



Results of the 2013 BC Adolescent Health Survey

## Northern Interior





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## RESULTS OF THE 2013 BC ADOLESCENT HEALTH SURVEY

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ISBN: 978-1-926675-27-5

McCreary Centre Society  
3552 East Hastings Street  
Vancouver, BC V5K 2A7

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For enquiries, please email [mccreary@mcs.bc.ca](mailto:mccreary@mcs.bc.ca)



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McCreary Centre Society is a non-government not-for-profit committed to improving the health of BC youth through research and community-based projects. Founded in 1977, the Society sponsors and promotes a wide range of activities and research to identify and address the health needs of young people in the province.



Youth health • Youth research • Youth engagement

## McCreary team

Annie Smith	<b>Executive Director</b>
Elizabeth Saewyc	<b>Research Director</b>
Duncan Stewart	<b>BC AHS Coordinator/ Research Associate</b>
Maya Peled	<b>Research Associate</b>
Colleen Poon	<b>Research Associate</b>
Stephanie Martin	<b>Community &amp; Communications Manager/Graphic Design</b>
Kate Kovaleva	<b>Research Assistant</b>
Preeti Prasad	<b>Research Assistant</b>
Brynn Warren	<b>Research Assistant</b>
Ange Cullen	<b>Research Assistant</b>
Annalise Zwack	<b>Administrative Assistant</b>

This study was approved by the Behavioural Research Ethics Board, University of British Columbia, #H12-02630.

### SUGGESTED

Stewart, D., Peled, M., Poon, C., Kovaleva, K., Cullen, A., Smith, A., & McCreary Centre Society (2014) *Northern Interior: Results of the 2013 BC Adolescent Health Survey*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society.

## Acknowledgements

Statistical weighting and expertise provided by Rita Green.

Funding for the 2013 BC Adolescent Health Survey was provided by BC Ministry of Children and Family Development, BC Ministry of Health, and Office of the BC Representative for Children and Youth.

Sincere thanks are due to all the students who participated in the 2013 BC Adolescent Health Survey.

We are also indebted to the following Northern Interior coordinators and survey administrators:

<b>Catherine Whalen</b>	Melisa Park
<b>Kathy Banks</b>	Natalie Woodman
<b>Kathy MacDonald</b>	Pamela Pighin
Barb Paterson	Raman Gill
Erin Hill-Tout	Rameeta Dhaliwal
Heather Ouellette	Randi Roy
Jasmine Ford	Robyn Klassen
Jo Anne Alexander	Shelly Kilburn
Mandeep Baidwan	Toni Emery
Mary Anne Munk	Victoria Griffiths

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# Key findings

Findings from the 2013 BC Adolescent Health Survey showed that most youth in the Northern Interior reported good physical and mental health; felt connected to their family, school, and community; had positive plans for the future; and were engaging in health promoting behaviours which will assist them to transition successfully to adulthood.

However, the survey findings also highlighted some differences between this region and the province as a whole, as well as identified some groups of students who may need additional support. Youth in this area reported higher rates of some health risk behaviours than seen provincially, such as substance use, but there were local improvements from previous years. Protective factors were also found that appear to be linked to better outcomes.

- Similar to findings across BC, in the past year, 7% of students did not get medical help when they thought they needed it. This percentage reflected a local decrease from 14% in 2008. Rates of missing out on needed mental health care remained consistent with 2008 (11%).
- In the past year, 30% of students were injured seriously enough to require medical attention, which reflected a local decrease from 35% in 2008.
- In the past year, 19% of local students experienced a concussion, which was higher than the provincial rate of 16%.
- Most students rated their overall health and their mental health as good or excellent. However, mental health ratings were lower than overall health ratings.
- As was the case provincially, males generally reported better mental health than females, including lower rates of self-harm, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts.
- The night before completing the survey, 56% of students slept for eight or more hours. Most local students (83%) were doing something such as homework or using their cellphone after the time they were expected to be asleep.

- The percentage of Northern Interior students who were a healthy weight decreased from 2008 to 2013. Females were more likely to be underweight than five years previous, while males were more likely to be classified as obese.
- Among local youth who ever had sex, there was a decrease in reported rates of pregnancy or causing a pregnancy, from 10% in 2008 to 4% in 2013.
- Twenty-eight percent of youth in this region had ever tried smoking tobacco, which was a decrease from 35% in 2008. Also, compared to five years earlier, youth who ever smoked were less likely to have started doing so at 12 years or younger (28% in 2013 vs. 37% in 2008).
- Among local youth who had tried alcohol, 72% first drank before turning 15 years old, which was a decrease from 82% in 2008. Similarly, youth were waiting longer to use marijuana than their peers five years earlier.
- Students reported a range of bullying experiences. Youth who had been bullied were more likely than their peers who had not been bullied to report missing out on extracurricular activities because they were afraid of being bullied further. As well, those who had been a victim of bullying in the past year were more likely to have also bullied others.
- Fourteen percent of students had been physically abused at some point (11% of males vs. 16% of females), and 10% had been sexually abused (4% of males vs. 16% of females). When compared to five years previous, physical abuse rates decreased among local females but not males, while sexual abuse rates decreased among males but not females.
- Canadian guidelines recommend youth aged 12–17 exercise for 60 minutes every day. Locally, 21% of students in this age group exercised for an hour every day in the past week, which was higher than the provincial rate of 17%.
- Protective factors which appeared to improve outcomes for even the most vulnerable youth included physical activity, meaningful engagement in activities, nutrition, and getting eight or more hours of sleep. Local results also highlighted the importance of supportive relationships with peers and adults, including family, teachers, and other professionals.



# Introduction

Between February and June 2013, 29,832 students in Grades 7–12 completed the BC Adolescent Health Survey (BC AHS) in schools across British Columbia. These students answered 130 questions about their health, and about the risk and protective factors in their lives.

This is the fifth time students have been asked to complete the survey since 1992. Fifty-six of the 59 BC school districts participated in the survey. This is seven more than when the survey was last conducted in 2008.

In addition to a provincial report (*From Hastings Street to Haida Gwaii* available at [www.mcs.bc.ca](http://www.mcs.bc.ca)), 16 reports at the Health Service Delivery Area level will be published over the coming year. This report focuses on students in the Northern Interior Health Service Delivery Area.

The Northern Interior Health Service Delivery Area is comprised of Quesnel (SD 28), Prince George (SD 57), and Nechako Lakes (SD 91). All school districts in this region participated in the survey.

The results presented in this report provide the most comprehensive and representative picture of youth health in the Northern Interior.

When reading this report it is important to keep in mind that the survey was administered in English to youth in public schools. This means that youth who were absent that day, had limited English language comprehension, or were not attending a mainstream class are not included in these results.

All comparisons and associations included in this report are statistically significant at  $p < .05$ . This means there is up to a 5% likelihood that these results occurred by chance. Comparisons between Northern Interior and the province are statistically significant at  $p < .01$ . Where relevant, differences in tables or charts that are not statistically significant are noted.



## QUOTES

Quotes from Northern Interior students who participated in the survey are included throughout this report.



## SYMBOLS USED IN THIS REPORT

\* The percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was relatively high but still within a releasable range.

NR The percentage could not be released due to the risk of deductive disclosure.

## PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

### Northern Health Authority

- 28 Quesnel
- 50 Haida Gwaii
- 52 Prince Rupert
- 57 Prince George
- 59 Peace River South
- 60 Peace River North
- 81 Fort Nelson
- 82 Coast Mountains
- 91 Nechako Lakes
- 92 Nisga'a

### Fraser Health Authority

- 33 Chilliwack
- 34 Abbotsford
- 35 Langley
- 36 Surrey
- 37 Delta
- 40 New Westminster
- 41 Burnaby
- 42 Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows
- 43 Coquitlam
- 78 Fraser-Cascade

### Vancouver Coastal Health Authority

- 38 Richmond
- 39 Vancouver
- 44 North Vancouver
- 45 West Vancouver
- 46 Sunshine Coast
- 47 Powell River
- 48 Sea To Sky
- 49 Central Coast

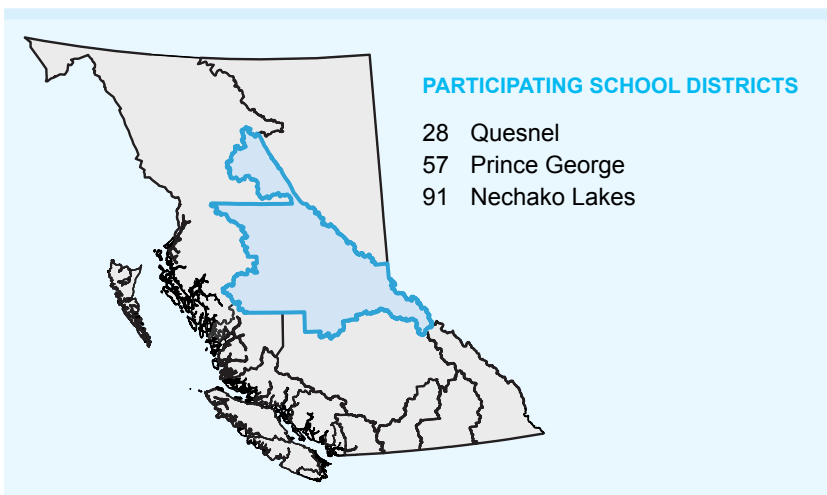
### Vancouver Island Health Authority

- 61 Greater Victoria
- 62 Sooke
- 63 Saanich
- 64 Gulf Islands
- 68 Nanaimo-Ladysmith
- 69 Qualicum
- 70 Alberni
- 71 Comox Valley
- 72 Campbell River
- 79 Cowichan Valley
- 84 Vancouver Island West
- 85 Vancouver Island North

### Interior Health Authority

- 05 Southeast Kootenay
- 06 Rocky Mountain
- 08 Kootenay Lake
- 10 Arrow Lakes
- 19 Revelstoke
- 20 Kootenay-Columbia
- 22 Vernon
- 23 Central Okanagan
- 27 Cariboo-Chilcotin
- 51 Boundary
- 53 Okanagan Similkameen
- 58 Nicola-Similkameen
- 67 Okanagan Skaha
- 73 Kamloops/Thompson
- 74 Gold Trail
- 83 North Okanagan-Shuswap

## NORTHERN INTERIOR HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY AREA



### ONLINE

A fact sheet explaining the methodology of the survey can be found at [www.mcs.bc.ca](http://www.mcs.bc.ca).

# Youth in the Northern Interior

## Ethnic & cultural background

In the 2013 BC Adolescent Health Survey (BC AHS), students in the Northern Interior most commonly reported that they were of European heritage (67%), which was above the provincial rate of 53%, and unchanged from 2008. Fifteen percent of local students did not know their background, which was almost double the rate for students in BC overall (8%), but a decrease from 18% in 2008.

There was an increase in the percentage of youth identifying as having an Australian/Pacific Islander background, from 1% in 2008 to 2% in 2013.

Family background	
European	67%
Aboriginal	22%
East Asian	3%
South Asian	3%
African	2%
Australian/Pacific Islander	2%
Latin/South/Central American	2%
Southeast Asian	2%
West Asian	NR
Other	3%
Don't know	15%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

Note: If youth did not feel any of the listed options represented their background, they could choose to write in their own identity. Most of these students wrote Canadian.

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

## ABORIGINAL STUDENTS

The percentage of students who identified as Aboriginal was unchanged from 2008. Local students were more than twice as likely as youth across BC to identify as having Aboriginal heritage (22% vs. 10%). Among students who identified as Aboriginal, 64% were First Nations and 34% were Métis.

Thirty percent of Aboriginal youth had ever lived on reserve, and 18% were living there currently (12% all of the time and 6% some of the time). Fifteen percent of Aboriginal youth spoke an Aboriginal language.

## NEW CANADIANS

Five percent of students were born outside of Canada, which was below the provincial rate of 19%, and unchanged from five years previously. Among local students born outside Canada, 37%\* had lived here less than two years, and 36%\* were international students.

## LANGUAGE

Similar to the rate in 2008, students in this region were more likely to speak only English at home than their peers across the province (71% vs. 51%). Almost a quarter of youth (24%) sometimes spoke a language other than English at home, and 5% spoke another language at home most of the time (compared to 21% provincially).

## Sexual orientation & gender identity

Reflecting the provincial picture, local students identified with a range of sexual orientations. Males were more likely to identify as completely straight (85% vs. 77% of females), whereas females were more likely to identify as mostly straight (8% vs. 4% of males), as well as bisexual and questioning. Male and female students were equally likely to identify as gay/lesbian or to report not having attractions.

Both male and female students were less likely to identify as completely straight in 2013 (81%) than in 2008 (87%).

Students were asked if they identified as transgender. The percentage who identified this way was too small to report.

Aboriginal students were also asked if they identified as Two Spirit. Although the majority did not know what the term meant, 4% identified as Two Spirit which reflected the provincial picture.

Sexual orientation	
Completely straight	81%
Mostly straight	6%
Bisexual	3%
Gay or lesbian	1%
Questioning	2%
Don't have attractions	7%

## Home life

Similar to the rest of the province, 93% of students lived with at least one parent (including a step-parent), which was a decrease from five years previously (95%). Local youth were less likely to be living with their grandparents (5% vs. 9% of youth across BC), as well as other adults related to them (2% vs. 4%), their siblings or stepsiblings (51% vs. 58%), or other children or youth (1% vs. 2%).

The vast majority of youth (92%) reported that their parents or guardians worked locally. This was above the provincial rate of 88%. Also, 13% of youth reported that at least one parent worked somewhere else in BC or Canada, and 1% worked abroad.

Four percent of youth reported that their parents did not work, which was consistent with the rest of BC.

Who youth lived with most of the time	
Mother/stepmother	83%
Father/stepfather	69%
Sibling(s)/stepsibling(s)	51%
Both parents at different times	9%
Grandparent(s)	5%
Other adult(s) related to me	2%
Other adult(s) not related to me	2%
Other children or youth	1%
Foster parent(s)	1%
Two mothers/two fathers	1%
I live alone	1%
My own child or children	NR

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

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

## In this report

**PARENT** refers to students' parent or guardian. 

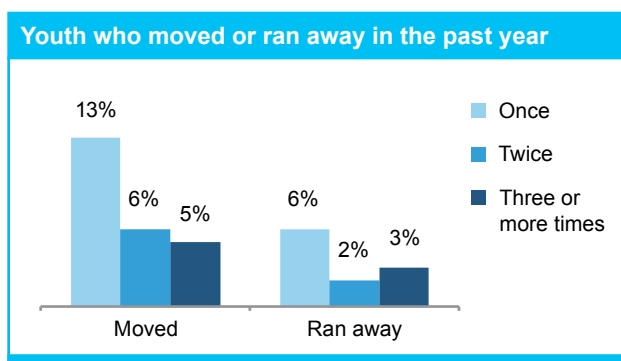
## Stable home

Having a stable home has been shown to be a protective factor in the lives of youth. Similar to the provincial rates, 11% of youth had run away in the past year, with females more likely than males to have done so (13% vs. 9%).

