

05

Youth Wellbeing and Access to Recreation

Breaking Down Barriers, Fostering
Social Connectedness, so all Youth
can Thrive

Key findings from the 2021 Halton Youth Impact Survey

In May and June 2021, 2599 young people completed the Halton Youth Impact Survey (HYIS). In November 2021, 44 youth participated in a Youth Data Party to validate the findings and share feedback on how their peers, schools, communities, and organizations serving youth can make a positive impact on young people in Halton. This is the fifth in a series of Data Action Bulletins to share findings from the Halton Youth Impact Survey and mobilize community partners to take action to support youth in Halton. For more information on the Halton Youth Impact Survey and to see previous bulletins, visit [HYIS Results](#).

We partnered with UNICEF Canada, the Canadian Index of Wellbeing, Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Medavie Foundation on this project.

Sociodemographic characteristics of this sample (n=1915[†]).

		N	%	
GENDER	Female	996	52%	
	Male	838	44%	
	Non-binary	27	1%	
	Another gender identity*	46	2%	
AGE	13-15 years	1010	53%	
	16-18 years	905	47%	
GRADE	Elementary school	132	8%	
	Secondary school	1620	92%	
MUNICIPALITY	Burlington	284	19%	
	Halton Hills	86	6%	
	Milton	427	28%	
	Oakville	729	48%	
IMMIGRATION	Newcomer**	220	12%	
	More than 5 years	256	14%	
	Born in Canada	1385	74%	
LIVING WITH CHRONIC ILLNESS OR DISABILITY	Has a long-term physical or mental condition that limits participation in activities	182	10%	
VISIBLE MINORITY***	Belongs to a visible minority group	986	53%	
INDIGENOUS	Identifies as First Nations, Métis, Inuit or other	176	10%	

Source: Our Kids Network (2021). Halton Youth Impact Survey. In partnership with UNICEF CANADA and the Canadian Index of Wellbeing

[†] Sample used for Halton Region statistics

* Respondents could self-identify and enter their own gender identity. The most common response was non-binary. Other responses included: gender fluid (13), questioning/not sure (10), demigirl (3), agender (12), genderqueer (2).

** Living in Canada for five years or less.

*** The definition of visible minorities is employed here to make the data comparable to Statistics Canada census data. The Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as “persons other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race and non white in colour”.

Sociodemographic characteristics of this sample by municipality (n=1526[†]).

		Burlington (n=284)		Halton Hills (n=86)		Milton (n=427)		Oakville (n=729)	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
GENDER	Female	142	50%	42	49%	247	58%	385	53%
	Male	134	47%	39	45%	169	40%	308	42%
	Non-binary	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15	2%
AGE	13-15 years	147	52%	41	48%	261	61%	390	53%
	16-18 years	137	48%	45	52%	166	39%	339	47%
IMMIGRATION	Newcomer*	12	4%	N/A	N/A	38	9%	126	17%
	More than 5 years	30	11%	N/A	N/A	68	16%	102	14%
	Born in Canada	240	85%	76	88%	315	74%	485	67%
LIVING WITH A DISABILITY	Has a long-term physical or mental condition that limits participation in activities	43	15%	11	13%	33	8%	40	5%
VISIBLE MINORITY	Belongs to a visible minority group	78	27%	15	17%	319	75%	415	57%
INDIGENOUS	Identifies as First Nations, Métis, Inuit or other	29	10%	18	21%	N/A	N/A	25	3%

Source: Our Kids Network (2021). Halton Youth Impact Survey. In partnership with UNICEF CANADA and the Canadian Index of Wellbeing

[†] Respondents with information on the municipality of residence. Data used for municipality-specific statistics.



Foreword

The idea for this bulletin was born in a meeting with professionals advocating for more inclusion supports in Milton's recreational activities. To support their advocacy, they needed data. At Our Kids Network we recognize the power of numbers to drive change. We created this bulletin to share data with those who can turn it into action. Recreation and leisure have an essential role in the wellbeing of children and youth, and we want to see all children and youth in Halton have access to recreation opportunities.

This bulletin combines data from the 2021 Halton Youth Impact Survey with other sources to support planning and advocacy for more inclusive recreation in Halton. We use the survey data to show the importance of ensuring equal access to recreational opportunities. Additionally, we've compiled census and school data to estimate the number of people who may be living with disabilities in Halton and Canada to help inclusion advocates estimate the size of the gap we need to address when we talk about inclusion spots in recreational programs.

