



BALANCE AND CONNECTION IN NORTH VANCOUVER ISLAND



THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF OUR YOUTH



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BALANCE AND CONNECTION IN NORTH VANCOUVER ISLAND: THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF OUR YOUTH

In memory of

Jeff Stewart

Principal, Educator, and Innovator

"The little things? The little moments? They aren't little."

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The BC AHS was administered in North Vancouver Island by Public Health Nurses, Public Health Dietitians, and nursing students from North Island College. Their role in the survey was fundamental to its success. Not only did they reassure students that they could answer honestly because their answers would remain confidential, but they were also available to answer any questions that students had about their health.

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Quotes from North Vancouver Island youth who completed the 2018 BC AHS are included throughout the report.



KEY FINDINGS

■ North Vancouver Island students remained more likely than their peers across BC to identify as European or Indigenous. However, the region is becoming increasingly diverse as the percentage who identified as European decreased (62% vs. 68% in 2013), and there was an increase in those who identified as Latin/South/Central American (5% vs. 3%) and East Asian (6% vs. 4%).

■ Around 4 in 10 (39%) local students spoke a language other than English at home at least some of the time (vs. 53% across BC), and 7% did so most of the time.

■ Local students were more likely than those across BC to have worked at a paid job during the school year (41% vs. 33%). They were also more likely to have been employed than local youth five years earlier (36% in 2013), and to have worked in excess of 20 hours a week (9% vs. 4%).

■ Similar to results in 2013, 53% of local youth slept for at least eight hours on the night before completing the survey, which was higher than across BC (48%). However, less than half (43%) reported going offline after their expected bedtime (e.g., turning off their phone or putting it in silent mode).

■ Most local youth were able to access the health care they needed in the past year. However, they were less likely than youth across BC to have visited a family doctor (56% vs. 61%); and were more likely to have accessed a walk-in clinic (43% vs. 35%), an emergency room (20% vs. 16%), or a nurse (12% vs. 9%).

■ Reflecting the trend across the province, there was a decline in the percentage of students who reported good or excellent mental health (71% vs. 83% in 2013). Also, youth were more likely to report having a mental health condition, including Anxiety Disorder/panic attacks (23% vs. 9% in 2013), Depression (17% vs. 10%), Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD; 11% vs. 8%), and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD; 3% vs. 1%).

■ Almost one in five students (18%) had seriously considered suicide in the past year, which was an increase for females (24% vs. 17%) and comparable to five years earlier for males (12%). Also, 5% had attempted suicide in the past year, with females more likely than males to have done so (7% vs. 4%).

■ In the past year, 18% of local youth reported they had needed mental health services but had not accessed them. The rate was comparable to the province as a whole and a local increase from 11% in 2013.

■ North Vancouver Island youth were more likely than youth across the province to have tried tobacco (e.g., cigarettes, cigars, or cigarillos; 27% vs. 18%), alcohol (54% vs. 44%), and marijuana (37% vs. 25%); and to have vaped with nicotine in the past month (29% vs. 21%).

Local youth aged 12–17 were more likely to meet Canadian physical activity guidelines for their age group than their peers across BC (21% vs. 18%). They were also more likely to meet the guidelines than local youth five years earlier (17%).

Compared to youth across BC, North Vancouver Island students were almost twice as likely to have participated in extreme sports on at least a weekly basis over the past year (17% vs. 9%).

There was an increase in the percentage of local youth who always wore a helmet when cycling in the past year (52% vs. 38% in 2013). Also, whilst provincially there was a decrease in the percentage who always wore a seatbelt, this was not the case locally. In North Vancouver Island, 71% of youth always wore a seatbelt when riding in a motor vehicle, which was similar to the rate in 2013 and an increase from 66% in 2008.

The percentage of females who had been sexually abused increased (22% vs. 16% in 2013), and remained comparable to five years earlier for males (7%).

Local students were more likely to have experienced bereavement than their peers across the province. For example, they were more likely to have lost someone to an accident (17% vs. 13%), suicide (16% vs. 9%), a fentanyl overdose (4% vs. 2%), and an overdose from a substance other than fentanyl (6% vs. 4%).

Local youth were also more likely to have experienced a family member and/or friend attempt or die by suicide (43% vs. 36% provincially). Those who had experienced a family member and/or close friend attempt suicide were more likely to have attempted suicide themselves.

Compared to five years earlier, students were more likely to turn to a family member for help in the past year (72% vs. 65%), and the majority found this experience helpful (94%).

Similar to youth across BC and local youth over the past decade, 73% of North Vancouver Island students felt safe at school. Local students were more likely than their peers across BC to feel safe in washrooms (89% vs. 86%), outside on school grounds (90% vs. 86%), and getting to or from school (92% vs. 89%).

There was an increase from 2013 in the percentage of North Vancouver Island students who felt quite a bit or very connected to their community (45% vs. 37%).

Most local youth (73%) felt there was an adult in their neighbourhood or community (outside their family or school) who really cared about them. This was higher than the provincial rate (65%) and the local rate in 2013 (68%).

The most common topic North Vancouver Island youth identified wanting to learn more about was mental health.

INTRODUCTION

2018 BC ADOLESCENT HEALTH SURVEY

The BC Adolescent Health Survey (BC AHS) is the most reliable, comprehensive survey of youth aged 12–19 in British Columbia. The survey has been completed every five years since 1992. In 2018, over 38,000 students in 58 of BC's 60 school districts participated.

The 2018 BC AHS was developed in consultation with young people, parents, and other experts in youth health. It was extensively pilot tested before being administered by Public Health Nurses and nursing students; and locally also by Public Health Dietitians to students in mainstream public schools between February and June 2018.

A report of the provincial findings was released in March 2019 (*Balance and connection in BC*) and can be accessed at www.mcs.bc.ca.

REGIONAL REPORTS

This report is one of 16 regional reports of the BC AHS results. It shares data provided by students in Grades 7–12 in the North Vancouver Island Health Service Delivery Area (HSDA).

North Vancouver Island HSDA is comprised of four school districts: Comox Valley (SD 71), Campbell River (SD 72), Vancouver Island West (SD 84), and Vancouver Island North (SD 85). All school districts in this region have participated in the survey since 2008, and two of the four have participated in all six waves of the survey. For the first time, the Conseil scolaire francophone (SD 93) also participated in the survey, and accounted for 3% of the sample in this region.

Between 2013 and 2018, one school district changed consent procedures to be consistent with the other school districts in the region. This change ensured the sample was the most representative that it could be. Additional analyses were conducted to ascertain if this change in consent procedures and the addition of SD 93 may have affected the regional results. This did not appear to be the case.

This regional report focuses on the 2018 North Vancouver Island results with relevant comparisons to the 2018 provincial results, as well as to local results in 2008 and 2013.



A GUIDE TO THIS REPORT

This report is intended for a community audience, and therefore does not detail all aspects of the methodology, including analyses conducted and statistical testing applied. This information is available at www.mcs.bc.ca or by email from mccreary@mcs.bc.ca.

The report is divided into five main sections. The first provides background information about the young people who completed the survey, the second focuses on their health profile, the next section considers some potentially adverse experiences or challenges to growing up healthy, and precedes a section which looks at factors that can support young people to thrive. The final section offers North Vancouver Island students' suggestions for health topics they would like to learn more about.

The 2018 BC AHS included many questions which have been asked on the BC AHS in previous years. This allowed us to report trends over time. The survey also included some new items which reflected the changing challenges and opportunities experienced by the province's young people. These items were deemed important to include by stakeholders who participated in consultations during the development of the survey.

Based on the feedback we received about the 2013 BC AHS and through consultations during the development of the 2018 survey, one of the areas which was updated was gender identity.

Following recommendations from Statistics Canada, the 2018 survey included two new questions: one about sex/gender assigned at birth (what is listed on a student's original birth certificate, with an option of male or female) and one about current gender identity (which included the response options of male, female, neither male nor female, and not yet sure).

Previous versions of the BC AHS only included male and female options for gender. Therefore, in this report, trends are reported only for males and females (based on the question about sex/gender assigned at birth). For analyses conducted exclusively with the 2018 data, results are reported using the second question about current gender identity (male, female, and non-binary). Non-binary youth include those who identified as neither male nor female, as well as those who were not yet sure of their gender identity.

All reported comparisons and associations within North Vancouver Island and to previous survey years which are included in this report are statistically significant at $p < .05$. This means there is up to a 5% likelihood these results occurred by chance. Comparisons between North Vancouver Island and the province are statistically significant at $p < .01$, which means there is up to a 1% likelihood that the results occurred by chance.

Where it is not obvious, differences in tables or charts that are not statistically significant are noted.

Any percentage that is marked with an asterisk (*) should be interpreted with caution, as it has a higher than anticipated standard error, but is still within the releasable range.



LIMITATIONS

When reading this report, it is important to remember that although it is considered representative of youth aged 12–19 who were attending mainstream schools in North Vancouver Island, it does not capture the health picture of all young people in this age range. For example, those who were in alternative schools, independent schools, were home-schooled, were dealing with challenges which kept them out of school, or were absent on the day the survey was administered were not included.

Also, the survey was only administered on paper and in English, which excluded some youth with certain disabilities, and literacy or comprehension challenges.

Finally, the percentage of students in North Vancouver Island who identified as non-binary was small (2%). Therefore, although non-binary youth were considered in all gendered analyses, it was often not possible to report the findings due to the risk of deductive disclosure or the possibility that the percentage estimate was unreliable.

GLOSSARY

For readability, the following terms are used in this report:

■ **Extreme sports** include activities such as back-country skiing and BMX.

■ **Ideas listened to** refers to youth who reported that their ideas were listened to ‘quite a bit’ or ‘a lot’ in the activities that they were involved in.

■ **Informal sports** are sports without a coach such as skateboarding and hiking.

■ **Meaningful activities** are activities which youth indicated were ‘quite a bit’ or ‘very’ meaningful to them.

■ **Non-binary** reflects youth who did not identify as either male or female or were not yet sure of their gender identity.

■ **Organized sports** are sports with a coach, such as school teams and swimming lessons.

■ **Phone** refers to a cell phone, smartphone, or other portable electronic communication device.

■ **Sexting** refers to sending sexually explicit photographs or messages via a phone. It was also referred to on the survey as ‘sending nudes.’

■ **Students** and **youth** are used interchangeably to refer to survey participants aged 12–19.

YOUNG PEOPLE IN NORTH VANCOUVER ISLAND

BACKGROUND

In 2018, 62% of North Vancouver Island students identified as European. This was a decrease from 68% in 2013. There was an increase in youth who identified as Latin/South/Central American (5% vs. 3% in 2013) and East Asian (6% vs. 4%).

Local youth were more likely than their peers across BC to identify as European and Indigenous, and were less likely to identify as Asian.

Family background		
	North Vancouver Island	BC
European	62%	46%
Indigenous	19%	10%
East Asian	6%	18%
Latin/South/Central American	5%	5%
Southeast Asian	2%	8%
African	2%	3%
South Asian	2%	11%
Australian/Pacific Islander	2%	2%
West Asian	NR	3%
Don't know	20%	10%
Other	4%	4%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

Note: The majority of students who chose 'other' indicated they were Canadian.

Note: For African, the difference between North Vancouver Island and BC was not statistically significant.

NR: Not releasable due to the risk of deductive disclosure.

BIRTHPLACE & LANGUAGE

The percentage of local students born in Canada declined over the past decade (91% vs. 96% in 2008), but remained higher than across the province (79%).

Among local students who were born abroad, 20% had been in Canada between two and five years, and 36% had been here less than two years.

Four percent of North Vancouver Island students were international students (vs. 6% provincially). The percentage who had arrived in Canada as refugees was too small to report.

Around 4 in 10 (39%) students spoke a language other than English at home (vs. 53% across BC), with 7% doing so most of the time.

INDIGENOUS YOUTH

Among youth who identified as Indigenous, 64% were First Nations, 30% Métis, and the remainder identified as another Indigenous background (including Inuit). The percentage of local youth who identified as First Nations decreased from 78% in 2013.

One in five (20%) Indigenous youth currently lived on a First Nations reserve at least some of the time, including 16% who lived there all the time. Another 11% had previously lived on reserve.

Thirty percent of Indigenous students spoke at least a few words of an Indigenous language, although none were fluent.

Among local Indigenous students, 43% reported that at least one member of their family had been in residential school, including around a quarter (26%) whose grandparents had attended. However, this is likely an underestimate as 36% did not know if their relatives had been in residential school.

The percentage of Indigenous students who identified as Two Spirit was too small to report.

GENDER IDENTITY & SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Half of North Vancouver Island students were male on their birth certificate and the other half were female. For nearly all youth (97%) their current gender identity corresponded with their sex at birth, and the remainder were transgender (e.g., they were assigned female on their birth certificate but currently identified as male) or non-binary.

Reflecting the provincial picture, most youth identified as straight. Males were more likely than females to identify as straight (90% vs. 76%) and females were more likely than males to identify as mostly straight (9% vs. 3%) or bisexual (8% vs. 3%). Non-binary youth were the most likely to identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (39%* vs. 9% of females vs. 4% of males).

Sexual orientation of North Vancouver Island youth	
Straight	81%
Mostly straight	6%
Bisexual	6%
Gay or lesbian	2%
Not sure yet	4%
Something other than those listed above	2%

Note: Among North Vancouver Island students who identified a sexual orientation other than the options listed on the survey, common responses were pansexual and asexual.

GOVERNMENT CARE

Students were asked if they had experienced different types of government care (through the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development or a delegated agency) or alternatives to care. Locally, 4% had been in foster care, 3% on a Kith and Kin agreement, 1% had stayed in a group home, and 1% had been in a custody centre. The percentage who had been on a Youth Agreement was too small to report.

LIVING SITUATION

Students most commonly reported living with at least one parent (94%) and with siblings. Compared to five years earlier, they were more likely to be living with parents, siblings, and other children or youth.

Youth were asked if they had caretaking responsibilities on a typical school day. Two thirds (66%) looked after a pet or other animal, and 18% cared for a relative (e.g., a relative with a disability or younger sibling). Non-binary youth and females were more likely than males to be caring for a pet (e.g., 73% of females vs. 59% of males) or a relative (e.g., 22% of females vs. 14% of males).

Around a quarter (24%) of local youth had moved from one home to another in the past year, including 7% who moved three or more times. Also, 9% had run away from home, and 7% had been kicked out in the past year.

Most students (93% vs. 96% in 2013) often or always felt safe inside their home, while 3% rarely or never did.

Who North Vancouver Island youth lived with most of the time			
	2013	2018	Change
Mother/Stepmother	81%	85%	↑
Father/Stepfather	67%	74%	↑
Two mothers or two fathers	NR	NR	—
Grandparent(s)	6%	8%	—
Foster parent(s)	NR	1%	—
Sibling(s)/Step-sibling(s)	47%	63%	↑
Own child or own children	NR	NR	—
Other children or youth	1%	2%	↑
Other related adult(s)	3%	3%	—
Other unrelated adult(s)	2%	2%	—
Live alone	1%	NR	—
Live with both parents at different times	9%	10%	—

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

↑ Indicates there was a statistically significant increase from 2013 to 2018.