Twenty-three percent of local students had moved from one home to another in the past year, and 5% had moved three or more times.

When compared to youth who had moved house, youth who had stayed in the same home for the past year were more likely to feel good about themselves (82% vs. 71%), and to have slept for eight or more hours on the night before they took the survey (58% vs. 50%).

Youth who had not moved were also less likely to have been involved in risky behaviours. For example, they were less likely to forego needed mental health services (10% vs. 18%) and necessary medical care (6% vs. 11% of youth who had moved in the past year).



Among youth who reported going to bed hungry, those who did not move house in the past year were less likely to have seriously considered suicide in the past year (27% vs. 47%\* who had moved). They were also half as likely to have attempted suicide in the past year (16% vs. 33%\*).

## Government care

Similar to the picture across the province, 4% of Northern Interior students had ever lived in foster care, and 2% had lived in a group home. One percent were currently in government care.

Reflective of youth in care across the province, more than half of local students with care experience had moved in the past year. Students with care experience were more likely to have moved in the past year compared to those who had not been in care (60%\* vs. 21%) and to have moved three or more times (19% vs. 4%).

As with other youth, if those with government care experience had lived at one address for the past year there appeared to be health benefits. For example, they were more likely to report feeling good about themselves, and more likely to have taken part in informal sports in the past year, such as skateboarding and hiking.

## Def.

In this report, when the term **GOVERNMENT CARE** is used, it refers to youth living in a foster home or group home.

“

I have thought about running away.”

A young person who is on a Youth Agreement is not considered to be in the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development. A Youth Agreement supports independent living for 16- to 18-year-olds (and occasionally 15-year-olds) who are homeless and cannot live with their family. One percent of local students had been on a Youth Agreement.

## Caretaking responsibilities

On an average school day, 76% of youth (72% of males vs. 81% of females) had some caretaking responsibilities. These included caring for pets or other animals (68% of males vs. 74% of females), and/or caring for a relative (such as a relative with a disability or younger sibling; 17% of males vs. 23% of females). Rates for caring for a relative were similar to the province, but local students were more likely to be caring for pets or other animals (71% vs. 52% provincially).

Northern Interior females who took care of a relative were more likely to miss out on extracurricular activities (72% vs. 62% of females without these responsibilities). They were also specifically more likely to miss out on activities because they could not afford them (24% vs. 16% of females without caretaking responsibilities), or because they were too busy (57% vs. 47%). This was not seen for males with caretaking responsibilities.

## Transportation

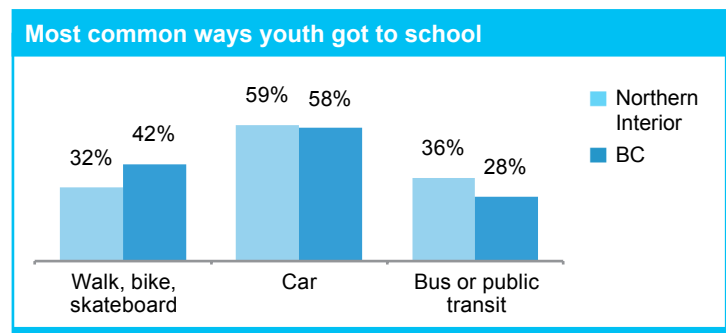
Students were asked about the method of transport they usually used to get to school. Thirty-two percent of local students used active means, including walking, biking or skateboarding. Fifty-nine percent got to school by car, and 36% took a bus or other public transit. One percent of students (2% males vs. 1% females) usually hitchhiked to school.

Youth who were dependent on public transit to get to school were more likely to have missed out on extracurricular activities because they could not get there (22% vs. 14% of youth who did not use a bus to get to school).

When asked about transportation in general, 58% used public transit, which was below the provincial rate of 73%.

Similar to the provincial picture, 3% of local students hitchhiked somewhere in the past month, with males more likely than females to have done so.

Thirty percent of Northern Interior youth held some sort of driver's licence. Specifically, 17% had a learner's licence and 12% had a novice licence.

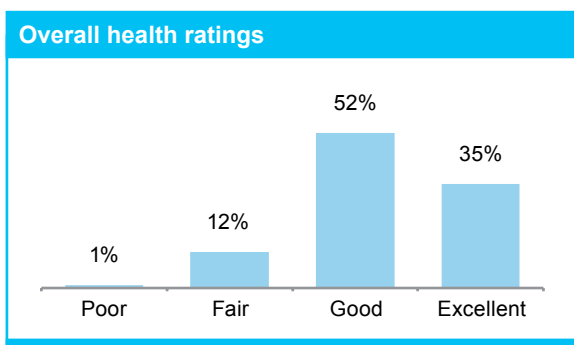


Note: The difference between local students and those throughout BC who usually got to school by car was not statistically significant.

# Physical health

Consistent with provincial findings, most students (87%) rated their health as good or excellent. Males were less likely than females to rate their health as good (45% vs. 59%), and more likely to rate it as excellent (43% vs. 27%).

Local students were more likely than in 2008 to rate their health as excellent (35% in 2013 vs. 28% in 2008), and less likely to rate it as poor (1% vs. 3%).



## Health conditions & disabilities

Twenty-seven percent of students (22% males vs. 32% females) had at least one health condition or disability, which was similar to the provincial picture.

There were no gender differences in the various types of health conditions and disabilities which youth reported, except females were more likely to report having a mental or emotional health condition (16% vs. 6% of males) or a long term or chronic condition (12% vs. 9%).

When students were asked additional questions about specific mental health conditions such as Depression and Anxiety Disorders, the percentage experiencing a mental health condition increased (see page 16 for more details).

Among youth with a health condition or disability, 46% (36% of males vs. 51% of females) had a condition that sometimes prevented them from doing things their peers could do, and 3% had a condition that always prevented them from participating in these activities.

Youth with a health condition or disability	
Mental or emotional health condition	11%
Long term or chronic condition (e.g., diabetes or asthma)	10%
Learning disability	5%
Behavioural condition	5%
Sensory disability	3%
Allergies severe enough to require an epinephrine injection	2%
Physical disability	NR

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.



**I have chronically low blood pressure/sugar, which causes bouts of fainting.”**

## Foregone medical care

In the past year, 7% of students (6% of males vs. 9% of females) did not get medical help when they thought they needed it. This was similar to the 2013 provincial results, and down locally from 14% in 2008.

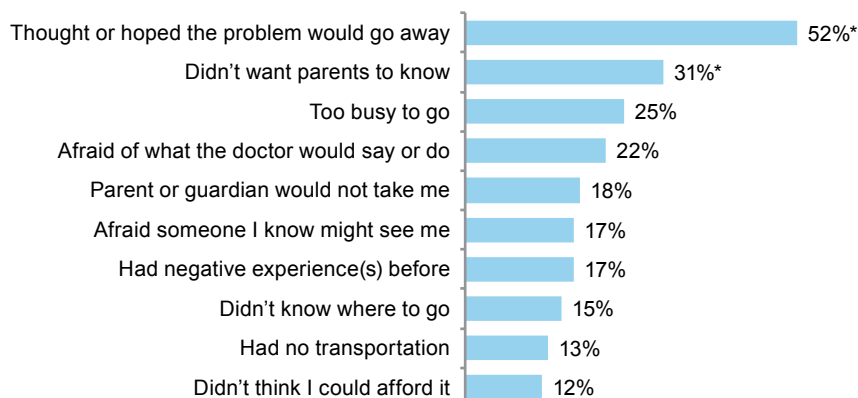
Among students who did not access needed medical care, the most common reasons for not doing so were thinking or hoping the problem would go away, and not wanting their parents to know. Compared to five years prior, local students were more likely to have missed out on needed medical care because they did not know where to go (7% in 2008 vs. 15% in 2013).

Females were almost twice as likely as males to miss out on needed medical care because they did not want their parents to know, while males were more likely to miss out because they could not go when it was open.

## Dental visits

Similar to the picture across the province, 85% of local students had visited the dentist in the past 12 months while 5% had last visited more than 24 months ago, and 2% had never been. For 9% of students their last visit to the dentist had been for pain.

**Most common reasons students missed out on needed medical help in the past year (among those who felt they needed help)**



\* The percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was relatively high but still within a releasable range.

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.



# Sleep

It is recommended that adolescents get between 8.5 and 9.25 hours of sleep each night. In the Northern Interior, 56% of students (61% of males vs. 51% of females) slept for eight hours or more, while 5% slept for four hours or less. These percentages were similar to those seen across BC.

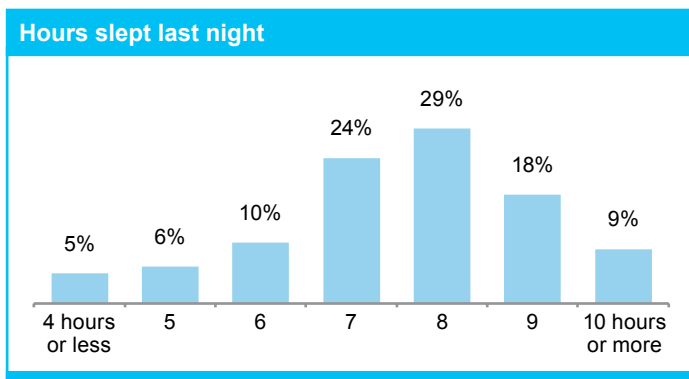
Older students slept less than younger ones. For example, 40%\* of students who were 18 years old slept for eight or more hours on the night before taking the survey, compared to 75% of students age 12 or younger.

Eighty-three percent of students were doing something such as homework or using their cellphone after the time they were expected to be asleep. For example, 32% of males and 47% of females were doing homework after the time they were normally expected to go to sleep.

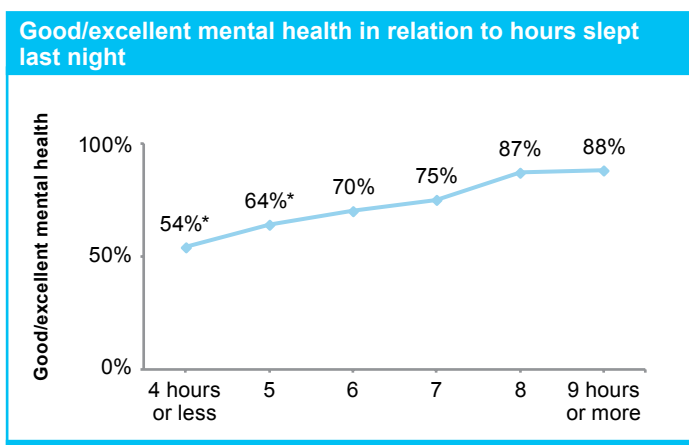
Some students were at particular risk of not getting enough sleep. For example, 40% of students who had been physically or sexually abused slept eight or more hours the night before taking the survey, compared to 59% of students who had not experienced abuse.

The more hours of sleep students got, the more likely they were to rate their mental health as good or excellent. For example, youth who had been abused who slept for at least eight hours were less likely to have self-harmed in the past year (36%\* vs. 52% who slept fewer hours), and were less likely to have foregone needed mental or emotional health services (20% vs. 37%).

Similarly, Northern Interior students with a mental or emotional health condition who slept for eight or more hours were less likely than those who slept fewer hours to have attempted suicide in the past year.



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



\* The percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was relatively high but still within a releasable range.

Note: Not all differences were statistically significant.

# Mental health

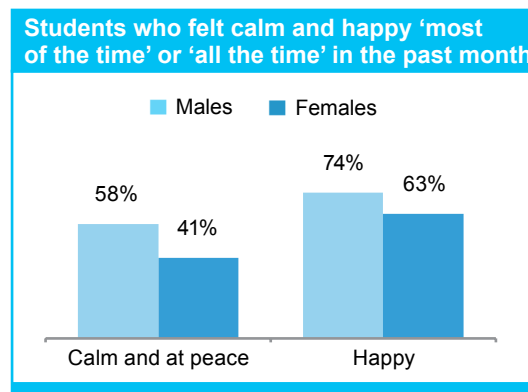
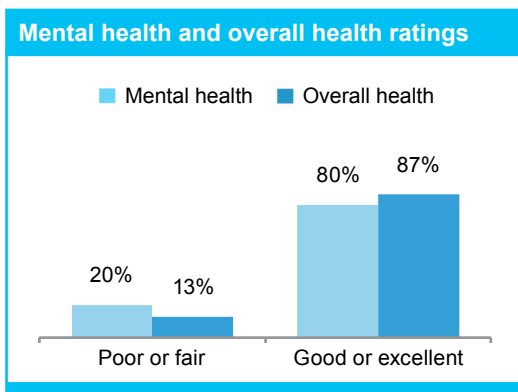
Comparable to the province, most youth (80%) rated their mental health as good or excellent. Males were more likely than females to rate their mental health as good or excellent (85% vs. 75%), whereas females were more likely to rate it as fair or poor (25% vs. 15% of males).

Students were less likely to rate their mental health as good or excellent than their overall health, which was also consistent with provincial findings.

The majority of students felt good about themselves (88% of males vs. 71% of females) and felt they were as competent as most of their peers (90% of males vs. 82% of females).

Most students also reported excelling in at least one area, such as sports, school, the arts, or relationships. As with self-confidence, males were more likely than females to indicate they were really good at something (80% vs. 73%).

Males were also more likely than females to feel happy and to feel calm and at peace most or all of the time in the past month.



I sometimes feel I'm not good enough."

## Mental health conditions

Students were asked about specific mental health conditions. As was the case provincially, females were more likely than males to have at least one condition (28% vs. 19%). Females were also more likely to have multiple conditions (12% vs. 5% of males).

Youth most commonly reported having Depression (11%), Anxiety Disorder (10%), Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD; 7%), and/or an addiction to alcohol or other drugs (4%). Females were more likely to have Anxiety Disorder and Depression, whereas males were more likely to report ADHD. Youth also reported having Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD; 1%), Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD; 1%), and/or Autism or Asperger's (1%).