The HYIS gathered data on whether respondents had recreation and culture facilities that were easy for them to get to, and had opportunities to enjoy nature in their neighbourhood. However, while being close to nature, recreation, and culture facilities improves access to recreation opportunities, children and youth may still experience barriers. Therefore, we focus on barriers experienced by Halton Youth Impact Survey respondents in accessing recreation - especially those barriers that can be mitigated by changes to programs and services. The next important question we explored in this bulletin is: **“What equity-deserving groups are more likely to face barriers in accessing recreation opportunities?”**.

Young people with a long-term physical or mental condition that limits their participation in at least one activity were more likely to report barriers to accessing recreation. Also, young people in households living with inadequate income were more likely to experience barriers. At the intersection of these two groups, we find the highest percentage of respondents experiencing barriers to participating in recreation.

We hope that this data, along with other data on the number of children and youth living with a disability or in low-income households, would support actions to create more recreation opportunities for equity-deserving children and youth who may not have access to these opportunities without the proper supports.

At the end of the bulletin, you will find a data to action guide with questions to facilitate the discussion about these data, and a recommendation for action to support you in moving from data to action.



Access to recreation and leisure opportunities helps our children and youth thrive.

There is growing awareness of the role of recreation and leisure in the wellbeing of children and youth. Recreation and leisure encompass a wide spectrum of activities that include play, physical activity, engagement with arts and culture, spending time in nature, and social interaction. Recreation and leisure activities that are age appropriate have been identified as having a positive developmental impact on children and youth.^{1,2}

Recent work resulting from the Halton Youth Impact Survey and developed in partnership with The Canadian Index of Wellbeing sheds light on how engaging in recreational and leisure activities can improve the wellbeing of children and youth.³ By facilitating social connectedness, participation in recreation and leisure opportunities decreases social isolation, and improves child and youth wellbeing. It is worth noting that when children and youth reported higher levels of perceived accessibility to nature and recreation and culture facilities and reported fewer barriers to participating in recreation, the positive impact of their participation in those opportunities on social connectedness was boosted.

Participating in recreation can bring other benefits to child and youth health and wellbeing. Being physically active is an important form of recreation, and the benefits to youth wellbeing and development are well documented by research. Physical activity has been found to decrease symptoms of anxiety and depression in children

Access to recreation and other leisure opportunities can promote social connectedness and improve the wellbeing of children and youth. When these opportunities are highly accessible, the beneficial impact of participating in these opportunities on social connectedness is boosted.

1 Tremblay, M.S., Gray, C., Babcock, S., Barnes, J., Costas Bradstreet, C., Carr, D., Chabot, G., Choquette, L., Chorney, D., Collyer, C., Herrington, S., Janson, K., Janssen, I., Larouche, R., Pickett, W., Power, M., Beate Hansen Sandseter, E., Simon, B., & Brussoni, M. (2015). Position statement on active outdoor play. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 12(6), 6475-6505.

2 Tonon, G., Laurito, M.J., & Benatuil, D. (2019). Leisure, free time, and well-being of 10 years old children living in Buenos Aires province, Argentina. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 14(3), 637-658.

3 Gao, M., Smale, B., Wells, E., & Redoschi, B. (2023). Moderating effect of perceived quality of and access to recreation opportunities on the relationship of leisure and wellbeing among children and youth. 17th Canadian Congress on Leisure Research. Ottawa.

and youth, and lead to higher quality of life. Physical activities that are team or group-based support healthy social development among youth, and unstructured free outdoor play promotes cognitive development and self-regulation. Activities such as cycling, running, walking, and swimming stimulate creativity and problem-solving. Among children and youth with disabilities, physical activity can improve social integration and enhance communication, resulting in improved wellbeing.^{4,5,6}

It is important to note that external factors, such as the characteristics of the school and neighbourhood, play an important role in children and youth's overall wellbeing.⁷ Barriers to physical activity among youth include neighbourhood characteristics such as the availability of recreation facilities and whether homes have yards attached to them, and the characteristics of recreation facilities, such as whether they offer a diversity of programs and are low cost.⁸

