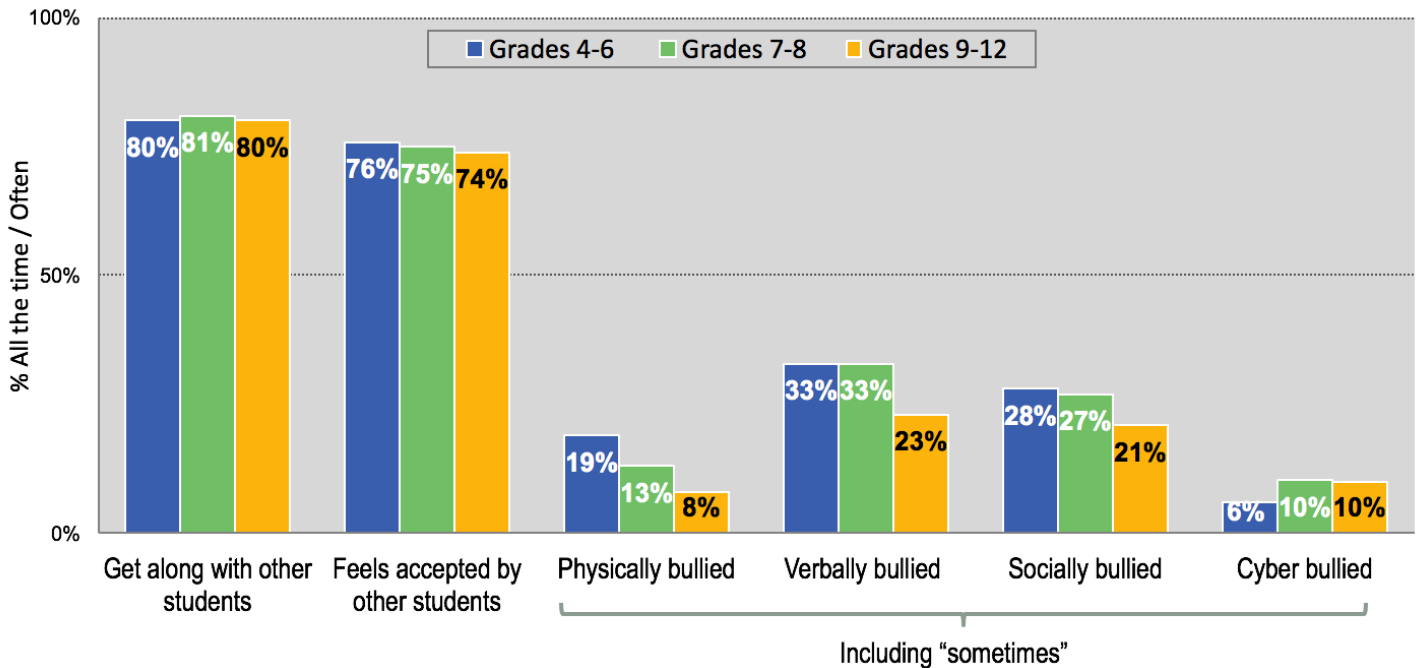
There was a decline in the proportion of grade 12 students who reported liking school (3 percentage pts), liking what they learn (6 percentage pts), and feeling that the school is preparing them for a job in the future (10 percentage points).

In fact, in 2015-16, the percentages of Grade 12 students who reported liking school or liking what they learned at school dropped to 42% and 39% respectively.

- OECD's *PISA 2015 Results from 78 participating countries*: "Across OECD countries, students' sense of belonging deteriorated between 2012 and 2015.... This trend seems to be part of a gradual decline in students' feelings of connectedness at school over the past 12 years [between 2003 and 2015]." (p.119)



Peer Relationships at School



Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- Peer relationships patterns were similar.
- Fewer (4-8 percentage points) Grade 7-12 students reported having been bullied verbally; but there was an increase among the Grade 7-8s in social bullying (5 percentage points).

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



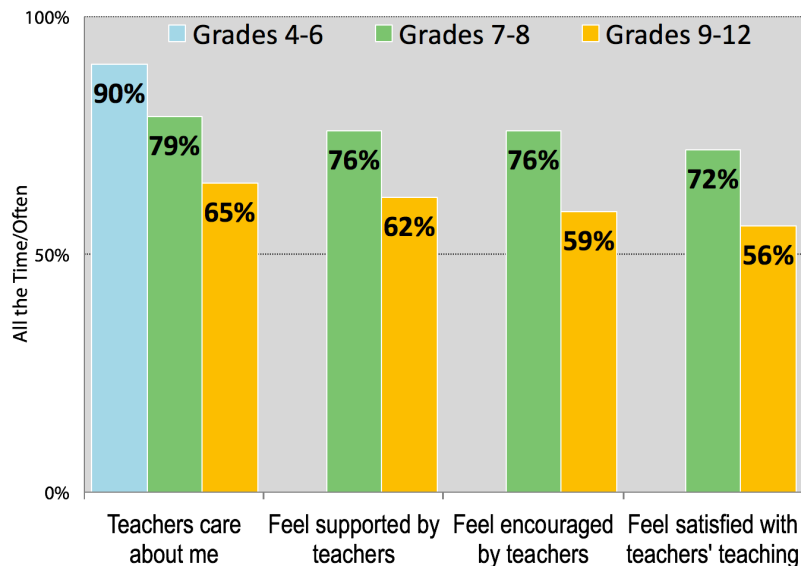
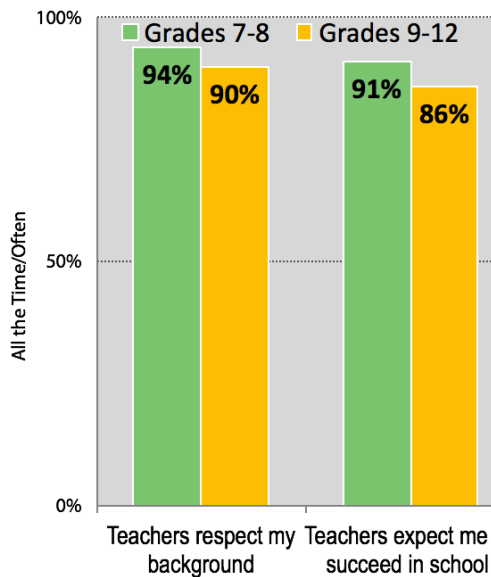
Relationships with Teachers: International Comparisons

Student relationships with their teachers and peers are closely connected to their feelings of belonging at schools (OECD, 2017)

- Across 78 OECD countries, between 2012 – 2015 a lower proportion (6 percentage points) of students reported disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with *feeling like an outsider*.
- Over the past 12 years, feelings of connectedness at school has been declining steadily. In 2003, around 7% of students reported that they feel like an outsider; by 2012, that proportion had grown by 4 percentage points, and by 2015 it had grown by 10 percentage points.
- In none of the participating countries and economies did the percentage of students who reported that they feel like an outsider at school decrease significantly between 2003 and 2015. (OECD, 2017)