Local students were more likely than youth across the province to report having at least one condition (24% vs. 19% provincially), and to specifically report having an addiction to alcohol or other drugs (4% vs. 2%).

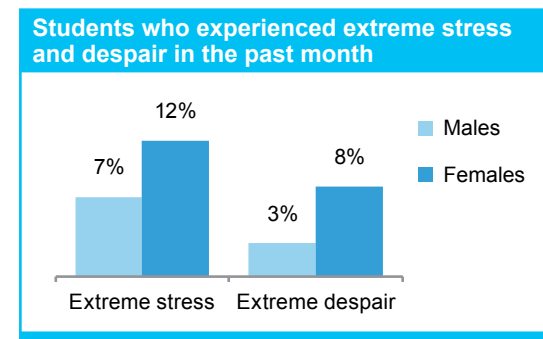
Most commonly reported conditions		
	Males	Females
Depression	7%	16%
Anxiety Disorder/ Panic Attacks	4%	15%
ADHD	9%	6%

## Stress & despair

Most students (80%) reported feeling some level of stress in the past month. Females were more likely than males to experience extreme stress that prevented them from functioning properly.

Students were also asked the extent to which they felt so sad, discouraged, or hopeless that they wondered if anything was worthwhile. Fifty percent reported feeling some level of despair in the past month. Local males were more likely to report experiencing despair in 2013 than five years earlier (40% vs. 35%), but there was no difference among females.

As was the case with extreme stress, percentages of students reporting extreme despair were comparable to those in the province as a whole. Percentages of extreme despair were also similar in 2013 and 2008.



I have never been diagnosed for any mental health issues, but I worry about being depressed.”

## Self-harm

Eight percent of males and 28% of females reported cutting or injuring themselves on purpose without trying to kill themselves in the past year. The percentage for local females was higher than for females across the province (22% provincially), but among males the local and BC percentages were comparable.

## Suicide

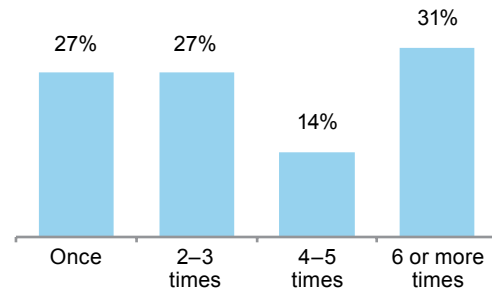
Fifteen percent of local students seriously thought about killing themselves in the past year, which was higher than the provincial rate of 12%. Local females were over twice as likely as males to have seriously thought about suicide, with similar percentages to those in 2008.

Females were also more likely than males to have attempted suicide in the past year. Percentages were similar to those in the province as a whole and to local rates in 2008.

A known risk factor for attempting suicide is having a family member or close friend attempt or die by suicide. Sixteen percent of students reported that a family member had tried to kill themselves at some point (5% in the past year), and 27% reported that a close friend had attempted suicide (17% in the past year).

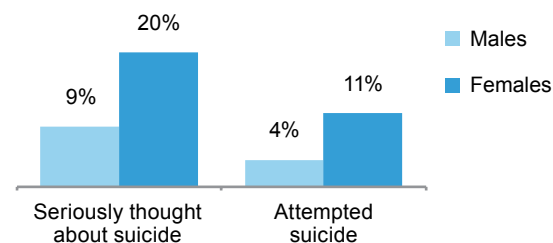
Students who indicated that both a friend and a family member had attempted suicide were more likely to have attempted suicide themselves in the past year than students who had either a friend or family member attempt suicide and to students who had neither experience.

Number of times students self-harmed  
(among those who self-harmed in the past year)

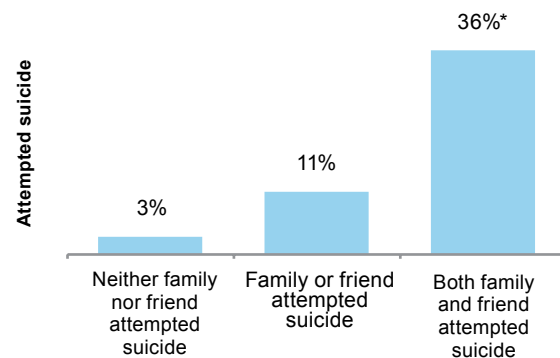


Note: Percentages do not equal 100% due to rounding.

Suicide ideation and attempts in the past year



Youth who attempted suicide in the past year in relation to suicide attempts by family or close friends



\* The percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was relatively high but still within a releasable range.

## Hope for the future

Students were asked where they saw themselves in five years. Most envisioned positive circumstances, including having a job or career, being in school, having a home of their own, having a family, and/or being engaged in their community.

A small minority of students saw negative circumstances in their future, including being in prison, homeless, or dead. Thirteen percent indicated not knowing what the future held for them.

Local students were less likely than those across the province to see themselves in school (43% vs. 52%), and were more likely to envision having a home of their own (34% vs. 26%) in five years.

## Foregoing mental health services

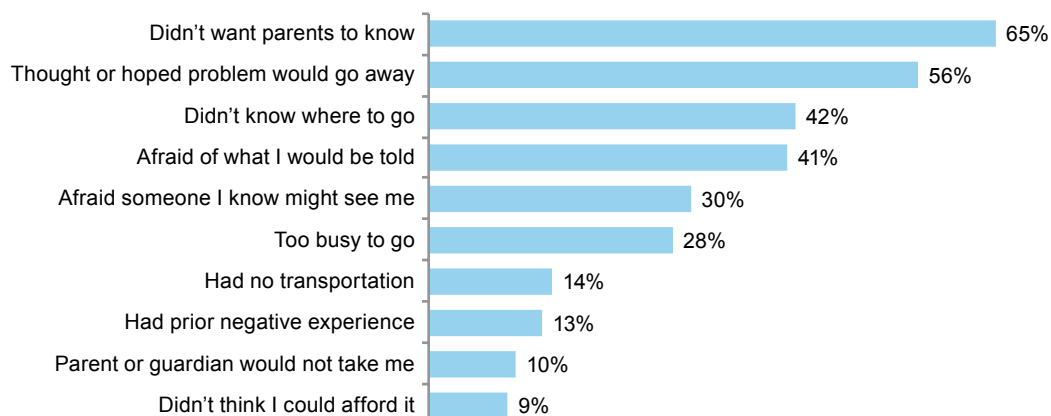
In the past year, 11% of local students (6% of males vs. 17% of females) reported not accessing mental health services when they thought they needed to. These rates were similar to those in the province as a whole and to the percentages five years earlier.

As was the case provincially, the most common reasons for not accessing needed mental health services included not wanting their parents to know, thinking or hoping the problem would go away, not knowing where to go, and feeling fearful of what they would be told.

The only gender difference was that females were more likely than males to not access services because of fear of what they would be told.

Consistent with findings across BC, local students who did not access needed services were more likely in 2013 than five years earlier to list certain reasons for not doing so. These included not knowing where to go (42% in 2013 vs. 24% in 2008), not wanting their parents to know (65% vs. 37%), fearing that someone they knew might see them (30% vs. 20%), and having no transportation to get there (14% vs. 7%).

**Most common reasons for not accessing mental health services in the past year  
(among students who felt they needed services)**



Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

# Injuries & injury prevention

In the past year, 33% of male and 26% of female students were injured seriously enough to require medical attention, with similar percentages across the province. The overall local rate of 30% reflected a decrease from 35% in 2008.

Almost half of injuries occurred when youth were playing or training for sports or other recreational activities (49%). Also, 9% of injuries happened when youth were snowboarding or skiing, 7% when riding or driving in a car, and 5% when riding a bicycle. Five percent of students were using a cellphone or portable electronic device when they were injured.

## Concussions

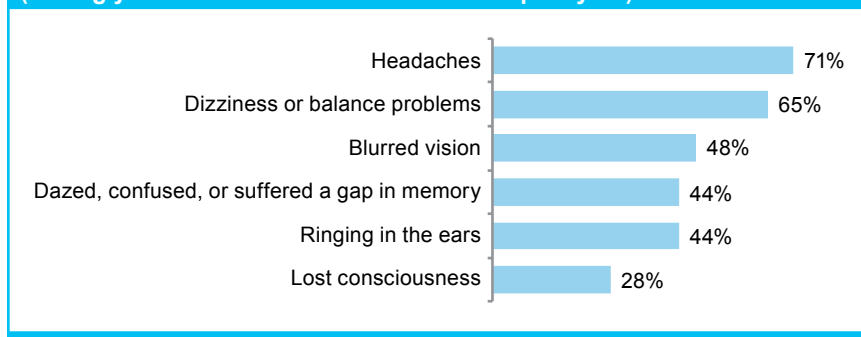
Twenty-two percent of males and 16% of females had a concussion in the past year. Fourteen percent had one concussion, 3% had two, and 2% had three or more. The most common symptoms were headaches and/or dizziness or balance problems.

Mirroring what was seen provincially, 16% of Northern Interior youth who had experienced a concussion in the past year had not accessed needed medical help.

## Def.

A **CONCUSSION** was defined in the survey as a head injury where youth lost consciousness, were dazed, confused, or suffered from a gap in their memory. ➔

Concussion symptoms experienced  
(among youth who had a concussion in the past year)



Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

**19%** of students experienced a concussion in the past year, compared to 16% provincially.

**27%** of youth who rode a bike never wore a helmet while cycling.

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## Injury prevention

Similar to youth across the province, more than three quarters of local male and female students always wore their seat belt when riding in a motor vehicle. This rate reflected an increase from 2008 (65% in 2008 vs. 76% in 2013).

Northern Interior youth were more likely to take injury prevention seriously in some activities than others. For example, 60% always wore a helmet when snowboarding or skiing, while 38% always wore one when riding a bike.

Wearing a helmet was linked to a lower chance of having a concussion. For example, 17% of youth who always wore a helmet when cycling had a concussion in the past year, compared to 26% of those who never wore one. Furthermore, they were less likely to have had multiple concussions.

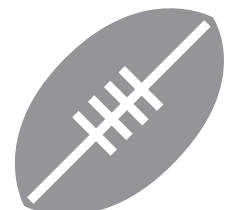
Similar to results across the province, 7% of Northern Interior youth who had tried alcohol had ever driven a car after drinking, which was a local decline from 15% in 2008. It was more common for youth to have driven after using marijuana, which 15% of marijuana users had ever done (a decrease from 21% in 2008), and 8% had done in the past month.

In total, 38% of youth who had driven after using alcohol or marijuana in the past month did not have a driver's licence.

Thirty-one percent of all Northern Interior students had been a passenger in a vehicle with a driver who had been drinking or using marijuana, and 13% had done so in the past month.



I broke my toe in lacrosse and got a concussion.”



# Nutrition

Ninety-two percent of youth reported eating fruit or vegetables at least once on the day before taking the survey, which was consistent with the provincial rate.

Canada's Food Guide recommends that males aged 14–18 eat eight servings of fruit and vegetables daily and females eat seven servings. Youth aged 13 and younger need six servings. However, more than a third of local students (36%) had fruit or vegetables only once or twice on the day before taking the survey. This was also consistent with students across the province.

In 2013, females were more likely to have consumed vegetables or green salad (82% vs. 77% of males), as well as coffee or coffee-based beverages (37% vs. 29%), while males were more likely to have consumed

fast food (44% vs. 34%), traditional foods from their background (22% vs. 16%), food grown or caught by them or their family (21% vs. 11%), pop or soda (50% vs. 29%), and energy drinks (12% vs. 6%).

When compared to their peers across the province, local students were more likely to have drunk energy drinks (9% vs. 6% provincially), and less likely to have eaten traditional foods from their background (19% vs. 38% provincially). In addition, local males were more likely to have consumed food grown or caught by them or their family (21% vs. 15% of males across BC) and pop or soda (50% vs. 43%), whereas local females were more likely to have drunk coffee or coffee-based beverages (37% vs. 30% of females across BC).

**What students ate and drank yesterday (one or more times)**

	2008	2013	Change from 2008
Fruit	79%	84%	↑
Vegetables or green salad	75%	80%	↑
Sweets (cookies, candy, chocolate, etc.)	61%	75%	↑
Fast food (pizza, hot dogs, fries, etc.)	52%	39%	↓
Traditional foods from youth's background	NA	19%	
Food grown or caught by youth or family	NA	16%	
Water	93%	95%	--
Pop or soda	49%	39%	↓
Energy drinks	18%	9%	↓
Coffee or coffee-based beverages	32%	33%	--

NA The question was not asked.

-- The percentages in 2008 and 2013 were comparable.



Youth who ate fruit or vegetables three or more times on the day before taking the survey were more likely to report good or excellent mental health compared to students who ate them less often (84% vs. 74%).

There was a link between diet and exercise, as youth who had eaten three or more servings of fruits or vegetables on the day before taking the survey were more likely to be engaging in physical activity. For example, 69% took part in informal sports on a weekly basis compared to 52% who were not eating as healthily, and 58% played organized sports weekly compared to 46% who had fewer servings of fruit or vegetables.

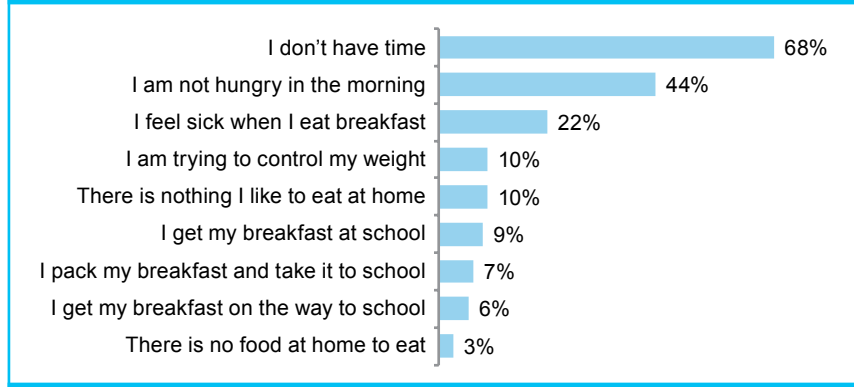
Among students with a mental or emotional health condition, those who had eaten three or more servings of fruit or vegetables were more likely to report good or excellent general health than those who had eaten fewer servings (79%\* vs. 58%\*).

## Breakfast

Consistent with the provincial rate, 13% of students (11% of males vs. 16% of females) reported never eating breakfast on school days, while half (58% of males vs. 43% of females) always ate breakfast on school days. This was unchanged from five years earlier, and lower than the overall provincial rate (54%).