NR: Not releasable due to the risk of deductive disclosure.

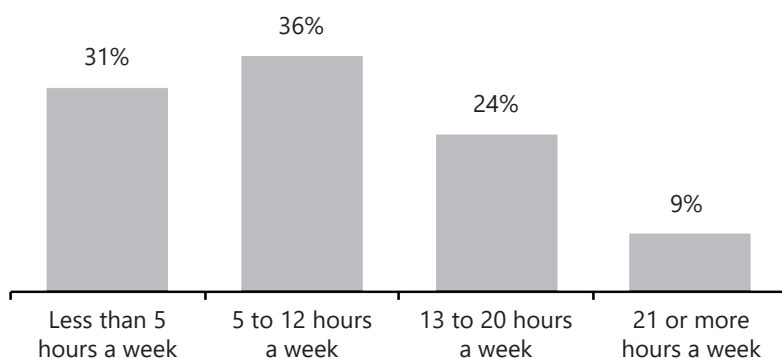
EMPLOYMENT

Local students were more likely than those across BC to have worked at a paid job during the school year (41% vs. 33%). They were also more likely to have been employed than local youth five years earlier (36% in 2013), and to have worked in excess of 20 hours a week (9% vs. 4%).

PHONE USE

Most North Vancouver Island youth (95%) had a cell phone, smartphone, or other portable device. Students most commonly used their device to listen to music, communicate with friends they knew in person, and for social media.

Hours North Vancouver Island youth spent working at a paid job
(among those who were employed)



North Vancouver Island students' phone use on their last school day
(among those with a phone)

Listening to music	86%
Communicating with friends they know in person	85%
Using social media	84%
Communicating with parents/guardians	76%
Watching shows, movies, YouTube, etc.	71%
Finding information (other than health information)	63%
Playing games	56%
Doing homework	53%
Communicating with someone they know only online	23%
Finding health information	18%
Watching porn	11%
Sexting	6%
Gambling	2%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

HEALTH PROFILE OF NORTH VANCOUVER ISLAND YOUTH

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Results of the 2018 BC AHS showed that youth who reported eating healthily, getting plenty of exercise and getting enough sleep (including going offline at bedtime) not only reported better physical health but also reported better mental health than their peers.

Consistent with youth across the province, most students in North Vancouver Island rated their health as good or excellent (80%). However, there was a decline in the percentage of females who rated their health this positively (74% vs. 83% in 2013).

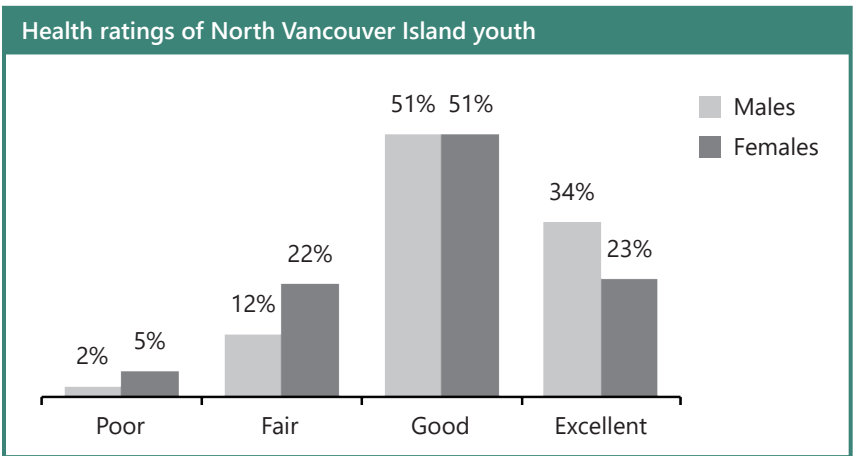
Just under half of local students (48%) who had a health condition or disability reported that it prevented them from doing things their peers could do.

HEALTH CONDITIONS & DISABILITIES

Similar to five years earlier and to youth across BC, 32% of North Vancouver Island youth reported having at least one health condition or disability. There was a decrease in the percentage of students with a long-term or chronic medical condition (8% vs. 10% in 2013), and an increase in those with a mental health condition (17% vs. 11%).

Health conditions and disabilities reported by North Vancouver Island youth	
Mental health condition	17%
Long-term/chronic medical condition	8%
Learning disability	6%
Sensory disability	4%
Severe allergy requiring EpiPen	3%
Physical disability	1%
Other	2%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.



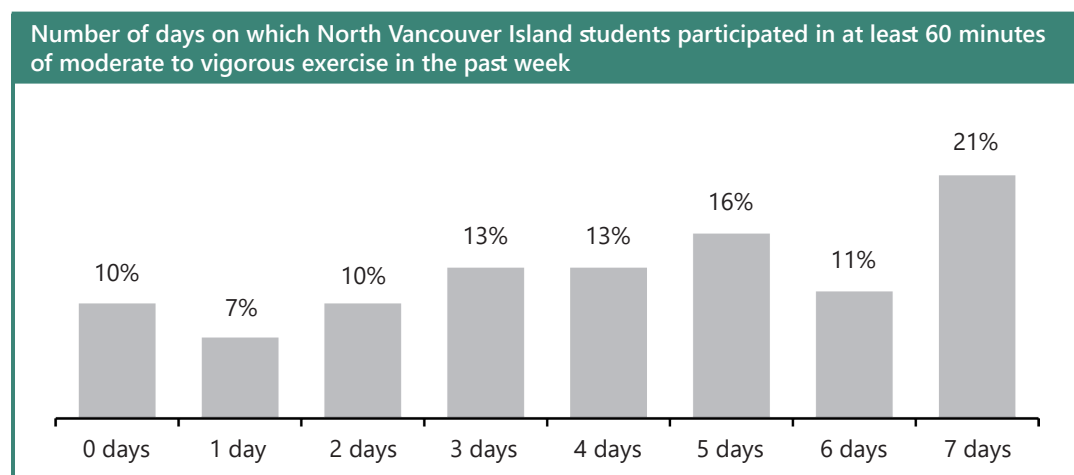
Note: Percentages do not equal 100% due to rounding.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The Canadian Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines state that children under 18 years of age should complete at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise every day. Local youth aged 12–17 were more likely to meet these guidelines than youth across BC (21% vs. 18%), and North Vancouver Island youth five years earlier (17% in 2013).

Reflecting the pattern in previous years, local males were more likely than females to have exercised for 60 minutes every day in the past week (27% vs. 16%).

The Guidelines recommend that individuals aged 18 or older take part in 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each week. As in 2013, 68% of students aged 18 or older met this recommendation by participating in 60 minutes of exercise on at least three days in the past week (with no gender differences).



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

SLEEP

"I have insomnia, and my parents refuse to help despite the doctor's recommendations."

Grade 8 student

Similar to results in 2013, 53% of local youth slept for at least eight hours on the night before completing the survey (including 25% who slept nine or more hours), and 6% slept four hours or less. The percentage of students who slept for at least eight hours was higher locally than across BC (53% vs. 48%).

Males were more likely than females to have slept eight or more hours (57% vs. 50%), as were younger youth in comparison to older ones. For example, 66% of 13-year-olds slept for at least eight hours compared to 51% of 15-year-olds and 32%* of 18-year-olds.

Students reported doing various activities after the time they were normally expected to go to sleep. These included chatting or texting (59%), homework (44%), gaming (26%), and online activities other than gaming (e.g., watching videos, checking social media; 69%).

Males were more likely than females to be gaming after they were expected to be asleep (38% vs. 12%), and were less likely to report chatting or texting (54% vs. 64% of females) and doing homework (33% vs. 55%).

Locally, 43% of youth reported going offline after their expected bedtime (e.g., turning off their phone, putting it in silent mode, or putting it in another room). Females were more likely than males to go offline (48% vs. 39%).

On the day they completed the survey, around half (51%) of local students woke up feeling like they got enough rest. Students who went offline and did not engage in activities such as doing homework were more likely to wake up feeling rested (59% vs. 51% of those who did not go offline).



ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Reflecting the picture across BC, 23% of local youth reported they had not needed health care in the past year, and 3% had needed health care but had not received it.

Local youth who did access health care most commonly visited a family doctor. However, they were less likely than their peers across BC to have accessed a family doctor in the past year (56% vs. 61% provincially); and were more likely to have accessed a walk-in clinic (43% vs. 35%), an emergency room (20% vs. 16%), or a nurse (12% vs. 9%).

When asked specifically about accessing medical care when they were physically sick or hurt in the past year, 57% of North Vancouver Island youth reported they did not need this type of medical help, 35% got the help they needed, and 9% did not get the help they needed.

Reflecting the pattern over the past decade, males were less likely than females to have missed out on needed medical care (6% vs. 12%).

DENTAL VISITS

Similar to five years earlier, most youth (84%) had been to the dentist in the past 12 months, 9% had visited the dentist between a year and two years ago, 5% had last been over two years ago (vs. 7% in 2013), and 2% had never been to the dentist.

One in ten students (10%) who had been to the dentist reported that their last visit had been for pain.

Where North Vancouver Island youth got health care in the past year	
Family doctor	56%
Walk-in clinic	43%
Emergency room (ER)	20%
Counsellor/psychologist	14%
Nurse	12%
Youth clinic	3%
School wellness centre	1%
Traditional healer	NR

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.
NR: Not releasable due to the risk of deductive disclosure.

NUTRITION

Provincially there was a slight decrease in the percentage of youth who ate fruit and vegetables on the day before completing the BC AHS, while locally the percentage remained similar to five and ten years earlier (94%). In North Vancouver Island, there was an increase in the percentage who ate fast food (43% vs. 38% in 2013), drank water (97% vs. 95%) and consumed energy drinks (9% vs. 6%).

On the day before completing the survey, North Vancouver Island youth also ate sweets (73%), traditional foods from their background (19%), food grown or caught by them or their family (21%), and drank pop (36%).

Local youth were less likely than their peers across the province to have eaten sweets (73% vs. 77%), fast food (43% vs. 47%), and traditional foods from their background (19% vs. 41%); and were more likely to have eaten food grown or caught by them or their family (21% vs. 16%) and consumed energy drinks (9% vs. 7%).

What North Vancouver Island students ate or drank yesterday		
	Once or twice	Three or more times
Water	25%	72%
Fruit	59%	26%
Vegetables or green salad	59%	19%
Sweets (cookies, cake, candy, chocolate, etc.)	62%	12%
Fast food (pizza, hot dogs, burgers, chips, fries, etc.)	38%	5%
Pop	33%	3%
Food grown/caught by them or their family	17%	4%
Traditional food from their background	14%	5%
Energy drinks	8%	1%



MEALS

Provincially, there was a decline in the percentage of youth who ate breakfast on school days. This was not the case locally as, unchanged from 2013, 48% always ate breakfast. However, there was an increase in the percentage of students who never ate breakfast on school days (19% vs. 15% in 2013).

Among local students who ate breakfast, the majority ate at home, 11% got their breakfast on the way to school, and 6% got it at school.

In North Vancouver Island, 60% of students always ate lunch while 5% never did, and 88% always ate dinner while 1% never did. Males were the most likely to eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner. For example, 66% of males always ate lunch, compared to 54% of females.

Consistent with results across the province, 37% of North Vancouver Island students ate three meals a day on school days.

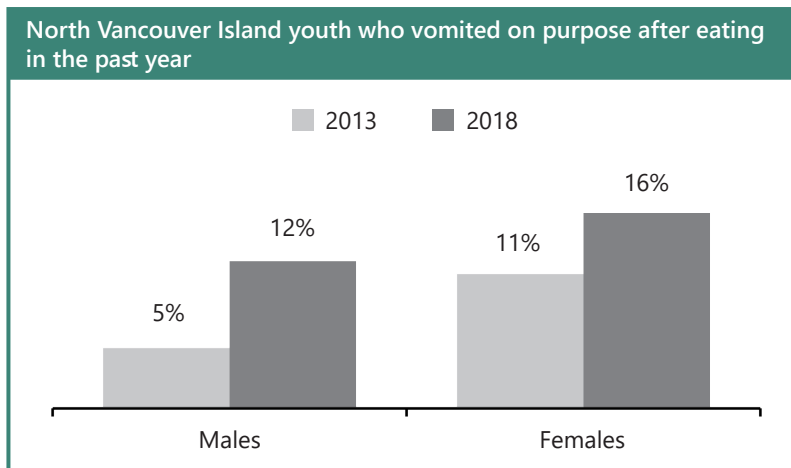
EATING BEHAVIOURS

"I think I care too much about losing weight, even though I know I don't really need to do it."

Grade 11 student

In the past year, 14% of North Vancouver Island students had vomited on purpose after eating, including 2% who had done so two or three times a month and 1% who had done so at least once a week.

Reflecting the provincial trend, there was an increase in the percentage of local males and females who reported they had vomited on purpose after eating in the past year.



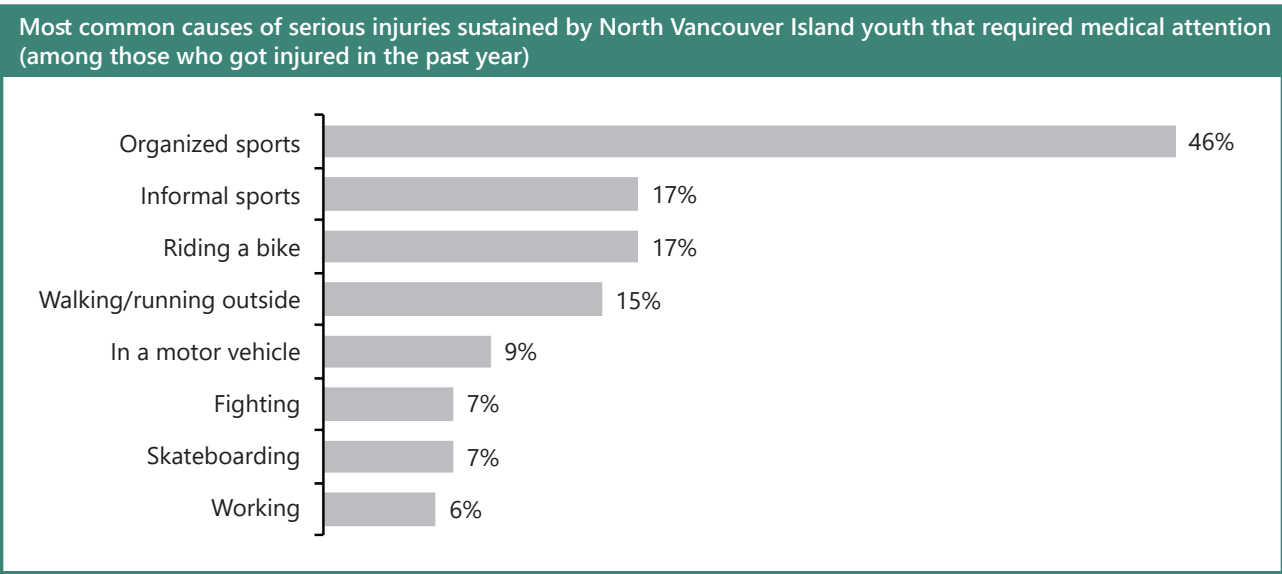
INJURIES & INJURY PREVENTION

INJURIES

In the past year, almost a third (32%) of North Vancouver Island youth were injured seriously enough to require medical attention, including 8% who experienced two serious injuries and 5% who had three or more. The percentage who were seriously injured was similar to the local rate in 2013 and higher than the 2018 provincial rate (26%).