Relationships with Teachers



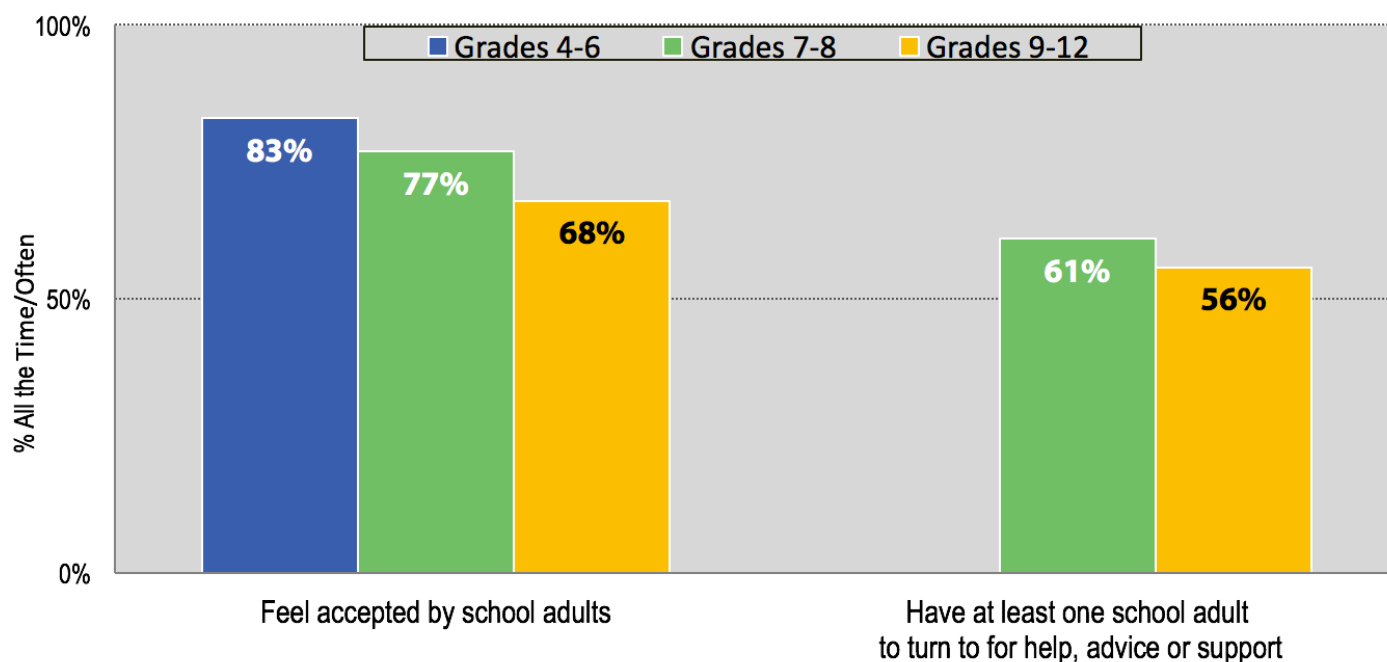
Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- Students' general perceptions of teachers were about the same.
- But fewer Grade 7-12 students reported feeling encouraged (7-10 percentage points) or supported (6-9 percentage points) by their teachers, or being satisfied with their teachers' teaching (8-12 percentage points).

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



Relationships with School Adults



Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- Fewer Grade 7-12 students felt accepted by school adults (8 percentage points).
- A similarly significant proportion of Grade 7-12 students reported having no school adults that they felt comfortable to turn to for help.

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census

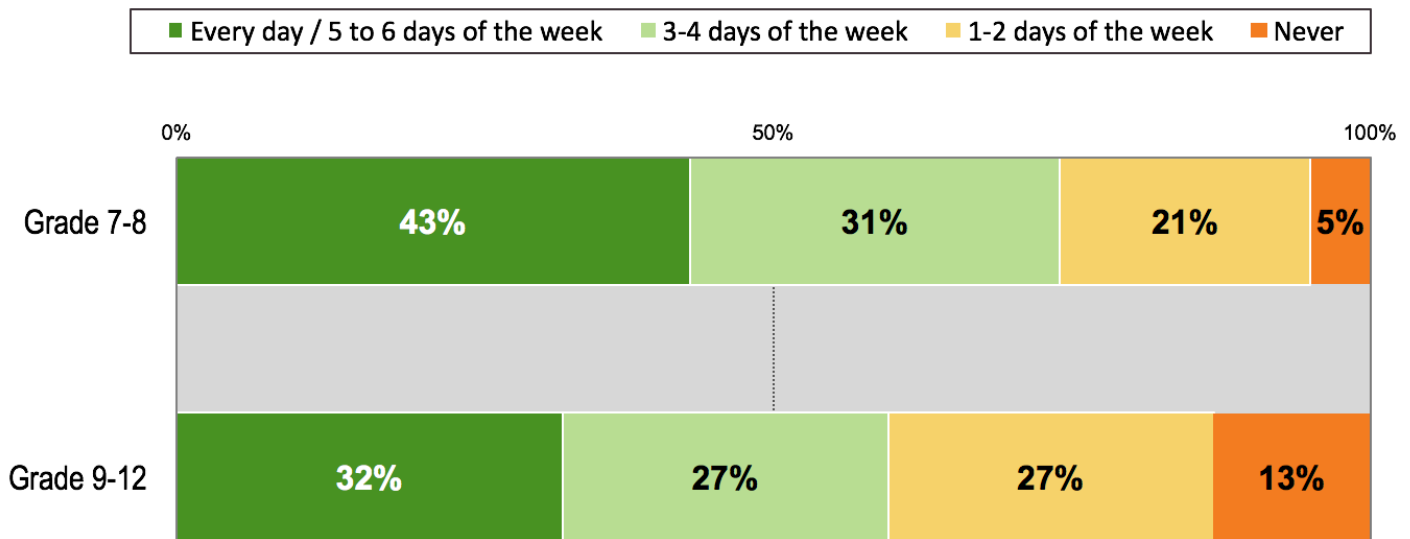


Physical Health

- Physical Activity
- Screen Time Activities
- Eating Habits
- Hours of Sleep



Physical Activity (for at least one hour per day)



Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- Fewer Grade 7-12 students reported having regular physical activity (over 10 percentage points).

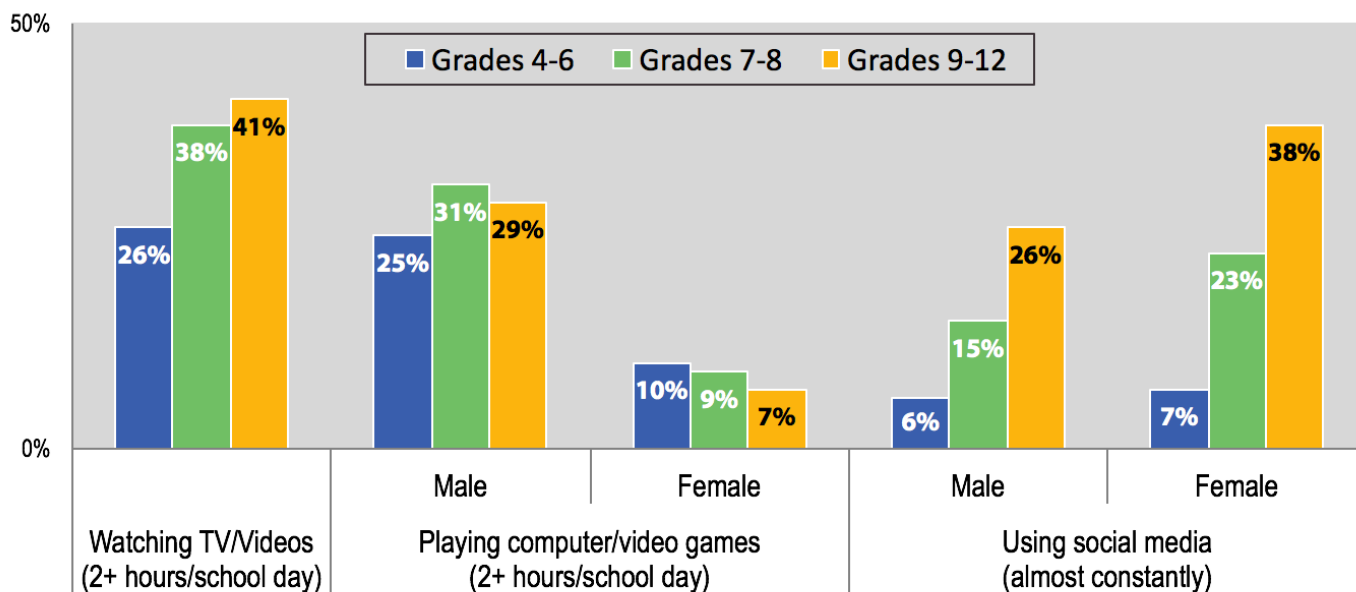
Compared to other studies:

- BC Ministry of Education's annual Satisfaction Survey shows similar age patterns and trends over time in physical activities among high school students.