Females were more likely than males to report not eating breakfast at home because they felt sick when they ate breakfast (28% vs. 13% of males), because they were trying to control their weight (15% vs. 4%), they packed their breakfast and took it to school (9% vs. 5%), and because there was no food at home to eat.

**Most common reasons for not eating breakfast at home  
(among youth who did not eat breakfast at home)**



Note: Youth could choose more than one response.



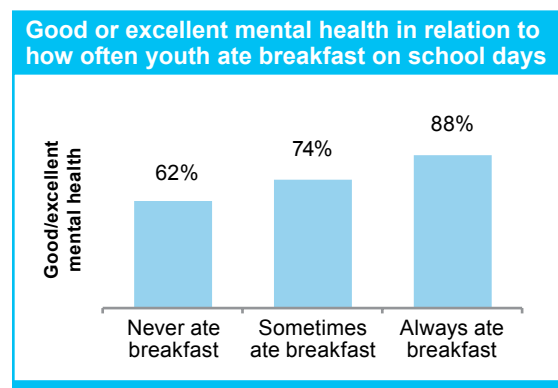
Youth who always ate breakfast on school days were more likely than those who ate breakfast less often to report good or excellent mental health (88% vs. 71%), better nutrition (such as eating fruit or vegetables three or more times yesterday; 65% vs. 47%), and to have slept for eight or more hours the previous night (65% vs. 46%).

## Going to bed hungry

Consistent with the province, 91% of youth in the Northern Interior never went to bed hungry because there was insufficient money for food at home, while 8% went to bed hungry sometimes, and 1% went to bed hungry often or always.

There was a local increase in the percentage of youth who never went to bed hungry, from 89% in 2008, and a decrease in the percentage of youth going to bed hungry often or always, from 2% in 2008.

Youth who indicated going to bed hungry at least sometimes were more likely to also report not having any food at home to eat for breakfast.



## Def.

Youth who **WENT TO BED HUNGRY** refers to youth who went to bed hungry because there was not enough money for food at home.

# Body weight & body image

## Body weight

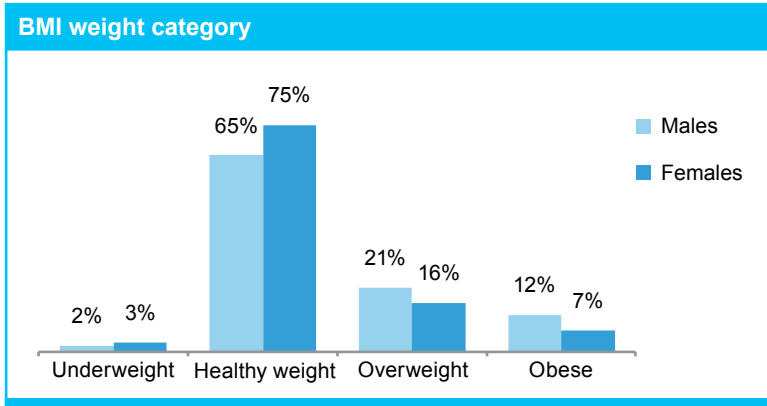
Students' body mass index (BMI) was calculated from their self-reported height and weight measurements. According to their BMI, 70% of Northern Interior youth were a healthy weight for their age and gender, while 3% were underweight, 18% were overweight, and 9% were obese. Males were more likely than females to be overweight or obese, but there was no gender difference for being underweight.

Youth in this region were more likely to be overweight or obese compared to those in the province as a whole, and were less likely to be a healthy weight.

The percentage of youth who were a healthy weight decreased from 2008 to 2013.

Females were more likely to be underweight, while males were more likely to be obese (12% in 2013 vs. 8% in 2008).

Youth who were underweight were less likely to exercise in the past week compared to their healthy weight peers. On the other hand, youth who were overweight or obese exercised, on average, a similar number of days as their healthy weight peers.



Note: The difference between males and females who were underweight was not statistically significant.

**20%** of healthy weight females thought they were overweight, compared to 4% of healthy weight males.

## Body image

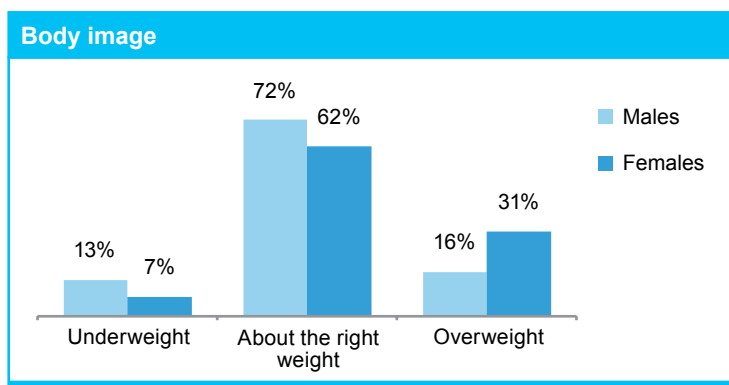
Students were also asked how they saw themselves. Sixty-seven percent felt they were about the right weight, whereas 10% thought they were underweight and the remaining 23% felt they were overweight.

Similar to results seen in 2008, 35% of healthy weight males were trying to gain weight (vs. 7% of healthy weight females), and 46% of healthy weight females were trying to lose weight (vs. 14% of healthy weight males).

## Eating behaviours

Twenty-six percent of youth (19% of males vs. 33% of females) had binge eaten in the past year, with 6% having done so on a weekly basis. Eight percent (5% of males vs. 10% of females) had vomited on purpose after eating (purged) in the past year, and 2% had done so weekly. These rates were consistent with the province.

Youth who reported poorer mental health were more likely to binge eat and purge. For example, 10% of youth who rated their mental health as poor or fair had binge eaten on a weekly basis in the past year, compared to 5% with good or excellent mental health. Similarly, 13% of students who did not feel happy during the past month binge ate on a weekly basis compared to 4% of students who felt happy most or all of the time.



Note: Percentages for males do not equal 100% due to rounding.



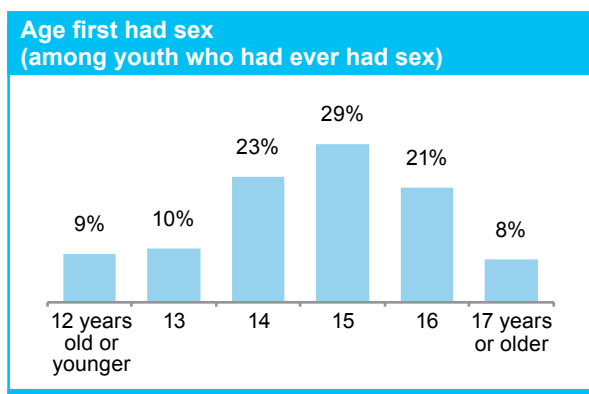
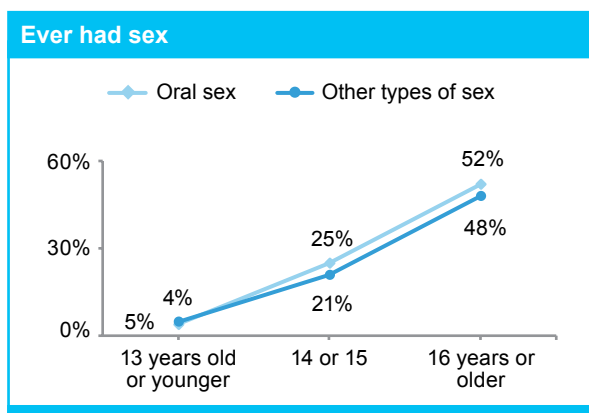
Everyone says that I am beautiful but I don't feel like that, I feel like I'm too fat or have bad skin."

# Sexual behaviour

## Oral sex

Thirty percent of students reported ever having oral sex, which was similar to the rate in 2008. The percentage of students who ever had oral sex was higher in this region than in the province as a whole (23%).

Although equal percentages of males and females indicated having oral sex, males were more likely to have received oral sex (30% vs. 23% of females), whereas females were more likely to have given oral sex (26% vs. 19% of males). The rate of ever having oral sex increased with age.



Note: Sex refers to sex other than oral sex or masturbation.

## CONDOM USE

Nineteen percent of students who had oral sex reported that they or their partner had used a condom or other barrier the last time they had oral sex, with similar rates for males and females, and comparable to the provincial rate.

## Sex (excluding oral sex)

Twenty-eight percent of local male and female students indicated ever having sex, other than oral sex or masturbation, which was higher than the provincial rate of 19%, and comparable to 2008. Consistent with the pattern for oral sex, older students were more likely than younger ones to have had other types of sex.

## AGE YOUTH FIRST HAD SEX

Youth who ever had sex most commonly reported first doing so at age 15. This was similar to the local 2008 percentage as well as to the 2013 provincial rate.

## PARTNERS

Among students who ever had sex, the majority (52%) had one sexual partner during the past year. Twenty-one percent had two partners during this time, and 20% had three or more partners. Seven percent of students who had ever had sex had not done so during the past year. These rates were comparable to those found provincially.

Eighty-five percent of youth (89% of males vs. 80% of females) who ever had sex reported having opposite gender partners exclusively in the past year.

On this page, findings were similar to the provincial results unless noted.

## SUBSTANCE USE

Twenty-four percent of students who had ever had sex reported using alcohol or other substances before they had sex the last time. The rate reflected a decline from 34% five years earlier. While males were more likely than females to have engaged in this behaviour in 2008, this gender difference was not evident in 2013.

## CONDOM USE

Similar to local findings in 2008, 66% of males and females who had sex reported that they or their partner had used a condom or other latex barrier the last time they had sex.

## CONTRACEPTION

When students were asked about what efforts they or their partner made to prevent pregnancy the last time they had sex, they most commonly reported using condoms, birth control pills, and withdrawal (which is

not a reliable method of birth control). Six percent of Northern Interior students indicated they did not try to prevent pregnancy the last time they had sex. For 7% of students, the last time they had sex was with a same sex partner. Results were generally similar to those found locally in 2008.

## Pregnancy

Overall, 2% of youth reported ever being pregnant or causing a pregnancy. The rate was 4% among students who had ever had sex, which was a decrease from 2008 (10%).

## Sexually transmitted infections

Locally, 1% of all youth had been told by a doctor or nurse at some point that they had a sexually transmitted infection (STI). The rate was 3% among youth who had ever had sex (including oral sex). The STI rate for females was comparable to that seen five years ago. However, the rate among males has decreased since 2008.

Efforts made to prevent pregnancy during last time students had sex (among students who indicated ever having sex)

Condoms	65%
Birth control pills	46%
Withdrawal	33%
Emergency contraception	6%
Depo Provera	3%
Not sure	3%
Other method prescribed by doctor or nurse (e.g., IUD, patch, ring)	NR

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

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

Note: Sex refers to sex other than oral sex or masturbation.



**Birth control  
should be cheaper.”**

# Tobacco use

Twenty-eight percent of male and female youth in this region had ever tried smoking tobacco, which was above the provincial rate of 21%. However, this was a local reduction from 2008 (35%).

Local youth started smoking at an earlier age compared to youth in the province overall. Among those who ever tried smoking, 28% first did so at 12 years old or younger (compared to 21% provincially), while 32% waited until they were 15 or older (compared to 45% provincially). However, there were local improvements. For example, fewer youth first smoked at 12 years or younger than in 2008 (37%).

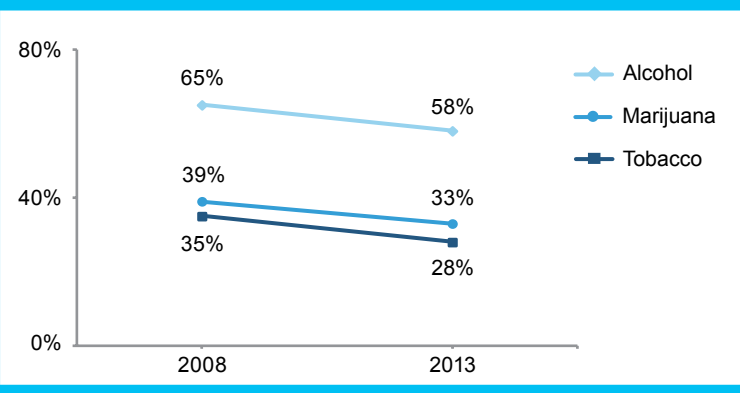
Youth used a variety of different tobacco products in the past month. Among those who ever smoked, 45% smoked cigarettes, 44% smoked cigars or cigarillos (51% of males vs. 37% of females), 16% used chewing tobacco (almost all were males), 14% used electronic cigarettes with nicotine (18% of males vs. 10% of females), and 12% used a hookah.

Among youth who had tried smoking, 52% smoked in the past month. This rate was similar to the provincial rate, and was no different from the 2008 local rate. Nine percent of youth who had ever smoked did so daily in the past month.

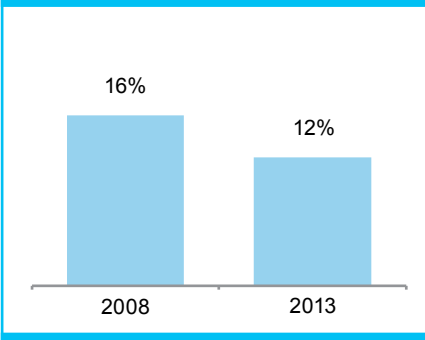
Twenty-six percent of youth who had ever smoked reported successfully quitting in the past year. Fifteen percent had tried to quit, but had started again. These were both comparable to the provincial rates. In the past month, 7% of smokers had used a product to help them stop smoking.

Being exposed to smoking is considered to be a risk factor for starting to smoke. Twenty-eight percent of local youth were exposed to tobacco smoke inside their home or family vehicle at least sometimes (compared to 21% provincially). Twelve percent experienced this daily or almost daily, which was lower than the rate in 2008.

