



BALANCE AND CONNECTION IN SOUTH VANCOUVER ISLAND



THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF OUR YOUTH

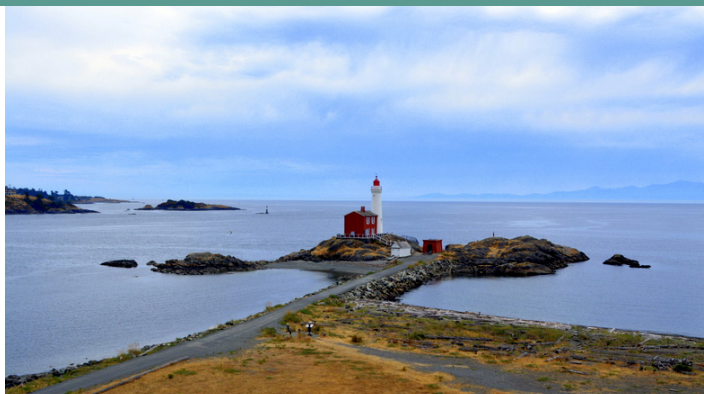


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BALANCE AND CONNECTION IN SOUTH VANCOUVER ISLAND: THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF OUR YOUTH

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



KEY FINDINGS

■ Compared to five years earlier, the percentage of South Vancouver Island youth who identified as European decreased (60% vs. 68% in 2013), and the percentages who identified as Latin/South/Central American (7% vs. 5%) and Southeast Asian (5% vs. 3%) increased.

■ Eight percent of students identified as Indigenous. Around 4 in 10 (39%) of these students reported that at least one member of their family had been in residential school, most commonly their grandparents (21%).

■ Mirroring the provincial pattern, there was a decrease in local students who rated their overall health as good or excellent (81% vs. 89% in 2013), or their mental health as good or excellent (71% vs. 81%).

■ Compared to five years earlier, local students were more likely to report having Anxiety Disorder/panic attacks (22% vs. 10% in 2013), Depression (17% vs. 10%), and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (3% vs. 1%).

■ The percentage of students who missed out on needed medical care in the past year continued to decrease (8% vs. 10% in 2013 vs. 14% in 2008). However, there was a rise in those who missed out on needed mental health services (19% vs. 12% in 2013).

■ South Vancouver Island youth were less likely than five years earlier to have experienced a concussion (13% vs. 18% in 2013), with a similar pattern for males (15% vs. 20%) and females (11% vs. 15%).

■ Local youth were more likely than their peers across BC to always wear a helmet when cycling (61% vs. 45%). They were also more likely to always wear one when mountain biking (76% vs. 69% provincially), BMXing (55% vs. 42%), and skateboarding (35% vs. 27%).

■ Among youth who had ever had sex, there was a decrease in those who used a condom to prevent pregnancy the last time they were sexually active (e.g., 54% vs. 64% in 2013), and an increase in those using withdrawal as their only contraceptive method (11% vs. 7% in 2008), and emergency contraception (6% vs. 3% in 2008).

■ Locally, 48% of youth had tried alcohol, 30% had used marijuana and 21% had smoked tobacco. These rates were higher than across BC and similar to local rates five years earlier.

■ Among youth who had tried marijuana, the percentage of local youth who waited until they were at least 15 years old to first try it increased steadily over the past decade (46% vs. 39% in 2013 vs. 30% in 2008).

■ Reflecting the provincial picture, 27% of local youth had vaped in the past month, including 22% who had vaped with nicotine and 18% who had vaped without nicotine.

■ In the past year, 92% of South Vancouver Island students participated in at least one extra-curricular activity (such as sports, dance, clubs, art, or volunteering), including 83% who did so on at least a weekly basis. Compared to youth across the province, local youth were less likely to participate weekly in volunteer activities (13% vs. 18%) and cultural or traditional activities (5% vs. 7%). They were also less likely to volunteer weekly than local youth five years earlier (13% vs. 16%).

■ Most South Vancouver Island students had experienced bereavement including due to an accident (13%), suicide (11%), an overdose from a substance other than fentanyl (5%), a fentanyl overdose (4%), and violence (3%). Also, 18% had a family member who had attempted or died by suicide, and 33% had a close friend who had done so.

■ Overall, 15% of South Vancouver Island youth reported they had been physically abused or mistreated and 12% had been sexually abused. Rates of physical abuse were consistent with five years earlier as was the percentage of males who had been sexually abused (6%). However, the percentage of females who had been sexually abused increased from 14% in 2013 to 17%.

■ Compared to five years earlier, students were more likely to have experienced discrimination on the basis of their physical appearance (22% vs. 19% in 2013); race, ethnicity, or skin colour (13% vs. 7%); income or family income (8% vs. 5%); and their sexual orientation (7% vs. 5%).

■ Most students felt connected to their family and there was an increase in those who turned to a family member for help in the past year (72% vs. 67% in 2013). The majority of students (94%) found the support they received from family helpful.

■ Similar to the province and the local rate in 2013, most South Vancouver Island students planned to complete Grade 12 (86%). However, local students were less likely than those five years earlier to plan to pursue post-secondary education (81% vs. 85% in 2013).

■ Local students were more likely to feel safe at school than their peers across BC (77% vs. 73% provincially).

■ There was an increase from five years earlier in the percentage of youth who felt connected to their community (42% vs. 37% in 2013), and who had an adult in their neighbourhood or community (outside their family or school) who really cared about them (66% vs. 62%).

■ There was a decrease in the percentage of youth who felt that the activities they took part in were meaningful to them (68% vs. 73% in 2013). Youth who did experience 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.

■ South Vancouver Island youth generally felt positively about their quality of life. For example, most indicated that they had a good life (80%) and their life was going well (74%).

■ Students were asked an open-ended question about any health-related topics they would like to learn about. The most common topic local youth wanted 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 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 is available to download 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 South Vancouver Island Health Service Delivery Area (HSDA).

South Vancouver Island HSDA is comprised of four school districts: Greater Victoria (SD 61), Sooke (SD 62), Saanich (SD 63), and Gulf Islands (SD 64). All school districts in this region have participated in the survey since 1998, and three of the four have participated in all six waves of the survey. The Conseil scolaire francophone school district (SD 93) also participated for the first time, and accounted for 5% of the sample in this region.

One school district changed consent procedures between 2013 and 2018. This change ensured the sample was the most representative that it could be. Additional analyses were conducted to assess if this change or the addition of students in SD 93 may have affected the regional results. This did not appear to be the case.

This report focuses on the 2018 local 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 South 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 by 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 South 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 South 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 South 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 South Vancouver Island students 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 SOUTH VANCOUVER ISLAND

BACKGROUND

Students in South Vancouver Island most commonly identified as European (60%). This percentage was higher than across BC (46% provincially), but lower locally than five and ten years earlier (e.g., 68% in 2013).

The percentage of youth who identified as Southeast Asian increased steadily over the past decade (5% vs. 3% in 2013 vs. 2% in 2008). There was also an increase from five years earlier in those who identified as Latin/South/Central American (7% vs. 5% in 2013), and increases from a decade earlier in those who identified as East Asian (13% vs. 10% in 2008) or did not know their heritage (12% vs. 8%).

BIRTHPLACE & LANGUAGE

The percentage of students born in Canada continued to decline (80% vs. 84% in 2013 vs. 88% in 2008). Among students who were born abroad, 48% had been in Canada less than two years, and 23% had been here between two and five years.

Locally, 11% of youth were here as international students (an increase from 7% in 2013, and above the provincial rate of 6%). The percentage of local youth who arrived in Canada as refugees was too small to report.

Over 4 in 10 students (44%) spoke a language other than English at home, with 14% doing so most of the time. These rates were lower than were seen provincially, where over half (53%) spoke another language at home, and 23% did so most of the time.

Family background		
	South Vancouver Island	BC
European	60%	46%
East Asian	13%	18%
Indigenous	8%	10%
Latin/South/Central American	7%	5%
Southeast Asian	5%	8%
South Asian	4%	11%
African	3%	3%
West Asian	2%	3%
Australian/Pacific Islander	2%	2%
Don't know	12%	10%
Other	4%	4%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

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

INDIGENOUS YOUTH

Among the 8% of local students who identified as Indigenous, the majority were First Nations (61%) and 30% were Métis.

Twenty-three percent of Indigenous students had ever lived on a First Nations reserve, including 16% who currently lived on a reserve.

Around a quarter (24%) of Indigenous students could speak at least a few words of an Indigenous language, although few were fluent.

Around 4 in 10 Indigenous students (39%) reported that at least one member of their family had been in residential school, most commonly their grandparents (21%). However, this is likely an underestimation as 36% of Indigenous students did not know if any of 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 South Vancouver Island students were female on their birth certificate and the other half were male. For nearly all youth (97%), their current gender identity corresponded with their sex at birth, whereas 1% were transgender (e.g., assigned female on their birth certificate and currently identified as male), and 2% were non-binary (including 1% who were not yet sure of how they identified).

Most students identified their sexual orientation as straight (88% of males vs. 72% of females). Females were more likely than males to identify as mostly straight (10% vs. 4%), bisexual (9% vs. 3%), or to indicate they were not yet sure of their sexual orientation (7% vs. 3%).

Sexual orientation of South Vancouver Island youth	
Straight	78%
Mostly straight	7%
Bisexual	6%
Gay or lesbian	2%
Not sure yet	5%
Something other than those listed above	2%

Note: Among students who identified a sexual orientation other than the options listed on the survey, the two most 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. In total, 3% had been in foster care, 2% had been on a Kith and Kin agreement, 1% had stayed in a group home, and 1% had been held in a custody centre. Also, 1% of those who were age eligible had been on a Youth Agreement.

LIVING SITUATION

Most youth (94%) lived with at least one parent. Compared to 2013, they were more likely to report living with their parents, grandparents, and siblings.

On a typical school day, 18% of local students had caretaking responsibilities for a relative (e.g., a relative with a disability or younger sibling), and 59% took care of a pet or other animal. Females were more likely than males to be caring for a pet (63% vs. 56%) or a relative (20% vs. 15%).

Around a quarter (26%) of youth had moved from one home to another in the past year (compared to 22% in 2013), including 5% who had moved three or more times. Also, 9% of students had run away from home and 6% had been kicked out in the past year.

Nearly all students often or always felt safe inside their home (93% vs. 96% in 2013), while 2% never or rarely felt safe there.

Who South Vancouver Island youth live with most of the time			
	2013	2018	Change
Mother/Stepmother	82%	86%	↑
Father/Stepfather	67%	75%	↑
Two mothers or two fathers	1%	1%	–
Grandparent(s)	5%	9%	↑
Foster parent(s)	1%	1%	–
Sibling(s)/Step-sibling(s)	53%	65%	↑
Own child or own children	NR	NR	–
Other children or youth	2%	2%	–
Other related adult(s)	3%	3%	–
Other unrelated adult(s)	3%	5%	–
Live alone	1%	<1%	–
Live with both parents at different times	12%	11%	–

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

Almost 4 in 10 students (38%) had worked at a paid job during the school year. This was above the provincial rate of 33%, and a local increase from 2013 (32%). Among students who were employed, 63% worked 12 hours or less and 8% worked in excess of 20 hours.

PHONE USE

The 2018 BC AHS asked students about their technology use on their last school day. Ninety-five percent of local students had a cell phone, smart-phone, or other portable device. More than 8 in 10 students with a device used it to listen to music, communicate with friends they knew in person, and engage in social media.

South Vancouver Island students' phone use on their last school day (among those with a phone)	
Listening to music	87%
Communicating with friends they know in person	86%
Using social media	84%
Communicating with parents/guardians	80%
Watching shows, movies, YouTube, etc.	77%
Finding information (other than health information)	65%
Doing homework	59%
Playing games	56%
Communicating with someone they know only online	26%
Finding health information	19%
Watching porn	14%
Sexting	6%
Gambling	2%

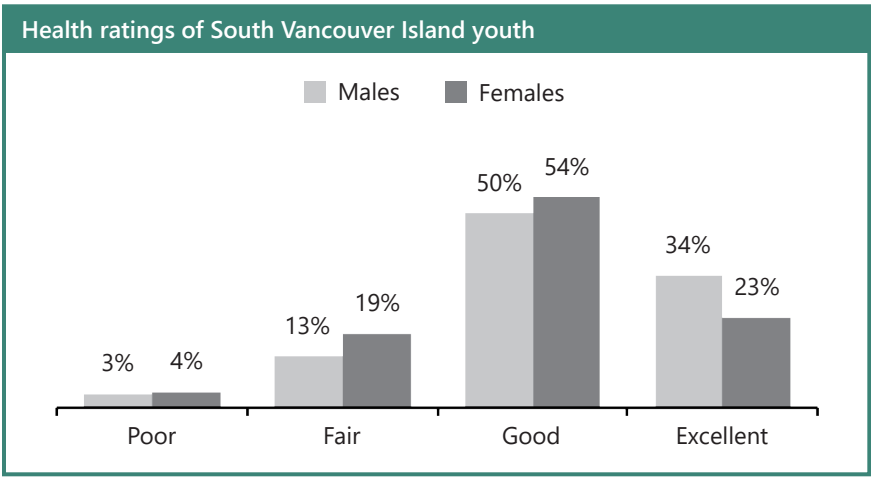
Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

HEALTH PROFILE OF SOUTH 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.

Comparable to the provincial picture, 81% of South Vancouver Island students rated their health as good or excellent. However, this represented a local decrease from previous survey years (89% in 2013 and 85% in 2008). Males remained more likely than females to rate their health as excellent.