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



Screen Time Activities

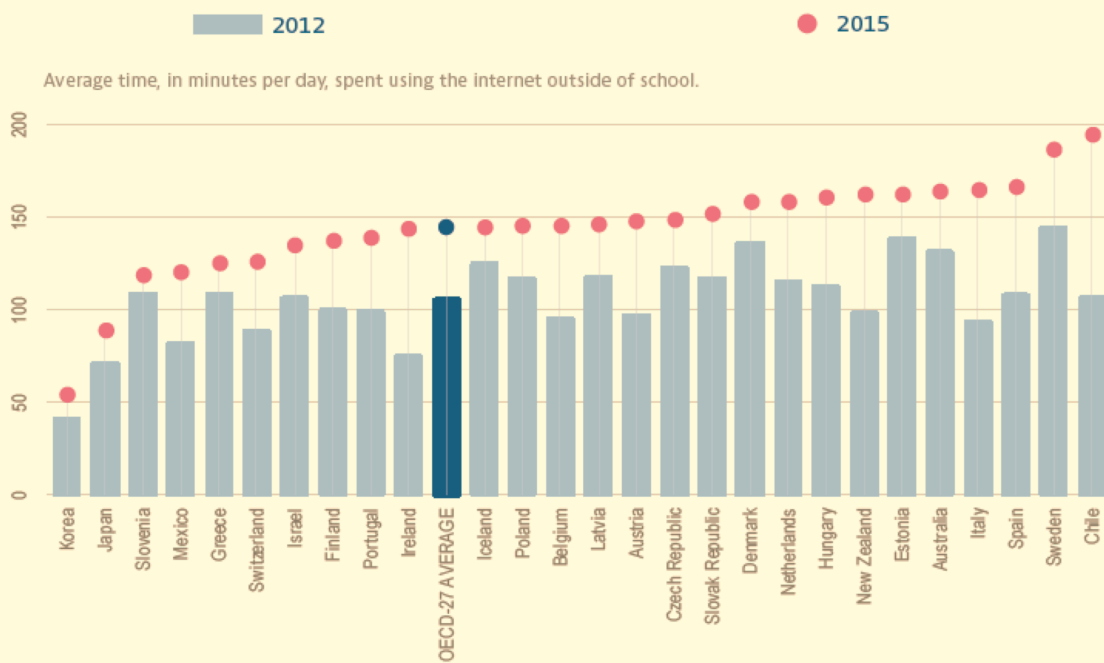


Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- More Grade 7-12 students reported watching TV/videos for over two hours on a school day (10 percentage points); but fewer Grade 9-12 students spent the same amount of time on video games (5 percentage points).
- More Grade 7-8 males and females (5 and 11 percentage points respectively), and many more Grade 9-12 males and females reported using social media “almost constantly” (8 and 16 percentage points respectively).



Figure 2. Between 2012 and 2015, the time spent online outside of school increased by 40 minutes per day on both weekdays and weekends



Note: "OECD average-27" includes all OECD countries with available data for both years.
 Source: OECD (2017), PISA 2015 Results (Volume III) Students' Well-Being.



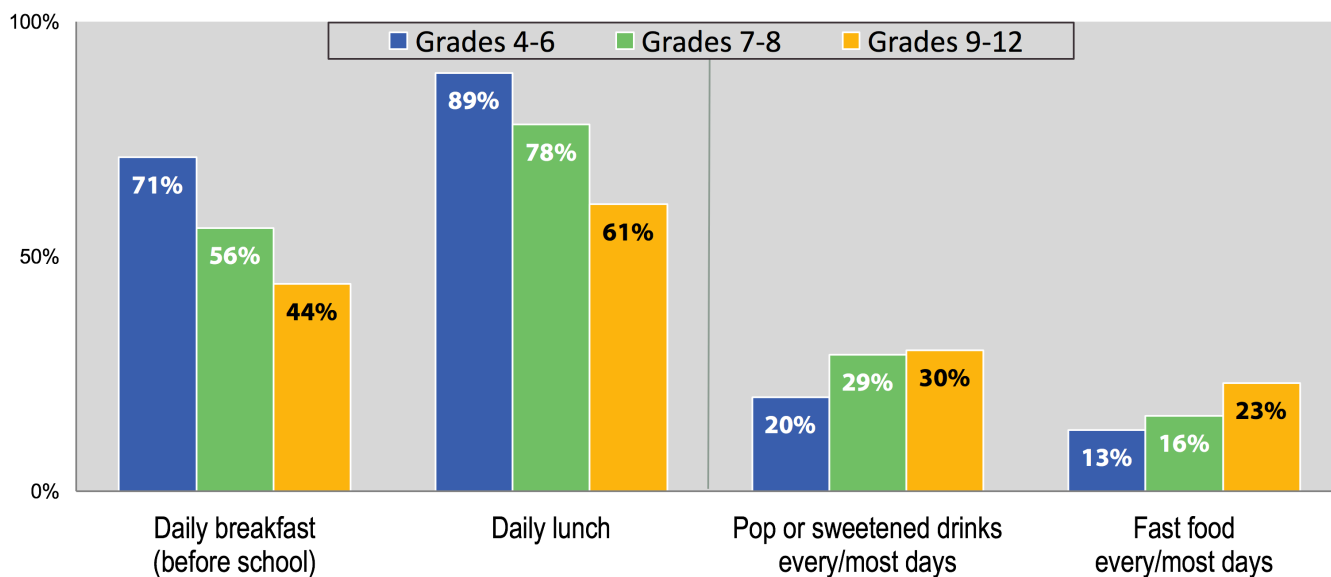
Teenage Internet Use World-wide

Within 78 countries participating in PISA in 2015:

- 26% of students reported that they spend more than six hours per day online during weekends, and 16% spend a similar amount of time online during weekdays.
- More than one in two students reported that they feel bad if they do not have access to the Internet.
- In most participating countries and economies, extreme Internet use – more than six hours per day – has a negative relationship with students' life satisfaction, sense of belonging and engagement at school.



Eating Habits



Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- Fewer Grade 7-12 students had daily breakfast or lunch (6-9 percentage points).

Compared to other studies:

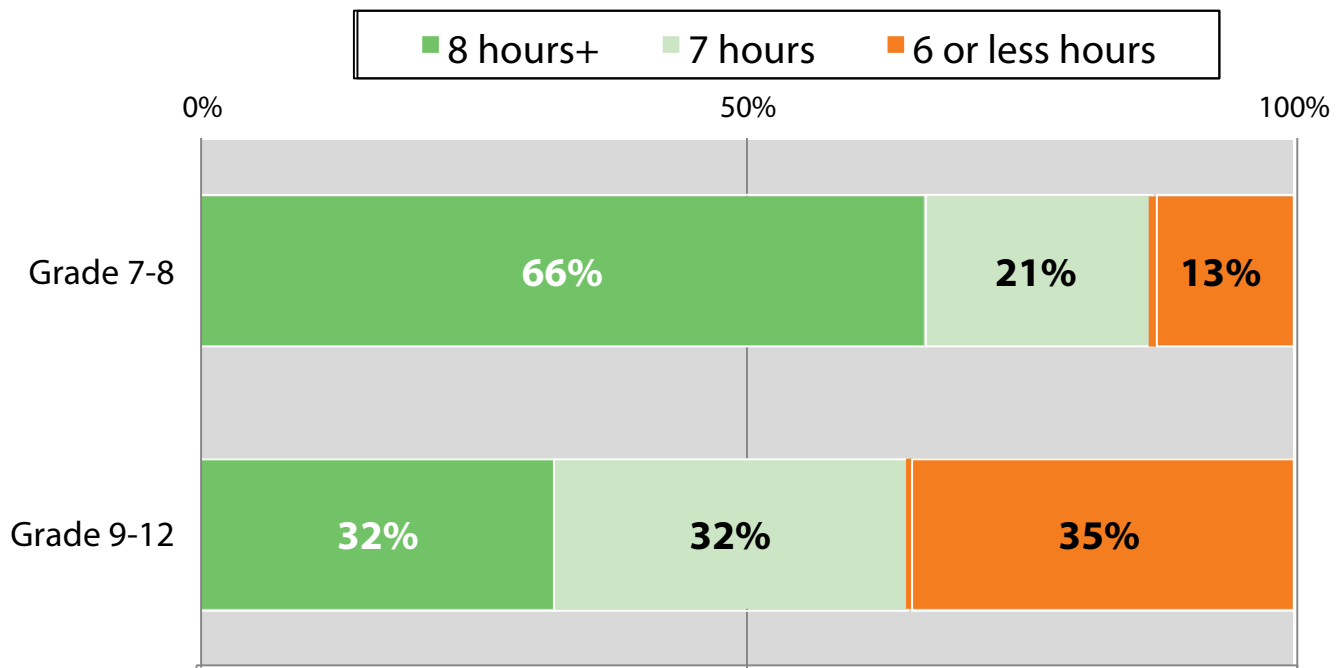
- BC Ministry of Education's annual census also shows an increase in unhealthy food consumption (e.g., pop, candy, deep-fried foods) by high school students and over time (27-28%).