Youth who had ever tried different substances



Exposed to second-hand smoke in home or family vehicle every day or almost every day



# Alcohol, marijuana, & other drug use

## Alcohol

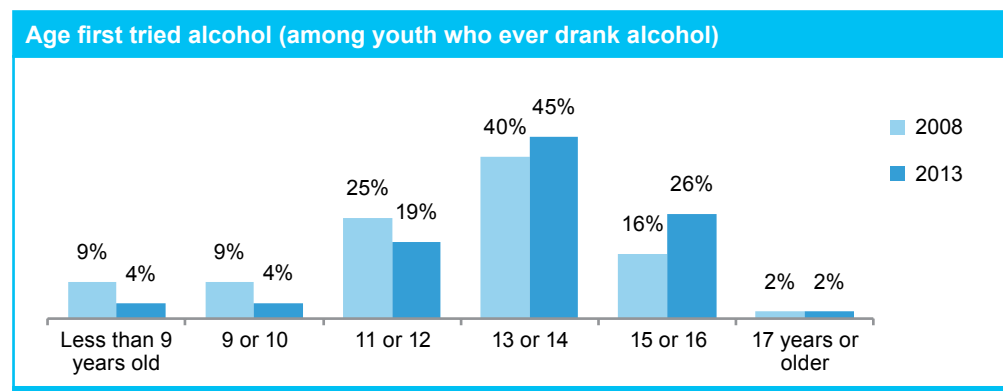
The percentage of youth in this region who had tried alcohol dropped from 65% in 2008 to 58% in 2013. This rate remained higher than the provincial rate (45%).

Delaying the onset of using alcohol and marijuana has been shown to reduce the risk of future substance dependence and other associated challenges. As a result, in 2010 the BC Ministry of Health Services and Ministry of Children and Family Development aimed to see a 10% reduction in the percentage of BC students who first use alcohol or marijuana before the age of 15. Among local youth who had tried alcohol, 72% first drank before turning 15 years old, which was a decrease from 82% in 2008. Local students who had tried alcohol reported having their first drink at an earlier age than youth across the province.

Forty-one percent of youth who had tried alcohol reported having five or more drinks within a couple of hours on at least one occasion in the past month. This rate was similar for males and females, as well as to the 2013 provincial rate and the local rate in 2008.

Over a quarter of youth drank on the Saturday before completing the survey (27%). Specifically, 21% had liquor, 17% drank coolers (13% of males vs. 21% of females), 16% had beer (19% of males vs. 14% of females), and 4% had wine.

Among youth who drank last Saturday, 71% had mixed different types of alcohol, 35% mixed three or four different types, and 16% mixed alcohol with energy drinks.



Note: 2008 percentages do not equal 100% due to rounding.

**70%** of females who drank last Saturday had four or more drinks that day, and 72% of males had five or more.

## Marijuana

Although local youth were more likely to have tried marijuana than students across BC (26% provincially), the percentage of local students who had tried marijuana decreased from 39% in 2008 to 33% in 2013.

Among those who had tried marijuana, 66% of males and females had first used it at age 14 or younger. This percentage was higher than the provincial rate (59%).

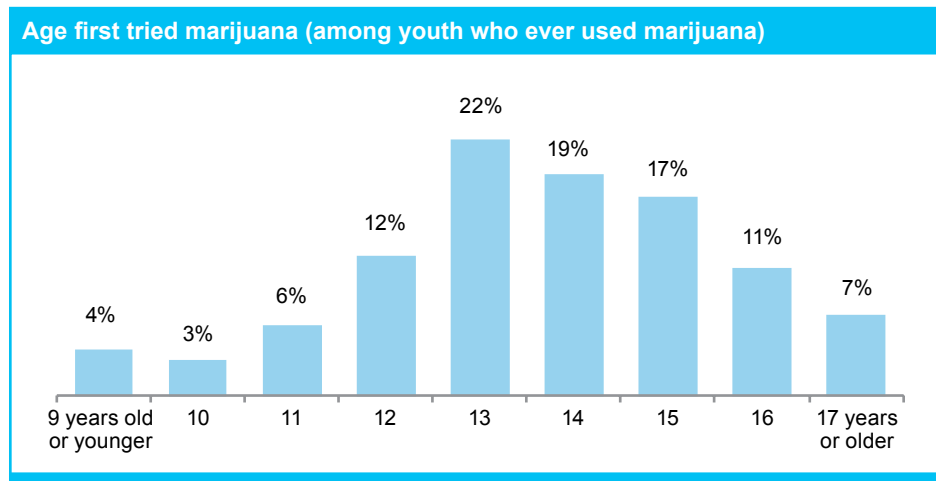
However, youth were waiting longer to try marijuana than their peers in previous years. For example, in 2013, 34% of those who used marijuana had first done so when they were 15 or older, compared to 27% in 2008.

Similar to results five years ago, 57% of youth who had tried marijuana (64% of

males vs. 50% of females) had used it in the past month. Twenty-six percent had used it on six or more days during that time. Eleven percent of youth used marijuana last Saturday.

There was a decrease in the percentage of students who had used both alcohol and marijuana on the Saturday before taking the survey, from 8% in 2013 to 12% in 2008.

Among youth who had tried marijuana, their most common source for this substance was a youth outside their family. Twenty percent got their marijuana from an adult outside their family. Seven percent got it from an adult inside their family, and 10% got it from another youth in their family, which was higher than the provincial rate (6%).



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

“ I do marijuana once a year.”

## Substances other than alcohol & marijuana

Northern Interior youth had tried a variety of substances other than alcohol and marijuana, but the use of many of them had decreased since 2008. For both males and females, the most common of these were prescription pills without a doctor's consent.

Thirteen percent of youth had misused prescription pills. This was a decrease from 17% in 2008. There was also a decrease in the use of cocaine (4% vs. 6%), hallucinogens (4% vs. 7%), ecstasy (4% vs. 10%), mushrooms (8% vs. 12%), inhalants (2% vs. 5%), amphetamines (2% vs. 4%), and crystal meth (1% vs. 3%).

There was no change locally between 2008 and 2013 in the use of heroin (1%), or steroids without a doctor's prescription (1%). For the first time, the survey included questions about ketamine or GHB, which 2% of youth had tried.

The rates of trying these substances were similar to those in the province overall. Local males and females were equally likely to try most substances, but males were more likely to have tried hallucinogens, mushrooms, and steroids.

## Consequences of substance use

Over half of youth (52%) who had used alcohol or other substances reported negative consequences in the past year (46% of males vs. 57% of females).

In the past year, a total of 6% of youth were either told or felt they needed help for their substance use (4% of males vs. 8% of females). Three percent needed help for their alcohol use, 4% for their marijuana use, and 2% for their other drug use. Females were more likely than males to feel they needed help for their alcohol and other drug use, but there was no gender difference in needing help for marijuana use.

### Most common consequences of substance use in the past year (among youth who had used alcohol or other substances during that time)

	Males	Females
Was told I did something that I couldn't remember	29%	44%
Passed out	27%	35%
Got injured	15%	15%
Damaged property	10%	7%
Got into a physical fight	10%	6%
Argued with family members	8%	17%
Got in trouble with police	7%	7%
School work or grades changed	6%	10%
Had sex when I didn't want to	5%	7%
Lost friends or broke up with a girlfriend or boyfriend	4%	14%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

Note: The differences between males and females in getting in a physical fight, damaging property, and having sex when they didn't want to were not statistically significant.

## Reported reasons for using

For the first time, the survey asked students who had used alcohol or other drugs what their reason for doing so was the last time they used. The most common reasons were wanting to have fun, because their friends were doing it, and wanting to experiment.

Females were more likely to have last used substances because of stress (25% vs. 17% of males), because they felt down or sad (21% vs. 12%), because they were pressured into doing it, or because of an addiction.

Most common reasons for using substances the last time (among youth who ever used alcohol or other drugs)	
I wanted to have fun	63%
My friends were doing it	30%
I wanted to try it/experiment	24%
Because of stress	22%
I felt down or sad	17%
I felt like there was nothing else to do	10%
To manage physical pain	7%
I thought it would help me focus	3%
I was pressured into doing it	3%
Because of an addiction	3%
Other	19%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.



When I smoke [marijuana], I feel like I can focus on what I want.”

# School

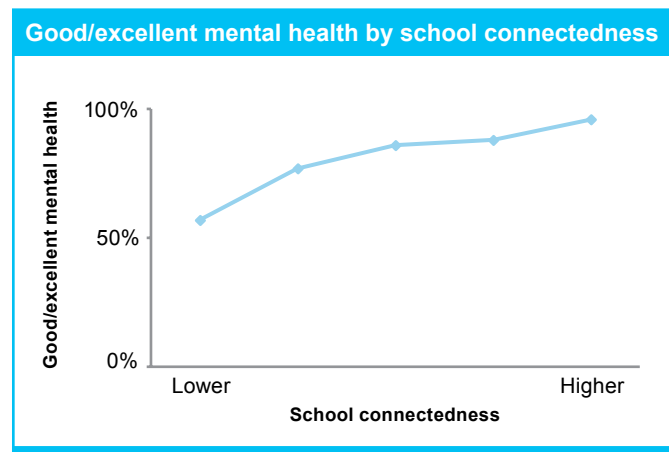
## School connectedness

School connectedness was measured using a scale which included students' feelings about school and their school community. Students in the Northern Interior reported similar levels of school connectedness as students across the province.

Most students felt like they were a part of their school (60%), were happy to be at school (64%), and felt safe there (75%). The majority also felt that they were treated fairly by school staff (73%), they got along with their teachers (65%), and their teachers cared about them (59%). However, less than half (47%) felt that school staff other than teachers cared about them.

The percentages of students who felt like they were a part of their school, were happy at their school, and felt safe at their school were similar to those seen in 2008.

The more connected students felt to their school, the better their mental health ratings. For example, youth with a mental or emotional health condition were more likely to feel good about themselves if they felt more connected to their school. Similarly, youth who had been teased, excluded, and/or assaulted in the past year were more likely to have only positive aspirations for the future if they felt more connected to their school.



## School safety

Northern Interior male and female students felt equally safe in each area of their school. They also felt safer in every area of their school in 2013 than in 2008.

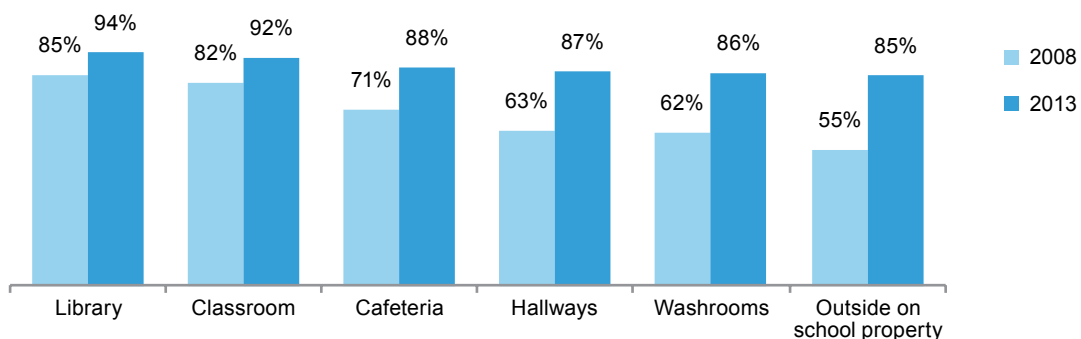
In terms of overall feelings of safety, 23% strongly agreed that they felt safe at school. These youth were less likely to have missed school in the past month (51% vs. 73%\* of those who strongly disagreed that they felt safe), and were more likely to have post-secondary plans (84% vs. 54%\*). Youth who strongly agreed that they felt safe at school also reported better overall health (94% vs. 56%\*), and were more likely to rate their mental health as good or excellent (90% vs. 46%\*).

## Weapon carrying

Six percent of students carried a weapon, such as a knife or bat, to school in the past month. Local males were as likely as their peers throughout BC to carry a weapon (7%), while females were more likely to carry a weapon than females across the province (5% vs. 2%).

Two percent of students reported that they always carried a weapon at school.

Locations where students always or usually felt safe at school



## School absences

Overall, 60% of students (57% of males vs. 64% of females) had missed classes on at least one day in the past month. The most common reason for this was illness (40% of males vs. 46% of females).

Females were more likely than males to have missed school because of bullying (6% vs. 2%), but equally as likely to have missed school for other reasons including skipping (23%), family responsibilities (17%), and work (3%).

Older students were generally more likely than younger ones to have skipped class.

Local females were more likely than females across the province to have missed school due to family responsibilities (19% vs. 14%).

## Educational aspirations

Eighty-seven percent of students expected to graduate from high school, while 82% (79% males vs. 85% females) anticipated continuing their education beyond high school, such as through university, college, or trade school. While the percentage planning to graduate from high school was similar to the province, local youth were less likely to plan to continue their education beyond that (86% provincially).

The small percentage of local students who did not expect to finish high school was comparable to 2008 (1%).

Consistent with provincial results, 5% of students did not know what their school plans were. However, local students were more likely than those throughout BC to have not thought about their school plans (8% vs. 6%).



# Bullying & discrimination

In this section, findings were similar to the provincial results unless noted.

## In-person bullying

Students were asked about a range of bullying experiences they may have had in the past year, either as the perpetrator or victim. Youth were asked specifically about their bullying experiences with other youth at school or on the way to or from school. (Cyberbullying is discussed on page 46 in the section about technology use.)

### TEASING

In the past year, 38% of local students (32% of males vs. 44% of females) had been teased at least once to the point where they felt bad or extremely uncomfortable. There was an increase in the percentage of male students experiencing teasing from 26% in 2008, while the rate remained stable for females. Twelve percent of students (10% of males vs. 15% of females) were teased on three or more occasions in the past year.

### SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Similar to local results in 2008, 33% of local students (24% of males vs. 42% of females) reported being socially excluded at least once in the past year. Ten percent (7% of males vs. 12% of females) were excluded on three or more occasions.

Youth were the most likely to be teased or excluded at age 14 or 15.

## ASSAULT

In the past year, 9% of students (11% of males vs. 7% of females) reported being physically attacked or assaulted at least once, and 2% had this experience three or more times. These rates were consistent with local results in 2008.

## Impacts of bullying

Youth who had been teased, excluded or assaulted in the past year were more likely to report skipping class in the past month (27% vs. 19% who had not experienced any of these types of bullying).

Overall, 7% of youth reported not having participated in extracurricular activities (e.g., sports, dance, art, or clubs) because they were worried about being bullied.

Youth who had been bullied were more likely to report not engaging in activities because they were worried about being further bullied. For example, 19% of youth who had been physically assaulted missed out on activities for fear of being bullied, compared to 6% of youth who had not been assaulted.



I have a hearing disability and I've had several people mock me and call me names."

The more types of bullying youth experienced, the more likely they were to bully others.