Provincially, males were more likely than females to have sustained a serious injury. There was no such gender difference locally.

The most common cause of serious injury was playing or training for organized sports.



Note: Youth could choose more than one response.



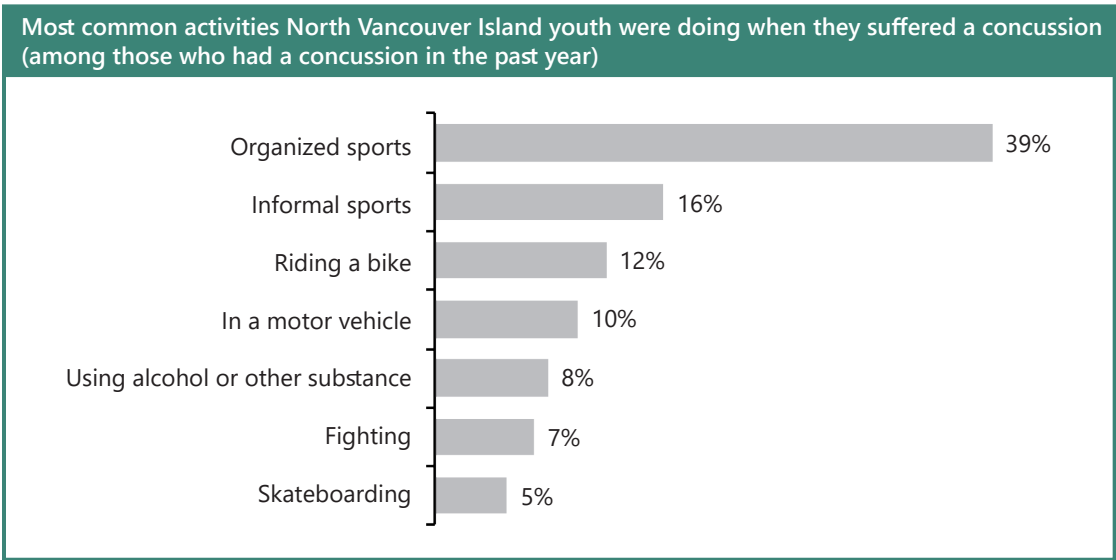
CONCUSSIONS

As in 2013, 17% of local youth suffered a concussion in the past year (vs. 13% across BC), including 3% who experienced two concussions and 2% who had three or more.

Youth who experienced a concussion typically reported multiple symptoms including headaches (70%); dizziness or balance problems (66%); blurred vision (53%); ringing in their ears (46%); feeling dazed, confused, or experiencing a gap in memory (46%); and loss of consciousness (28%).

Similar to the provincial picture, the most common cause of concussion was playing or training for organized sports.

In the past year, 48% of local youth who experienced a concussion received medical treatment for their injury.



Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

INJURY PREVENTION

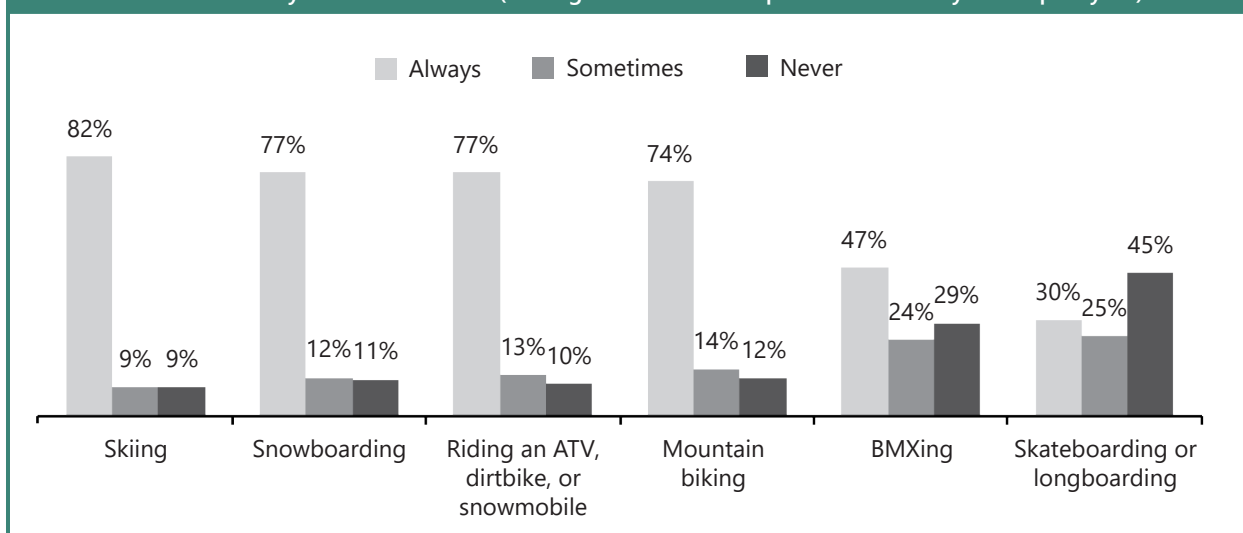
Provincially, there was a slight decrease from five years earlier in the percentage of youth who always wore a seatbelt when riding in a motor vehicle. This was not the case locally, as 71% of North Vancouver Island youth always wore a seatbelt, which was similar to the rate in 2013 and an increase from 66% in 2008. As in previous years, there were no gender differences in seatbelt use.

Reflecting the provincial picture, there was an increase in the percentage of local youth who always wore a helmet when cycling in the past year (52% vs. 38% in 2013).

Youth were more likely to wear a helmet in some activities with a risk of head injury than others. For example, they were most likely to wear a helmet when skiing and least likely to wear one when skateboarding or longboarding.

Local youth were more likely than their peers across BC to wear a helmet when riding an ATV, dirt bike, or snowmobile (77% vs. 66%).

North Vancouver Island youth's helmet use (among those who took part in the activity in the past year)



Note: For skiing; snowboarding; riding an ATV, dirtbike, or snowmobile; mountain biking; and BMXing the differences between 'sometimes' and 'never' were not statistically significant.

Note: For skateboarding or longboarding, the difference between 'always' and 'sometimes' was not statistically significant.

MENTAL HEALTH

"I feel there is still not enough awareness and help for mental health—people make getting help seem like a joke or judge you."

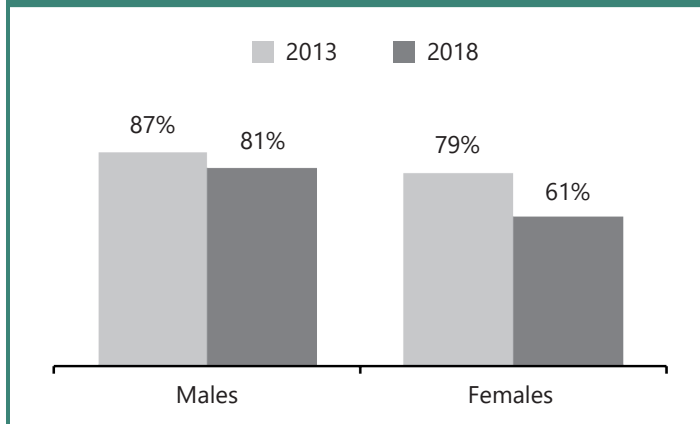
Grade 10 student

Mirroring the trend across the province, there was a decline in the percentage of students who reported good or excellent mental health (71% vs. 83% in 2013). Consistent with five years earlier, males were more likely than females to rate their mental health positively.

HAPPINESS

Overall, 64% of North Vancouver Island students felt happy most or all of the time in the past month, and 11% rarely or never felt happy. Males were the most likely to feel happy most or all of the time (73%). There was a decrease in females who felt this way (55% vs. 62% in 2013).

North Vancouver Island youth who rated their mental health as good/excellent

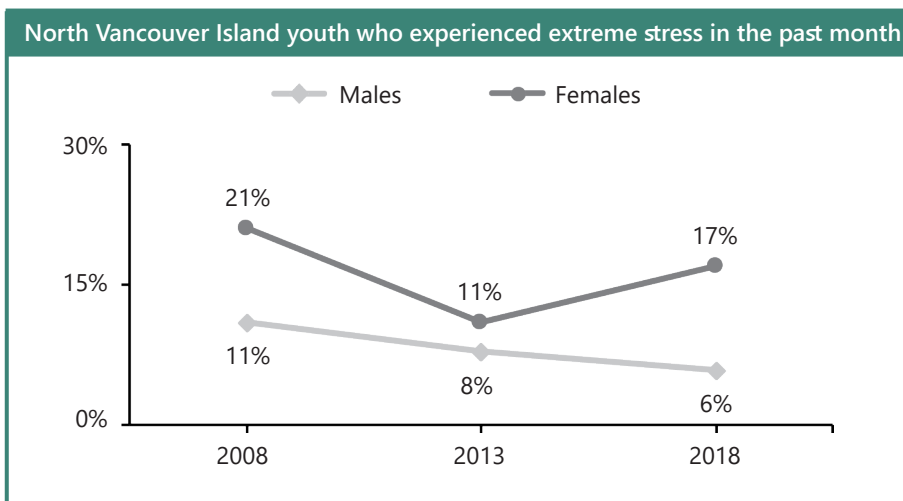


STRESS & DESPAIR

Most North Vancouver Island youth (85%) experienced some level of stress in the past month, including 11% who felt so stressed that they could not function properly. As in previous years, females were more likely than males to experience extreme stress.

For the first time, the BC AHS asked students how well they managed their stress. Among those who experienced stress, 34% felt they managed it well and 20% managed it very well, while 31% managed their stress only fairly well and the rest managed it poorly.

Over half (55%) of local students felt sad, discouraged, or hopeless in the past month, including 7% who felt so much despair that they were unable to function properly. Females were more likely than males to experience this level of extreme despair (10% vs. 4%), and were also more likely to feel this way than local females five years earlier (vs. 6%).



Note: The difference for males between 2013 and 2018 was not statistically significant nor was the difference for females between 2008 and 2018.



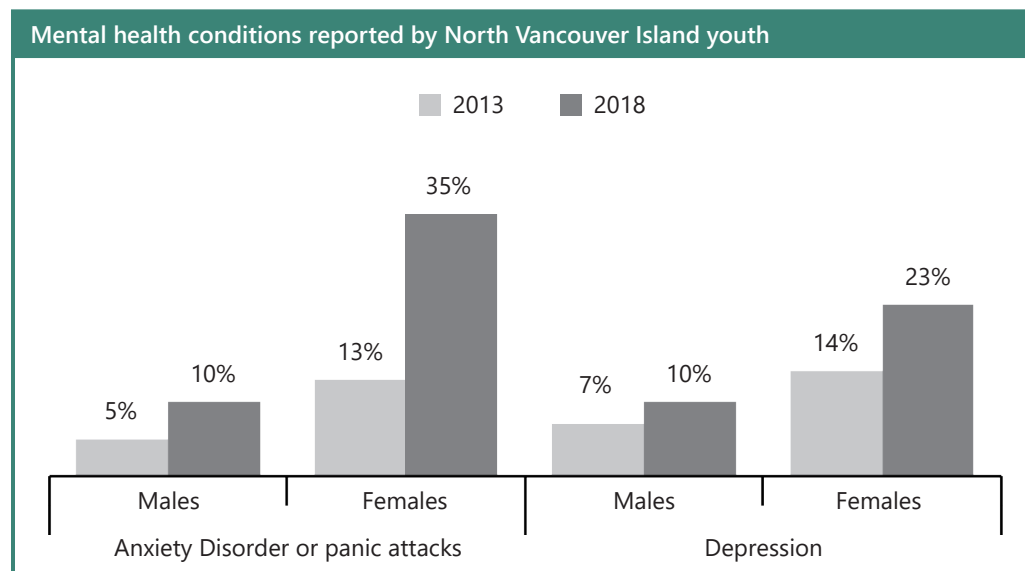
MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

Compared to five years earlier, youth were more likely to report having a mental health condition, including Anxiety Disorder/panic attacks (23% vs. 9% in 2013), Depression (17% vs. 10%), Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD; 11% vs. 8%), and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD; 3% vs. 1%). The percentage who reported having Asperger's or Autism Spectrum Disorder (2%) was similar to 2013, as was the percentage with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (1%).

Females were more likely than males to report having Anxiety Disorder/panic attacks, Depression and PTSD (5% vs. 2%), while males were more likely to have ADHD (14% vs. 8%). Among non-binary students, 41%* reported having Anxiety Disorder/panic attacks and the same percentage reported Depression.

"I have suffered from severe depression in my life at a very young age and I am different now because of it."

Grade 8 student



Note: For males, the difference between 2013 and 2018 for Depression was not statistically significant.

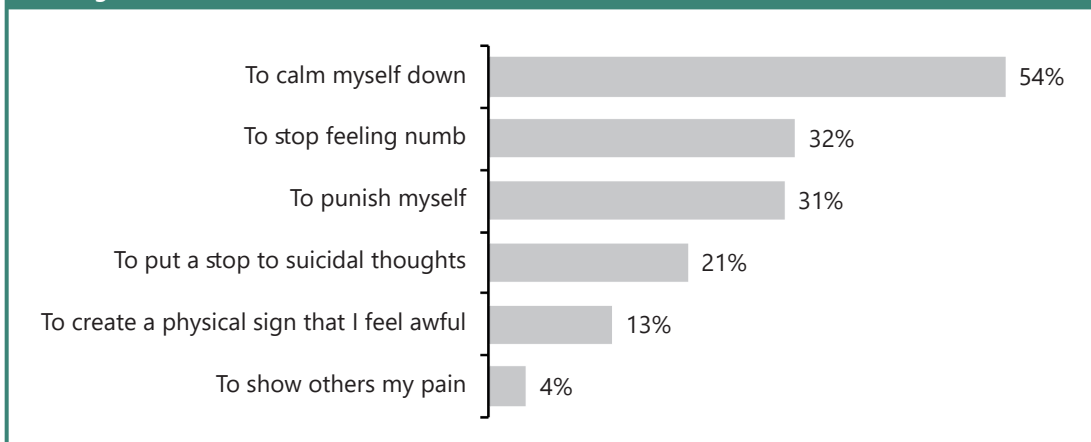
SELF-HARM & SUICIDALITY

In the past year, 18% of North Vancouver Island youth had cut or injured themselves on purpose without the intention of killing themselves. Males were the least likely to have done so (10% vs. 25% of females vs. 55%* of non-binary youth). The most common reason youth gave for self-harming the last time was to calm themselves down.