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



Hours of Sleep on School Days

National Sleep Foundation: Teenagers need 8-10 hours of sleep each night.





Sleep Deprivation: International Studies

In OECD's *Trends Shaping Education 2016*:

- Sleep deprivation is a risk factor associated with student well-being. *"[It] is linked to a reduced ability to concentrate, poorer academic performance, symptoms of anxiety, depression and even suicide."*
- *"Teens may also feel anxious about school, have their sleeping habits disrupted by technology use, or feel the social pressure to stay up later than before, leading to an increased risk of sleep deprivation and irregular sleep patterns."*

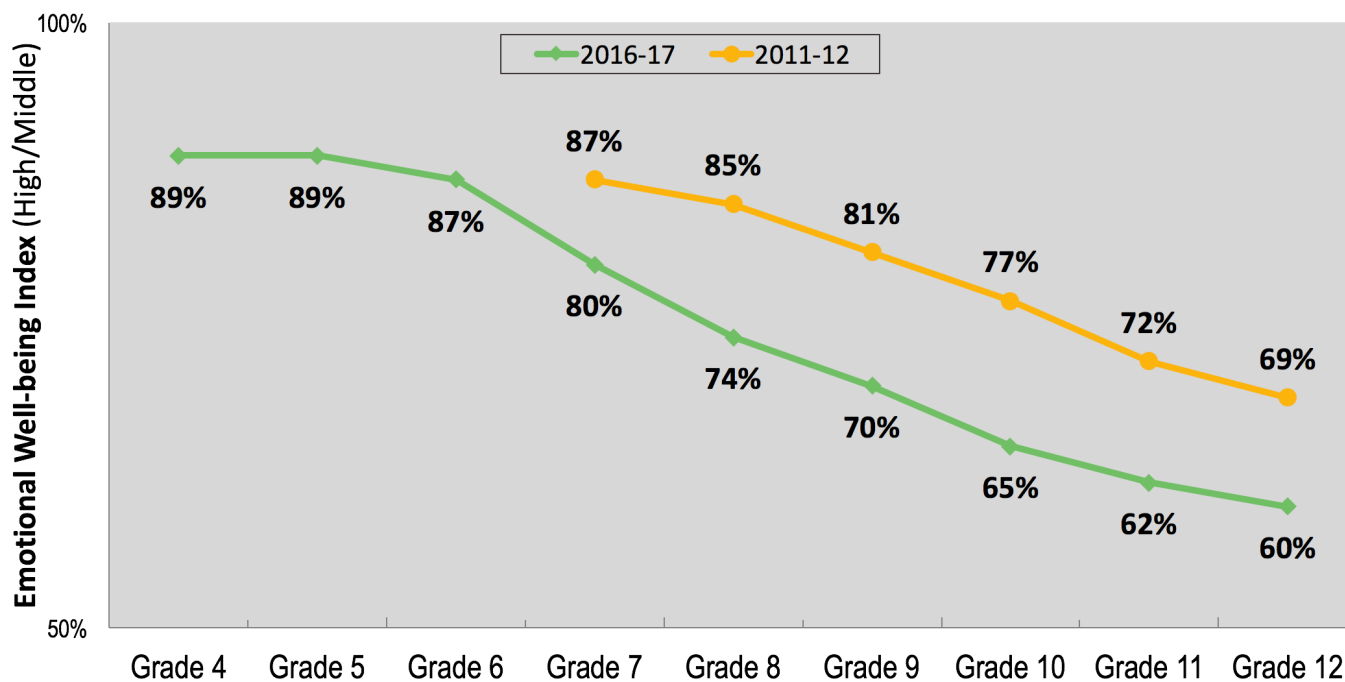


Emotional Well-being

- Student State of Emotional Well-being by:
 - Grade
 - Gender
 - Socio-economic Status
 - Racialized Background
- Positive Emotions
- Negative Emotions
- Worries



Emotional Well-Being (Grades 4-12)



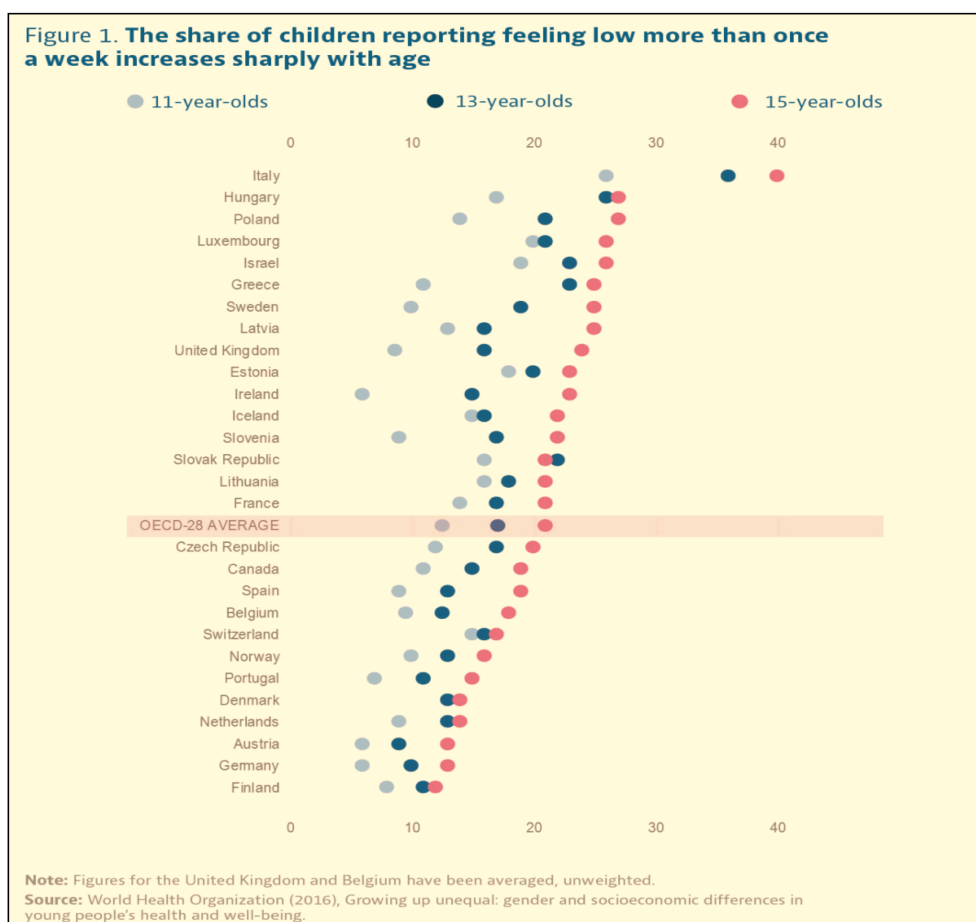
Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- There was an average of 10 percentage-point decrease in the proportion of Grade 7-12 students being at high/middle emotional well-being level.