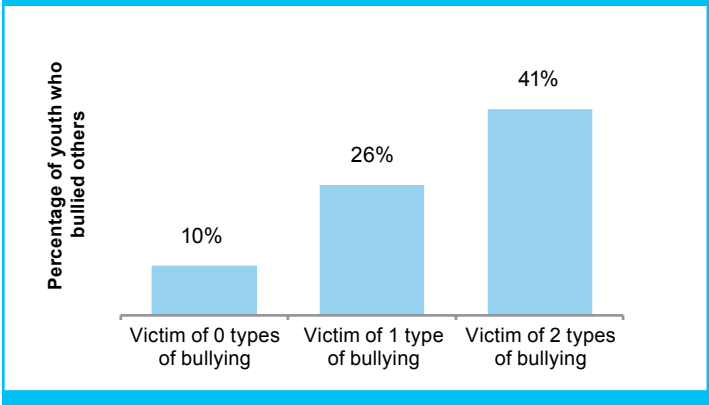
### Perpetrators

Provincially, females were more likely to exclude others and males were more likely to assault or tease others. Locally, males and females were equally likely to have excluded someone.

In the past year, 12% of Northern Interior students (15% of males vs. 9% of females) reported they had teased another youth at school or on the way to or from school with the intention of making them feel bad or extremely uncomfortable. Additionally, 13% of students had socially excluded another youth, and 4% (5% of males vs. 2% of females) had physically attacked or assaulted another youth.

Students who had been the victim of a particular type of bullying were more likely to perpetrate that same type of bullying. For example, 23% of students who had been teased in the past year teased others during this same time frame, compared to 6% who had not been teased. Similarly, students who had been excluded themselves were more likely to exclude others (25% vs. 8% who had not been excluded), and students who had been physically attacked or assaulted were more likely to assault others (26% vs. 2% of those who had not been assaulted).

Youth who bullied others in relation to the number of different types of bullying they experienced in the past year (teased, excluded, assaulted)



## Discrimination

Youth in the Northern Interior identified a number of different discrimination experiences.

Perceived reasons for being discriminated against in the past year	
Physical appearance	22%
Being seen as different	15%
Age	10%
Race, ethnicity, or skin colour	8%
Income or family income	7%
Sexual orientation (being or thought to be gay or lesbian)	6%
Gender/sex	6%
A disability	3%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

There were some gender differences in experiences of discrimination. Females were more likely to report being discriminated against because of their physical appearance (27% vs. 17% of males), their age (14% vs. 6%), being seen as different (18% vs. 12%), and their gender or sex (10% vs. 3%).

There was a decrease in the percentage of local males who had experienced racial discrimination, from 13% in 2008 to 8% in 2013. Local youth were less likely to experience racial discrimination than youth in BC as a whole (8% vs. 11%).



# Physical abuse, sexual abuse, & sexual harassment

## Physical abuse

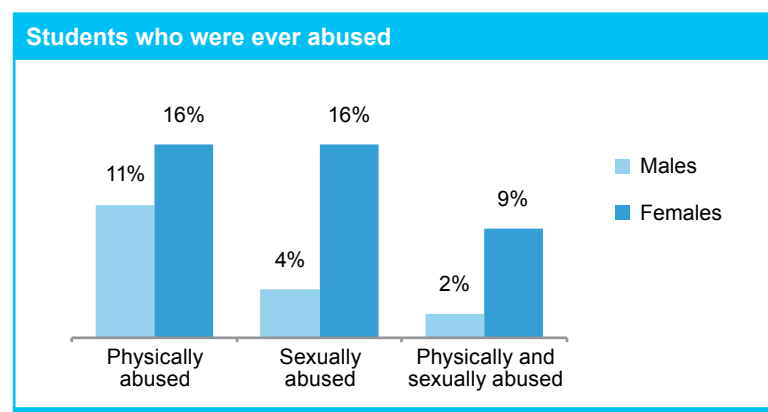
Consistent with the experiences of youth across the province, 14% of students (11% of males vs. 16% of females) in the Northern Interior had been physically abused at some point in their life. This was a local decrease for females from 24% in 2008, but unchanged for males from previous years.

## Sexual abuse

When youth were asked specifically if they had ever been sexually abused, 7% of students (2% of males vs. 12% of females) recognized they had experienced this type of abuse. This was unchanged from five years previous. Youth were also asked about other

forms of sexual abuse they might not have recognized as abuse. For example, 6% of students (2% of males vs. 9% of females) were forced into sexual activity against their will by another youth, and 2% by an adult (with females more likely than males to have experienced this). In addition, 2% of students were the younger of an illegal age pairing the first time they had sex.

When all these forms of sexual abuse were considered, a total of 10% of students (4% of males vs. 16% of females) were sexually abused. This was consistent with the provincial picture and reflected a local decrease among males, from 7% in 2008, although it was unchanged for females.



Note: Sexual abuse included being forced into sexual activity by another youth or adult, or being the younger of an illegal age pairing the first time they had sex.

Females were more likely than males to have experienced verbal or physical sexual harassment.

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## Sexual harassment

**Experiences of sexual harassment occurred at a similar rate for local youth as for youth across the province.**

Thirty-four percent of local males had experienced verbal sexual harassment in the past year, which was a local decrease from 39% in 2008. Twenty percent of males had been harassed once or twice and 14% had experienced harassment three or more times.

Eleven percent of males were physically sexually harassed in the past year, compared to 17% in 2008.

Fifty-one percent of female students had experienced verbal sexual harassment, which was a local decrease from 62% in 2008. In 2013, 32% had been harassed once or twice and 19% had experienced harassment three or more times.

Twenty-eight percent of female students experienced physical sexual harassment in the past year, including 7% who experienced it three or more times. This was a local decrease from 45% in 2008.



I think we need to make women more aware that sexual assault is NOT their fault.”

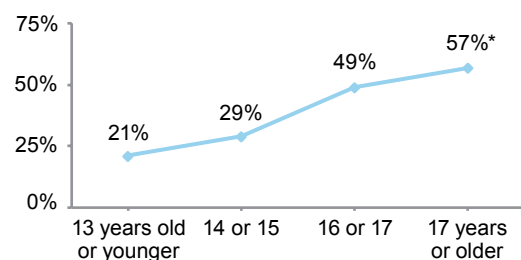
# Employment

A total of 35% of male and female students worked at a paid job during the school year. This was higher than the provincial rate (29%), but down locally from 42% in 2008.

Older students were more likely than younger ones to have worked.

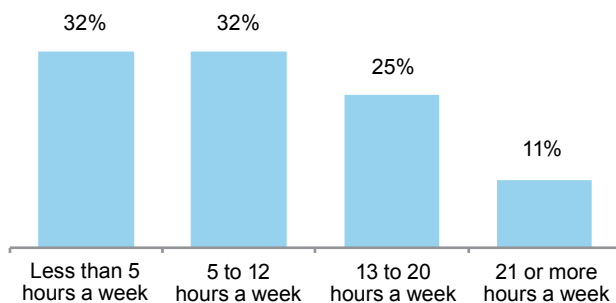
Eleven percent of employed students in the Northern Interior worked 21 or more hours each week, compared to 6% of students across the province. Provincially, males were more likely than females to work this much, but this gender difference did not exist locally.

Students who worked at a paid job during the school year



\* The percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was relatively high but still within a releasable range.

Hours spent working at a paid job (among youth who were employed)



# Physical activity, sports, & leisure

## Physical activity

The Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines recommend that youth aged 12 to 17 do an hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day. Locally, 21% of students in this age group (26% of males vs. 16% of females) exercised for an hour a day in the past week, which was higher than the provincial rate of 17%.

Provincially, females were more likely than males to have not exercised at all during the past week (10% vs. 7%). However, this gender difference did not exist in the Northern Interior, where 10% of male and female students had not exercised for an hour or more on any day during the past week.

Younger students were generally more likely than older ones to have met the physical activity guidelines. For example, 31% of students aged 12 or younger had exercised for an hour daily in the past week, compared to 14% of students aged 17.

Canadian Guidelines recommend that individuals aged 18 and older take part in 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each week. Similar to youth across BC, 63% of local students aged 18 and older met these recommendations by participating in 60 minutes of exercise on at least three days in the past week.

Physical activity was associated with better health outcomes. For example, those who exercised daily during the past week were more likely to feel very connected to their community (16% vs. 9% of students who exercised on fewer days), and to rate their overall health as good or excellent (93% vs. 86%).

Physical activity may be particularly beneficial for those with challenges in their lives. For example, local youth who had been teased, excluded, and/or assaulted who exercised on at least three days in the past week were more likely to feel good about themselves (72% vs. 58% of youth who had been bullied and who exercised on two or fewer days), and about their skills and abilities (85% vs. 68%).



I am a runner so I believe I'm pretty healthy."



85%

of students who played organized sports reported good/excellent mental health, compared to 74% who never participated.

## Sports

During the past year, students in the Northern Interior were as likely as students throughout BC to have participated in weekly organized sports (53%), and informal sports (such as road hockey, hiking, and skateboarding; 62%). However, local students were less likely to have taken part in weekly yoga, dance, or exercise classes (14% vs. 18% provincially).

The local rates for weekly participation declined from 2008, when 59% of students participated in organized sports, 76% in informal sports, and 19% in yoga, dance, or exercise classes.

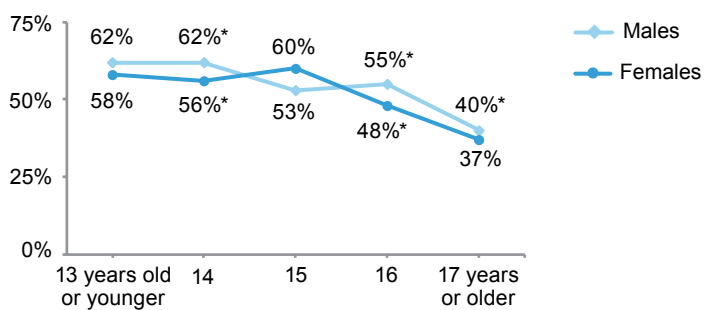
Males were more likely than females to be involved on a weekly basis in informal sports (67% vs. 56% of females), while females were more likely to be taking weekly dance, yoga, or exercise classes (21% vs. 8% of males).

Older students were less likely than younger ones to play organized sports on a weekly basis. This was consistent with the provincial picture.

There were health benefits to being involved in sports and exercise classes. For example, youth who took part in informal sports on a weekly basis were more likely than those who did not take part at all to rate their mental health as good or excellent (85% vs. 70%) and to have slept for eight hours or more on the previous night (59% vs. 50%).

Among youth who had been physically and/or sexually abused, those who took part in organized sports on a weekly basis were more likely to rate their overall health as good or excellent (83% vs. 64%\* of youth who had been abused who did not play organized sports). Similarly, 83% of youth who had been abused who took part in informal sports rated their health as good or excellent, compared to 61%\* who did not take part in informal sports.

**Students who participated in organized sports at least weekly in the past year**



\* The percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was relatively high but still within a releasable range.

Note: Not all age differences were statistically significant.

## Barriers to participation

Students were asked about the reasons they might not have participated in sports or other activities in the past year. The most common reason male and female students gave was being too busy, although not being able to afford to participate was a reality for 12% of males and 17% of females. Local findings were comparable to the provincial picture.

Barriers to participation in activities		
	Males	Females
Too busy	37%	49%
Couldn't get there or home	14%	20%
Activity wasn't available in community	14%	18%
Couldn't afford to	12%	17%
Worried about being bullied	6%	8%

Note: The differences between males and females who did not participate because the activity wasn't available in their community or because they were afraid of being bullied were not statistically significant.

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

## 2010 Winter Olympics

Three years after the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic games, 11% of students (13% of males vs. 9% of females) reported that they were more physically active as a result of the Games. This was similar to the provincial rate, as was the finding that 5% of local youth (7% of males vs. 4% of females) felt they had more sports opportunities because of the Games.

## Gambling

While the legal gambling age in BC is 19 years old, 12% of Northern Interior students (18% of males vs. 6% of females) had gambled in the past 12 months. Almost all of these students were aged 18 or younger. This was similar to the 2013 provincial rate, but represented a local decrease from 43% in 2008.

Similar to 2008, however, 4% of students had gambled more than once a month during the past year, with males more likely than females to have done so.



# Technology use

Similar to youth across the province, 91% of youth in the Northern Interior (87% of males vs. 94% of females) owned a cellphone or other portable electronic communication device. The majority of these students (97%) had used their device on the previous school day.

Youth who had a phone most commonly used it for communicating with friends, playing games/entertainment/music, communicating with parent(s), chatting online or social networking, and for finding information.

## Def.

**CELLPHONE** refers to a cellphone, smart phone, or similar portable electronic communication device.

Used cellphone to...	Did this on last school day	When activity took place		
		Before school	During school	After school
Communicate with friends	88%	46%	65%	66%
Playing games/entertainment/music	84%	36%	49%	66%
Communicate with parent(s)/guardian(s)	80%	22%	45%	58%
Chat online or social networking	73%	31%	40%	59%
Find information	68%	18%	52%	42%
Engage in sexting	15%	3%	4%	13%
Communicate with teachers	9%	1%	5%	4%
Bully others	2%	NR	1%	2%

Note: Sexting is the sending of explicit photographs or messages via cellphone or other similar device.

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

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



There have been a lot of guys asking me for pictures, sexting, lately.”

**8%** of students reported that they had cyberbullied someone in the past year.

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Students in the Northern Interior were more likely to report engaging in sexting compared to students across the province (15% vs. 10%). This was the case for both males (18% vs. 13% provincially) and females (11% vs. 7%).

Females were more likely than males to use their cellphone to communicate with friends, parents, and for chatting online or social networking, whereas males were more likely than females to use their phone to engage in sexting.

Seventy-nine percent of students were online or on their phone after they were supposed to be asleep. The most common activities included using a phone to talk or text (61%), surfing the Internet (57%) and chatting online or social networking (56%).

#### Technology use after students were expected to go to sleep

	Males	Females
Surfing the Internet	58%	56%
Using a phone to chat or text	56%	65%
Chatting online or social networking	52%	60%
Online gaming	44%	22%

Note: The difference between males and females who surfed the Internet after they were expected to go to sleep was not statistically significant.

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

## Online safety

Seventeen percent of students reported that they had been cyberbullied in the past year (12% of males vs. 22% of females), which was similar to the provincial percentage and the local rate in 2008.

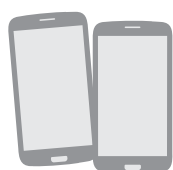
As with in-person bullying, students who had been cyberbullied were more likely to have not taken part in extracurricular activities because they were worried about being bullied (19% vs. 4% who had not been cyberbullied).

Females were more than twice as likely as males to have met someone on the Internet who made them feel unsafe (19% vs. 9%).