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



HEALTH CONDITIONS & DISABILITIES

A third (33%) of students indicated having at least one health condition or disability. They most commonly reported having a mental health condition, and were more likely to have such a condition than five years earlier (18% vs. 12% in 2013).

Forty-five percent of students with a health condition or disability reported that it prevented them from doing things their peers could do.

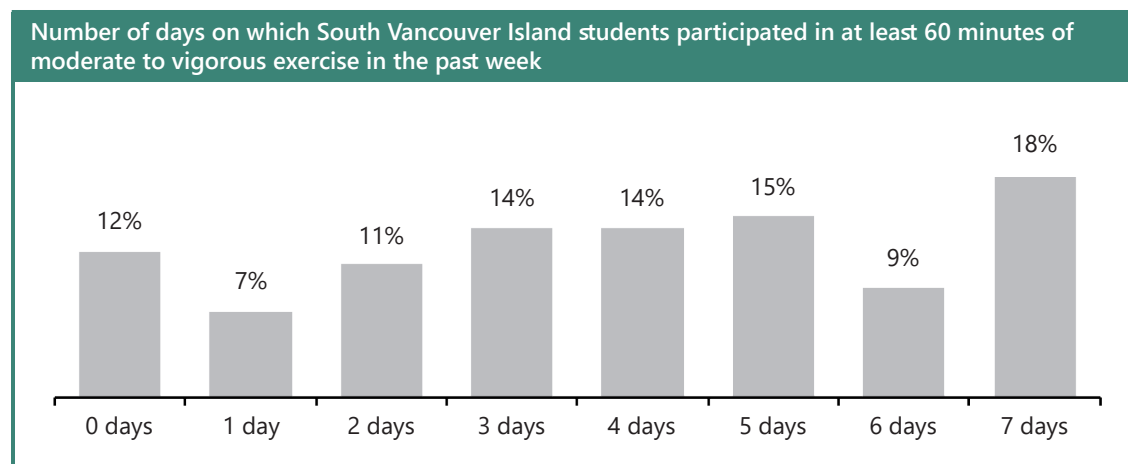
Health conditions and disabilities reported by South Vancouver Island youth	
Mental health condition	18%
Long-term/chronic medical condition	10%
Learning disability	6%
Sensory disability	4%
Severe allergy requiring EpiPen	3%
Physical disability	1%
Other	2%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The Canadian Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines state that children and youth aged 5–17 should complete at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise every day. Similar to the provincial results and to local findings five years earlier, 19% of youth aged 12–17 met these recommendations in the week before taking the survey (24% of males vs. 13% of females).

The Guidelines recommend that individuals aged 18 or older take part in 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each week. A little over half of students aged 18 or older (52%) met this recommendation by participating in 60 minutes of exercise on at least three days in the past week (64% of males vs. 40% of females).



SLEEP

"I would like to mention that if schools started a little later, youth would be able to get a little more sleep, which I think would really benefit us."

Grade 12 student

"We need more sleep!"

Grade 9 student

Similar to the provincial findings, 51% of students slept for at least eight hours on the night before completing the survey (vs. 55% in 2013), including 11% who slept five hours or less.

Younger students were more likely than older ones to have slept for at least eight hours. There were no gender differences.

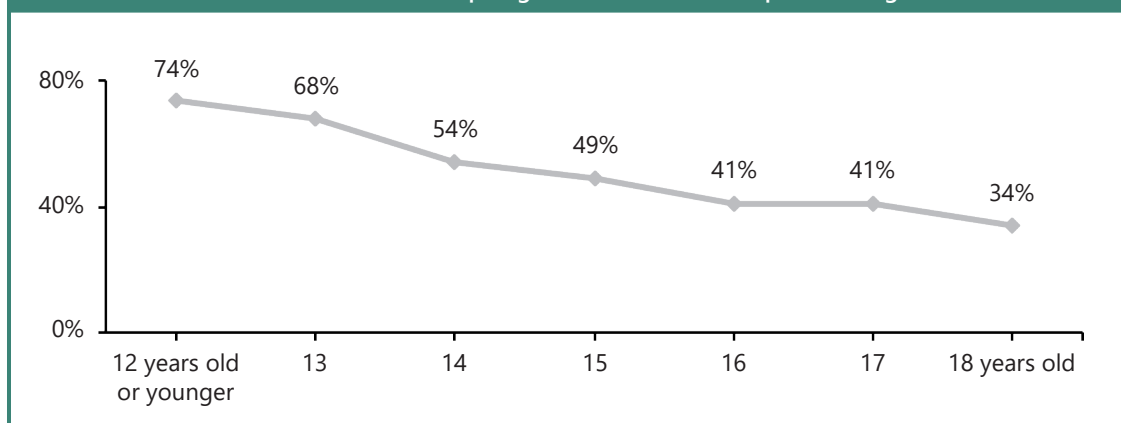
Students reported doing various activities after the time they were normally expected to be asleep. These included chatting or texting (56%),

homework (45%), gaming (27%), and other online activities (such as watching videos, checking social media; 71%). Females were more likely than males to chat/text (60% vs. 53%) and do their homework (52% vs. 37%), but were less likely to report gaming (14% vs. 39%).

Forty-four percent of students reported going offline after their expected bedtime (e.g., turning off their phone, putting it on silent mode, or putting it in another room). Females were more likely than males to go offline at night (47% vs. 40%).

On the day they completed the survey, 50% of students had woken up feeling like they got enough rest. Students who reported going offline after their expected bedtime were more likely to wake up feeling rested (56% vs. 45% of those who did not go offline). Among students who went offline and did not engage in any activity (e.g., homework) after their expected bedtime, 65% woke up feeling rested.

South Vancouver Island students who slept eight or more hours the previous night



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

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

"[I want to learn] how to contact a doctor/nurse to make an appointment."

Grade 11 student

Most local students had accessed health care in the past year, but 24% had not needed health care and 5% did not get the care they felt they needed (similar to youth across BC).

Students in South Vancouver Island were less likely than those across the province to have visited a family doctor (54% vs. 61% provincially) or a nurse (7% vs. 9%); and were more likely to have visited a walk-in clinic (40% vs. 35%), a counsellor/psychologist (14% vs. 11%), or a school wellness centre (4% vs. 2%).

Where South Vancouver Island youth got health care in the past year

Family doctor	54%
Walk-in clinic	40%
Emergency room (ER)	14%
Counsellor/psychologist	14%
Nurse	7%
Youth clinic	5%
School wellness centre	4%
Traditional healer	2%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

When asked specifically about accessing medical care when they were physically sick or hurt in the past year, 57% of students reported they did not need this type of medical help and 36% got the help they needed. Eight percent of local students had not received the help they needed, which was similar to youth across BC.

Over the past decade, the percentage of students who had not received the medical help they needed decreased (8% vs. 10% in 2013 vs. 14% in 2008), with similar patterns for males (e.g., 6% vs. 13% in 2008) and females (9% vs. 16% in 2008).

DENTAL VISITS

Most youth (83%) had been to the dentist in the past 12 months, while 10% had visited the dentist between a year and two years ago, 5% had last been to the dentist more than two years ago, and 3% had never been.

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

NUTRITION

Most students (94%) ate fruit and/or vegetables the day before completing the survey, which was similar to five years earlier and slightly higher than in 2008 (92%).

Compared to local results in 2013, there was an increase in the percentage of students who ate fast food (43% vs. 38%) and food grown or caught by them or their family (17% vs. 13%), as well as those who drank water (98% vs. 96%) and energy drinks (7% vs. 5%).

Local youth were less likely than those across the province to have eaten fast food (43% vs. 47% provincially) or traditional foods from their background (27% vs. 41%).

MEALS

"I have eating problems, but not enough to be anorexic or bulimic. I'm doing better now with the help from my parents, but until last month I was skipping lunch every day and counting my calories."

Grade 11 student

Similar to the province as a whole, there was a decline from 2013 in the percentage of students who always ate breakfast on school days (51% vs. 56%) and a rise in the percentage who never did so (16% vs. 12%). As was the case provincially, males were the most likely to always eat breakfast on school days (e.g., 57% vs. 46% of females).

What South Vancouver Island students ate or drank yesterday		
	Once or twice	Three or more times
Water	22%	75%
Fruit	58%	26%
Vegetables or green salad	63%	19%
Sweets (cookies, cake, candy, chocolate, etc.)	63%	16%
Fast food (pizza, hot dogs, burgers, chips, fries, etc.)	37%	6%
Pop	30%	4%
Traditional food from their background	19%	9%
Food grown/caught by them or their family	13%	4%
Energy drinks	6%	1%

Among local students who ate breakfast, the majority ate at home, while 10% got their breakfast on the way to school, and 8% got it at school.

The 2018 survey asked for the first time about eating lunch and dinner. In South Vancouver Island, 65% of students always ate lunch while 4% never did, and 87% always ate dinner while 1% never did. Males were the most likely to always eat lunch and dinner.

Around 4 in 10 students (39%) always ate three meals on school days, which was similar to youth across BC.

EATING BEHAVIOURS

"I struggle with a severe eating disorder and the only place you can get help that I know of is the hospital which is not ideal. It would be nice if there were more resources in place for this issue as it is extremely common among kids my age."

Grade 10 student

In the past year, 13% of youth had vomited on purpose after eating (purged), including 2% who had done so two or three times a month and a little under 2% who had done so at least once a week.

Over the past five years, the percentage of local males who purged increased (11% vs. 5% in 2013), while the percentage among females remained stable (15%).



INJURIES & INJURY PREVENTION

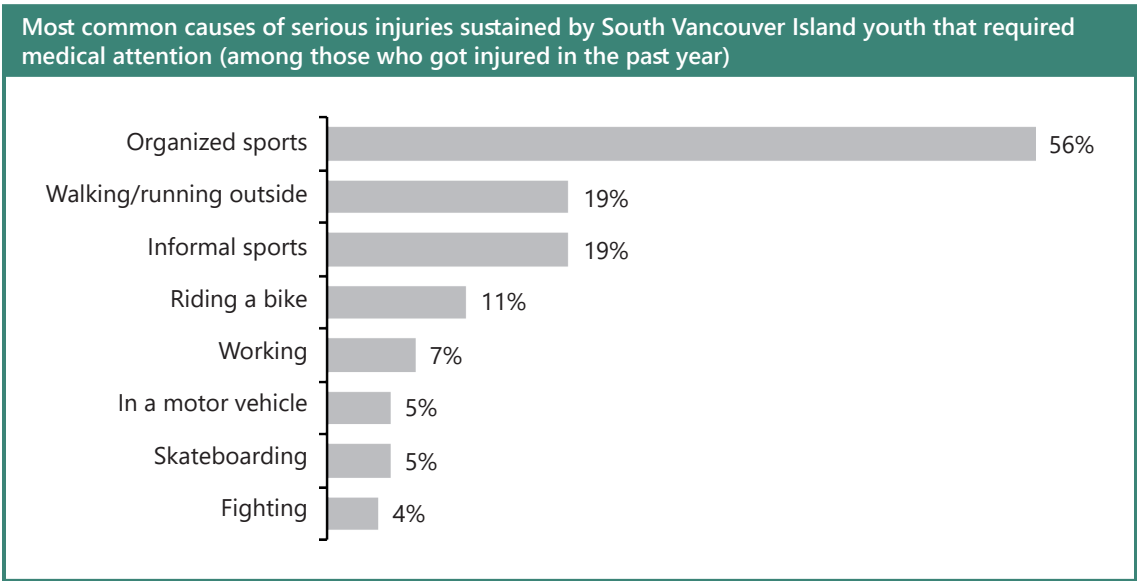
INJURIES

Reflecting the provincial picture, 26% of youth sustained an injury serious enough to require medical attention. This included 7% who experienced two serious injuries and 4% who had three or more.

The percentage of males who were seriously injured decreased, while there was no change among females.

This meant that unlike in previous years when males were more likely than females to have been seriously injured, there were no such gender difference in 2018.

Consistent with findings across BC, the most common cause of serious injury was playing or training for organized sports.



Note: Youth could choose more than one response.



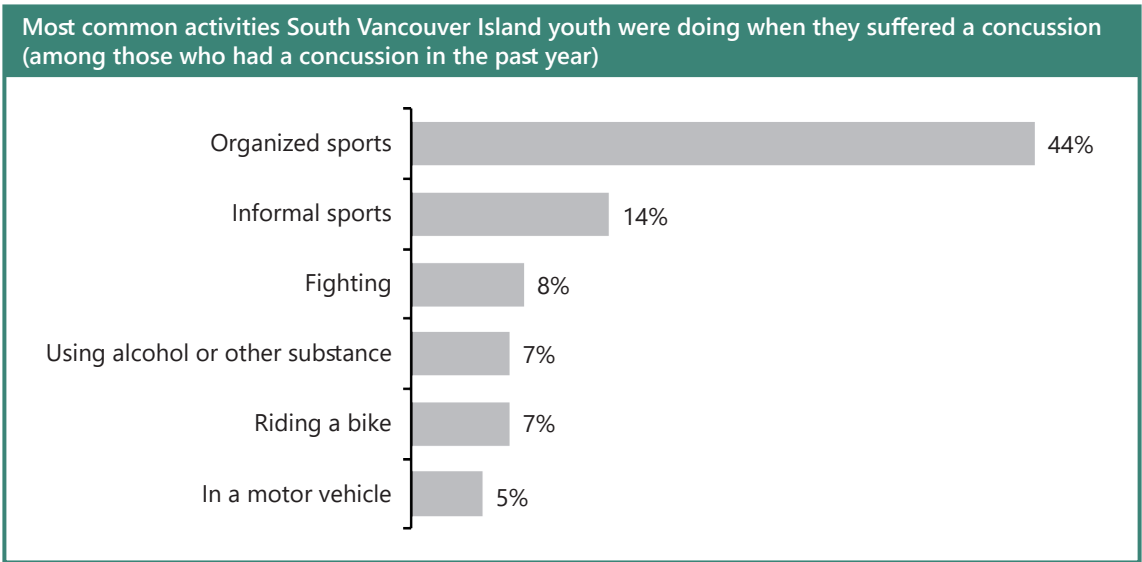
CONCUSSIONS

Locally, 13% of youth had sustained a concussion in the past year, including 3% who had two concussions and 1% who had experienced three or more. Youth were less likely than five years earlier to have had a concussion (13% vs. 18% in 2013), with a similar pattern for males (15% vs. 20%) and females (11% vs. 15%). Males remained more likely to have had a concussion.