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



International Comparison of Age Differences in Feeling Low

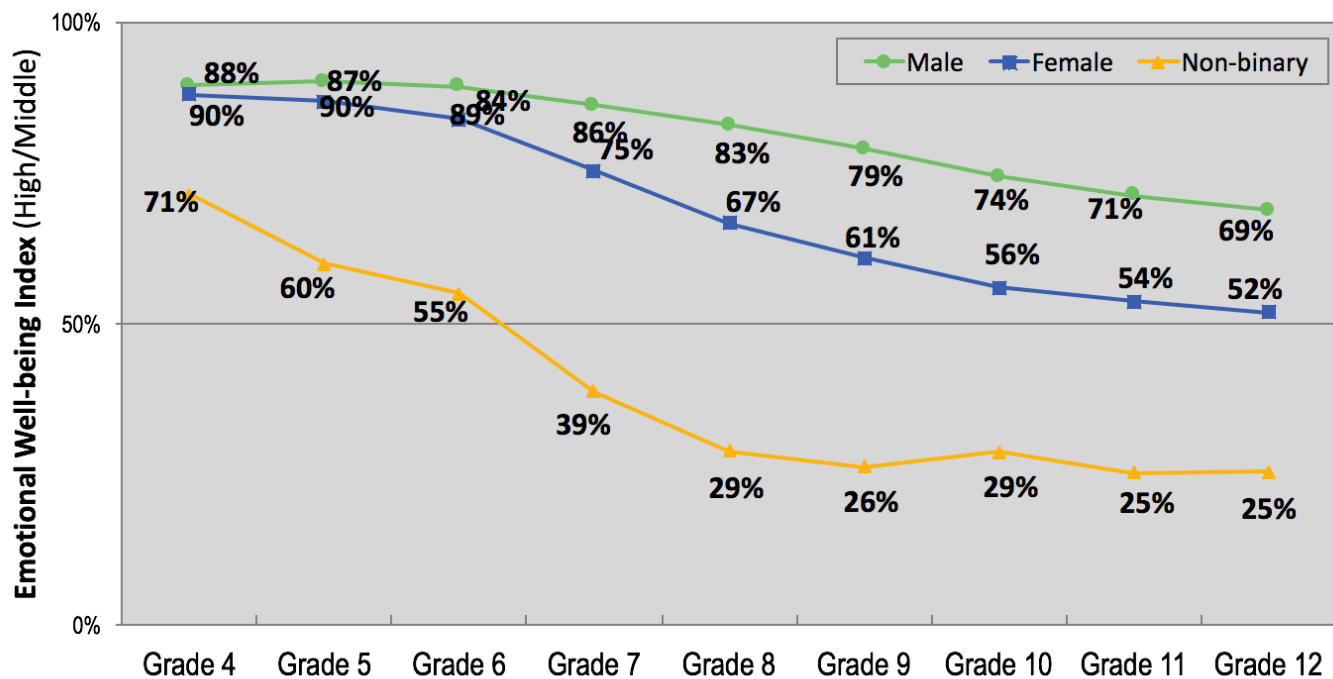


Students across the world show a similar trend in reporting feeling low. As they age from 11 to 13 to 15 years old, they report feeling low more often.

Chart Source: OECD (2018). Children & Young People's Mental Health in the Digital Age: Shaping the Future. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.



Emotional Well-Being Index by Gender Identity (Grades 4-12)



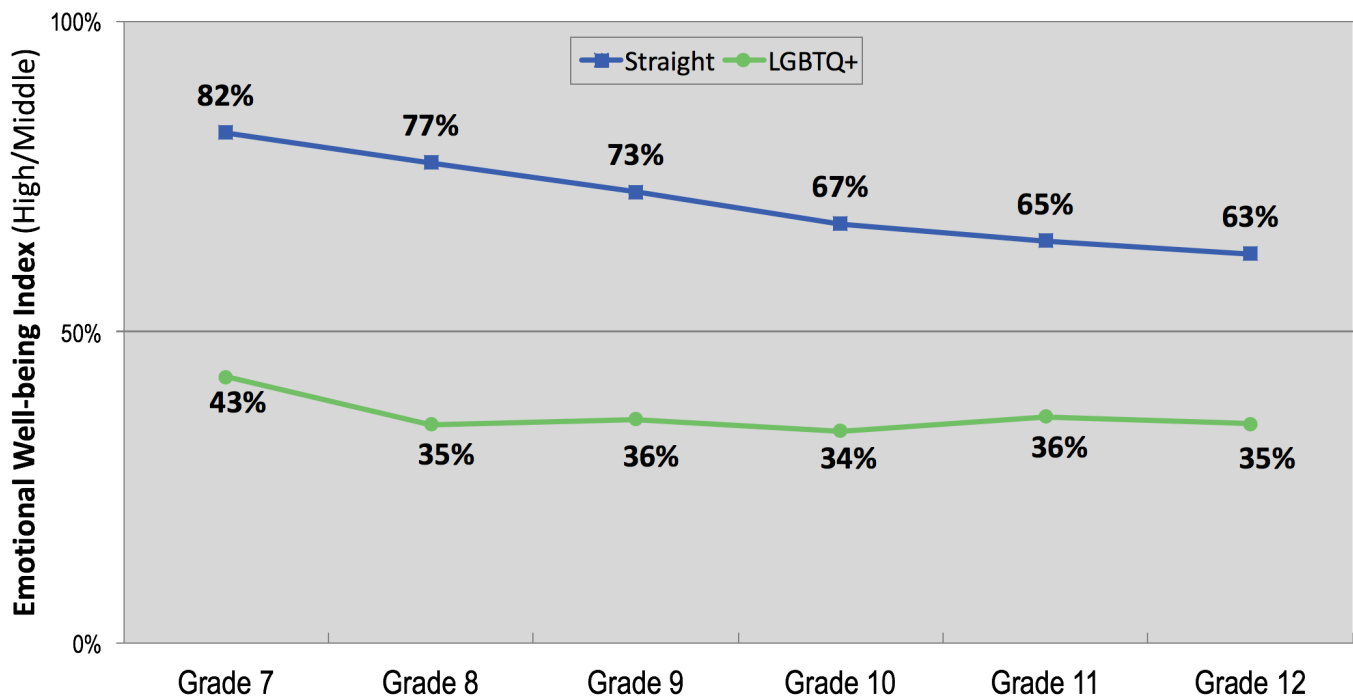
Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- Both male and female Grade 7-12 students showed a decline in their emotional well-being; it was however more significant among females than males (12 versus 6 percentage points). No trend data are available for non-binary students.

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



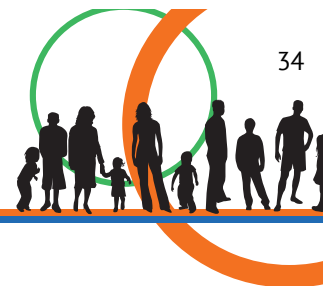
Emotional Well-Being Index by Sexual Orientation (Grades 7-12)