## Students without a cellphone

Nine percent of students reported that they did not have a cellphone or other such device. There were some differences between these students and those who had a phone. For example, students without a phone were more likely to have slept eight or more hours compared to their peers with a phone (65% vs. 55%).

However, students with a phone were more likely to report having an adult outside their family they felt comfortable talking to (35% vs. 25%), that their family understood them (61% vs. 46%), and that their family paid attention to them (74% vs. 59%).



# Youth engagement

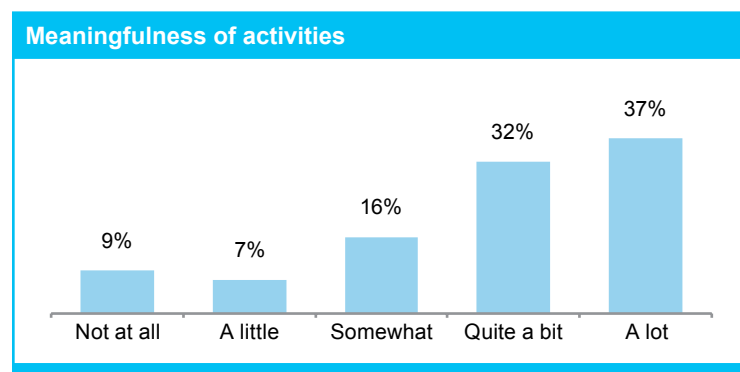
Students were asked about their level of engagement in the activities they took part in. Specifically, they were asked about how meaningful they felt their activities were and how much they felt their ideas were listened to and valued within these activities.

Similar to the provincial picture and local results in 2008, 69% of Northern Interior students reported that the activities they were involved in were at least quite a bit meaningful to them.

However, when asked if they felt that their ideas were listened to and acted upon in these activities, only 40% of local students felt that they were to a significant extent, compared to 47% in 2008. Among females, the local percentage in 2013 was similar to the provincial percentage, but the rate among local males was lower than that for males across BC (46%).

There were many positive associations for youth who felt that they were valued within the activities they took part and who felt that those activities were meaningful. For example, students who felt their ideas were listened to at least quite a bit were more likely to rate their overall health as good or excellent (94% vs. 78% of students who felt their ideas were listened to less).

Among youth who had been teased, excluded, or assaulted in the past year, those who felt their activities were quite a bit or very meaningful were more likely to feel good about themselves (75% vs. 45%\* of those who felt the activities they engaged in were less meaningful). Similarly, youth who had been bullied were more likely to rate their mental health as good or excellent if they were engaged in meaningful activities (78% vs. 50%\* of youth who had been bullied and were less engaged).



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



# Family relationships

The BC AHS asked youth about their sense of connectedness to their family. Most students in the Northern Interior felt their family paid attention to them (72%), they had fun together (66%), and their family understood them (59%). Females were more likely than males to feel that their family had fun together (69% vs. 63%), and less likely to feel their family understood them (55% vs. 63% of males).

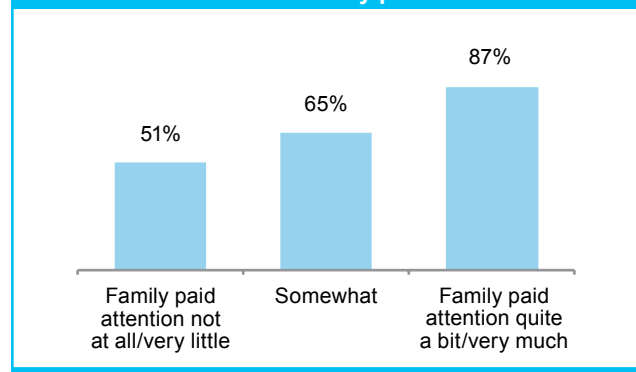
Local males were less likely than their peers across BC to report that their family paid attention to them (73% vs. 78% provincially), and that their family had fun together (63% vs. 68% provincially). Percentages among local female students were consistent with the provincial results.

Nine percent of students felt their family did not pay attention to them, 12% felt their family did not have fun together, and 17% felt that their family did not understand them.

Having positive family relationships was associated with better mental health. For example, students who felt their family paid attention to them were less likely than those who did not feel this way to have seriously considered suicide (9% vs. 43%), to have actually attempted suicide (4% vs. 26%), and to have self-harmed (12% vs. 41%) in the past year. They were also more likely to rate their mental health as good or excellent (87% vs. 51%), and to report feeling good about themselves (87% vs. 50%) and their abilities (92% vs. 62%).

Additionally, among students who had tried alcohol, those who felt their family paid attention to them quite a bit or very much were less likely to have tried alcohol before the age of 15 (69% vs. 84%). They were also less likely to report drinking alcohol last Saturday (44% vs. 58%\* who felt their family paid very little or no attention to them).

Good or excellent mental health in relation to how much students felt their family paid attention to them



## Def.

**FAMILY CONNECTEDNESS** included students feeling that members of their family paid attention to them, had fun together, and understood them.

There was a positive association between family relationships and injury prevention. For example, students who felt that their family understood them were less likely than those who did not feel this way to have ever been a passenger in a vehicle with someone who had been drinking (15% vs. 40%), or had been using marijuana (13% vs. 36%). Also, when students felt that their family paid attention to them, they were more likely to report always wearing a seat belt (80% vs. 61% who felt their family did not pay attention to them).

Among youth with a mental or emotional health condition, those with higher levels of family connectedness all reported good or excellent general and mental health, planning to continue their education after high school, feeling as competent as their peers, always wearing a seat belt when riding in a motor vehicle, and participating in informal sports on a weekly basis. This was not the case among those with lower levels of family connectedness.

Students were asked if there was an adult in their family they could turn to if faced with a serious problem. Locally, 73% of male and female students indicated that there was, which was consistent with the provincial rate. Students who had such an adult in their lives were less likely to miss out on mental health services when they felt they needed them (8% vs. 22% of students who did not feel they could turn to an adult relative).

Among youth who identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, those who had an adult in their family to talk to were half as likely to have attempted suicide in the past year than those who did not have such an adult in their family.

Sixty-seven percent of youth had asked a family member for help in the past year (64% of males vs. 70% of females). Although youth who had been bullied were equally likely as their peers without these experiences to have asked a family member for help, youth who had been bullied were less likely to have found their family members to be helpful (90% vs. 97%).

However, when these youth did find a family member helpful they were more likely to rate their mental health as good or excellent (78% vs. 57%\*). They were also less likely than those who had been bullied and did not find their family helpful to have missed out on needed mental health services (15% vs. 37%\*) and medical care (7% vs. 38%\*).



**I would rather talk to an adult in my family than an adult outside my family.”**

**76%** of youth ate an evening meal with their parents most or all of the time in the past month.

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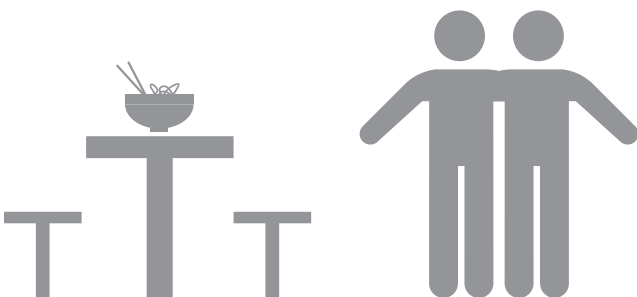
## Parental monitoring

Consistent with students across BC, 78% of students in the Northern Interior reported that their parents always or mostly knew what they were doing in their free time (75% of males vs. 81% of females). Eleven percent reported that their parents never or rarely knew what they were doing.

Students whose parents were aware of what they were doing in their free time were less likely to be texting or chatting on their phone after they were expected to be asleep (58% vs. 68% of students whose parents were not monitoring their spare time). They were also more likely to have slept for eight or more hours on the night before taking the survey (60% vs. 36%).

Youth who ate their evening meals with their parents most or all of the time were more likely to report eating fruit or vegetables three or more times yesterday (59% vs. 38% who never or rarely ate with their parents). They were also more likely to rate their mental health as good or excellent (83% vs. 64%), to feel good about themselves (84% vs. 61%) and their abilities (88% vs. 77%), and were less likely to have missed out on needed mental health care (9% vs. 25%) or medical care (6% vs. 14%).

Youth with a mental or emotional health condition who ate evening meals with their parents most or all of the time were more likely to plan to continue their education beyond high school (85% vs. 64%\* who never or rarely ate with their parents), to have only positive aspirations (86% vs. 61%\*), and to have slept for eight or more hours the previous night.



# Supportive & caring adults outside the family

## Adult to turn to for support

Similar to the provincial rates, 33% of local youth (29% of males vs. 38% of females) felt they had an adult outside their family they could turn to if faced with a problem.

Students who could identify a supportive adult outside of their family were more likely to have post-secondary plans (86% vs. 80% without this support).

Among those who had been both physically and sexually abused, youth who had an adult outside of their family to talk to were more likely to have only positive future aspirations.

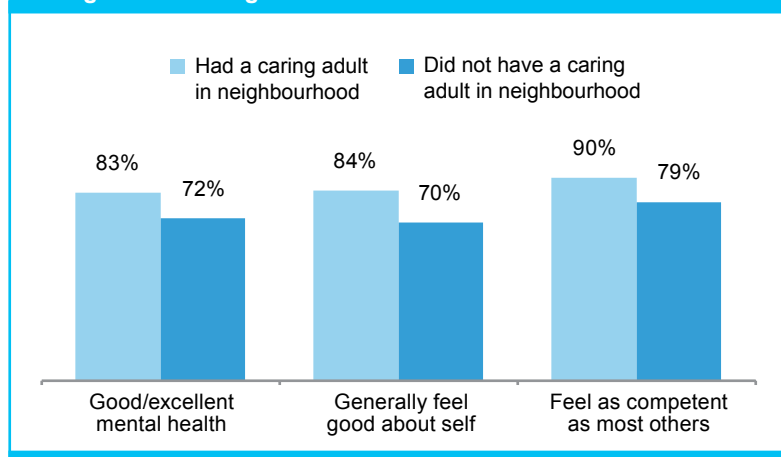
## Local adult who cares

Sixty-seven percent of students reported having an adult in their neighbourhood or community (beyond their school or family) who cared about them.

Similar to the provincial results, 62% of local males reported having a caring adult in their neighbourhood or community. However, females were more likely than those across BC to feel this way (71% vs. 63%).

Students who reported having an adult in their community who cared about them were more likely to feel that the activities they engaged in were meaningful to them (74% vs. 58% who did not have a caring adult in their neighbourhood or community), and to feel that their ideas were listened to and acted upon in these activities (46% vs. 28%).

Caring adults in neighbourhood and mental health outcomes



**Feeling cared about by an adult outside the family was associated with positive mental health.**

# Help seeking

When students needed help, they most commonly approached friends (60% of males vs. 78% of females) and family members (64% of males vs. 70% of females). Local males were less likely than males provincially to ask a friend for help (60% vs. 65%).

Students also sought support from a variety of different professionals in their lives, most commonly teachers, school counselors, sports coaches, and doctors.

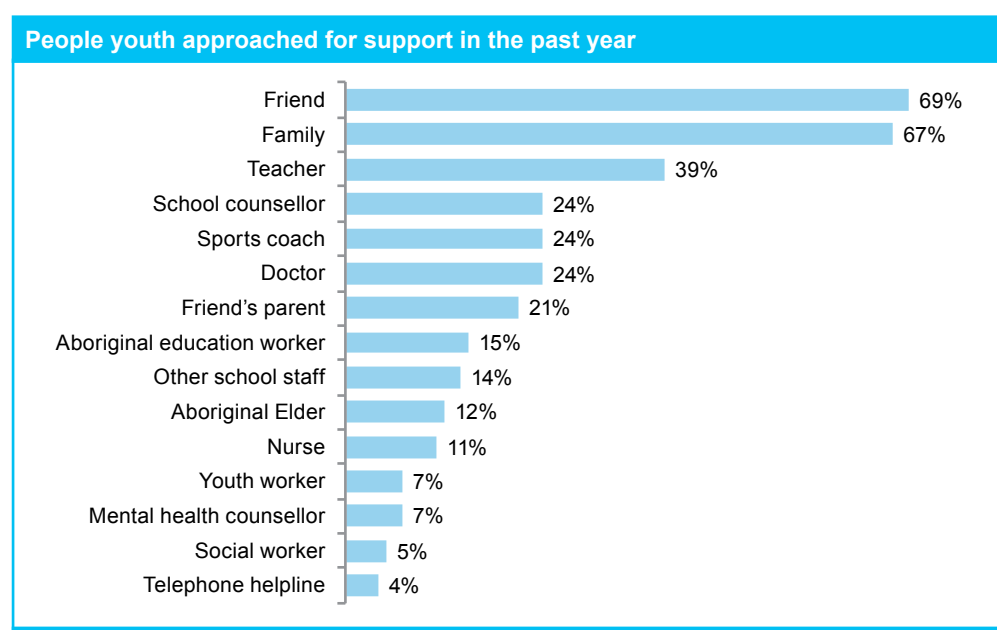
There were some gender differences. For example, females were more likely to have sought help from a school counsellor (27% vs. 20% males).

The majority of male and female students found the people they approached to be helpful, although some vulnerable groups were less likely to feel this way. For example, youth who had been teased, socially

excluded, and/or assaulted who asked a school counsellor for help were less likely than their peers who had not been bullied to have found the counsellor helpful (79% vs. 89%).

However, when these youth found the people they approached to be helpful, there were health benefits. For example, youth who had been bullied who had asked their school counsellor for help and found this experience helpful were less likely to have self-harmed in the past year (29% vs. 57%\* who asked for help but did not find it useful), or to have engaged in binge drinking during the past month (24% vs. 46%\*).

In addition, youth who had been physically and/or sexually abused and found their teacher to be helpful were more likely to feel good about their abilities, and were less likely to have attempted suicide in the past year.



Note: The rates for accessing an Aboriginal education worker and an Elder are among Aboriginal youth.