Youth who experienced a concussion typically reported multiple symptoms including headaches (72%); dizziness or balance problems (66%); blurred vision (46%); feeling dazed, confused, or suffering a gap in memory (46%); ringing in their ears (45%); and loss of consciousness (29%).

Similar to the provincial picture and serious injuries in general, the most common cause of concussion was playing or training for organized sports.

Just over half (53%) of local youth who experienced a concussion in the past year received medical treatment for their injury.



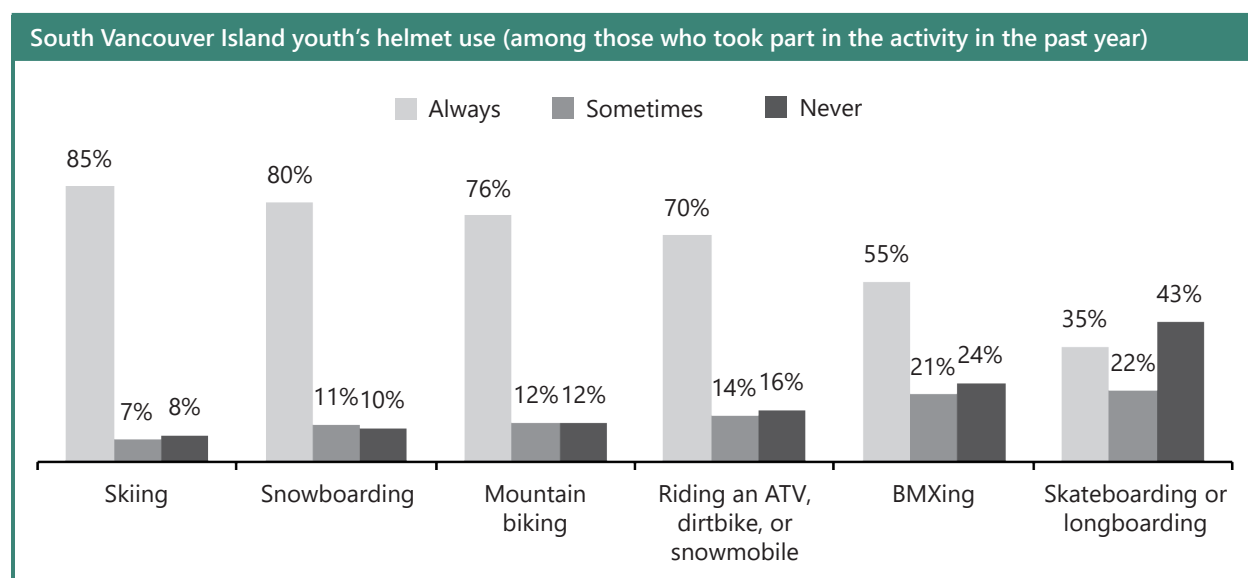
Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

INJURY PREVENTION

Three quarters (75%) of South Vancouver Island youth always wore a seatbelt when riding in a motor vehicle, which was similar to 2013 and an increase from a decade earlier (68% in 2008). As in previous years, there were no gender differences in seatbelt use.

Overall, students were most likely to wear a helmet when skiing, and least likely to wear one when skateboarding and longboarding.

Local youth were more likely than their peers across BC to always wear a helmet when cycling (61% vs. 45%). They were also more likely to always wear one when mountain biking (76% vs. 69% provincially), BMXing (55% vs. 42%), and skateboarding or longboarding (35% vs. 27%).



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

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

MENTAL HEALTH

"I do not think mental health is talked about enough. There is very much still a stigma surrounding it and even though we have days to talk about it people still don't think it's a thing that exists in our world, or exists to the extent that they are told it does."

Grade 10 student

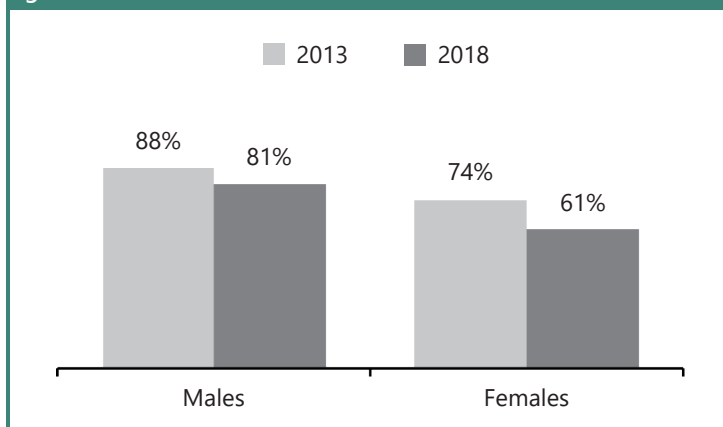
Mirroring the provincial pattern, there was a decline in the percentage of students who rated their mental health as good or excellent (71% vs. 81% in 2013). As in 2013, males were more likely than females to rate their mental health positively.

HAPPINESS

Comparable to the province as a whole, 64% of 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 (72% vs. 57% of females vs. 35%* of non-binary students).

Local youth were less likely than in 2013 to feel happy most or all of the time (64% vs. 70%).

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



STRESS & DESPAIR

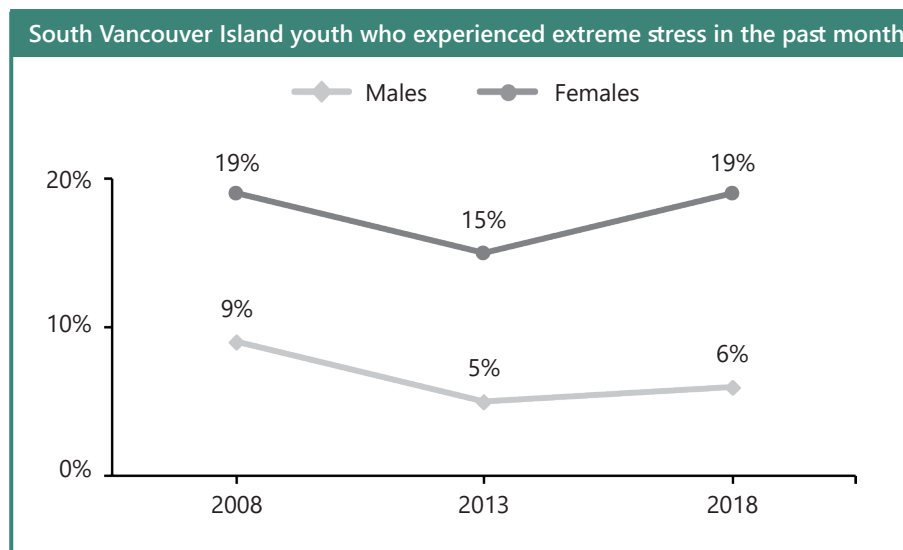
Most youth (88%) experienced some level of stress in the past month, including 13% who felt so stressed that they could not function properly. As in previous years, females were more likely than males to experience extreme stress.

For the first time, the BC AHS asked students how well they managed their stress. Among those who experienced stress, 33% felt they managed it well and 18% managed it very well. However, 31% felt they managed it only fairly well and 18% managed it poorly.

"At the beginning of the year I was going through losing a lot of people and a lot of stress. I was very depressed and slept to get away from it."

Grade 9 student

The majority of students (59% vs. 50% in 2013) felt some level of despair in the past month and 8% felt so sad, discouraged, or hopeless that they were unable to function properly. Males were the least likely to report feeling this level of despair (4% vs. 11% of females vs. 23%* of non-binary youth).



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

"I don't know if I have depression or not."

Grade 7 student

"I used to deal with heavy sadness which I believed to be depression which leads to more sadness and feeling of helplessness because I believed I was broken."

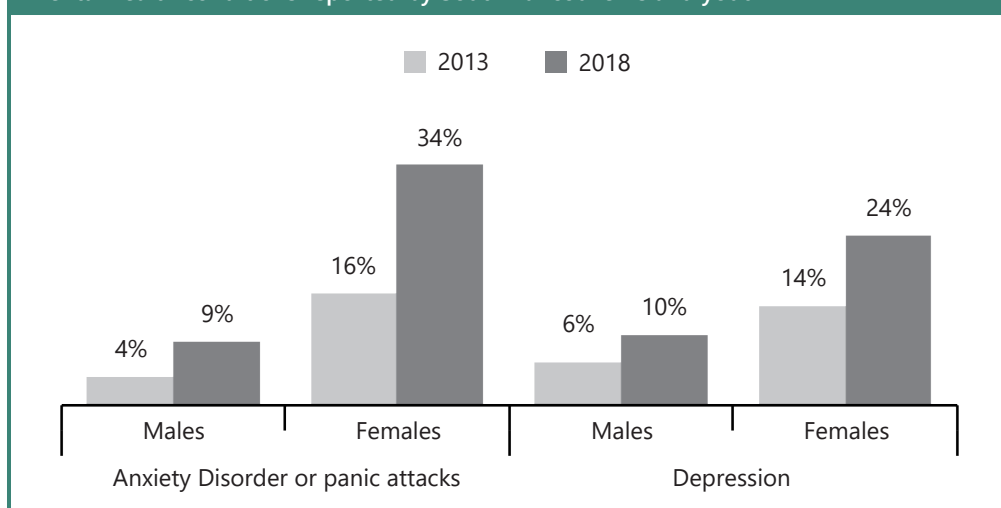
Grade 10 student

Compared to five years earlier, local students were more likely to report having Anxiety Disorder/panic attacks (22% vs. 10% in 2013), Depression (17% vs. 10%), Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD; 3% vs. 1%), and Asperger's or Autism Spectrum Disorder (from a little under 1% to a little over 1%). The percentage who reported having Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) was similar to five years earlier (8%).

Females were more likely than males to report having Anxiety Disorder/panic attacks, Depression, and PTSD (4% vs. 2%); while males were more likely to have ADHD (10% vs. 6% of females). Local females were more likely than females across BC to have Anxiety Disorder/panic attacks (34% vs. 28% provincially).

Among non-binary students, over half (54%*) reported having Depression, which was more than twice the rate of other students.

Mental health conditions reported by South Vancouver Island youth



SELF-HARM & SUICIDALITY

"The mental health system for youth is really intimidating and I have often been told I wasn't sick enough or my problems were invalid despite being in danger or suicidal. I sometimes thought about killing myself out of spite because I was very unwell."

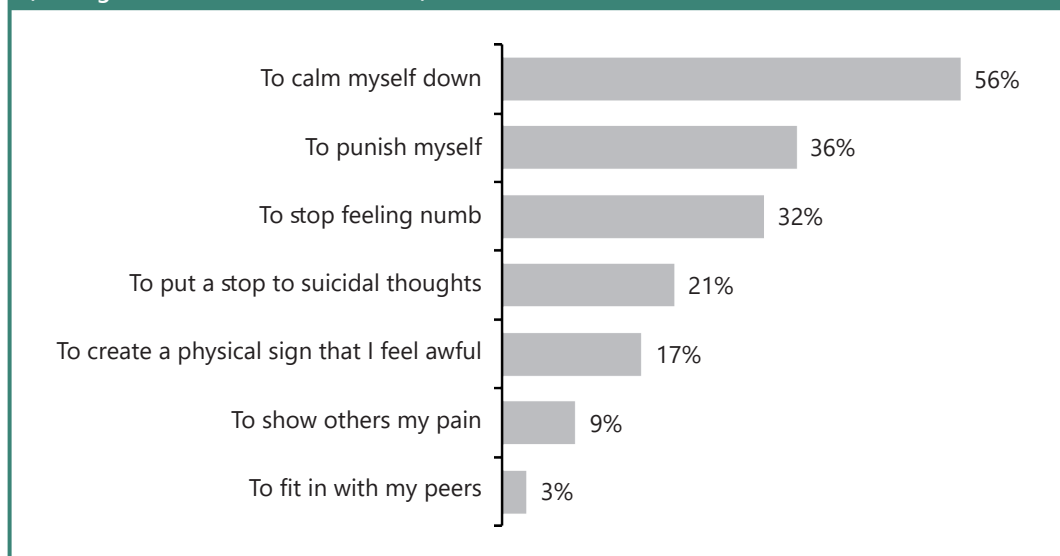
Grade 12 student

In the past year, 19% of local students had cut or injured themselves on purpose without intending to kill themselves. Males were the least likely to have done so (11% vs. 26% of females vs. 43%* of non-binary youth). The most common reason youth gave for self-harming the last time was to calm themselves down.