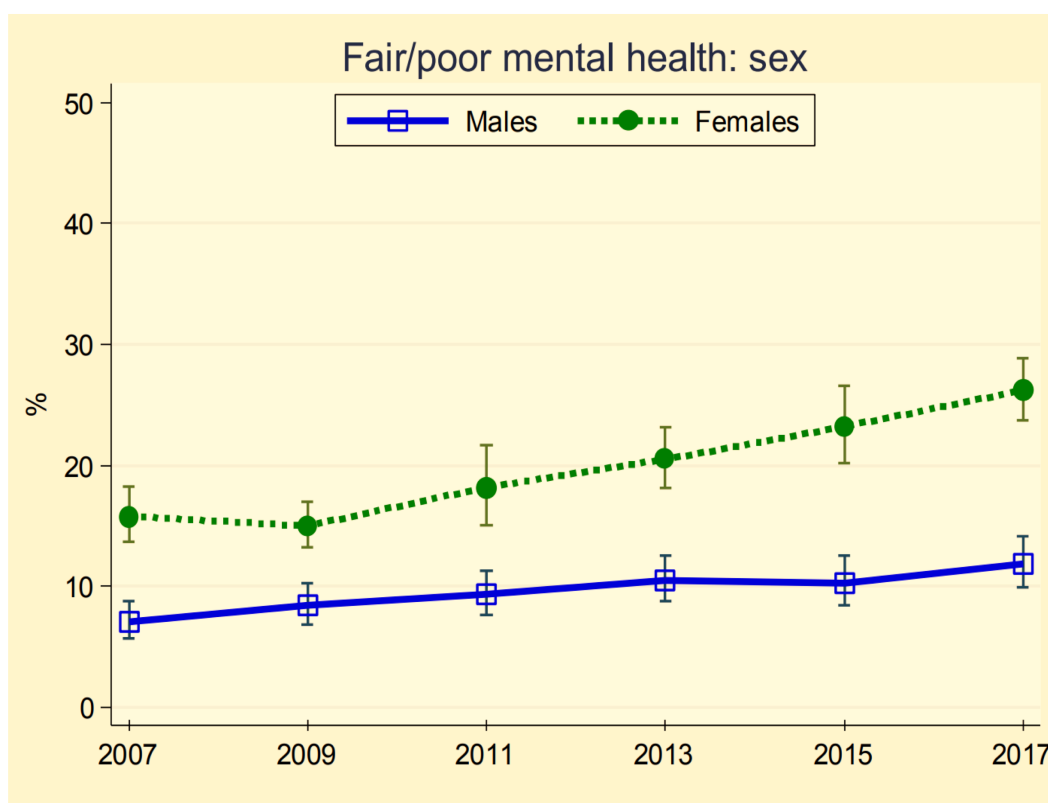
Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- Among the secondary school students, there was a decline for both heterosexual and 2SLGBTQ students; the drop was even greater among the 2SLGBTQ (14 percentage points) than heterosexual students (9 percentage points).

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



CAMH's Student Drug Use and Mental Health Survey : Ontario Grade 7-12 Students Reporting Fair or Poor Mental Health, 2007–2017

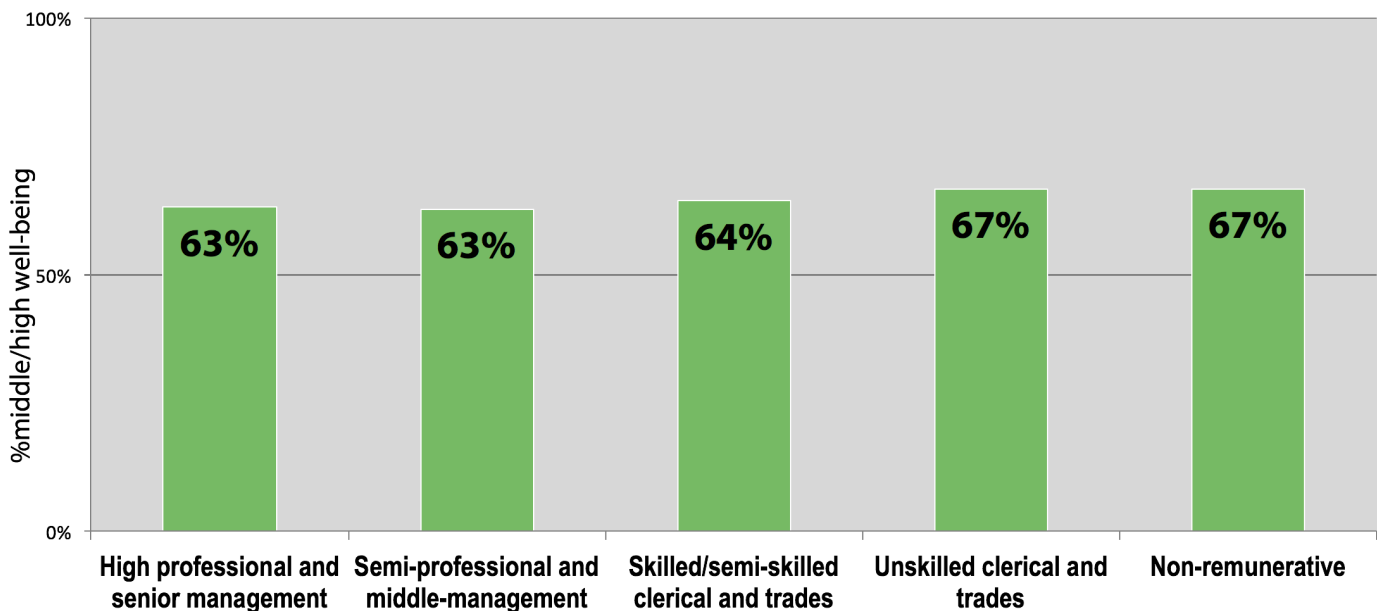


From 2007 to 2017 in Ontario, a higher proportion of females than males in grades 7-12 report fair or poor mental health at an increased rate.

Source: Findings from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS)



Emotional Well-Being by Socio-economic Status (SES) (Grades 9-12)



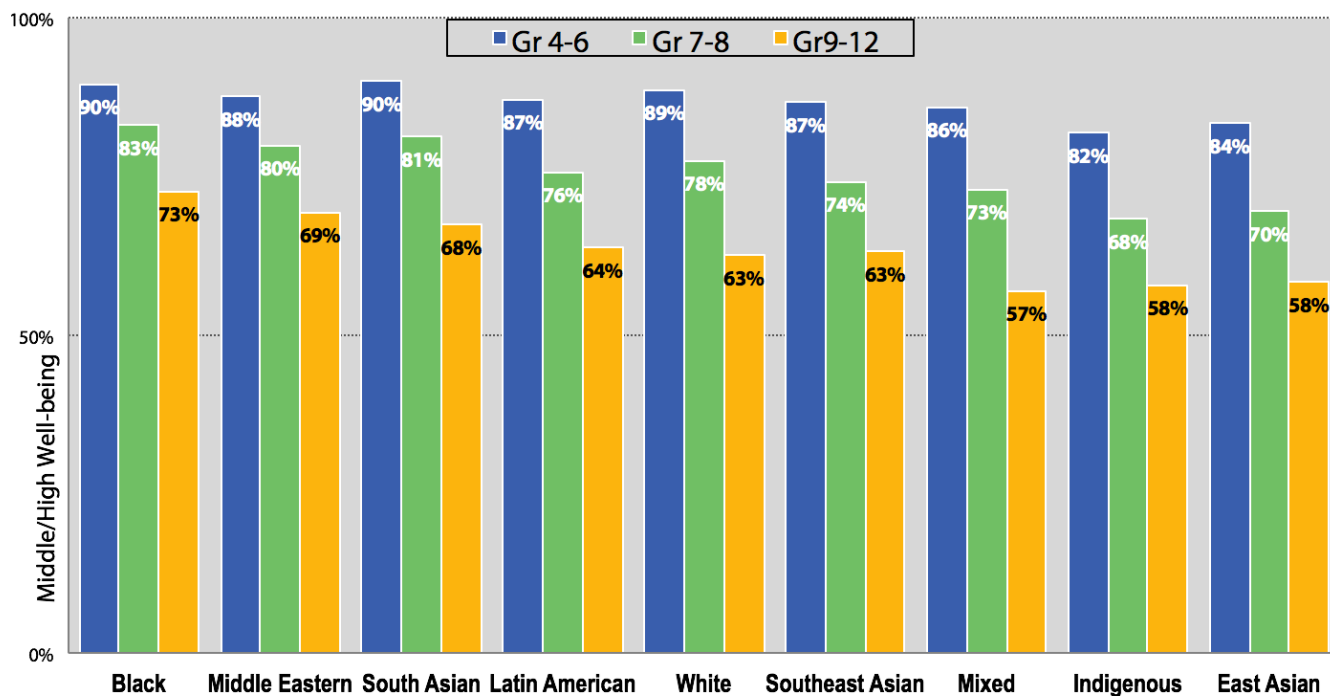
Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- Grade 9-12 students from all SES groups showed a decline in emotional well-being.
- The drop was, however, greater among the two higher occupational groups (12 percentage points) than the two clerical and trades groups (10 percentage points) and non-remunerative (7 percentage points).