# Peer relationships

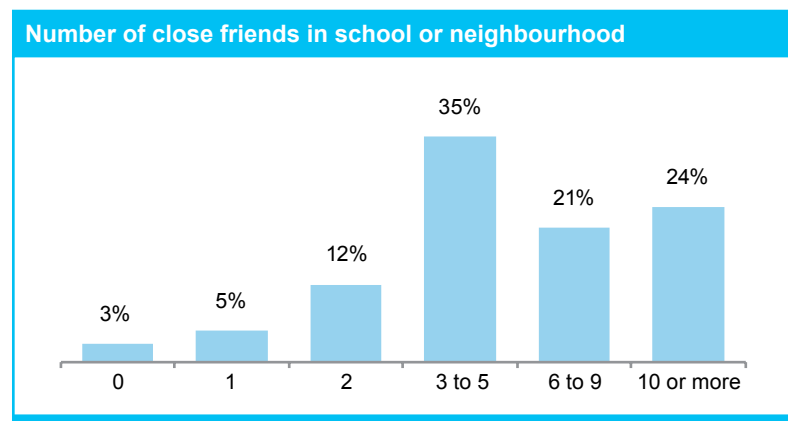
**In this section, findings were similar to the provincial results unless noted.**

Half of students in the Northern Interior had been in a romantic relationship in the past year, down from 68% in 2008. Among these students, 7% of male and female youth had been the victim of dating violence. While the percentage of students in a dating relationship was higher in the Northern Interior than in BC overall (39%), the rates of violence within relationships were comparable. The local rate of dating violence was similar to that reported in 2008.

Students were asked about how many close friends they had in their school or neighbourhood. Four percent of males and 2% of females had no close friends, while 28% of males and 19% of females had ten or more close friends.

There were positive associations with having more than just one or two close friends. For example, students who had three or more close friends in their school or neighbourhood were more likely than those with fewer friends to rate their overall health as good or excellent (89% vs. 82%). They were also less likely to have been teased, excluded, or assaulted in the past year (48% vs. 61%).

Having more than two close friends appeared to be protective for youth who had been bullied. For example, students with three or more friends who had been teased or excluded were more likely than those with fewer friends to feel good about themselves and their abilities.

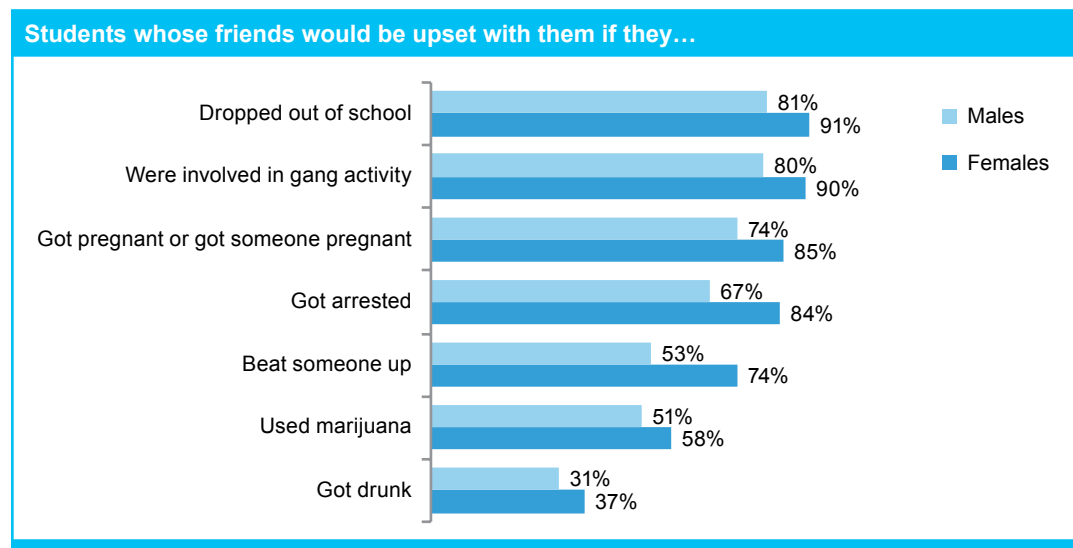


**80%** of local students had three or more close friends

## Friends with pro-social attitudes

Students were asked if their friends would be upset with them if they were involved in certain risk behaviours, such as getting arrested, dropping out of school, or using marijuana. They generally had friends who would be upset with them for engaging in most of these behaviours. However,

students in the Northern Interior were less likely than their peers throughout BC to have friends who would be upset with them if they beat someone up (64% vs. 71%) or got drunk (34% vs. 44%).



Students whose friends would be upset with them if they beat someone up were less likely to have assaulted someone than those whose friends would not be upset with them for this reason (1% vs. 8%). In addition, students whose friends would be upset with them for dropping out of school were more likely to have post-secondary plans (86% vs. 63% of those whose friends would not be upset with them for this reason).

Further, students who drank in the past month were less likely to have been binge drinking if they had friends who would be upset with them for getting drunk (42%\* vs. 68% of those whose friends would not be upset with them for getting drunk).

Students whose friends would be upset with them if they...			
	2008	2013	Change from 2008
Dropped out of school	84%	86%	--
Were involved in gang activity	NA	85%	
Got pregnant or got someone pregnant	71%	79%	↑
Got arrested	61%	76%	↑
Beat someone up	41%	64%	↑
Used marijuana	56%	54%	--
Got drunk	27%	34%	↑

NA The question was not asked.

-- The percentages in 2008 and 2013 were comparable.



# Neighbourhood safety

Reflecting the provincial picture, 82% of youth always felt safe inside their home and 66% always felt safe in their neighbourhood during the day. However, local youth were more likely than their peers across the province to always feel safe in their neighbourhood at night (36% vs. 28% provincially).

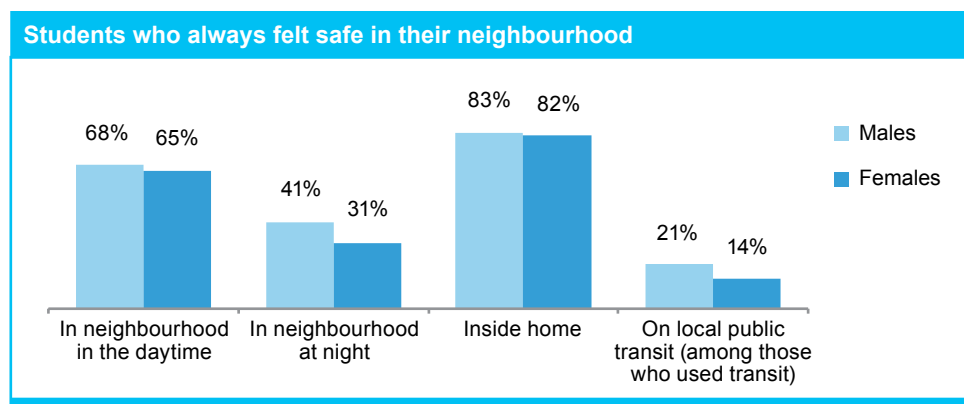
Among youth who used transit, 18% always felt safe, and 8% never did. Local youth were more likely to never feel safe on transit than their peers across the province (5%).

Males were more likely than females to always feel safe in their neighbourhood at night or on transit. Unlike the rest of the province, there was no gender difference in students who always felt safe in their neighbourhood during the day or inside their home.

When compared to youth who never felt safe in their neighbourhood during the day, those who always felt safe were more likely to describe their mental health as good or excellent (85% vs. 57%\*), to usually feel good

about themselves (85% vs. 61%\*), to plan to continue their education after high school (85% vs. 60%\*), and to have only positive future aspirations (89% vs. 71%\*).

Feeling safe was associated with positive mental health among vulnerable youth. For example, local students who had been physically abused were less likely to always feel safe in their neighbourhood in the daytime (47% vs. 69% of youth who had not been abused) or in their home (60% vs. 86%). However, if these students did feel safe inside their home, they were more likely to describe their overall health as good or excellent (76%\* vs. 0% of students who never felt safe). Similarly, among youth who had been teased, those who always felt safe in their neighbourhood during the day were less likely than those who never felt safe to have self-harmed or attempted suicide in the past year.



Note: The difference between males and females in always feeling safe in their neighbourhood in the daytime and inside their home was not statistically significant.

# Community connectedness & cultural engagement

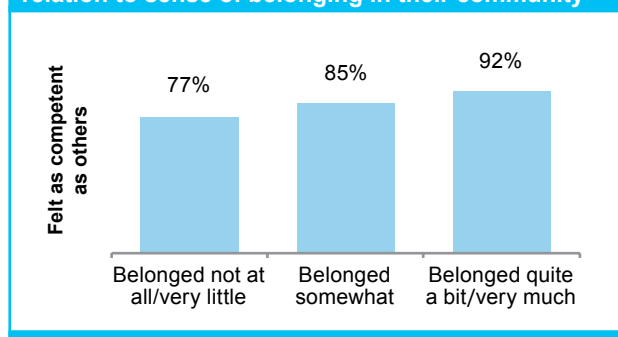
## Community connectedness

Students were asked how much they felt like a part of their community. Locally, 39% reported that they felt quite a bit or very much connected to their community. This was similar to results across the province.

There were many benefits associated with feeling like a member of the community. For example, youth who felt like they were a part of their community were more likely to feel good about themselves (90% vs. 64% who did not feel like a part of their community) and to feel skilled and competent.

Feeling like a part of the community was also protective among youth who had been victimized. For example, those who had been teased in the past year were more likely to rate their mental health as good or excellent if they felt connected to their community (80%), than if they only somewhat felt that way (67%), or did not feel connected (50%). Similarly, the more connected youth who had been socially excluded felt to their community, the less likely they were to have missed out on needed mental health services (15% vs. 31% of those who were very little or not at all connected), or to have self-harmed in the past year (26% vs. 44%\*).

Youth who felt as competent as their peers in relation to sense of belonging in their community



## Cultural engagement

In addition to feelings about their community, students were asked about their engagement in their culture. Similar to youth across the province, 5% of Northern Interior youth participated in cultural or traditional activities at least weekly. Youth who were involved in traditional activities on a weekly basis were more likely to have only positive visions of their future. They were also over four times more likely to be volunteering weekly (49%\* vs. 12%).



# Summary list of protective factors

Throughout this report a number of protective factors in the lives of local students have been identified. This chapter provides a list of some of those protective factors along with an example for each from the report.

PROTECTIVE FACTOR	EXAMPLE
Stable home	When compared to youth who had moved house, those who had stayed in the same home for the past year were less likely to have missed out on needed mental health services or medical care.
Eight or more hours of sleep	Among local students with a mental or emotional health condition, those who slept for eight or more hours were less likely than those who slept fewer hours to have attempted suicide in the past year.
Good nutrition	Among youth with a mental or emotional health condition, those who had eaten three or more servings of fruit or vegetables the day before completing the survey were more likely to rate their general health as good or excellent compared to youth who had consumed fewer servings.
Sports and exercise	Youth who took part in informal sports (such as road hockey, hiking, or skateboarding) on a weekly basis were more likely than those who did not take part to rate their mental health as good or excellent and to have slept for eight or more hours on the previous night.
Feeling safe at home, in school, and the community or neighbourhood	Youth who felt safe at school were less likely than those who did not feel safe to have missed classes in the past month, and were more likely to have post-secondary plans.
Feeling connected to school	The more connected students felt to their school, the better their mental health ratings.
Feeling engaged in activities	Among youth who had been bullied, those who felt their activities were meaningful were more likely to feel good about themselves and to rate their mental health as good or excellent, compared to those who were not engaged in meaningful activities.
Feeling connected to family	Students who felt their family paid attention to them were less likely than those who did not feel this way to have seriously considered suicide, to have actually attempted suicide, and to have self-harmed in the past year.

**PROTECTIVE FACTOR****EXAMPLE****Parental monitoring**

Compared to students whose parents were not monitoring their spare time, students whose parents were aware of what they were doing in their free time were less likely to be texting or chatting on their phone after they were expected to be asleep, and were more likely to have slept for eight or more hours on the night before taking the survey.

**Adult in the family students could talk to**

Among youth who identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, those who felt they had an adult in their family to talk to were half as likely to have attempted suicide in the past year as those who did not have a supportive adult in their family.

**A supportive adult outside family**

Among youth who had been both physically and sexually abused, those who had an adult outside of their family to talk to were more likely than youth without such an adult in their lives to have only positive future aspirations.

**Adult outside their family who cares about them**

Feeling cared about by an adult outside the family was associated with greater self-confidence and ratings of good or excellent mental health.

**Helpful sources of support**

Among youth who had been bullied, those who asked their school counsellor for help and found this experience helpful were less likely to have self-harmed in the past year than their peers who asked for help but did not find the assistance helpful.

**Having close friends (excluding online friends)**

Students who had three or more close friends in their school or neighbourhood were more likely than those with fewer friends to rate their overall health as good or excellent.

**Having friends with pro-social attitudes**

Students whose friends would be upset with them for dropping out of school were more likely to have post-secondary plans than students whose friends would not be upset with them for this reason.

**Community connectedness**

Among youth who had been socially excluded, the more connected they felt to their community the less likely they were to have missed out on needed mental health services or to have self-harmed in the past year.

**Cultural engagement**

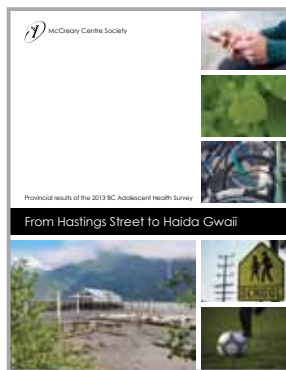
Youth who were involved in traditional or cultural activities on a weekly basis were more likely than those involved less frequently to have only positive aspirations for their future.

# How to use these results

McCreary will continue to produce reports and other resources using the results of the 2013 BC Adolescent Health Survey. All of the resources can be accessed at [www.mcs.bc.ca](http://www.mcs.bc.ca). Upcoming reports include a sexual health report and 15 other regional reports at the Health Service Delivery Area level.

If you would like to join our community mailing list to receive updates about when new reports are released, when webinar presentations are scheduled, and other news related to the BC Adolescent Health Survey, please contact [community@mcs.bc.ca](mailto:community@mcs.bc.ca).

## A selection of BC AHS resources



### *From Hastings Street to Haida Gwaii*

This report offers a comprehensive picture of the health and health behaviours of BC youth.



This film shares responses from key BC figures to results of the BC Adolescent Health Survey.



This PowerPoint provides an overview of the provincial BC Adolescent Health Survey results. It is aimed at adult audiences. McCreary staff are also available to present local and provincial results.

## YOUTH RESOURCES



This and other posters were designed by McCreary's Youth Advisory and Action Council (YAC) for a youth audience.

Other resources for youth include interactive workshops and the Next Steps program which uses the results of the survey to engage youth in local community projects.



McCreary's YAC has a granting program open to students in school districts which participated in the survey. Grants of up to \$500 are awarded to youth who wish to conduct a project that aims to address a local youth health issue.