Locally, 18% of youth had seriously considered suicide in the past year, which was an increase for both females (24% vs. 15% in 2013) and males (13% vs. 8%).

Unchanged from five and ten years earlier, 5% of local youth had attempted suicide. As in previous years, females were more likely than males to have attempted suicide (7% vs. 3%).

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



Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

MISSED OUT ON NEEDED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Around one in five (19%) local students had needed mental health services in the past year but had not accessed them (11% of males vs. 26% of females vs. 48%* of non-binary youth). This rate was comparable to the province as a whole, and was a local increase from 12% in 2013.

Students in this region were less likely than those across the province to report they missed out on services because they did not know where to go (35% vs. 44% provincially).

Among students who did not access needed mental health services, the most common reasons were thinking or hoping the problem would go away and not wanting their parents to know. These were also the most common reasons in 2013.

South Vancouver Island youth's most commonly reported reasons for not accessing mental health services (among those who felt they needed services in the past year)

Thought or hoped the problem would go away	61%
Didn't want parents to know	58%
Afraid of what I would be told	45%
Too busy to go	38%
Afraid someone I know might see me	36%
Didn't know where to go	35%
Didn't think I could afford it	20%
Had prior negative experience	14%
Parent/guardian would not take me	10%
Had no transportation	7%
On a waiting list	7%
Couldn't go when it was open	3%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

SEXUAL HEALTH

ORAL SEX

Around a quarter (26%) of local youth had engaged in oral sex, which was similar to local rates over the past decade and higher than the provincial rate.

Among local students who ever had oral sex, 14% used a condom or other barrier/protection the last time they had oral sex (similar to the rate in 2013).

INTERCOURSE

Locally, 23% of youth had ever had sex other than oral sex or masturbation, which was similar to local rates over the past decade, and higher than across BC.

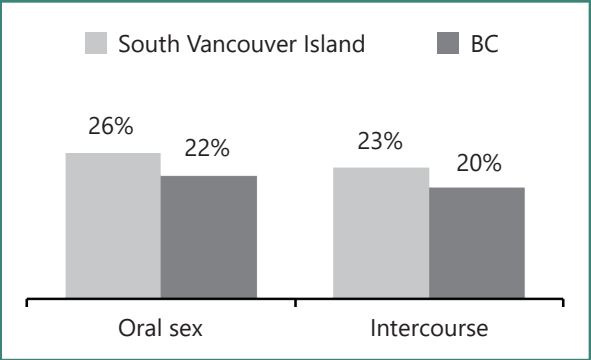
Among those who ever had intercourse, the most common ages for first doing so were 15 and 16 years old. The percentage of youth who waited until they were at least 15 years old (67%) was similar to five and ten years earlier.

Around half of youth (49%) who ever had intercourse had one sexual partner in the past year, while 19% had two partners, 25% had three or more partners, and 7% did not have intercourse in the past year.

Among youth who had ever had intercourse, there was a decrease from 2013 in the percentage who used a condom or other barrier/protection the last time they had sex (59% vs. 68%).

When asked specifically about what efforts they made to prevent pregnancy the last time they had sex, there was a decrease in local students

Ever engaged in sexual activity



who used a condom to prevent pregnancy (e.g., 54% vs. 64% in 2013; among those who ever had intercourse). There were increases in those using withdrawal as their only contraceptive method (11% vs. 7% in 2008), and emergency contraception (6% vs. 3% in 2008). Also, 3% used an IUD and 2% made no effort to prevent pregnancy.

Locally, 1% of youth had ever been involved in a pregnancy.

Methods South 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	45%
Withdrawal	41%
Emergency contraception	6%
IUD	3%
Depo Provera	NR
Not sure	3%
No method	2%

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

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs) & THE HPV VACCINE

One percent 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, 30% of students had been vaccinated (17% of youth who were assigned male on their birth certificate vs. 42% of females), and 55% (65% of males vs. 44% of females) did not know whether they had received the vaccine.

USED PHONE TO SEXT OR WATCH PORNOGRAPHY

Six percent of students with a phone used it on their most recent school day to engage in sexting (a decrease from 9% in 2013), and 14% used their device to watch pornography (asked for the first time on the 2018 survey).

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.

South 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	91%	2%	7%
Have sex with a long-term partner when they did not want to	85%	4%	11%
Send nudes/sext	91%	3%	6%



SUBSTANCE USE

SMOKING, VAPING, & TOBACCO USE

Around 1 in 5 students (21%) had ever smoked tobacco (e.g., cigarettes, cigars, or cigarillos), which was unchanged from 2013 (after decreasing from 25% in 2008). Local youth were more likely than youth across BC to have ever smoked (18% provincially).

Among students who had ever smoked tobacco, 49% smoked in the past month, including 7% who smoked daily.

Around half (49%) of those who had smoked tobacco first did so at aged 15 or older.

There were no gender differences in youth who had ever smoked tobacco, but males were more likely than females to have used a product to help them stop smoking in the past month (3% vs. 1%).

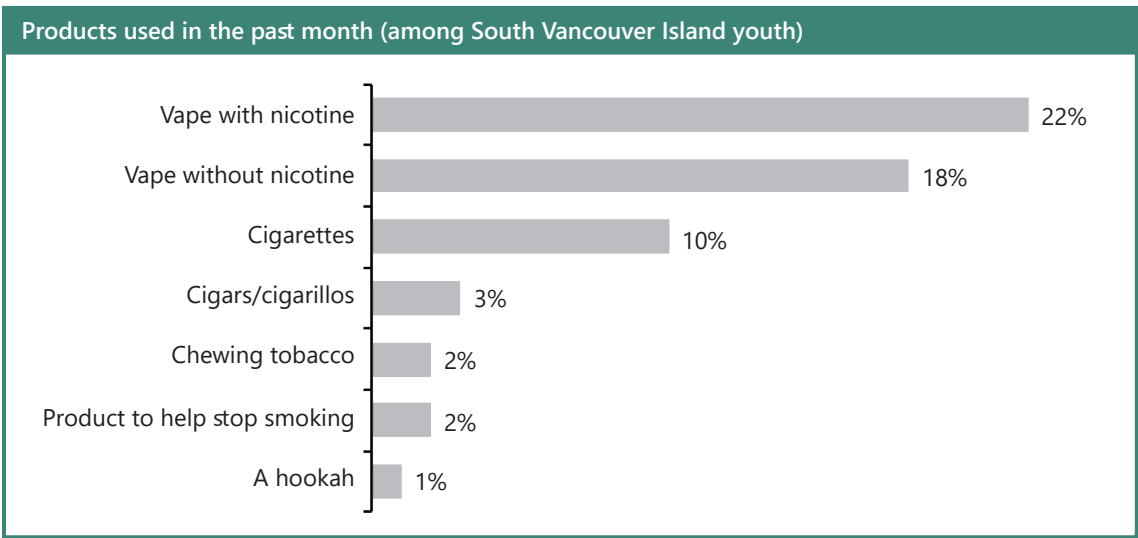
"I vaped due to peer pressure."

Grade 10 student

Reflecting the provincial picture, 27% of local youth had vaped in the past month, including 22% who had vaped with nicotine and 18% who had vaped without nicotine.

Among students who had smoked tobacco, 60% vaped with nicotine and 41% vaped without nicotine in the past month. Youth who had never smoked tobacco were also vaping as 16% had vaped in the past month, including 11% who vaped with nicotine.

Compared to youth across BC, local youth were more likely to have smoked cigarettes (10% vs. 7% provincially) and were less likely to have used a hookah (1% vs. 2%) in the past month.



Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

ALCOHOL

Locally, 48% of youth had tried alcohol, which was similar to five years earlier and lower than in 2008 (60%). Local students were more likely than those across BC to have tried alcohol (44% provincially).

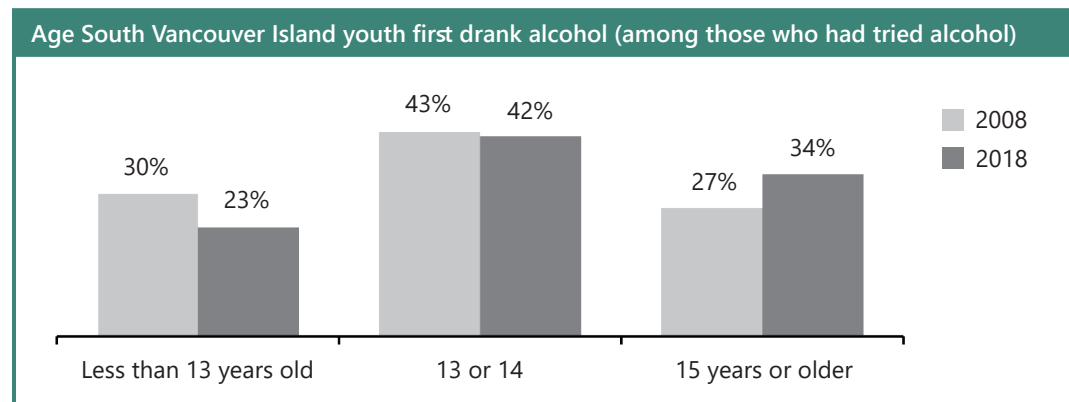
Provincially, females were more likely than males to have tried alcohol, but no such gender difference was present locally.

As in 2013, the most common ages for youth to have their first drink were 13, 14, and 15 years old. Around a third (34%) of those who had tried alcohol waited until they were 15 or older to have their first drink. This was higher than a decade earlier.

Among youth who had tried alcohol, 64% had at least one drink in the past month, including 1% who drank daily that month.

Canadian Low Risk Drinking Guidelines for adults suggest not exceeding two drinks on any one occasion. Among local youth who had tried alcohol, 25% had more than two drinks at least once in the week before they took the survey, and 5% did so on at least three of those days.

Also, 35% of those who had tried alcohol consumed five or more drinks within a couple of hours at least once in the past month (with no gender differences), and 2% did so on 10 or more days. The percentage of youth who engaged in this type of heavy drinking was similar to 2013, and lower than in 2008 (42%).



Note: For first drinking at 13 or 14 years old, the difference between 2008 and 2018 was not statistically significant.

Note: Percentages for 2018 do not equal 100% due to rounding.

Thirty percent of local students who had tried alcohol drank on the Saturday prior to completing the survey, which was lower than the provincial rate (35%) and the local percentage five years earlier (39% in 2013). Among youth who drank that day, 23% drank liquor (vs. 28% in 2013), 17% drank beer (24% of males vs. 10% of females), 15% drank coolers (23% of females vs. 8% of males), and 6% drank wine. Compared to youth across BC, local youth were less likely to drink coolers (15% vs. 22% provincially) or liquor (23% vs. 28%).

Among youth who drank last Saturday, there was a decrease in the percentage who mixed at least two different types of alcohol (e.g., drank liquor and coolers), from 57% in 2013 to 42%.

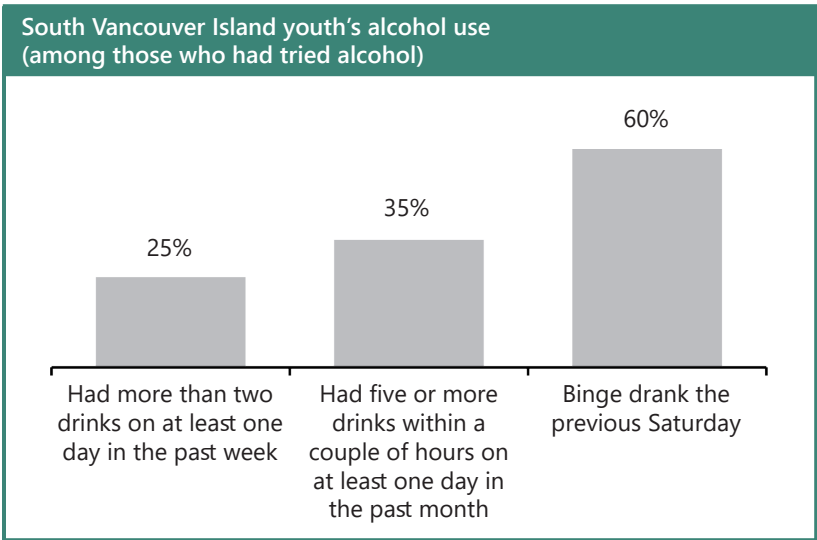
Binge drinking refers to males who consume four or more alcoholic drinks within a couple of hours and to females who consume three or more. Among students who had tried alcohol and drank on the Saturday before taking the survey, 60% engaged in binge drinking, which was comparable to the provincial rate. The percentage of males

who engaged in binge drinking decreased (51% vs. 71% in 2013). Unlike in 2013 when there was no such difference, females were more likely than males to binge drink (67% vs. 51%).

For the first time, the BC AHS asked youth where they got their alcohol the last time they drank. They most commonly got it from an adult. Females were more likely than males to report that they gave someone money to buy alcohol (31% vs. 24%) or that they got it from another youth (17% vs. 12%).

Where South Vancouver Island youth got alcohol from last time (among those who had tried alcohol)	
Adult gave it to me	40%
At a party	31%
Gave someone money to buy it for me	27%
Youth gave it to me	15%
Took it without permission	10%
Bought it	7%
Made it	2%
Exchanged something for it	2%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.



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. Thirty percent of youth in South Vancouver Island had ever used marijuana (with no gender differences). This was above the provincial rate (25%) and similar to the local percentage five years earlier, but lower than in 2008 (35%).