Almost one in five students (18%) had seriously considered suicide in the past year, which reflected an increase for females (24% vs. 17% in 2013) and a rate for males which was comparable to five years earlier (12% in 2018).

The percentage of local youth who had attempted suicide in the past year (5%) was similar to previous years. Females were more likely than males to have attempted suicide (7% vs. 4%).

North Vancouver Island youth's most commonly reported reasons for self-harming the last time (among those who self-harmed)



Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

MISSED OUT ON NEEDED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

In the past year, 18% of youth felt they needed mental health services but had not accessed them. This was comparable to the province as a whole and represented a local increase from previous survey years (e.g., 11% in 2013).

Among students who did not access needed mental health services, the most common reasons were because they thought or hoped the problem would go away and they did not want their parents to know.

Most commonly reported reasons North Vancouver Island youth did not access mental health services (among those who felt they needed services in the past year)

Thought or hoped the problem would go away	60%
Didn't want parents to know	58%
Afraid of what I would be told	47%
Didn't know where to go	41%
Afraid someone I know might see me	36%
Too busy to go	34%
Didn't think I could afford it	20%
Had prior negative experience	19%
Parent/guardian would not take me	11%
Had no transportation	10%
On a waiting list	4%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

SEXUAL HEALTH

ORAL SEX & INTERCOURSE

The percentage of North Vancouver Island youth who had engaged in oral sex and sexual intercourse was similar to the percentage over the past decade, and higher than across BC.

Among students who had engaged in oral sex, 23% used a condom or other barrier/protection the last time they had oral sex, which was an increase from 17% in 2013.

Consistent with provincial results and local results over the past decade, 63% of youth who ever had intercourse used a condom or other protection the last time they had sex.

The percentage of youth who waited until they were at least 15 years old to first have intercourse was similar to five years earlier and higher than in 2008 (63% vs. 53%).

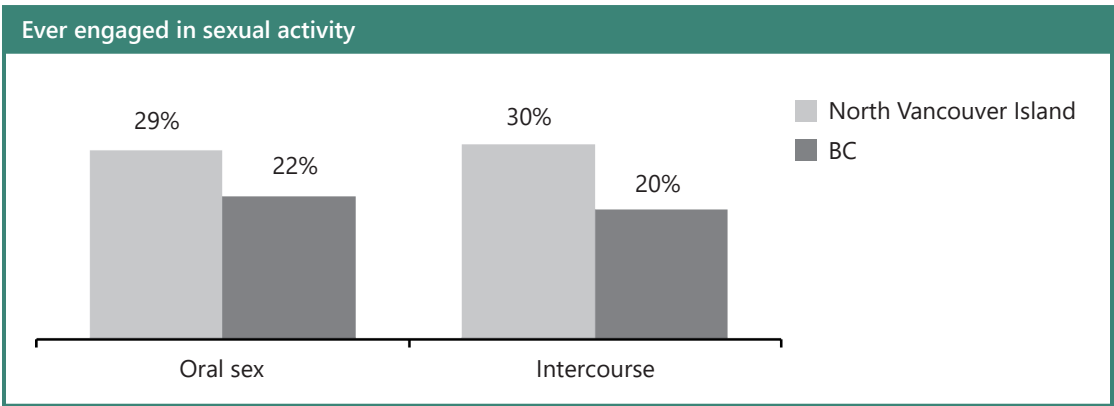
Just under half of youth (48%) who ever had intercourse had one sexual partner in the past year, while 24% had two partners, 22% had three or more partners, and the remainder did not have intercourse in the past year.

When asked specifically about their efforts to prevent pregnancy, there was a decrease from 2008 in the percentage of youth who used a condom (54% vs. 64%), and an increase in those who used withdrawal as their only method (8% vs. 4%), emergency contraception (8% vs. 3%), and an IUD.

Two percent of youth had ever been involved in a pregnancy.

Most common methods North Vancouver Island youth used to prevent pregnancy the last time they had intercourse (among those who ever had intercourse)	
Condoms	54%
Birth control pills, birth control patch, Nuva Ring, or other method prescribed by doctor or nurse	50%
Withdrawal	45%
Emergency contraception	8%
IUD	8%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.



SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs) & THE HPV VACCINE

In North Vancouver Island, 1% of youth reported ever being told by a doctor or nurse that they had an STI.

The HPV vaccines protect against infection from certain types of cancers, and have been available to girls in Grade 6 since 2008 and to boys in Grade 6 since September 2017. Locally, 28% of youth had been vaccinated (14% of youth who were assigned male on their birth certificate vs. 42% of females). Also, 56% (67% of males vs. 45% of females) did not know whether they had been vaccinated.

REFUSAL SKILLS

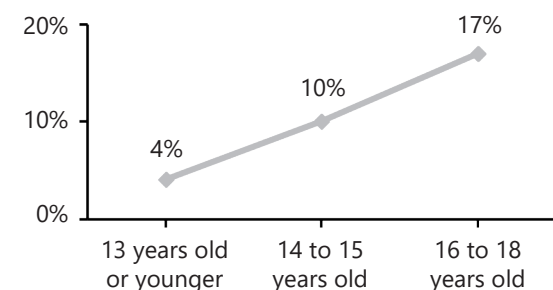
Most youth felt they were able to say 'no' if they were asked to engage in a sexual activity which they did not want to do.

USED PHONE TO SEXT OR WATCH PORNOGRAPHY

On their most recent school day, 6% of North Vancouver Island students with a phone had used it to engage in sexting (a decrease from 12% in 2013), and 11% used their device to watch pornography (asked for the first time on the 2018 survey).

Older youth were more likely than younger ones to use their phone to watch pornography.

North Vancouver Island students who used their phone to watch pornography (among those with a device)



North Vancouver Island youth who felt they could say no if asked to...

	Could say no	Could not say no	Not sure
Have sex with a new partner when they did not want to	92%	1%	7%
Have sex with a long-term partner when they did not want to	88%	4%	9%
Send nudes/sext	92%	3%	5%

Note: Percentages for long-term partner do not equal 100% due to rounding.

SUBSTANCE USE

SMOKING, VAPING, & TOBACCO USE

Locally, 27% of students had smoked tobacco (e.g., cigarettes, cigars, or cigarillos), which was higher than the rate across BC (18%) and similar to the local rate five and ten years earlier.

Unlike in 2013, there were no gender differences in having tried smoking. However, males were less likely than five years earlier to have smoked (33% in 2013), while the percentage among females remained comparable.

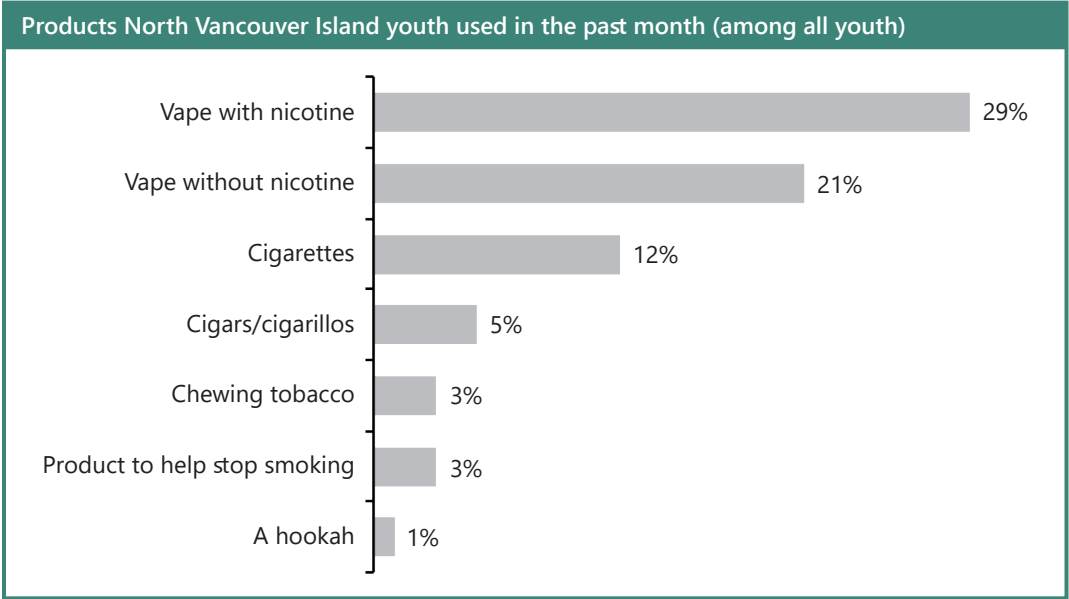
Similar to five years earlier, 44% of those who had tried smoking waited until they were at least 15 years old to first smoke.

Among those who had ever smoked tobacco, 48% smoked in the past month, including 8% who smoked daily. Daily smoking rates were similar to five years earlier and lower than a decade earlier (14% in 2008).

North Vancouver Island youth were more likely than youth across BC to have vaped (34% vs. 27% provincially), smoked cigarettes (12% vs. 7%), and smoked cigars (5% vs. 3%) in the past month.

There were some gender differences in the products youth used. Local males were more likely than females to have used chewing tobacco and cigars, and non-binary youth were the least likely to have smoked cigarettes.

Among students who had smoked tobacco, 73% had vaped in the past month, including 69% who vaped with nicotine. Youth who had never smoked tobacco were also vaping, as 19% had vaped in the past month, including 14% who vaped with nicotine.



Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

ALCOHOL

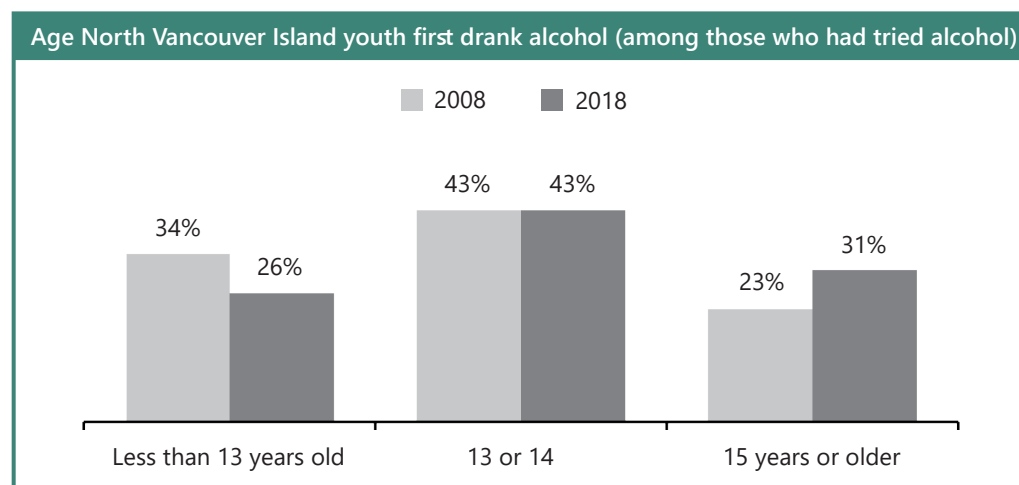
After a decline between 2008 and 2013, the percentage of local youth who had tried alcohol remained comparable to five years earlier (54%) and above the provincial rate (44%). As in previous years, there were no gender differences in having tried alcohol.

The most common ages for youth to have their first drink of alcohol were 13 or 14. Among those who had tried alcohol, 31% waited until they were 15 or older to first drink, which was similar to the percentage five years earlier and lower than across BC (37%).

Among youth who had tried alcohol, two thirds (66%) had at least one drink in the past month, including 6% who drank alcohol on at least 10 days that month.

Similar to youth across the province, 37% of local students who had tried alcohol drank on the Saturday prior to completing the survey. As in previous years, they most commonly drank liquor (33%; among those who had tried alcohol). They also consumed beer (22%), coolers (21%), and wine (5%). Males were more likely than females to drink beer (30% vs. 13%), while females were more likely to drink coolers (28% vs. 15% of males) and wine (8% vs. 3%).

As in 2013, 56% of those who drank last Saturday mixed different types of alcohol (e.g., drank liquor and coolers), including 20% who mixed three or four different types.



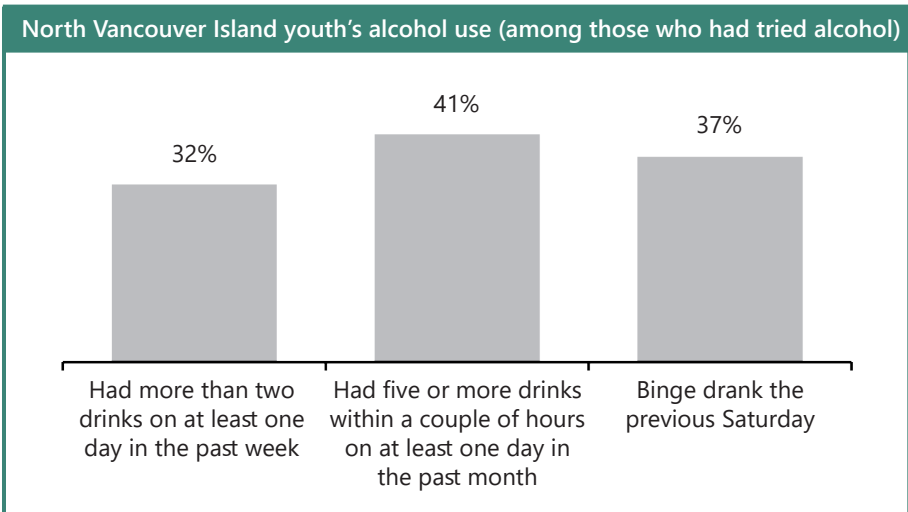
Canadian Low Risk Drinking Guidelines suggest not exceeding two alcoholic drinks on any one occasion. However, among those who had tried alcohol, 32% of students had more than two drinks at least once in the week before completing the survey, and 6% did so on at least three days that week.

Also, 41% of local youth who had tried alcohol consumed five or more drinks within a couple of hours at least once in the past month, and 7% did so on six or more days that month (with no gender differences). The percentage of youth who engaged in this type of heavy drinking was comparable to 2013 and lower than a decade earlier (48% in 2008).

In this report, binge drinking refers to males who consume four or more alcoholic drinks within a couple of hours and females who consume three or more. Among students who drank on the Saturday before taking the survey, 63% engaged in binge drinking, which was a decrease from 76% in 2013. This decrease was seen for both males (57% vs. 71% in 2013) and females (69% vs. 80%).

For the first time, the BC AHS asked youth where they got their alcohol from the last time they drank. Youth in North Vancouver Island most commonly got their alcohol from an adult.

Where North Vancouver Island youth most commonly got alcohol from the last time they drank (among those who had tried alcohol)	
Adult gave it to me	38%
Gave someone money to buy it for me	31%
At a party	28%
Youth gave it to me	13%
Took it without permission	12%
Bought it	8%



Note: Binge drinking refers to males who consume four or more alcoholic drinks within a couple of hours and to females who consume three or more.

MARIJUANA

The 2018 BC AHS was completed a month before marijuana was legalized for adults in Canada. Locally, 37% of youth had ever used marijuana (with no gender differences), which was similar to the percentage five and ten years earlier, and higher than the provincial rate (25%).