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



Student Emotional Well-Being by Race



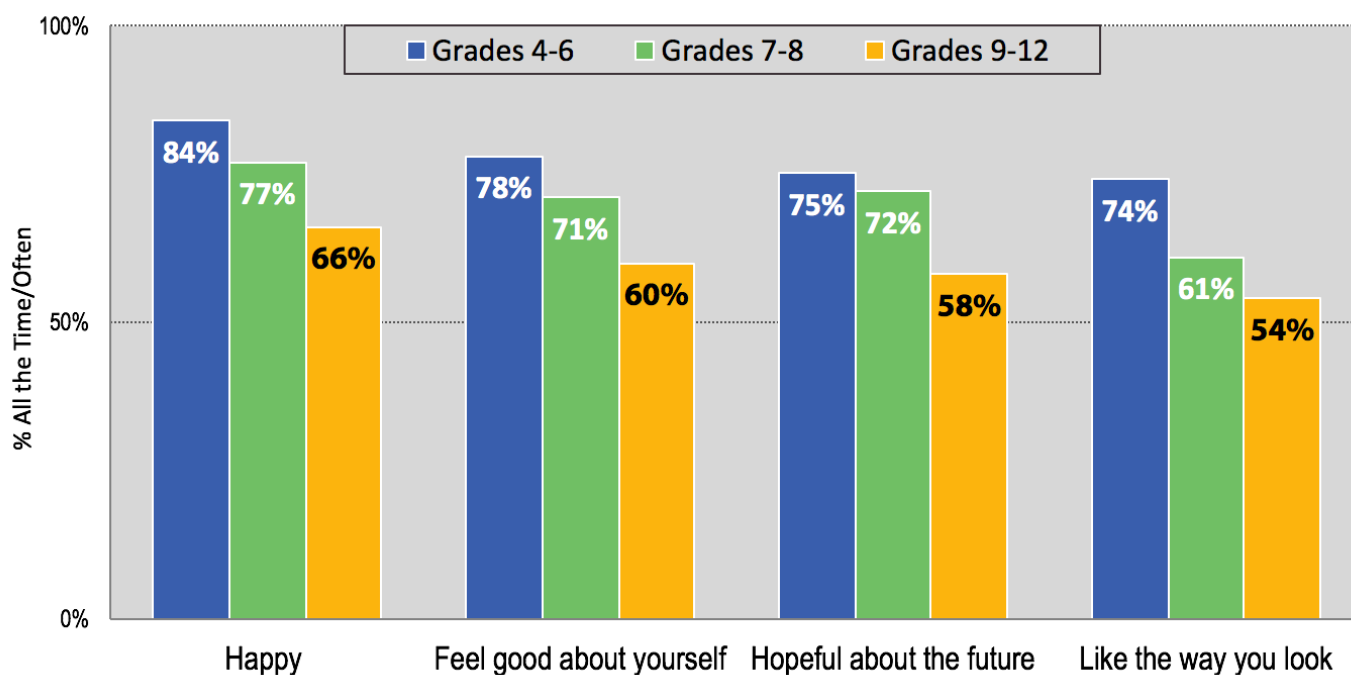
Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- All Grade 7-12 students from different racialized groups showed a decline in emotional well-being (ranging from 7 to 12 percentage points).

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



Positive Emotions



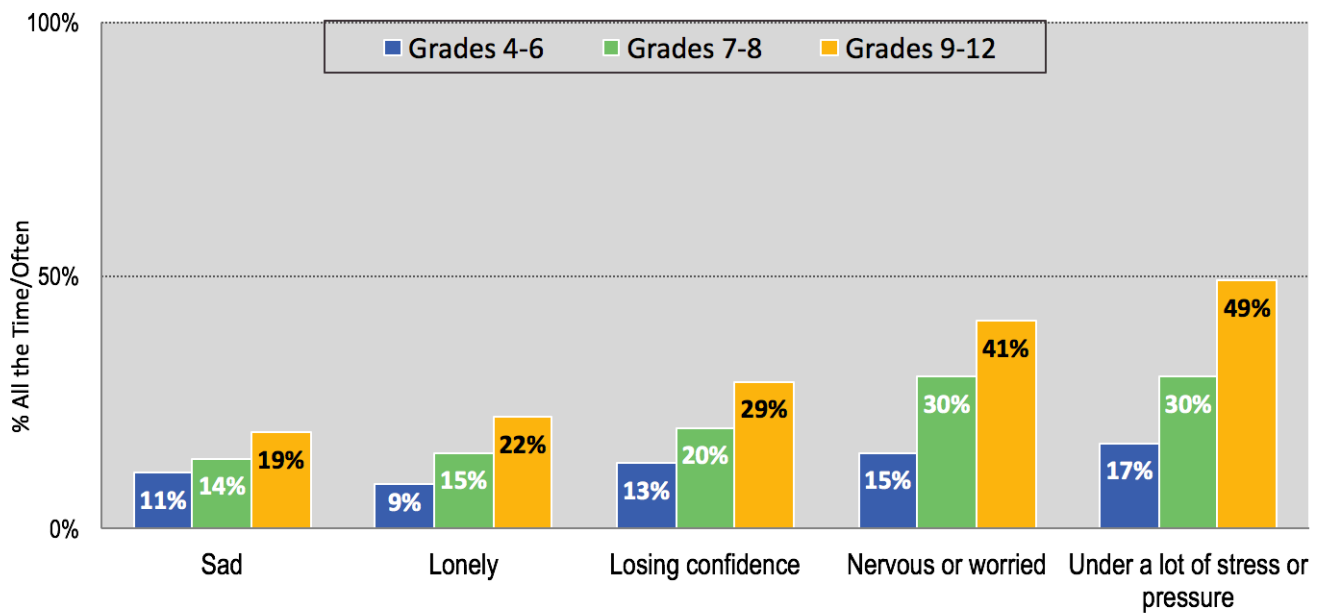
Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- Fewer Grade 7-12 students reported feeling good about themselves (9-10 percentage points), and being pleased with their own appearance (4-6 percentage points).
- There was also a decrease (4 percentage points) of Grade 9-12 students reporting being hopeful about the future.

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



Negative Emotions



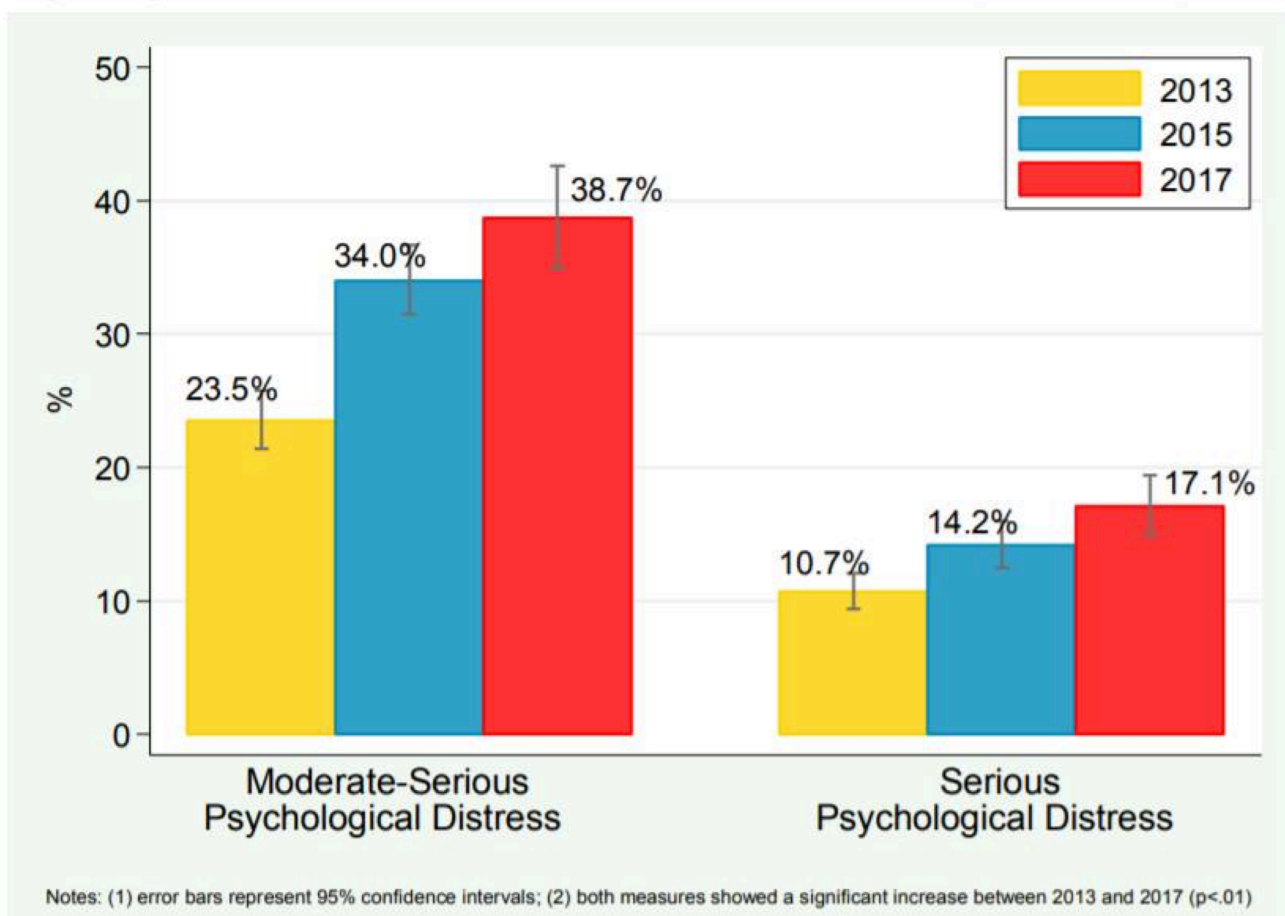
Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- More Grade 7-12 students reported feeling lonely (5-6 percentage points), losing confidence in themselves (7-9 percentage points), feeling nervous or worried (4-7 percentage points, and feeling under a lot of stress or pressure (11-12 percentage points).