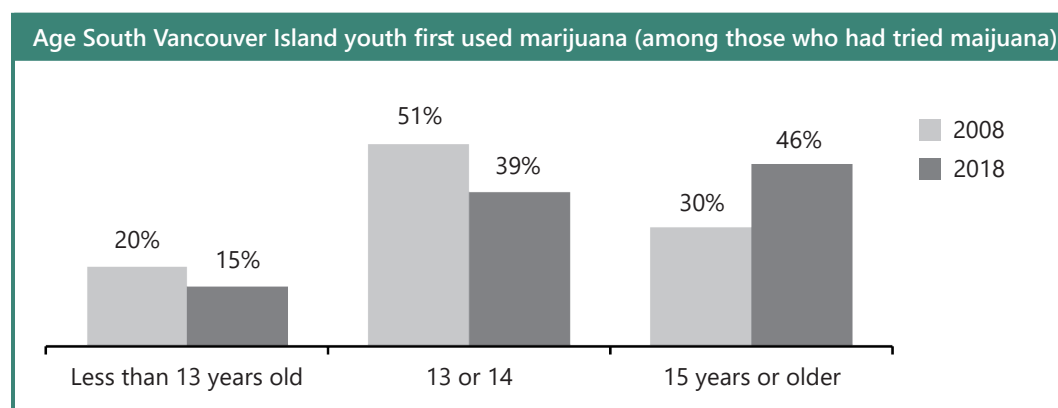
Among youth who had tried marijuana, the percentage of local youth who waited until they were at least 15 years old to first try it increased steadily over the past decade (46% vs. 39% in 2013 vs. 30% in 2008).

Among youth who had tried marijuana, 63% had used it in the past month, including 25% who had used marijuana on 6 or more days and 11% who had used it on 20 or more days that month. These percentages were comparable to those over the past decade.

Thirty-one percent of youth who had tried marijuana had used it on the Saturday before taking the survey. Also, 5% of all local youth had used both alcohol and marijuana last Saturday (vs. 11% in 2008).

For the first time, the BC AHS asked students who used marijuana how they had consumed it the last time they used it. Most students reported smoking it, while 15% ate it in a cooked recipe, and 4% took it in another form such as an oil or gummies.

One percent of local youth had ever been prescribed medical marijuana.



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

USE OF SUBSTANCES OTHER THAN ALCOHOL & MARIJUANA

Nineteen percent of South Vancouver Island youth had tried at least one substance other than alcohol or marijuana (compared to 16% provincially). As was the case provincially, youth in South Vancouver Island most commonly reported the misuse of prescription medications.

In 2018, South Vancouver Island youth were more likely than their peers across the province to use prescription pills without a doctor's consent (11%

vs. 9%) and mushrooms (7% vs. 5%). However, they were less likely than local youth in 2008 to have used a number of substances including prescription pills without a doctor's consent (11% vs. 15% in 2008), ecstasy (4% vs. 6%), and inhalants (2% vs. 5%).

One percent of South Vancouver Island youth had injected an illegal drug.

South Vancouver Island youth who had used substances other than alcohol and marijuana	
Prescription pills without a doctor's consent	11%
Mushrooms	7%
More of my own prescription than prescribed	5%
Ecstasy/MDMA	4%
Hallucinogens (excluding mushrooms, ecstasy/MDMA, and ketamine)	4%
Cocaine	3%
Inhalants	2%
Amphetamines (excluding ecstasy/MDMA and crystal meth)	2%
Heroin	1%
Crystal meth	<1%
Ketamine, GHB	<1%



CONSEQUENCES OF USE

A little more than half (52%) of local youth who had used alcohol or other substances reported 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 intercourse, 25% used alcohol or other substances before having sex the last time, which was similar to five and ten years earlier.

In the past year, 7% of students felt or were told that they needed help for their substance use. Specifically, 3% 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, 3% of youth indicated having an addiction to alcohol or other substances.

Consequences of substance use experienced by South 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	40%
Passed out	26%
Got injured	16%
Argued with family members	14%
School work or grades changed	12%
Lost friends or broke up with a girlfriend, boyfriend, or significant other	9%
Damaged property	7%
Got into a physical fight	7%
Had sex when I didn't want to	7%
Got into trouble with the police	5%
Had to get medical treatment	3%
Overdosed	2%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

DRIVING AFTER SUBSTANCE USE

Rates were comparable to youth across BC.

Among youth who had tried alcohol, 5% had ever driven a car or other vehicle after they had been drinking and 2% had done so in the past month. Both of these rates were similar to five years earlier, as were the percentages of marijuana users who had driven after using marijuana (11%), and had driven under its influence within the past month (7%).

Also, among youth who had used a substance other than alcohol or marijuana, 7% had driven after doing so.

Although youth were more likely to have driven after using marijuana than alcohol, they were more likely to have ever been a passenger with a driver who had been drinking (19%) than one who had used marijuana (14%).

REPORTED REASONS FOR USING

As in 2013, the most common reason youth gave for using substances the last time was to have fun. The percentage who used substances because they were feeling down or sad increased (21% vs. 15% in 2013).

Reasons South Vancouver Island youth used substances the last time (among those who had used alcohol or other substances)

I wanted to have fun	71%
My friends were doing it	32%
I wanted to try it/experiment	31%
Because of stress	22%
I felt down or sad	21%
I felt like there was nothing else to do	8%
To manage physical pain	5%
I thought it would help me focus	3%
I was pressured into doing it	3%
Because of an addiction	3%
To change the effects of some other drug(s)	2%
Didn't mean to do it	1%
Other	8%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.



EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

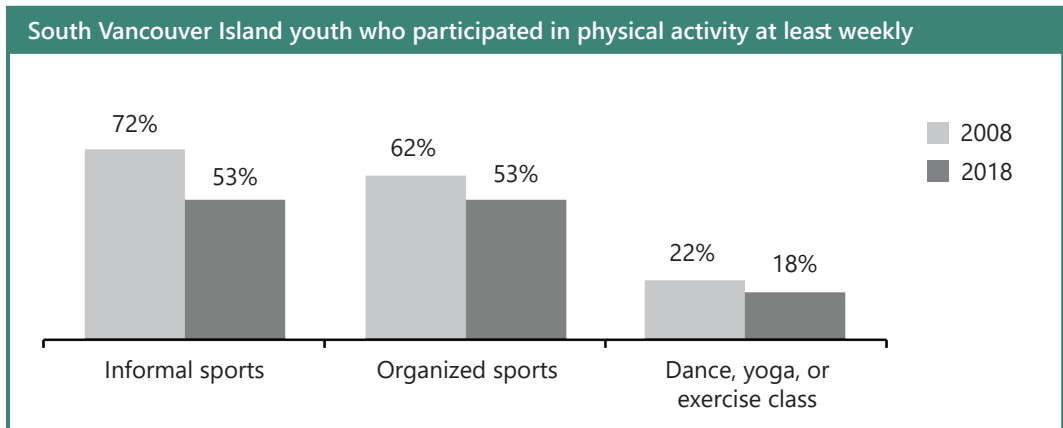
BC AHS results show that participation in extracurricular activities has many benefits, including an increased likelihood that youth will have access to a supportive adult outside their family and will feel connected to their community. Engaging in regular physical activity (such as weekly organized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

In the past year, 92% of South Vancouver Island students participated in at least one extracurricular activity (such as sports, dance, clubs, art, or volunteering), including 83% who did so on at least a weekly basis.

The most common weekly extracurricular activities South Vancouver Island youth engaged in over the past year were organized and informal sports. However, weekly participation in informal sports decreased from five years earlier (53% vs. 60% in 2013), and remained stable for organized sports. Participation in both types of sports was lower than a decade earlier.

South 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	25%	22%	34%	19%
Organized sports	41%	6%	27%	27%
Volunteered without pay	63%	24%	12%	1%
Art/drama/singing/music (group or lessons)	68%	8%	15%	9%
Dance/yoga/exercise classes	72%	10%	12%	6%
Cultural/traditional activities	78%	18%	4%	1%
Extreme sports	83%	10%	4%	4%
Clubs/groups	85%	5%	9%	1%

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



Compared to five years earlier, weekly participation in drama, singing, or music decreased (24% vs. 29% in 2013), as did volunteering (13% vs. 16%).

As in 2013, males were more likely to participate in informal sports (59% vs. 48% of females) and extreme sports (12% vs. 4%). Females were more likely to participate in art, drama, singing groups or classes (29% vs. 18% of males); dance, yoga, or exercise classes (28% vs. 6%); and volunteer activities (18% vs. 8%). However, unlike in previous years, there was no longer a gender difference in weekly participation in organized sports.

Compared to youth across the province, South Vancouver Island youth were less likely to participate weekly in volunteer activities (13% vs. 18%) and cultural or traditional activities (5% vs. 7%).

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 rest of the province and with local results in 2013, the most common barrier was being too busy (48%).

Other reasons included being too anxious or depressed (16% vs. 14% provincially), not being able to get there or get home (14%), not being able to afford it (12%), the activity they wanted to do was not available in their community (11%), and they were worried about being bullied (6%).



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 or dice, sports betting, lottery tickets or scratch cards), and, if so, whether they had played these games for money.

Comparable to youth across BC, 64% of South Vancouver Island students had played at least one of these games in the past year, with females the least likely to have done so (e.g., 50% vs. 78% of males). About a quarter (23%) of local youth had gambled for money in the past year.

GAMBLING FOR MONEY

In the past year, South Vancouver Island students engaged in a range of gambling games for money including buying lottery tickets or scratch cards (41%); playing cards or dice in person (38%) and online (12%); gaming online (36%); and sports betting in person (31%) and online (9%).

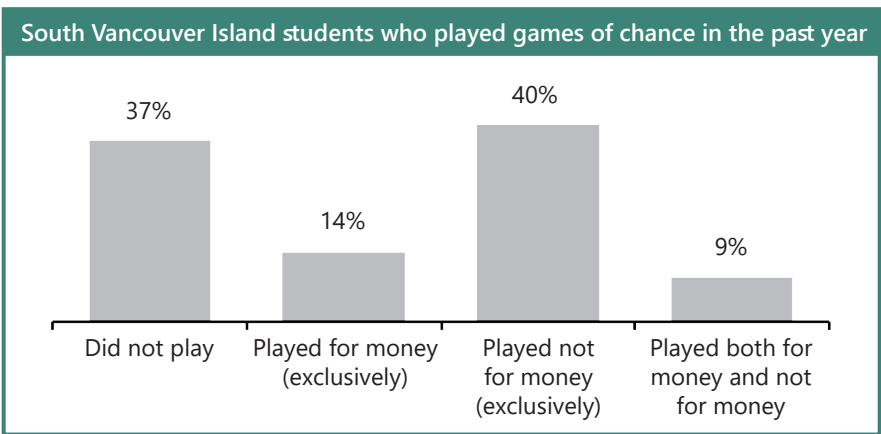
Among those who gambled for money, females were less likely than males to have engaged in online gaming (13% vs. 45%); sports betting in person (20% vs. 36%) and online (11% vs. 5%); and playing cards or dice online (7% vs. 14%). Females were more likely to have bought lottery tickets or scratch cards (61% vs. 29% of males).

Reflecting the provincial pattern, 22% of local youth who had gambled for money did so on at least a weekly basis over the past 12 months.

Local students who gambled on a weekly basis were over three times as likely to have engaged in online gaming than any other gambling activity. For example, 17% participated in online gaming weekly, compared to 5% who played cards or dice in person and 2% who bought lottery tickets or scratch cards.

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

In the past year, 2% of South Vancouver Island students who had gambled for money felt they had a problem with their gambling or had been told they needed to get help.



RISKS TO HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

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

POVERTY & DEPRIVATION

GOING TO BED HUNGRY

Reflecting the provincial picture and previous local rates, 10% of youth in South 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 at home 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, 97% of South Vancouver Island youth had a quiet place to sleep, while 2% 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.

South Vancouver Island youth who felt deprived of...	
Money to spend on themselves	9%
Smartphone	6%
Space of their own to hang out in	6%
Lunch for school/money for lunch	5%
Money for school supplies, trips, and extracurricular activities	4%
Access to transportation	3%
Equipment/clothes for extracurricular activities	3%
Clothes to fit in	2%
A quiet place to sleep	2%
Access to Internet	1%

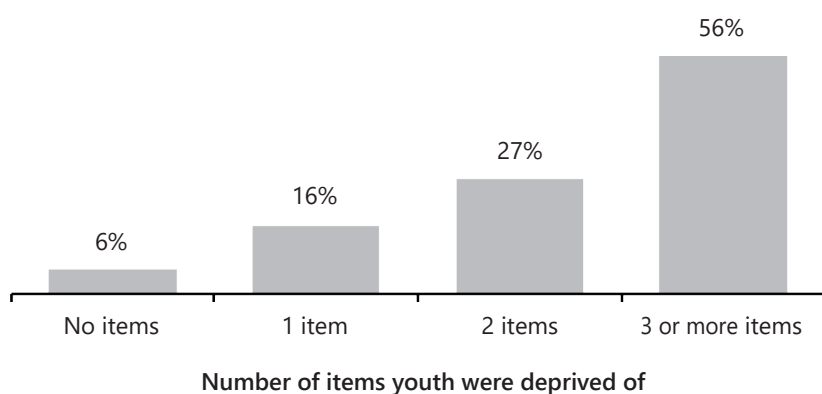
Reflecting the provincial pattern, the most common item that youth reported wanting but not having was money to spend on themselves.