The most common ages for local youth to first try marijuana were 13, 14, and 15 years old. However, compared to five and ten years earlier, there was an increase in youth who waited until they were at least 15 years old to first try it (e.g., 37% vs. 27% in 2008).

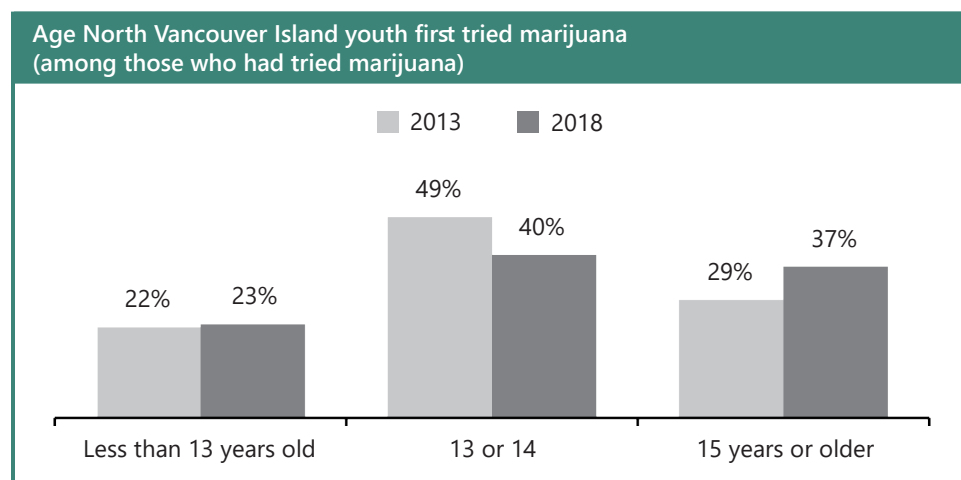
Among youth who had tried marijuana, 66% had used it in the month preceding the survey, which was a return to the 2008 rate and higher than five years earlier (56%). Also comparable to a decade earlier, 26% of those who had used marijuana used it on 6 or more days in the past month, including 13% who used it on 20 or more days.

Locally, 35% of youth who had tried marijuana used it on the Saturday before taking the survey.

Overall, 8% of North Vancouver Island had used both alcohol and marijuana that day, which was unchanged from 2013 and a decrease from 15% in 2008.

The last time they used marijuana, most students had smoked it, 15% ate it in a cooked recipe, and 7% took it another way such as gummies.

One percent of local youth had been prescribed medical marijuana.



Note: For 'Less than 13 years old' the difference between 2013 and 2018 was not statistically significant.

USE OF SUBSTANCES OTHER THAN ALCOHOL & MARIJUANA

Around 1 in 5 (22%) local youth had used at least one substance other than alcohol or marijuana (vs. 16% provincially). Students most commonly misused prescription pills and consumed hallucinogenic mushrooms.

The percentage of North Vancouver Island youth who had injected an illegal drug was too small to report.

The use of most substances was lower locally than a decade earlier. However, North Vancouver Island youth were more likely with than their peers across BC to have used mushrooms (9% vs. 5%), ecstasy (6% vs. 3%), hallucinogens (5% vs. 3%), and cocaine (4% vs. 3%).

North Vancouver Island youth who used substances other than alcohol or marijuana		
	2008	2018
Prescription pills without a doctor's consent	17%	10%
Mushrooms (shrooms, magic mushrooms)	13%	9%
Ecstasy/MDMA	10%	6%
Hallucinogens (excluding ecstasy/MDMA, ketamine, and mushrooms)	8%	5%
Cocaine	6%	4%
Inhalants	5%	3%
Amphetamines (excluding ecstasy/MDMA and crystal meth)	4%	2%
Ketamine, GHB	NA	1%
Crystal meth	2%	NR
Heroin	2%	NR

Note: For cocaine the difference between 2008 and 2018 was not statistically significant.

NA: Youth were not asked about their use of this substance in 2008.

NR: Not releasable due to the risk of deductive disclosure.

CONSEQUENCES OF USE

Similar to five and ten years earlier, 53% of youth who used alcohol or other substances experienced negative consequences of their use in the past year. The most common was being told they did something they could not remember.

Among youth who ever had sex, 23% used alcohol or other substances before having sex the last time, which was similar to 2013 and a decrease from 36% in 2008.

In the past year, 7% of students felt they needed help or were told they needed help for their substance use. Specifically, 4% needed help for their alcohol use, 4% for their marijuana use, and 2% for their use of other substances. Also, when asked about health conditions, 4% of youth indicated having an alcohol or drug addiction, which was slightly higher than across the province (3%).

Consequences of substance use experienced by North Vancouver Island youth in the past year (among those who used alcohol or other substances during that time)	
Was told I did something I couldn't remember	39%
Passed out	31%
Got injured	17%
Argued with family members	15%
School work or grades changed	11%
Lost friends or broke up with a girlfriend, boyfriend, or significant other	9%
Had sex when I didn't want to	9%
Damaged property	7%
Got into a physical fight	7%
Got into trouble with the police	7%
Had to get medical treatment	2%
Overdosed	2%
Used alcohol or other substances but none of these happened	47%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.



DRIVING AFTER SUBSTANCE USE

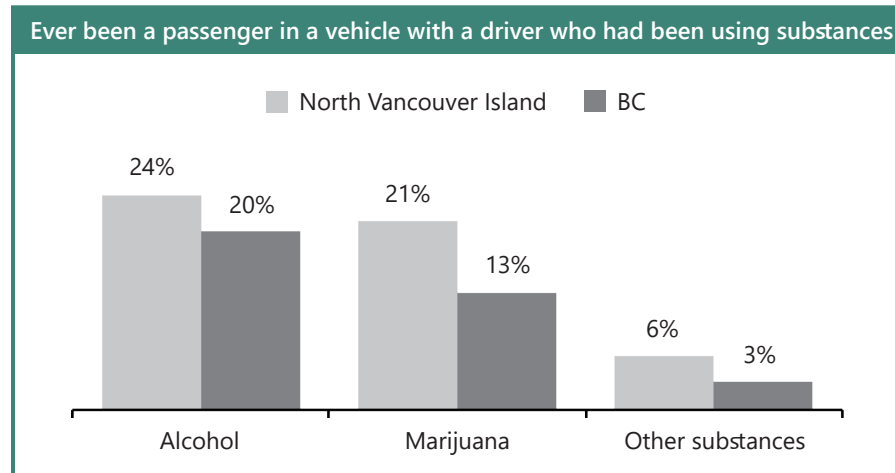
Among youth who had ever tried alcohol, 7% drove a vehicle after they had been drinking, which was comparable to the rate five years earlier and below the rate a decade ago (12%). As in 2013, 3% of youth who had drunk alcohol drove after drinking in the past month (vs. 7% in 2008).

Also similar to 2013, 18% of local youth who had tried marijuana drove after using it, and 8% did so in the past month.

Among those who had used a substance other than alcohol or marijuana, 5% reported ever driving after doing so.

Comparable to 2013, 24% of youth had ever been a passenger of a driver who had been using alcohol, and 21% had been in a vehicle with a driver who had been using marijuana. There was a decrease in the percentage of students who had recently ridden with a driver who had used alcohol (9% had done so in the past month vs. 6% in 2013).

Rates of driving after using alcohol, marijuana, or other substances were comparable to youth across BC. However, local youth were more likely to have been a passenger in a vehicle with a driver who had used substances.



REPORTED REASONS FOR USING

As in 2013, the most common reason youth gave for using substances the last time they did so was to have fun. However, there was an increase in youth who wanted to try it or experiment (29% vs. 24% in 2013; among those who used alcohol or other substances).

"I feel like people think youth use drugs or alcohol to be cool or fit in but that's not always the case. Some youth use them to get away from stress or thoughts and adults need to stop alienating them. They're not addicts—they're looking for a momentary escape."

Grade 9 student

Reasons North Vancouver Island youth used substances the last time (among those who had used alcohol or other substances)	
I wanted to have fun	67%
My friends were doing it	31%
I wanted to try it/experiment	29%
Because of stress	22%
I felt down or sad	18%
I felt like there was nothing else to do	8%
To manage physical pain	7%
I was pressured into doing it	4%
I thought it would help me focus	4%
Because of an addiction	4%
I didn't mean to do it	2%
To change the effects of some other drug	NR
Other	11%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

Note: Among youth who wrote 'Other' they commonly cited being at a party as the reason they had used substances.

NR: Not releasable due to the risk of deductive disclosure.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

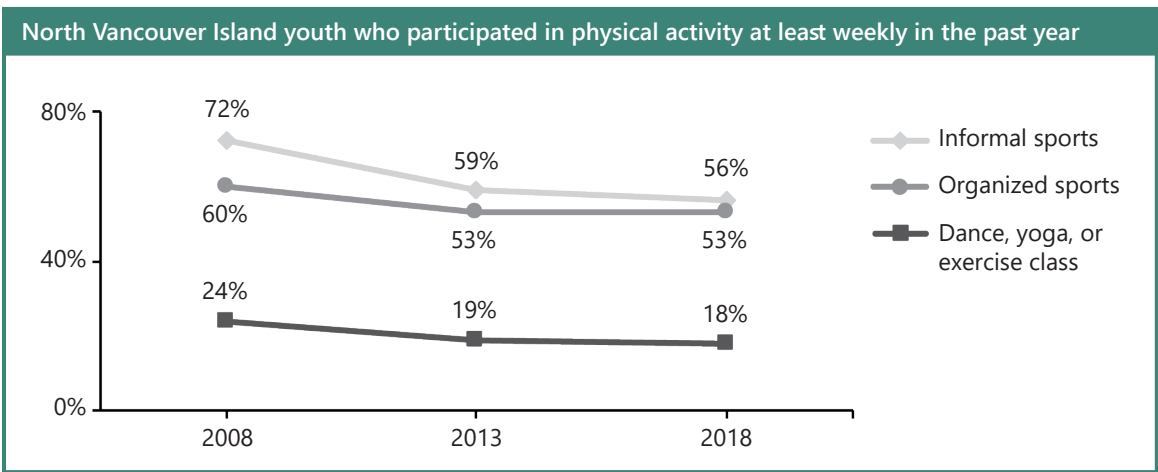
BC AHS results show that participation in extracurricular activities can have many benefits, including an increased likelihood that youth will have access to a supportive adult outside their family and will feel connected to their community. Engaging in regular physical activity (such as weekly organized or informal sports) is also linked to better mental health and better sleep patterns.

In the past year, 93% of North Vancouver Island students participated in at least one extracurricular activity (such as sports, dance, clubs, art, or volunteering), including 85% who did so on at least a weekly basis.

Among youth who engaged in weekly extracurricular activities, 73% took part in at least two different types of activities (e.g., volunteering and organized sports), including 18% who participated in four or more types of activities.

As in 2013, the two most common weekly extracurricular activities were informal sports and organized sports. Participation in both types of sports was lower than a decade earlier, as was participation in dance, yoga, or exercise classes (17% vs. 25% in 2008).

Local youth also participated on a weekly basis in art, drama, singing, or music (25%); clubs or groups (12%); extreme sports (17%); and cultural or traditional activities (6%).



Note: For all three types of physical activity, the differences between 2013 and 2018 were not statistically significant.



As in 2013, males were more likely than females to participate weekly in informal sports (63% vs. 49%) and extreme sports (25% vs. 9%). Females remained more likely to participate weekly in art, drama, music, and singing groups or classes (34% vs. 16% of males); dance, yoga, and exercise classes (31% vs. 6%); and volunteering (23% vs. 11%).

Compared to youth across the province, North Vancouver Island students were more likely to participate weekly in extreme sports in the past year (17% vs. 9%).

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

Students were asked about any barriers they had experienced to taking part in extracurricular activities in the past year. Consistent with the provincial results and previous local results, being too busy was the most common barrier reported by North Vancouver Island youth.

Compared to five years earlier, there was an increase in the percentage of local youth who reported they had missed out on extracurricular activities because they were too busy (51% vs. 42% in 2013), and a decrease in those who did not participate because they could not get there or get home (13% vs. 17%) or because they could not afford to (10% vs. 16%).

North Vancouver Island students were more likely than their peers across BC to report they did not participate in extracurricular activities because they were too anxious or depressed (17% vs. 14%), and because the activity was not available in their community (16% vs. 13%).

North Vancouver Island youth's participation in extracurricular activities in the past year				
	Never	Less than once a week	1 to 3 times a week	4 or more times a week
Informal sports	21%	23%	33%	23%
Organized sports	40%	7%	29%	24%
Volunteered without pay	61%	23%	14%	2%
Art/drama/singing/music (group or lessons)	67%	8%	18%	7%
Extreme sports	71%	12%	11%	7%
Dance/yoga/exercise classes	73%	9%	10%	8%
Cultural/traditional activities	80%	14%	5%	1%
Clubs/groups	84%	5%	10%	1%

Note: Percentages for each activity may not equal 100% due to rounding.

GAMBLING

In BC, it is against the law for young people under the age of 19 to enter a gambling facility or participate in online or in-person gambling for money.

The BC AHS asked students if they had played a number of games of chance in the past year (e.g., online gaming, cards/dice, sports betting, lottery tickets/scratch cards), and, if so, whether they had played these games for money. Comparable to youth across BC, 63% of North Vancouver Island students had played at least one of these games in the past year, including 22% who had done so for money.

Local females were less likely than males to have participated in any type of gambling behaviour in the past year (47% vs. 78%).

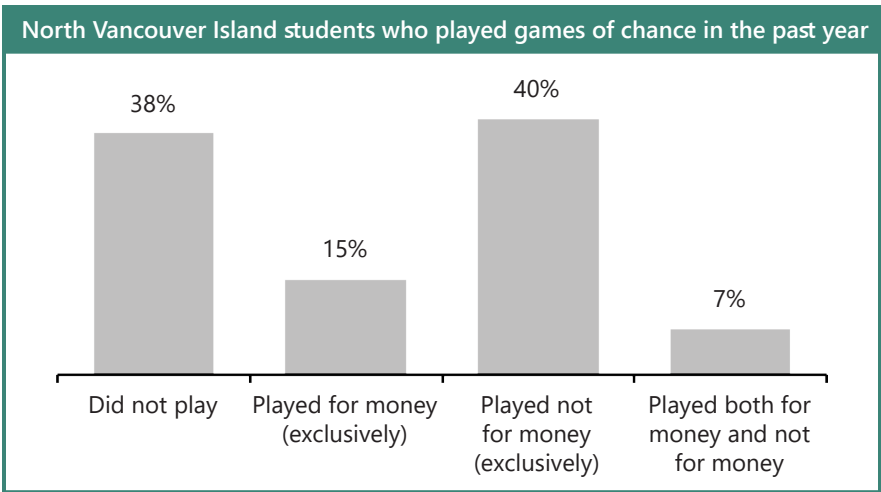
GAMBLED FOR MONEY

Among students who gambled for money in the past year, 43% bought lottery tickets or scratch cards. They also played cards or dice in person (38%) and online (8%); engaged in sports betting in person (34%) and online (9%); and online gaming (33%).