Trends among Ontario Grade 7-12 Students (CAMH Research)

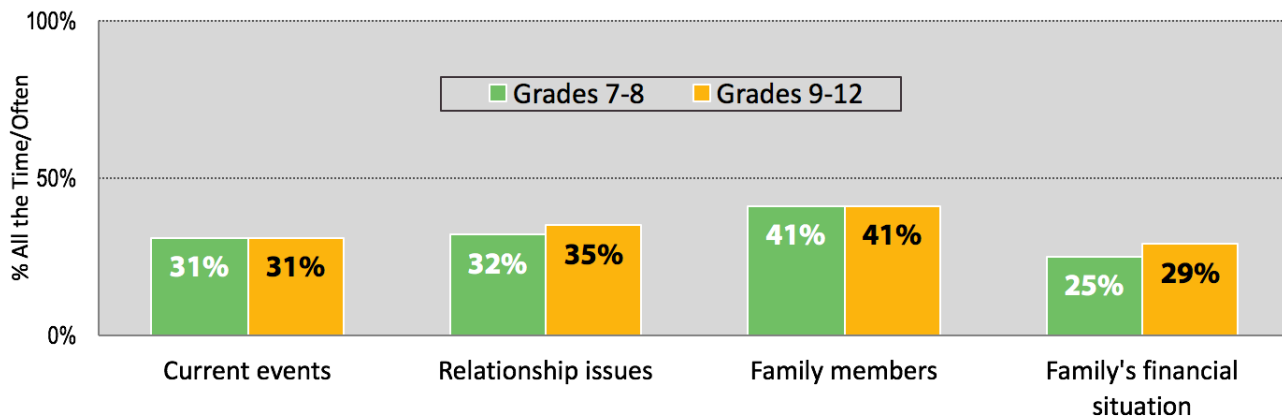
Percentage Indicating Moderate-to-Serious Psychological Distress and Serious Psychological Distress in the Past Month, 2013–2017 OSDUHS (Grades 7–12)



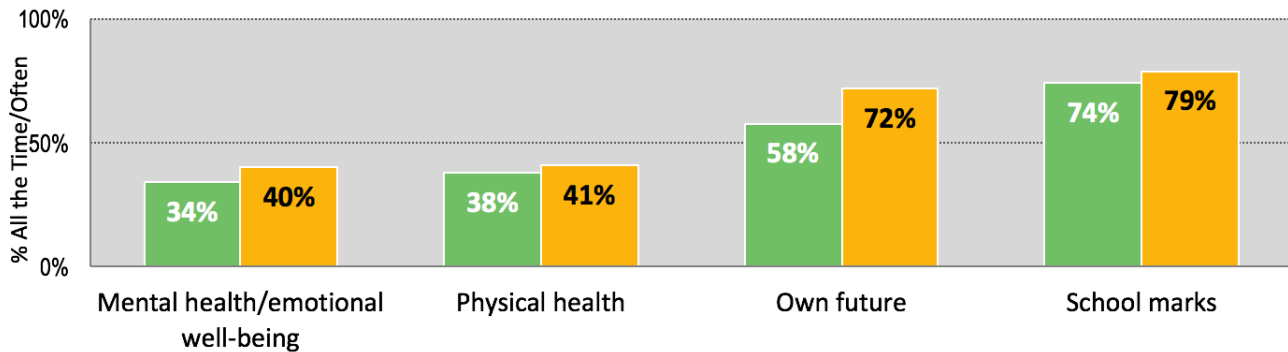
Source: Boak, A., Hamilton, H. A., Adlaf, E. M., Henderson, J. L., & Mann, R. E. (2018). The mental health and well-being of Ontario students, 1991-2017: Detailed findings from the Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS) (CAMH Research Document Series No. 47). Toronto, ON: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.



Worries Related to Others



Worries Related to Self



Compared to the 2011-12 Census:

- There was a significant increase in the proportion of students who reported worrying about their school marks all the time or often (8-10 percentage points).

Source: 2016-17 Student and Parent Census



Schoolwork-related Anxiety: OECD's PISA 2015

PISA 2015 data show that schoolwork-related anxiety is common among adolescents.

“Often, this anxiety is students’ reaction to, and interpretation of, the mistakes they make – or are afraid to make. Students internalise mistakes as evidence that they are not smart enough.”

On average across OECD countries:

- 59% reported that they often worry that taking a test will be difficult;
- 66% reported that they worry about poor grades;
- 55% reported feeling very anxious for a test even if they are well prepared;
- 37% reported they get very tense when studying; and
- 52% reported that they get nervous when they don't know how to solve a task at school. (p.40).



How will we improve and build on our successes?

- Multi-Year Strategic Action Plans (MYSP) & Action Plans
- Support for Schools to Improve their Results
- Central Resources



Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) **(Three key priorities)**

Create a culture of student and staff well-being

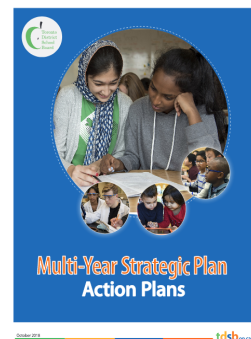
Transform student learning

Build a partnership within school communities that
promote learning and well-being



Goals & Commitments in the Action Plans

- Support leaders in evaluating curriculum resources and co-curricular programs focused *on improving well-being* based on criteria such as: developmental and cultural relevance, principles of equity and human rights, student interest and evidence of impact
- Provide learning opportunities for students focusing on social justice, sustainability and the environment
- Explore additional experiential learning opportunities (Co-operative Education) to ensure global competencies are incorporated into placement options





How will we improve and build on our successes?

- Ensure every school has a school improvement goal in well-being
- Engage diverse parent and student voices in analyzing data and next steps
- Create equitable and inclusive environments
- Engage students in deep learning experiences that allow them to take greater ownership for their learning while developing foundational skills
- Communicate key findings and strategies to all parents
- Integrate Protective Factors
- Integrate well-being in professional learning
- Examine the connections between staff & student well-being
- Continue to survey students
- Align specialized mental health & well-being supports closer to schools



Schools can have a **protective and transformative power** on student well-being

(Tratnor, Carson and Boland, 2018)

There are factors, outside of school, that greatly influence how students feel about themselves, others and their future.

It vitally important that parents, students and staff work together on supporting well-being.



References

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