When the items were considered individually, there was a link between feeling deprived and potentially negative outcomes. For example, 69%* 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 49% of those who had somewhere quiet to sleep. Also, youth who wished for but did not have the money to buy school supplies, go on school trips, or join in extracurricular activities were less likely to think they would go on to post-secondary (62%* vs. 83% of those who had money for these items).

Almost a quarter (24%) of local youth reported they lacked but wished they had at least one of the items in the Index, including 5% who lacked two items, 2% 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.

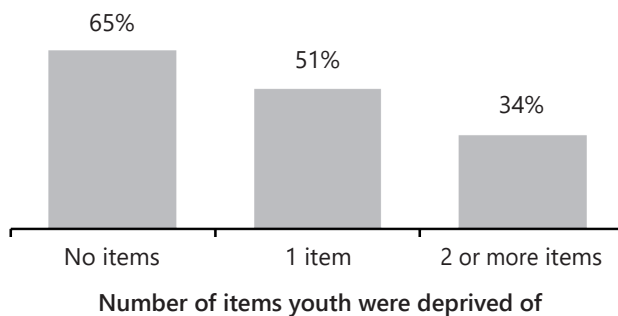
South Vancouver Island youth who went to bed hungry because there was not enough money for food at home



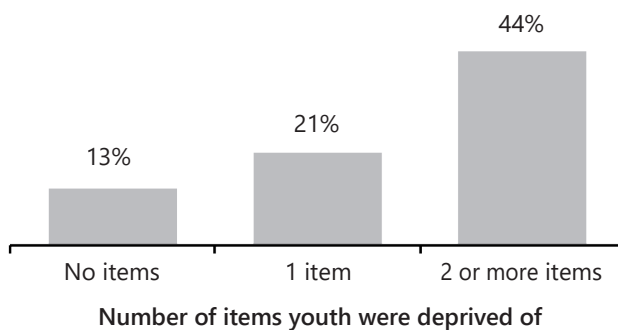
The more items youth were deprived of, the less likely they were to feel like a part of their school or their community. For example, 46% of local youth who had all the items in the Index reported that they felt connected to their community, compared to 19% of those who were deprived of two or more items on the list.

Youth deprivation was also associated with poorer health and well-being. For example, 84% of those who had all items on the list reported good or excellent health, compared to 76% of those who felt deprived of one item and 48%* of those who were deprived of three or more of the items. Similarly, three quarters (75%) of local youth who had all the items in the Index reported that their mental health was good or excellent, compared to 42% of those who were deprived of two or more items on the list.

South Vancouver Island youth who felt like a part of their school



South Vancouver Island youth who wished they could have a different life



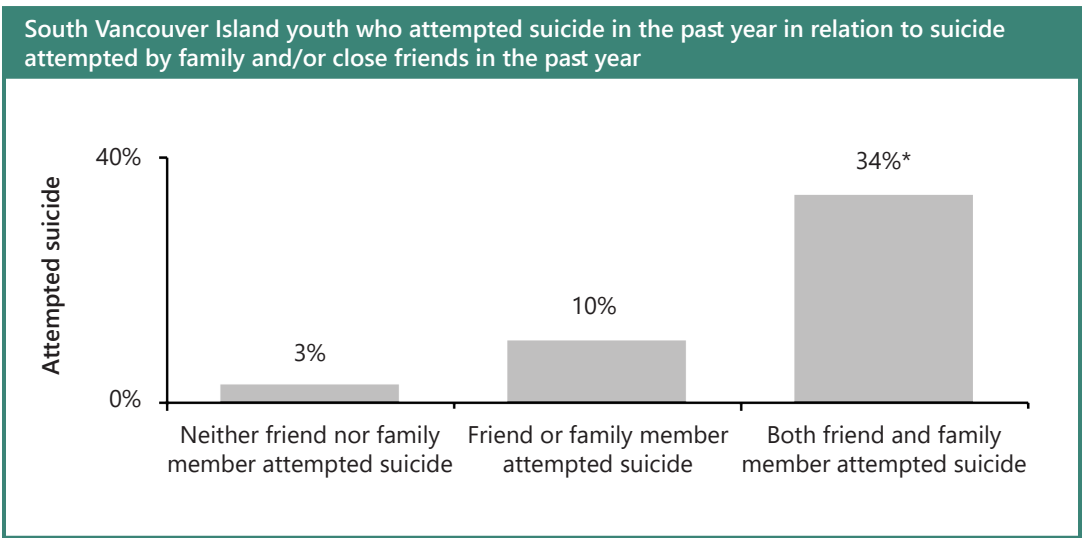
LOSS & BEREAVEMENT

Reflecting the provincial pattern, nearly three quarters (73%) of South Vancouver Island students had experienced bereavement. They had most commonly lost someone close to them due to illness (48%) and old age (46%). Other reasons included accident (13%), suicide (11%), an overdose from a substance other than fentanyl (5%), a fentanyl overdose (4%), and violence (3%).

Youth were also asked if a family member or close friend had attempted or died by suicide, and if this experience had happened within the past year.

In total, 18% of local youth had a family member who had attempted or died by suicide (including 5% in the past year), and 33% had a close friend who had done so (21% in the past year).

Youth 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

Results in this section were similar to results across BC.

DATING VIOLENCE

In the past year, 44% of local students had been in a romantic relationship. Among these students, 8% had been the victim of physical violence within their relationship (with no gender differences).

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

"People at my school get catcalled a lot, even by the older students. And it makes me feel uncomfortable and I feel I can't wear things because they will make a comment I don't want."

Grade 9 student

In the past year, 41% of local students had experienced verbal sexual harassment and 24% had experienced physical sexual harassment. Rates of verbal sexual harassment were similar to five years earlier, but physical sexual harassment increased for both males (15% vs. 10% in 2013) and females (33% vs. 29%).

Males were less likely than females and non-binary youth to have experienced verbal sexual harassment (e.g., 29% vs. 52% of females) and physical sexual harassment (e.g., 15% vs. 33% of females).

PHYSICAL & SEXUAL ABUSE

Overall, 15% of South Vancouver Island youth reported they had been physically abused or mistreated. This rate was similar to five years earlier but below the 18% who had been physically abused in 2008. Males were the least likely to have been physically abused (e.g., 13% vs. 16% of females).

Also, 12% of students had been sexually abused. Rates for males (6%) were consistent with five years earlier, while the percentage for females increased from 14% in 2013 to 17%.



DISCRIMINATION

"People need to be educated on LGBTQ related subjects, to help stop ignorance and discrimination. People often are confused because they don't have the resources or education they need when it comes to topics like these."

Grade 8 student

In the past year, 39% of local students experienced at least one form of discrimination. This was an increase from 33% in 2013. The most commonly perceived reason for being discriminated against was physical appearance.

Compared to five years earlier, students in South Vancouver Island were more likely to report experiencing discrimination on the basis of their physical appearance (22% vs. 19% in 2013); race, ethnicity, or skin colour (13% vs. 7%); income or family income (8% vs. 5%); and their sexual orientation (7% vs. 5%).

South Vancouver Island youth's perceived reasons for being discriminated against in the past year

Physical appearance	22%
Weight	16%
Race, ethnicity, or skin colour	13%
Gender/sex	10%
Income or family income	8%
Sexual orientation (e.g., being or thought to be gay or lesbian)	7%
A disability	4%

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

BULLYING

Over half (54%) of South Vancouver Island youth had been bullied at school or on the way to or from school in the past 12 months. This included being teased to the point that they felt bad or extremely uncomfortable (40%), being deliberately socially excluded (39%), and being physically attacked (9%).

As in previous years, females were more likely than males to report being teased (45% vs. 34%) or socially excluded (47% vs. 30%), while males continued to be more likely to have been physically assaulted (12% vs. 6% of females).

Rates of being bullied remained comparable to previous years for males, but females were more likely to have been teased (e.g., 45% vs. 40% in 2008) and socially excluded (e.g., 47% vs. 42% in 2013).

Also, 9% of students reported they had teased, excluded, or physically attacked someone else at school or on the way to or from school in the past year.

WEAPON CARRYING

In the past month, 6% of students had carried a weapon to school, including 1% who always carried a weapon.

Students who had been the victim of bullying were more likely to carry a weapon. For example, 23% of youth who had been physically attacked in the past year carried a weapon, compared to 4% of those who had not been attacked.

INTERNET SAFETY

Compared to five years earlier, students in this region were more likely to have met someone through the Internet who made them feel unsafe (19% vs. 15% in 2013). This increase was seen for both males (12% vs. 9% in 2013) and females (25% vs. 20%). Females remained more likely than males to have met such a person online.

After decreasing between 2008 and 2013, the percentage of students who had been cyberbullied in the past year was similar to five years earlier (13%). Females were more likely than males to have been cyberbullied (16% vs. 10%).

Also consistent with five years earlier, 5% of students reported they had cyberbullied someone in the past year. However, males and females were equally likely to have been the perpetrator of cyberbullying in 2013, whereas males were more likely than females to have cyberbullied someone in 2018 (6% vs. 3%).



SUPPORTING HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

FAMILY

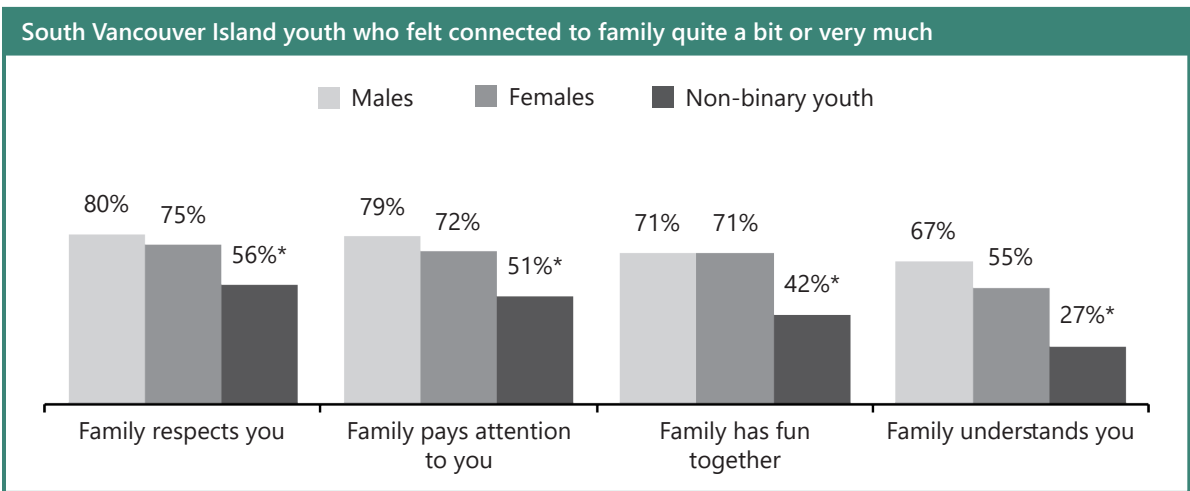
BC AHS results show that family relationships are one of the most important protective factors in the lives of youth. For example, youth who report feeling connected to family, have supportive adults they can turn to within their family, and have parents or caregivers who know what they are doing in 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 risky substance use or risky sexual behaviours), and are more likely to have the skills to refuse negative peer pressure or unwanted sexual activity.

Most South Vancouver Island youth felt connected to their family. Overall, 77% felt respected by their family, 75% felt that their family paid attention to them, 71% felt that their family had fun together, and 60% felt their family understood them.

SUPPORTIVE FAMILY

In total, 71% of South Vancouver Island students felt they had an adult inside their family they could talk to if they had a serious problem. Non-binary youth were the least likely to feel they had such an adult inside their family and males were the most likely (49%* vs. 69% of females vs. 74% of males).



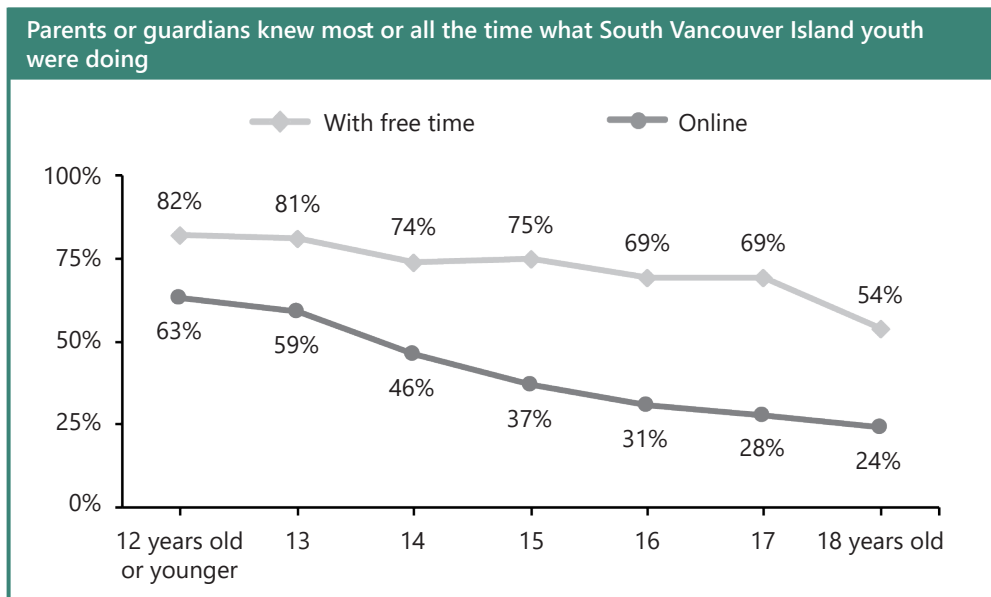
* Percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was higher than expected but is still within the releasable range.