Among students who gambled for money, local females were less likely than males to have participated in online gaming (16% vs. 40%), played cards or dice in person (28% vs. 42%) and engaged in sports betting in person (23% vs. 40%); and they were more likely to have bought lottery tickets or scratch cards (66% vs. 31% of males).

Reflecting the provincial pattern, 18% of local youth who had gambled for money in the past year did so on at least a weekly basis. The most common weekly gambling activity was online gaming. For example, 12% of North Vancouver Island youth participated in online gaming weekly, compared to 4% who played cards or dice in person and 4% who engaged in sports betting in person.

Among local students who gambled for money in the past year and had access to a phone, 5% used their device to gamble on the day before completing the survey.



RISKS TO HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

This section considers some of the adverse experiences which can have lasting negative effects on health and well-being.

POVERTY & DEPRIVATION

GOING TO BED HUNGRY

Similar to youth across BC and to local youth five years earlier, 11% of youth in North Vancouver Island went to bed hungry at least sometimes because there was not enough money for food at home, including 1% who often or always went to bed hungry.

DEPRIVATION

Going to bed hungry because there is not enough money for food is a measure of extreme poverty, and the BC AHS has previously struggled to get a reliable measure of other experiences of poverty and deprivation.

With the help of over 800 youth across BC, an Index of Deprivation was developed for the 2018 survey. The Index highlights the 10 items BC youth felt were most important for them to have to feel like they belonged, and which if they did not have, could make them feel like they were missing out on things their peers had. The 2018 BC AHS asked youth if they had the 10 items, and whether they wished they had them if they did not.

Most youth had all the items on the list. For example, 98% of North Vancouver Island youth had access to the Internet, while 1% did not have this but wished they had it, and 1% did not have it and did not want it or did not know if they wanted it.

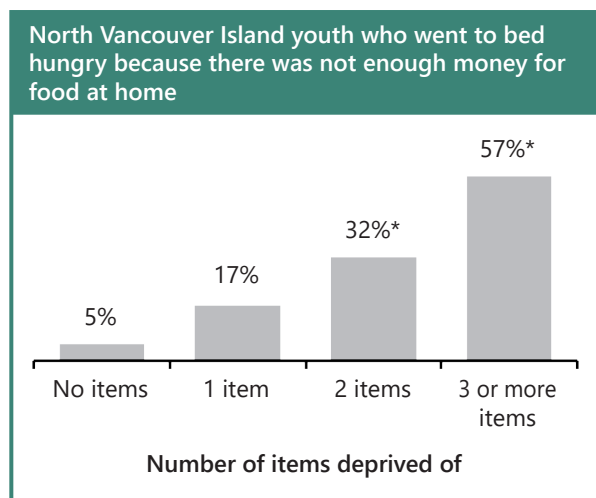
North Vancouver Island youth who felt deprived of...	
Money to spend on themselves	10%
Smartphone	7%
Lunch for school/money to buy lunch	5%
Money for school supplies, trips, and extracurricular activities	5%
Space of their own to hang out in	5%
Equipment/clothes for extracurricular activities	4%
Access to transportation	2%
A quiet place to sleep	2%
Clothes to fit in	2%
Access to the Internet	1%

Reflecting the provincial pattern, the most common item that youth reported wanting but not having was money to spend on themselves.

When the items were considered individually, there was a link between feeling deprived and potentially negative outcomes. For example, 77%* of youth who did not have but wished for a quiet place to sleep had slept for less than eight hours on the night before completing the survey, compared to 46% of those who had somewhere quiet to sleep.

A quarter (25%) of North Vancouver Island youth lacked but wished they had at least one of the items in the Index, including 5% who lacked two items, 3% who lacked three items, 1% who lacked four items, and 1% who lacked five or more items.

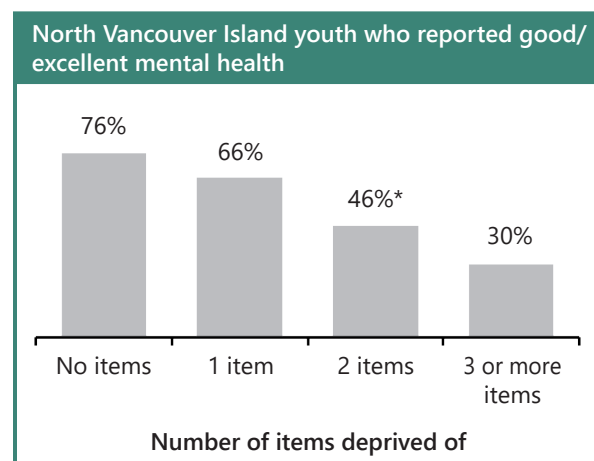
The more items youth reported not having but wishing they had, the more likely they were to go to bed hungry because there was not enough money for food at home.



* Percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was higher than expected but is still within the releasable range.

The more items youth were deprived of, the less likely they were to feel like a part of their school or their community. For example, 63% of those who were not deprived of any items in the Index felt like a part of their school, compared to 30% of those who were deprived of two or more items. Similarly, 51% of those who had all the items felt connected to their community, compared to 33% of those who were deprived of one item and 17% of those who were deprived of two or more items on the list.

Deprivation was also associated with poorer mental health and with youth wishing they had a different life. For example, 11% of those who had all the items in the Index wished they had a different life, compared to 35%* of those who felt deprived of two items and 54%* of those who were deprived of three or more of the items.



* Percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was higher than expected but is still within the releasable range.

LOSS & BEREAVEMENT

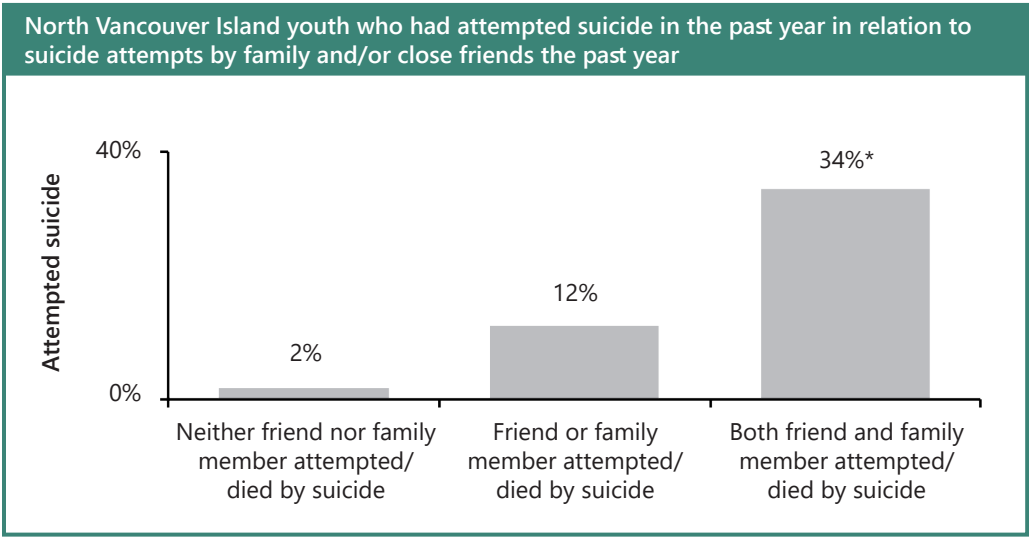
Most North Vancouver Island students (78%) had experienced bereavement. They had most commonly lost someone close to them due to illness (50%) and old age (48%). Other reasons included accident (17%), suicide (16%), violence (3%), a fentanyl overdose (4%), and an overdose from a substance other than fentanyl (6%).

Local students were more likely to have experienced bereavement than their peers across the province. For example, they were more likely to have lost someone to an accident (17% vs. 13%), suicide (16% vs. 9%), a fentanyl overdose (4% vs. 2%), and an overdose from a substance other than fentanyl (6% vs. 4%).

"After [a close relative] passed away people didn't want to be around me anymore."

Grade 7 student

Local youth were also more likely to have had a family member and/or friend attempt or die by suicide (43% vs. 36% provincially). Around 1 in 5 (22%) had a family member who had attempted or died by suicide (including 8% who had done so in the past year), and 34% had a close friend who had attempted or died by suicide (including 19% in the past year). Those who had experienced a family member and/or close friend attempt or die by suicide were more likely to have attempted suicide themselves.



* Percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was higher than expected but is still within the releasable range.

VIOLENCE & DISCRIMINATION

DATING VIOLENCE

In the past year, 53% of North Vancouver Island students had been in a romantic relationship (vs. 43% provincially). Among these students, 11% had been the victim of physical violence within their relationship (with no gender differences). This was above the provincial rate of 8% and the local rate in 2013 (6%).

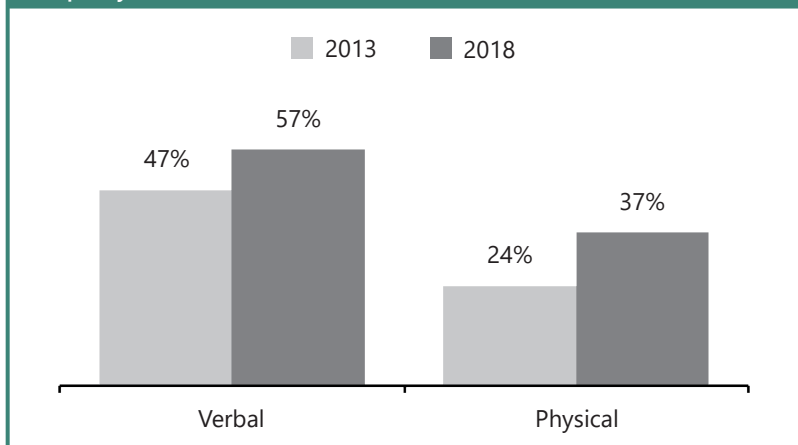
SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Overall, students in this region were more likely than youth across the province to have been verbally sexually harassed (44% vs. 39%) and physically sexually harassed (25% vs. 22%). However, when considered by gender, rates of verbal and physical sexual harassment were similar to the province for males and non-binary youth, while local females were more likely than females across BC to experience verbal (57% vs. 50%) and physical (37% vs. 31%) sexual harassment.

Males were the least likely to have experienced sexual harassment. For example, 34% of males had been verbally and/or physically sexually harassed in the past year, compared to 60% of females.

For males, rates of verbal (30%) and physical (14%) sexual harassment were comparable to those five years earlier, while rates increased for females.

North Vancouver Island females who had been sexually harassed in the past year



PHYSICAL & SEXUAL ABUSE

Similar to five years earlier, 16% of North Vancouver Island youth had been physically abused or mistreated. Females remained more likely than males to have been physically abused (19% vs. 13%).

Also, 15% of students had been sexually abused (compared to 11% provincially). The percentage of local females who were sexually abused increased (22% vs. 16% in 2013), and remained comparable to 2013 for males (7%).

DISCRIMINATION

"I have been discriminated against for my religion."

Grade 12 student

Similar to the picture across BC, 37% of students experienced at least one form of discrimination in the past year. The most commonly perceived reason for being discriminated against was physical appearance.

Youth in North Vancouver Island were less likely than those across BC to have been discriminated against because of their race, ethnicity, or skin colour (7% vs. 14%).

Compared to a decade earlier, there was a decrease in the percentage of students who experienced discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, or skin colour (7% vs. 10% in 2008). However, there was an increase from 2013 in experiences of discrimination because of their or their family's income (9% vs. 6% in 2013).

North Vancouver Island youth's perceived reasons for being discriminated against in the past year	
Physical appearance	23%
Weight	17%
Gender/sex	9%
Income or family income	9%
Race, ethnicity, or skin colour	7%
Sexual orientation (e.g., being or thought to be gay or lesbian)	6%
A disability	4%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

BULLYING

In the past year, 54% of local students had been the victim of bullying at school or on the way to or from school. This included being teased to the point where they felt bad or extremely uncomfortable, being deliberately socially excluded, and being physically attacked.

Compared to five and ten years earlier there was an increase in the percentage of youth who had been socially excluded (e.g., 41% vs. 34% in 2013); while rates of being teased (39%) and physically assaulted (10%) remained stable.

Consistent with previous years, females were more likely than males to have been teased (47% vs. 30%) and socially excluded (50% vs. 32%), and males were more likely than females to have been physically assaulted (13% vs. 8%).

Reflecting the provincial picture, 9% of North Vancouver Island students reported they had teased, excluded, or physically attacked someone at school or on the way to or from school in the past year.

WEAPON CARRYING

In the past 30 days, 6% of students carried a weapon to school, including 2% who always carried a weapon.

Students who had been the victim of bullying were more likely to carry a weapon. For example, 15% of those who had been physically attacked in the past year carried a weapon, compared to 5% of those who had not been attacked.

INTERNET SAFETY

A fifth of youth met someone online who made them feel unsafe in the past year, which was higher than five and ten years earlier (20% vs. 12% in 2013 and 16% in 2008). Females remained more likely than males to have met someone unsafe online (28% vs. 12%).

Similar to five and ten years earlier, 16% of students had been cyberbullied in the past year (21% of females vs. 11% of males). Also, 6% had cyberbullied someone else (with no gender differences), which was a decrease from 8% in 2013.



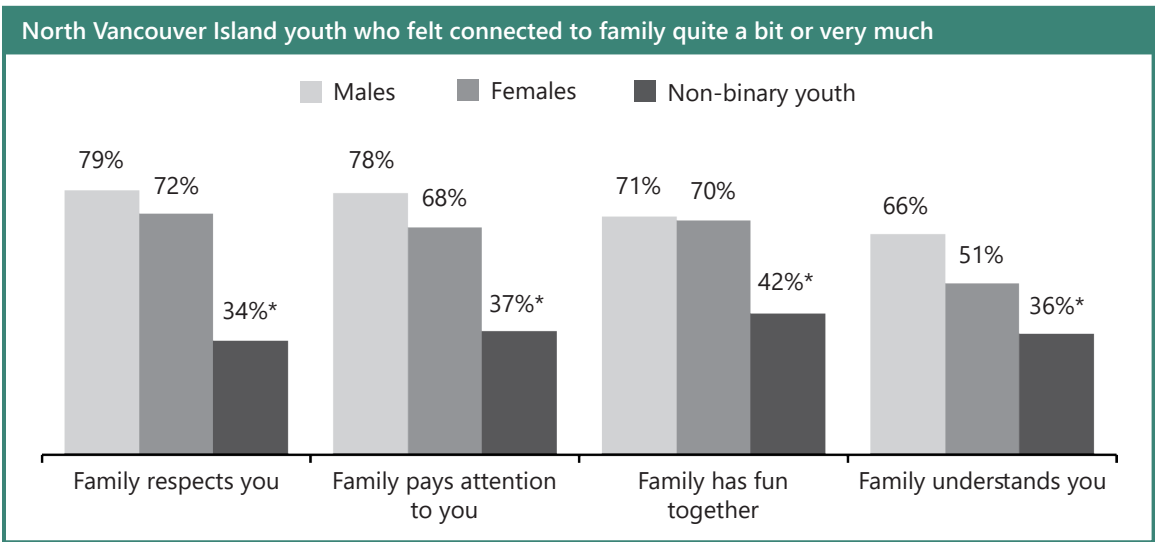
SUPPORTING HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

FAMILY

BC AHS results show that family relationships are one of the most important protective factors in the lives of youth. For example, youth who report feeling connected to family, have supportive adults they can turn to within their family, and have parents or caregivers who know what they are doing in their free time and online report better overall health and better mental health than their peers without such positive family relationships.

Youth with positive family relationships are also less likely to engage in health risk behaviours (such as substance use or risky sexual behaviours), and are more likely to have the skills to refuse negative peer pressure or unwanted sexual activity.

Most North Vancouver Island youth felt connected to their families. Overall, 74% felt respected by their family, 72% felt that their family paid attention to them, 70% felt that their family had fun together, and 58% felt their family understood them.



* Percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was higher than expected but is still within the releasable range.
Note: For 'family has fun together' the difference between males and females was not statistically significant.
Note: For 'family understands you' the difference between females and non-binary students was not statistically significant.

SUPPORTIVE FAMILY

Locally, 72% of students felt they had an adult inside their family they could talk to if they had a serious problem, with males the most likely to feel this way and non-binary youth the least likely (77% of males vs. 67% of females vs. 47%* of non-binary youth).

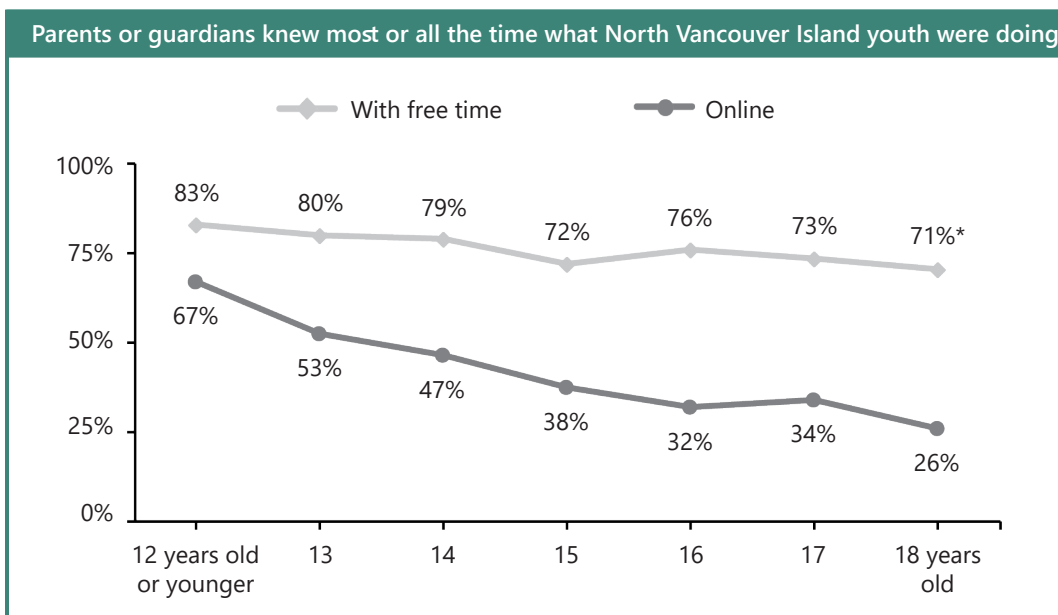
Compared to five years earlier, students were more likely to turn to a family member for help in the past year (72% vs. 65% in 2013), and the majority of these students found this experience helpful (94%).

Around 7 in 10 males and females asked a family member for help, compared to around half (49%*) of non-binary youth.

MONITORING

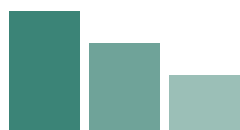
Most students had parents who monitored their free time (76%). However, 10% reported their parents rarely or never knew what they were doing in their free time, and 38% reported their parents rarely or never knew what they were doing online.

When asked how much time they had to do the things they wanted with their family, most local students (72%) felt they had the right amount of time, and 21% felt they did not have enough time.



* Percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was higher than expected but is still within the releasable range.

Note: Differences between ages were not statistically significant at every point.



SCHOOL

School connectedness is consistently one of the strongest protective factors for BC youth. It is associated with positive academic and health-related outcomes, including positive mental health and reduced likelihood of risky substance use and risky sexual behaviour.

“School has been very stressful for me and I always feel as if I don’t have enough time to have fun.”
Grade 11 student

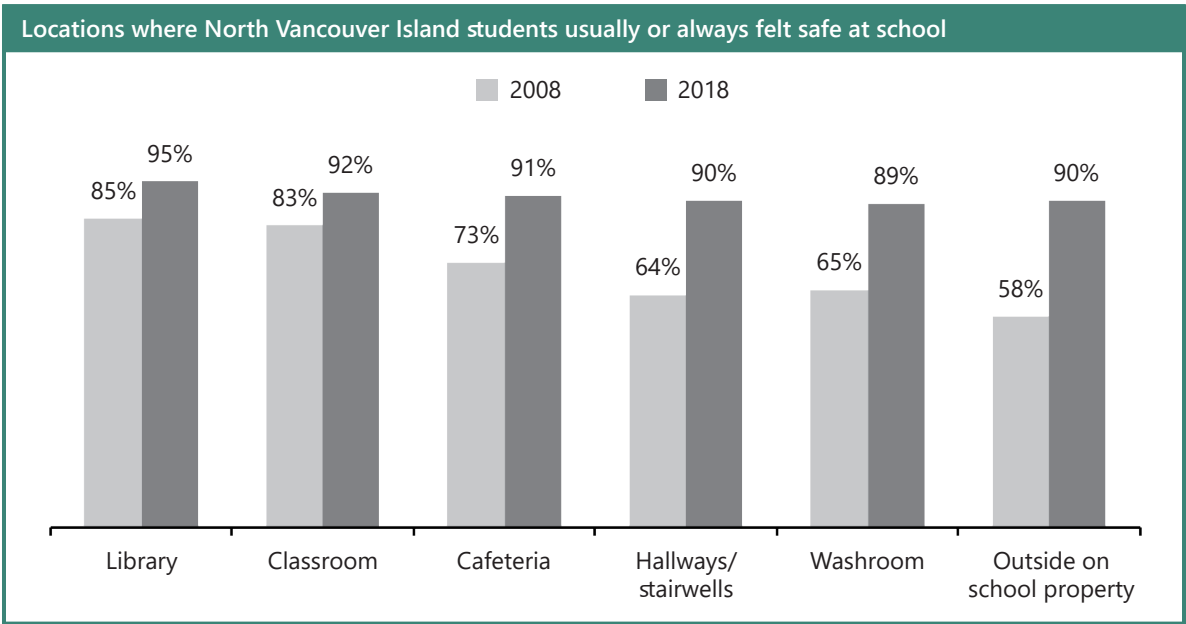
Most students in North Vancouver Island felt that school staff expected them to do well (79%), they were treated fairly by school staff (71%), their teachers cared about them (66%), they were happy to be at school (58%), they were part of their school (57%), and school staff other than teachers cared about them (56%).

SAFETY

Similar to youth across BC and to local youth over the past decade, 73% of North Vancouver Island students felt safe at school.

Compared to youth across BC, local students were more likely to feel safe in the washrooms (89% vs. 86%), outside on school grounds (90% vs. 86%), and getting to and from school (92% vs. 89%).

There were few gender differences in feeling safe in different parts of the school; and local rates of feeling safe in various parts of the school were similar to 2013, and higher than a decade earlier. Also, in 2018, 87% of students felt safe in the changing rooms.



EDUCATION PLANS

Most students planned to finish high school and continue on to post-secondary education. Local students were less likely than their peers across the province to plan to finish Grade 12 (83% vs. 87%) or attend post-secondary (77% vs. 83%). However, most youth who did not specifically plan to finish high school had not thought about their plans and only 1% did not intend to graduate.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

In the past month, North Vancouver Island youth most commonly missed school because of illness or to attend appointments. Also, more than a quarter (28%) had skipped class, with 8% doing so on three or more days.

Females were more likely than males to have missed school because of an appointment (49% vs. 31%), illness (48% vs. 36%), other school responsibilities (26% vs. 17%), family responsibilities (19% vs. 13%), bullying (7% vs. 2%), and mental health (25% vs. 8%).

COMMUTE TO SCHOOL

Similar to youth across the province, 48% of North Vancouver Island youth got to school by car; 27% walked, cycled, or skateboarded; and 24% took a school bus or public transit.

Most North Vancouver Island students (89%) had a commute to school that was less than 30 minutes, and 3% had a commute that was an hour or longer.

Reasons North Vancouver Island students missed classes in the past month	
Illness	42%
Appointments	40%
Skipping class	28%
Slept in	24%
Other school responsibilities	22%
Mental health (e.g., anxiety, depression)	17%
Family responsibilities	16%
No transportation	6%
Bullying	5%
Work	4%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.



COMMUNITY

Youth who feel connected to their community are more likely to feel safe in their neighbourhood, to have post-secondary aspirations, and to feel hopeful for the future; and they are less likely to engage in binge drinking and other health risk behaviours. They are also less likely to miss out on mental health services when they need them.

Having an adult to turn to in their community for support can be particularly helpful for youth without such an adult in their family.

Similar to youth across BC, 45% of North Vancouver Island students felt quite a bit or very connected to their community (vs. 37% in 2013), and 19% felt only a little or not at all connected.

Most local youth (73%) felt there was an adult in their neighbourhood or community (outside their family or school) who really cared about them. This was higher than the provincial rate (65%) and the local rate in 2013 (68%).

SAFETY

The majority of North Vancouver Island youth often or always felt safe in their neighbourhood in the daytime (93%) and at night (73%). There were no gender differences in feeling safe during the day, but males were the most likely to feel safe at night (81% of males vs. 66% of females and 42%* of non-binary youth).

Almost two thirds (64%) of local youth used public transit. Among these youth, 60% often or always felt safe, and 15% never or rarely did. Males were more likely than females to feel safe on transit.

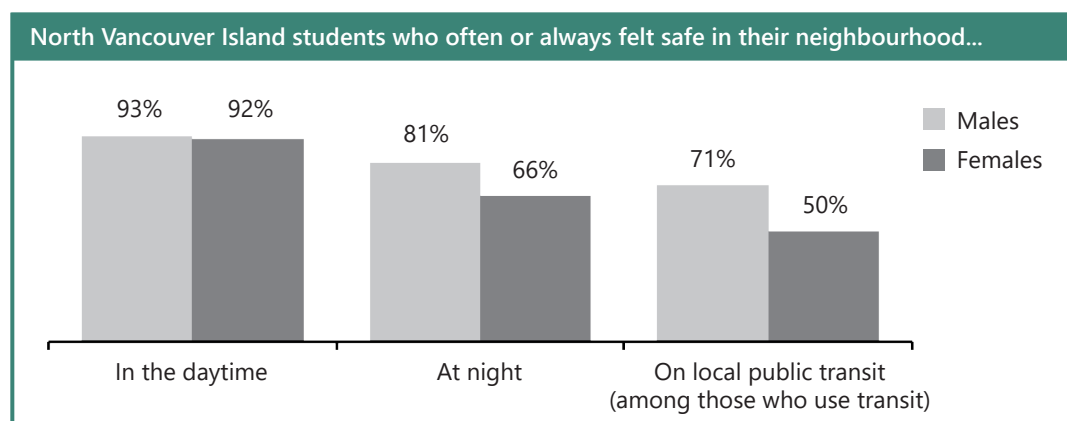
RELATIONSHIP TO THE LAND/NATURE

"I have so much to do. I just want to go in the forest and never come out."

Grade 12 student

For the first time, the BC AHS asked about feeling connected to the land or nature. Fifty-three per cent of North Vancouver Island students reported often or always feeling connected, whereas 32% sometimes felt this way, and 15% hardly ever or never felt connected.

Youth who felt they had the right amount of time to spend in nature were more likely to feel connected to the land/nature (56% vs. 49% of those who felt they did not have enough time).



Note: For 'In the daytime' the difference between males and females was not statistically significant.

SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

SUPPORTIVE ADULTS

In North Vancouver Island, 33% of youth reported having an adult outside their family who they could talk to if they had a serious problem, which was above the provincial rate of 27% and similar to the local rate in 2013.

Most youth in North Vancouver Island had an adult who helped them to make and get to appointments, prepare for post-secondary, get a job, and with homework. Local students were more likely than their peers across BC to have an adult who helped them to find employment (72% vs. 69%).

North Vancouver Island students who had an adult who helped them with ...			
	Yes	No	Do not need this
Getting to appointments	90%	5%	6%
Making appointments	90%	5%	5%
Preparing for post-secondary	76%	14%	10%
Getting a job	72%	14%	14%
Homework	65%	18%	17%

Note: Percentages for each task may not total 100% due to rounding.



ASKING ADULTS FOR HELP

Outside of family members and friends, students in North Vancouver Island most commonly approached a teacher for help, and the majority found this experience helpful.

Local students were less likely than youth across BC to ask for help from an online community or support group (5% vs. 6%), and were more likely to ask a friend's parent for help (25% vs. 21%).

Adults outside their family whom North Vancouver Island students approached for help and found helpful in the past year		
	Asked for help	Found helpful (among those who asked for help)
Teacher	53%	92%
Doctor	35%	91%
Sports coach	29%	93%
School counsellor	28%	82%
Friend's parent	25%	93%
School staff (other than teacher, counsellor, or Aboriginal Education Worker)	24%	85%
Nurse	18%	92%
Mental health counsellor	13%	79%
Youth worker	8%	78%
Aboriginal Education Worker [†]	8%	70%
Social worker	7%	59%*
Spiritual leader	5%	74%*
Online community/online support group	5%	71%*
Telephone helpline	5%	50%*
Indigenous Elder [†]	4%	74%*

[†]Among Indigenous students, 23% had approached an Aboriginal Education Worker for help and 75%* found this experience helpful, while 16% had approached an Elder and 85%* found this experience helpful.

* Percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was higher than expected but is still within the releasable range.

FRIENDS

The BC AHS has shown that having three or more in-person friends is associated with a number of positive experiences, including positive mental health and a reduced likelihood of being bullied.

The survey results also show that if students have friends who disapprove of them engaging in certain health risk behaviours, they are less likely to engage in those behaviours.

The majority of students in North Vancouver Island (97%) had at least one close friend in their school or neighbourhood, and 80% had three or more close friends. Males were more likely than females and non-binary youth to have three or more close friends (84% vs. 78% of females vs. 63%* of non-binary youth).

Just over a third of North Vancouver Island students (36%) had at least one close friend online whom they had never met in person, and 16% had three or more such friends. As with in-person friends, males were more likely than females to have three or more online friends who they had never met (22% vs. 9%).

In the past year, 7% of youth had dated someone they had met online and had never met in person, including 1% who had two or more online partners.