Most students (72%) turned to a family member for help in the past year (an increase from 67% in 2013), and the majority of these students (94%) found the support helpful. The percentage of females who sought help from a family member was similar to five years earlier, but increased for males to the extent that there was no longer a gender difference (72% vs. 63% in 2013).

MONITORING

Most students (73%) had parents who monitored their free time, while 11% had parents who rarely or never knew what they were doing in their free time. Also, 41% had parents who usually or always monitored their time online, while 38% reported their parents rarely or never did.

When asked how much time they had to do the things they wanted with their family, most local students (73%) felt they had the right amount of time, and 21% felt they did not have enough time.



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.

“Homework/school work is getting too overwhelming. It’s causing a ton of stress for me and other students I know.”

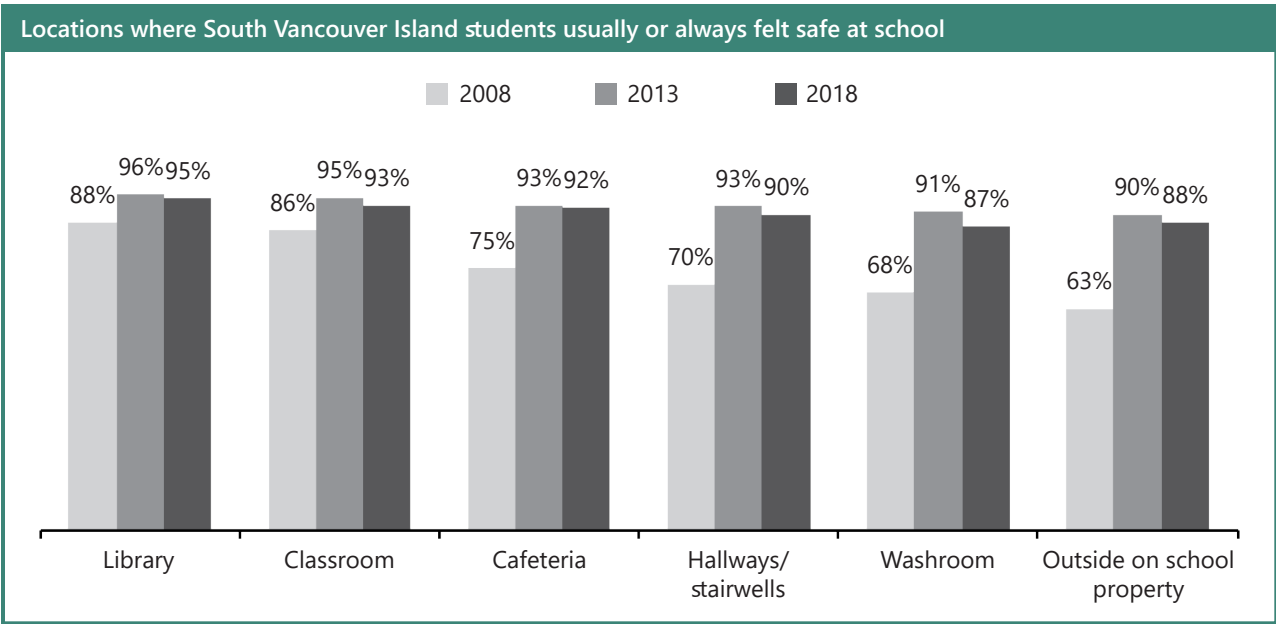
Grade 10 student

Most South Vancouver Island students felt that school staff expected them to do well (79%), they were treated fairly by school staff (72%), their teachers cared about them (70%), they were happy to be at school (61%), they were part of their school (60%), and school staff other than teachers cared about them (54%).

SAFETY

Most local students (77%) felt safe at school, with non-binary youth the least likely to feel this way (50%* vs. a little under 80% of males and females).

Overall, feelings of safety at school were similar to a decade earlier but lower than five years earlier (81% in 2013). Local students were more likely to feel safe at school than students across the province (77% vs. 73% provincially). They were also specifically more likely to feel safe outside on school grounds (88% vs. 86%).



Note: For ‘Cafeteria’ and ‘Outside on school property’ the differences between 2013 and 2018 were not statistically significant.

Students generally felt less safe than local students in 2013. For example, 91% felt safe getting to or from school (vs. 93% in 2013), and 85% felt safe in the changing rooms (vs. 89% in 2013).

Non-binary students were the least likely to feel safe in different locations around the school. For example, 66%* felt safe in hallways or stairwells, compared to around 90% of males and females; and 61%* felt safe in changing rooms, compared to around 85% of males and females.

EDUCATION PLANS

Similar to the provincial picture and the local rate in 2013, 86% of South Vancouver Island students planned to finish Grade 12. Most of those who did not plan to graduate had not yet thought about it and only 1% specifically did not plan to complete Grade 12.

Local students were less likely than those five years earlier to plan to pursue post-secondary education (81% vs. 85% in 2013).

COMMUTE TO SCHOOL

Local youth most commonly got to school by car or school bus/public transit. They were less likely than their peers across the province to get to school by car (39% vs. 47%) or by active means such as walking, cycling, or skateboarding (23% vs. 29%); and were more likely to take a school bus or public transit (38% vs. 23%).

Most youth had a commute to school that was less than 30 minutes (84% vs. 90% across BC), whereas 3% commuted for an hour or more.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

In the past month, students most commonly missed school because of illness. Also, 27% had skipped class, with 8% doing so on three or more days.

Local females were more likely than males to miss classes because of illness (46% vs. 40%), appointments (44% vs. 34%), other school responsibilities (21% vs. 16%), family responsibilities (16% vs. 12%), and bullying (4% vs. 2%). Also, males were the least likely to miss classes because of their mental health (10% vs. over a quarter of females and non-binary youth).

As in 2013, South Vancouver Island youth were more likely than their peers across BC to have missed school because of illness (43% vs. 39% provincially), appointments (39% vs. 36%), and their mental health (18% vs. 15%).

Reasons South Vancouver Island students missed classes in the past month	
Illness	43%
Appointments	39%
Skipping class	27%
Slept in	21%
Mental health (e.g., anxiety, depression)	18%
Other school responsibilities	18%
Family responsibilities	14%
No transportation	5%
Work	4%
Bullying	3%

Note: Students 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 the province, 42% of South Vancouver Island students felt quite a bit or very connected to their community, while 24% felt only a little or not at all connected. Non-binary youth were the least likely to feel connected.

South Vancouver Island youth were more likely to feel connected to their community than they were in 2013 (42% vs. 37%).

Similar to youth across BC, two thirds (66%) of local students felt there was an adult in their neighbourhood or community (outside their family or school) who really cared about them. This reflected a local increase from 62% in 2013.

SAFETY

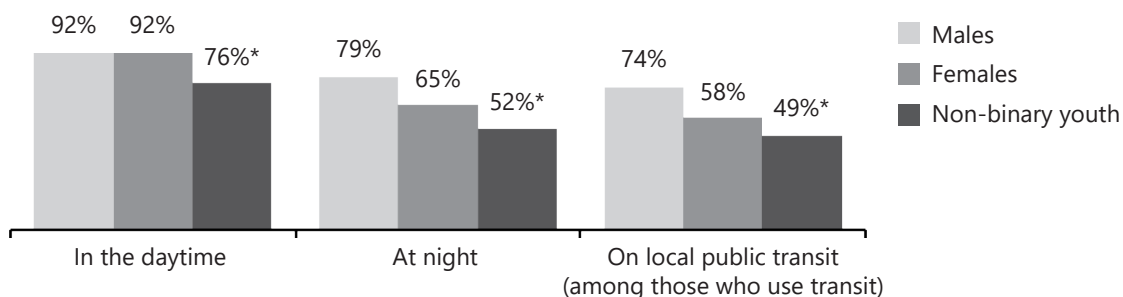
The majority of South Vancouver Island youth often or always felt safe in their neighbourhood in the daytime (92%) and at night (71% vs. 65% provincially). Non-binary youth were generally the least likely to feel safe and males were the most likely. However, males were less likely than five years earlier to often or always feel safe in their neighbourhood in the daytime (92% vs. 95% in 2013).

Among local youth who used public transit, 22% always felt safe and 4% never felt safe doing so. Males were more likely than females and non-binary youth to feel safe on transit.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE LAND/NATURE

For the first time, the BC AHS asked about feeling connected to the land or nature. Forty-six per cent of South Vancouver Island students reported often or always feeling connected, whereas 38% sometimes felt this way, and 16% hardly ever or never felt connected.

South Vancouver Island students who often or always felt safe in their neighbourhood ...



Note: The difference between males and females for 'in the daytime' was not statistically significant nor was the difference between females and non-binary youth for 'at night' and 'on local public transit'.

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

SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Youth who have a supportive adult in their life are more likely to feel comfortable refusing to do something they do not want to do, such as engaging in unwanted sexual activity or sexting, and are less likely to miss out on needed mental health care. They are also more likely to feel happy if they have an adult who cares about them.

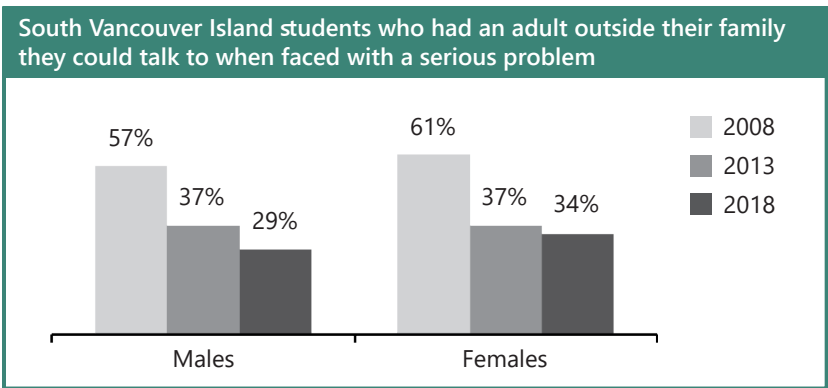
Youth who have an adult who helps them with tasks report better outcomes. For example, if they have an adult to help them with post-secondary applications, they are more likely to plan to go to college, university, or trade school.

SUPPORTIVE ADULTS

In South Vancouver Island, 31% of youth indicated they had an adult outside their family who they could talk to if they had a serious problem. This was above the provincial rate (27%), but a local decrease from 37% in 2013 and 59% in 2008.

Females were more likely than their male peers to have a supportive adult outside their family.

Most South Vancouver Island youth had an adult who helped them to make and get to appointments, prepare for post-secondary, find employment, and with homework.



Note: The difference for females between 2013 and 2018 was not statistically significant.

South Vancouver Island students who had an adult who helped them with...			
	Yes	No	Don't need this
Getting to appointments	89%	6%	6%
Making appointments	89%	6%	5%
Preparing for post-secondary	77%	14%	10%
Getting a job	70%	15%	15%
Homework	63%	19%	18%

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

ASKING ADULTS FOR HELP

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

In comparison to the rest of the province, local students were more likely to ask a mental health counsellor for help (13% vs. 11%).

Adults outside their family whom South 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%	93%
Doctor	32%	91%
School counsellor	30%	82%
Sports coach	27%	94%
School staff (other than teacher, counsellor, or Aboriginal Education Worker)	23%	85%
Friend's parent	20%	88%
Nurse	15%	90%
Mental health counsellor	13%	82%
Youth worker	7%	81%
Online community/online support group	7%	74%
Aboriginal Education Worker [†]	7%	70%
Telephone helpline	7%	58%
Social worker	6%	64%
Spiritual leader	5%	71%
Indigenous Elder [†]	4%	64%*

[†]Among Indigenous students, 18% had approached an Aboriginal Education Worker for help and 90%* of these students found this experience helpful, while 12% had approached an Elder and 86%* of them 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 results show that having three or more in-person friends is associated with a number of positive outcomes, 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.

Most students in South Vancouver Island (96%) had at least one close friend in their school or neighbourhood, and 82% had three or more close friends. Males were the most likely to have three or more close in-person friends and non-binary students were the least likely (84% of males vs. 80% of females vs. 59%* of non-binary youth).

About a third of students (34%) had at least one close friend who they knew online and had never met in person, and 16% had three or more such friends. Males were twice as likely as females to have three or more online friends whom they had never met in person (22% vs. 11%).

In the past year, 8% of youth had dated someone they had met online and had never met in person, including 2% 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, 28% did not have enough time, and the remainder had too much time. Females were more likely than males to feel they did not have enough time with their friends (31% vs. 23%), as were older youth in comparison to younger ones (e.g., 29% of 17-year-olds did not have enough time with their friends vs. 20% of 13-year-olds).

Asking for help

When faced with a serious problem, South Vancouver Island youth were less likely than their peers across BC to have asked their in-person friends for help, but were equally likely to approach friends they knew exclusively online.

In the past year, 73% of local students had asked a friend they knew in person for help (vs. 76% provincially). Among these students, 94% found their friend helpful. Also, 20% asked a friend that they exclusively knew online for help, and 80% of these youth found this helpful.

Females were more likely than males to have sought help from an in-person friend (79% vs. 67%). However, males were more likely than females to have found their friends helpful (96% vs. 93%; among those who asked for help).