Connecting with friends

When asked how much time they had to do the things they wanted with friends, 67% felt like they had the right amount of time, 30% did not have enough time, and 3% had too much time. Females and non-binary students were more likely than males to feel they had insufficient time with their friends, as were older youth in comparison to younger ones (e.g., 40% of 17-year-olds did not have enough time with their friends vs. 22% of 13-year-olds).



Asking for help

In the past year, 73% of local students asked a friend they knew in person for help and 94% of these students found their friend helpful. Also, 19% asked a friend they knew exclusively online for help, and 81% found the experience helpful.

Females were more likely than males and non-binary youth to have sought help from a friend they knew in person (e.g., 78% of females vs. 69% of males). However, males were more likely than females to have found their friends helpful (96% vs. 93%; among those who had asked for help).

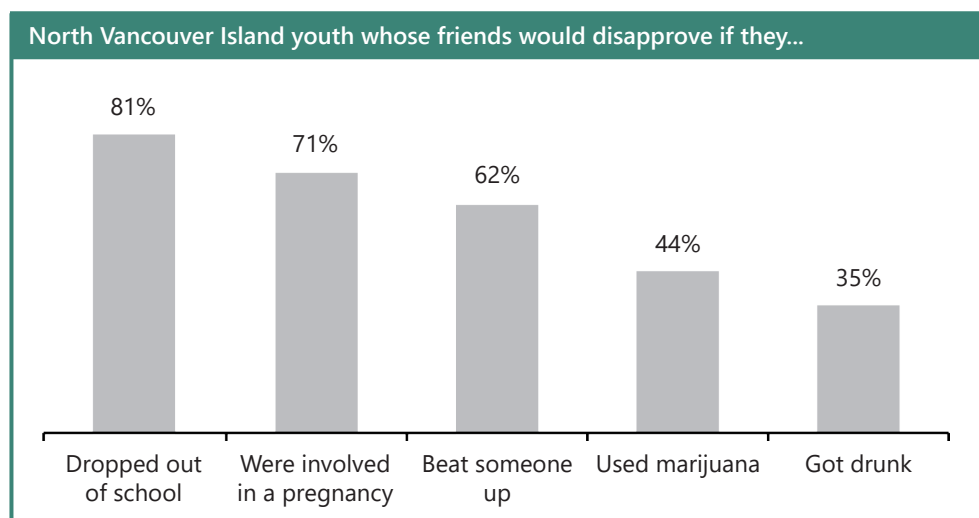
In the past year, 82% of students had a friend who had asked them for help (86% of females vs. 77% of males), and most of these youth (96%) felt able to help.

Friends with prosocial attitudes

Most North Vancouver Island youth had friends with prosocial attitudes to health risk behaviours. However, they were less likely than youth across BC to have friends who would be upset if they used marijuana (44% vs. 55%) or got drunk (35% vs. 45%).

Females were more likely than males to have friends who would be upset with them if they dropped out (86% vs. 76%), were involved in a pregnancy (75% vs. 67%), beat someone up (75% vs. 48%), used marijuana (49% vs. 40%), or got drunk (40% vs. 31%).

Compared to five years earlier, local youth were less likely to report their friends would be upset with them if they were involved in a pregnancy (71% vs. 78% in 2013) or dropped out of school (81% vs. 86%).



YOUNG PEOPLE'S STRENGTHS & RESILIENCY

QUALITY OF LIFE & WELL-BEING

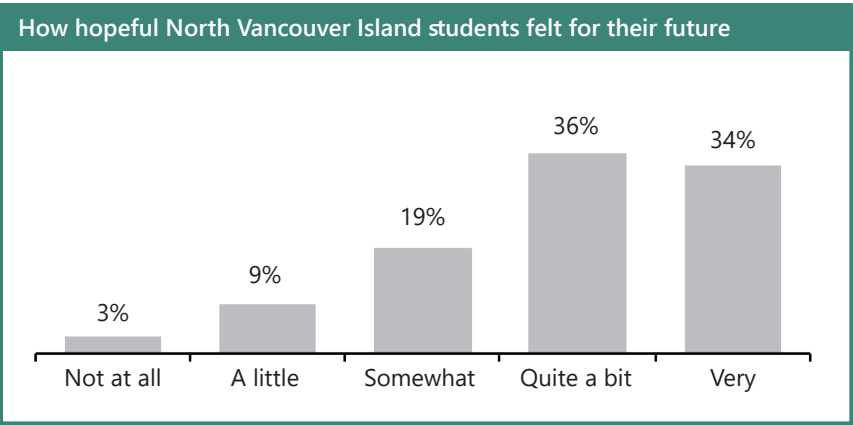
North Vancouver Island youth generally felt positively about their quality of life. For example, most reported they had a good life and their life was going well. Males were the most likely to rate their quality of life positively.

HOPEFULNESS

Over two thirds of North Vancouver Island students felt quite or very hopeful for their future. Youth who felt hopeful were more likely than their peers to report positive mental health, including feeling happy, and were less likely to report extreme stress and despair.

Quality of life and well-being among North Vancouver Island youth			
	Agree/ Strongly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree/ Strongly disagree
I have a good life	81%	14%	5%
My life is going well	75%	16%	9%
I have what I want in life	61%	25%	15%
My life is going just right	58%	26%	17%
I wish I had a different life	15%	19%	65%

Note: Percentages within a row may not equal 100% due to rounding.



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



PERSEVERANCE

For the first time, the BC AHS included a question about how often students pushed themselves to achieve their goals when things went wrong. Three percent of local students indicated that things had never gone wrong for them.

Among those who had experienced challenges or setbacks, 43% always pushed themselves to achieve their goals in these situations (with males the most likely to do so), while 52% sometimes pushed themselves, and 5% never pushed themselves.

The more often North Vancouver Island students persevered when faced with obstacles, the more likely they were to experience positive mental health and to have plans to pursue post-secondary education, and the less likely they were to experience extreme stress.

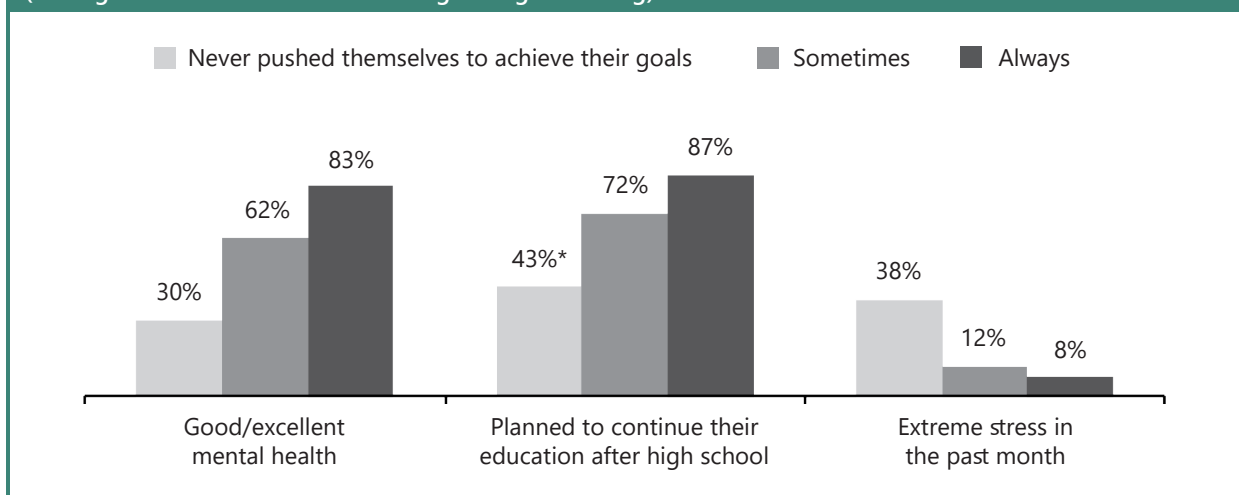
FEELING SKILLED & CONFIDENT

There was a local increase in youth who were able to name something they were really good at (such as sports, school work, relationships, and art), from 78% in 2013 to 82%.

The majority (60%) of local students also usually felt good about themselves. Students who felt good about themselves were more likely than those who did not feel this way to feel hopeful for their future (85% vs. 38%).

As in 2013, males were more likely than females to be able to name something they were good at and to feel good about themselves.

How often North Vancouver Island students pushed themselves to achieve their goals when things went wrong (among those who indicated that things had gone wrong)



* Percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was higher than anticipated but is still within the releasable range.

UNSTRUCTURED TIME

Nearly two thirds (65%) of local youth felt they had the right amount of time to do what they wanted on their own, whereas 25% did not have enough time, and the remainder felt they had too much time.

Students who felt they had the right amount of time to spend on their own were more likely to report positive mental health and well-being. For example, they were more likely to feel happy in the past month and to feel their life was going well, and were less likely to experience extreme stress.

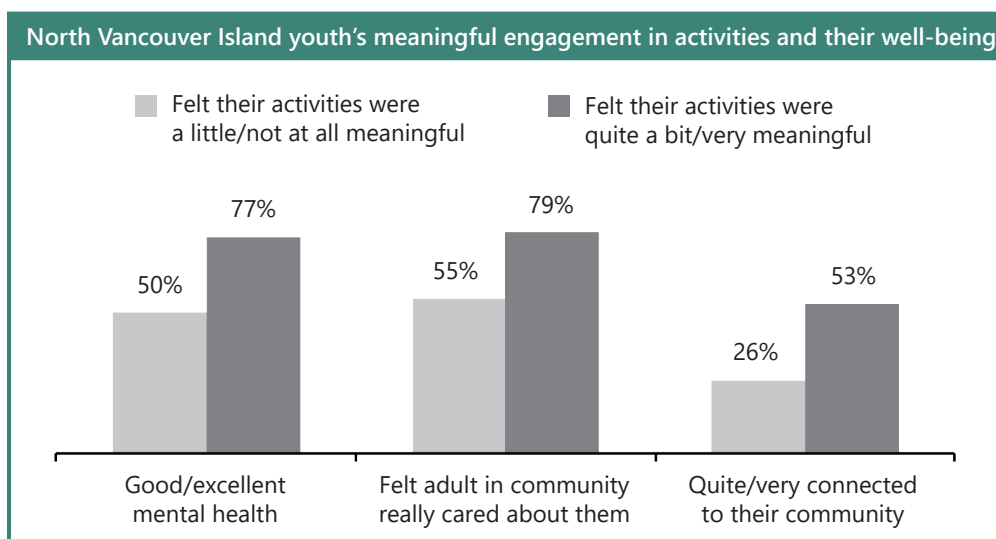
SPIRITUALITY

Eleven percent of North Vancouver Island students reported that spirituality was very important in their life, while 19% felt it was somewhat important, 17% a little important, 41% felt it was not important to them, and the remainder were unsure how important it was to them.

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

Comparable to results five years earlier, 70% of local youth felt that the activities they took part in were meaningful to them, and 43% felt their ideas were listened to and acted upon in these activities.

North Vancouver Island youth who experienced meaningful engagement in their activities were more likely to report positive mental health, to feel an adult in their community cared about them, and to feel connected to their community.



TOPICS NORTH VANCOUVER ISLAND YOUTH WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT

The final question on the 2018 BC Adolescent Health Survey was an open-ended question which asked youth if there were any topics which affected their health that they wanted to learn more about. Locally, 3% of students provided a comment and identified at least one health-related topic they would like to receive training about or see included in their school's curriculum.

The most common topic youth identified wanting to learn more about was mental health, including information about specific conditions and how they are managed.

"I would like to learn about mental health. Like how anxiety can affect physical health and why it happens in the first place."

Grade 7 student

"We should learn about social anxiety and depression."

Grade 10 student

"I want information on mental health, and the effects of traumatic events (physical/emotional) on mental health."

Grade 12 student

Sexual and physical health were also common topics youth wanted more training on, including information about various health conditions, how to adopt a healthy lifestyle, general sex education, and sex education aimed at LGBTQ2S youth.

"We need sex education! Taught by non-teachers not from our schools. Teach boys about periods and sexual assault."

Grade 11 student

"I believe high school students should be taught more about consent and sex ed in general because it is rarely spoken of and is almost frowned upon to speak of any of it."

Grade 10 student

"I wish there was a more in-depth course about health in schools including info about sex and general fitness. I think most people are too shy to ask but could greatly benefit from more information regarding those topics."

Grade 11 student

"[I want to learn about] nutrition!"

Grade 12 student

Other topics students wanted to learn more about included substance use, healthy relationships, discrimination, and sexual orientation and gender.

"Kids need to be educated on relationships."

Grade 12 student

"[I want to learn about] racism."

Grade 10 student

"I learned a lot about cell phone use in the past year, and I think that other people/kids should have more education about this."

Grade 11 student

"I want info on vaping."

Grade 12 student

McCREARY RESOURCES

BC AHS PROVINCIAL & REGIONAL RESULTS



This report provides an overview of the BC Adolescent Health Survey results for youth in North Vancouver Island Health Service Delivery Area. Provincial results and results for BC's other Health Service Delivery Areas are available at www.mcs.bc.ca.

ADDITIONAL PUBLICATIONS



A range of special topic reports and posters are being published using data from the 2018 BC AHS. These include an in-depth report about the health of Métis youth who completed the survey, a poster considering BC AHS results in the context of Canada's commitment to implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a youth-led investigation of substance use among BC youth, a vaping poster and a helmet use poster created by youth, and an in-depth report about marijuana use among BC youth.

PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS



McCreary staff are available to present BC AHS findings for North Vancouver Island, and to conduct workshops which explore how local stakeholders can utilize the results. For more information contact mccreary@mcs.bc.ca.

ENGAGING YOUTH IN THE BC AHS RESULTS

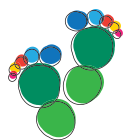


McCreary's Youth Advisory and Action Council (YAC) have created a youth-friendly poster of the key findings of the provincial report. Additional youth-friendly posters will be available on a range of topics, including substance use and mental health. The YAC have also created a workshop to share the results of the survey with their peers. To book a workshop contact mccreary@mcs.bc.ca.

YOUTH ACTION GRANTS



The YAC distributed over \$87,000 in Youth Action Grants (YAGs) to youth (aged 12–19) in school districts that participated in the 2013 BC AHS (including North Vancouver Island). The granting program for the 2018 BC AHS is now accepting applications from youth aged 12 to 19 who want to improve youth health in their school or community in one of the areas highlighted in the BC AHS. The YAC are also available to offer grant-writing workshops to young people who may be thinking of applying for a YAG. To book a workshop contact mccreary@mcs.bc.ca.



BC AHS NEXT STEPS

McCreary is committed to returning the results of the 2018 BC AHS to youth in North Vancouver Island. An interactive 'Next Steps' workshop is available to engage young people in a dialogue about the results and youth health in their community. Youth who participate in the workshops can receive funding and support to conduct youth health projects in their school or community. For more details or to book a workshop contact mccreary@mcs.bc.ca. A Next Steps curriculum toolkit is also available on our website for anyone wanting to conduct their own Next Steps.





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