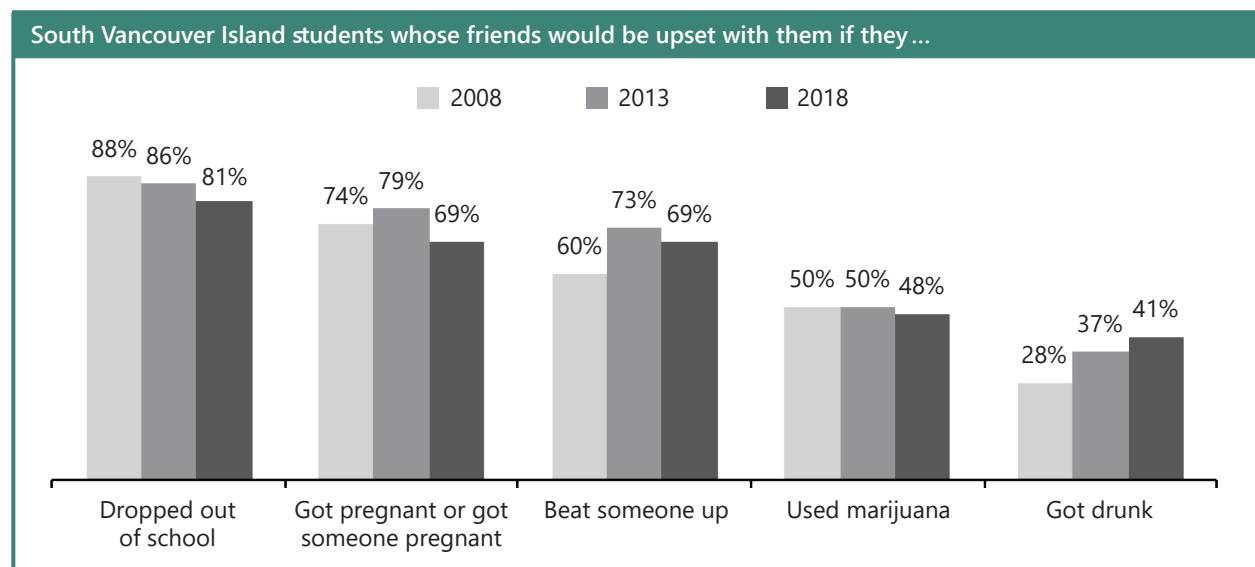
In the past year, 79% of students had a friend who asked them for help, and most (97%) who were asked felt able to help. Females were more likely than males to have a friend ask them for help (84% vs. 74%).

Friends with prosocial attitudes

Most South Vancouver Island youth had friends with prosocial attitudes to health risk behaviours. Females were more likely than males to indicate their friends would be upset with them if they dropped out of school (85% vs. 77% of males), beat someone up (80% vs. 57%), used marijuana (53% vs. 45%), or got drunk (43% vs. 38%). Non-binary students were the least likely to report that their friends would be upset with them for being involved in a pregnancy (48%* vs. approximately 7 in 10 males and females).

As in 2013, local youth were less likely than their peers across the province to have friends who would disapprove if they used marijuana (48% vs. 55%), or got drunk (41% vs. 45%). However, in 2018, they were more likely than youth across BC to have friends who would disapprove of them if they beat someone up (69% vs. 65% provincially).

The percentage of South Vancouver Island youth who had friends who would disapprove if they used marijuana was similar to previous years. However, students were less likely than 2013 to have friends who would disapprove if they beat someone up, were involved in a pregnancy, or dropped out of school, and were more likely to have friends who would disapprove if they got drunk.



Note: For 'Dropped out of school', the difference between 2008 and 2013 was not statistically significant.

Note: For 'Used marijuana', the differences between years were not statistically significant.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S STRENGTHS & RESILIENCY

QUALITY OF LIFE & WELL-BEING

South Vancouver Island youth generally felt positively about their quality of life. For example, most indicated that they had a good life and their life was going well. Males were the most likely to rate their quality of life positively, while non-binary youth were the least likely to do so.

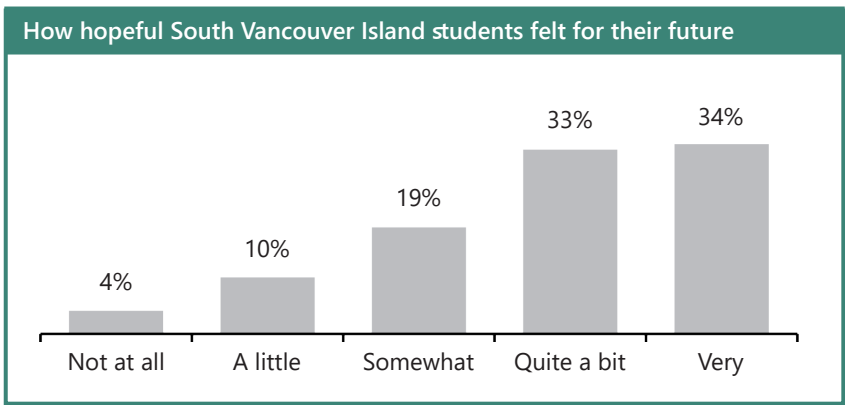
HOPEFULNESS

Two thirds (67%) of South Vancouver Island students felt quite a bit or very hopeful for their future, with males the most likely to feel this way.

Youth who felt hopeful were more likely than their peers to report positive mental health, including feeling happy, as well as lower rates of extreme stress and despair.

Quality of life and well-being among South Vancouver Island youth			
	Agree/ Strongly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree/ Strongly disagree
I have a good life	80%	14%	6%
My life is going well	74%	17%	9%
I have what I want in life	59%	26%	15%
My life is going just right	57%	27%	17%
I wish I had a different life	17%	22%	61%

Note: Percentages for 'My life is going just right' 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. Four percent of students indicated that things never went wrong for them. Among those who had experienced challenges or setbacks, 42% always pushed themselves to achieve their goals in these situations (with males the most likely to report doing so), whereas 6% never pushed themselves, and the rest sometimes pushed themselves.

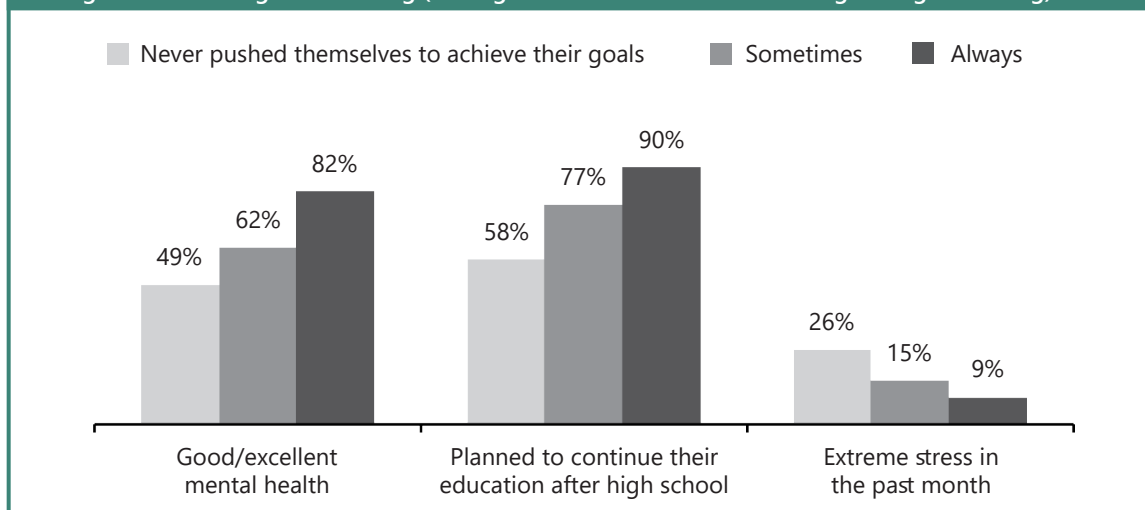
The more often South Vancouver Island students persevered when faced with obstacles, the more likely they were to experience positive mental health and to have plans to pursue post-secondary education, and the less likely they were to experience extreme stress.

FEELING SKILLED & CONFIDENT

As in 2013, 78% of South Vancouver Island youth were able to name something they were really good at (such as sports, school work, and art). Males were the most likely to name something they were really good at.

The majority (58%) also usually felt good about themselves (69% of males vs. 49% of females vs. 30%* of non-binary youth). 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. 30%).

South Vancouver Island students well-being in relation to how often they pushed themselves to achieve their goals when things went wrong (among those who indicated that things had gone wrong)



UNSTRUCTURED TIME

Two thirds (67%) of local youth felt they had the right amount of time to do what they wanted on their own, whereas 22% felt they 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 and to feel their life was going well, and were less likely to experience extreme stress in the past month.

Locally, 57% of youth felt they had the right amount of time to do what they wanted in nature, while 39% did not have enough time. Those who felt they had the right amount of time in nature were more likely to feel connected to the land/nature (48% vs. 42% of those who felt they did not have enough time to spend in nature).

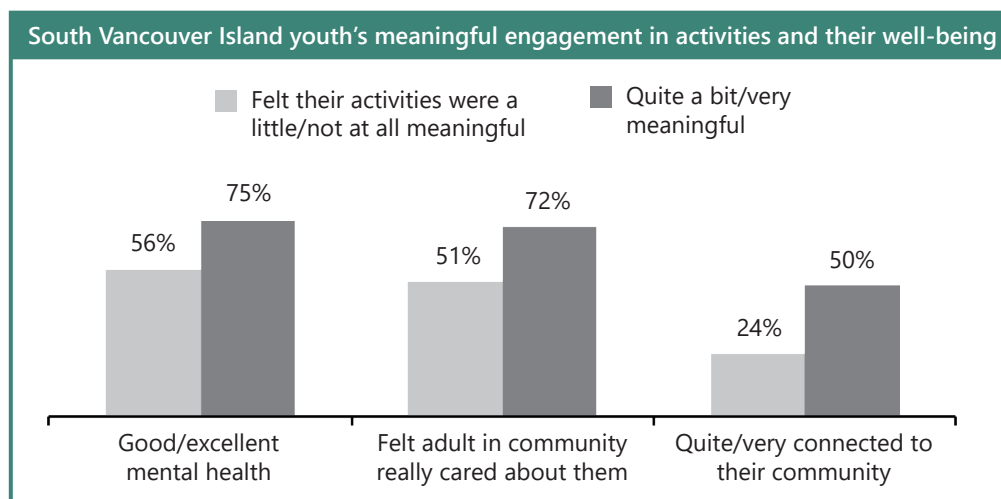
SPIRITUALITY

Thirteen percent of South Vancouver Island students reported that spirituality was very important in their life, while 20% felt it was somewhat important, 17% a little important, and 39% indicated it was not important to them. Also, 11% indicated not knowing how important spirituality was in their life.

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

Compared to five years earlier, there was a decrease in the percentage of youth who felt that the activities they took part in were meaningful to them (68% vs. 73% in 2013). However, the percentage who felt their ideas were listened to and acted upon in these activities remained similar (45%).

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.



Note: For 'Felt adult in community really cared about them' and for 'Feeling quite/very connected to their community', the differences between 'a little/not at all meaningful' and 'somewhat meaningful' were not statistically significant.

TOPICS SOUTH 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, 5% 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 wanted to learn about was mental health (46% of those who answered the question asked for more information about mental health). Specifically, students wanted to learn more about different mental health conditions, how to manage mental health challenges, and where and how to access help.

"I want to learn more about anxiety and depression. Even though I have them both I would like to know more about them."

Grade 10 student

"I would like to learn more about OCD, as it affects my daily life quite a bit and causes me stress, but I don't know much about it."

Grade 8 student

"I want information on what to do if a friend or family member is considering suicide and telling you about it."

Grade 10 student

Physical and sexual health were also common topics youth wanted to learn more about, including information about various illnesses and health conditions, how to adopt a healthy lifestyle, general sex education, and sex education aimed at LGBTQ2S youth.

"I would like to learn more about infections."

Grade 7 student

"We should get information on eating healthy."

Grade 12 student

"I want to learn what to do if you think you have an STI."

Grade 10 student

"[I want to learn] more about sexual health."

Grade 9 student

Other topics South Vancouver Island students wanted to learn about included healthy relationships, recognizing and reporting abuse, discrimination, gender identity and sexual orientation, and substance use.

"[There] should be more education about LGBTQ+."

Grade 12 student

"I think school should teach more about discrimination, sexism, racism, and homophobia."

Grade 9 student

"I want to know how to get help with abusive parents."

Grade 12 student

"We should have classes on problem solving and communication."

Grade 9 student



McCREARY RESOURCES

BC AHS PROVINCIAL & REGIONAL RESULTS



This report provides an overview of the BC Adolescent Health Survey results for youth in South 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 created by youth; and an in-depth report about marijuana use among BC youth.

PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS



McCreary staff are available to present BC AHS findings for South 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



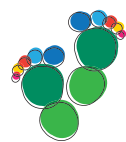
McCreary's Youth Advisory and Action Council (YAC) have created a youth-friendly poster of the key findings of the provincial report. Additional youth-friendly posters will be available on a range of topics, including substance use and mental health. The YAC have also created a workshop to share the 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 in school districts that participated in the 2013 BC AHS (including 40 grants in South Vancouver Island). The granting program for the 2018 BC AHS is now accepting applications from youth aged 12–19 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 young people in South 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.