Recreation and leisure activities that take place outdoors and in nature have additional benefits for child and youth psychological wellbeing. Interacting with the natural environment can improve emotional wellbeing and reduce stress among youth. The accessibility, or ease of reaching natural destinations, positively impacts the likelihood that youth spend time in nature, with youth who live nearby to natural spaces more likely to spend time enjoying the environment. Youth typically spend time in natural spaces like parks to socialize or to engage in recreation activities.⁹

During the COVID-19 outbreak and restrictions, youth experienced a striking decline in nearly all forms of physical activity. The most significant decline was in outdoor activities and sports. Conversely, screen time and social media use increased during the outbreak.¹⁰ Youth experienced increased stress due to social isolation, leading to a deterioration in mental health outcomes. Recreation and leisure activities provide opportunities for positive experiences and social interactions, which are critical for adolescent development and mental health.^{11, 12} Since the end of COVID-19 restrictions, a key component of promoting youth wellbeing involves ensuring that all youth have opportunities to be active and enjoy the wide-ranging benefits of physical, outdoor, cultural, and other forms of recreation.

In this bulletin, Halton Youth Impact Survey data provides a snapshot of how young people in Halton were doing during COVID-19 lockdowns and social distancing measures. Although the survey was conducted during a very particular moment in time, these findings highlight concerns and inequities in accessing recreation that go beyond the impact of COVID-19 restrictions.

Are recreation and leisure opportunities accessible to all children and youth in Halton?

4 Biddle, S. J., & Asare, M. (2011). Physical activity and mental health in children and adolescents: A review of reviews. *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 45(11), 886-895.

5 ParticipACTION. (2020). The role of the family in the physical activity, sedentary and sleep behaviours of children and youth. The 2020 ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth. Toronto. Retrieved from: https://participation.cdn.prismic.io/participation/f6854240-ef7c-448c-ae5c-5634c41a0170_2020_Report_Card_Children_and_Youth_Full_Report.pdf.

6 SickKids. (2021). Let the children play: Getting children and youth outdoors now for an active recovery. <https://www.sickkids.ca/en/news/archive/2021/let-children-play/#top>

7 Ibid.

8 Public Health Ontario. (2016). Evidence brief: Barriers to physical activity for children and youth in Ontario. <http://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/E/2016/eb-physical-activity-barriers.pdf>

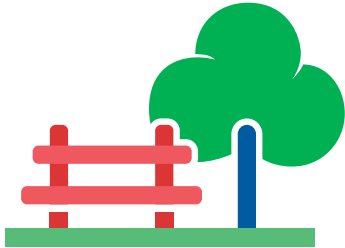
9 Tillmann, S., Tobin, D., Avison, W., & Gilland, J. (2018). Mental health benefits of interactions with nature in children and teenagers: A systematic review. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Mental Health*.

10 Moore, S.A., Faulkner, G., Rhodes, R.E., Brussoni, M., Chulak-Bozzer, T., Ferguson, L.J., Mitra, R., O'Reilly, N., Spence, J.C., Vanderloo, L.M., & Tremblay, M.S. (2020). Impact of the COVID-19 virus outbreak on movement and play behaviours of Canadian children and youth: A national survey. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 17(85).

11 Orben, A., Tomova, L., & Blakemore, S. (2020). The effects of social deprivation on adolescent development and mental health. *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*, 4(8), 634-640.

12 Tombeau Cost, K., Crosbie, J., Anagnostou, E., Birken, C.S., Charach, A., Monga, S., Kelley, E., Nicolson, R., Maguire, J.L., Burton, C.L., Schachar, R.J., Arnold, P.D., Korczak, D.J. (2020). Mostly worse, occasionally better: Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of Canadian children and adolescents. *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 31(4), 671-684.

Indicators



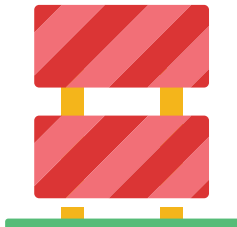
Availability of leisure and recreation opportunities

Whether respondents reported opportunities to enjoy nature in their neighbourhood, and culture and recreation facilities they could easily get to. It is derived from two items: “There are plenty of opportunities to enjoy nature in my neighbourhood” and “There are recreation and culture facilities that are easy for me to get to.” Respondents rated these items on a scale ranging from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree.”



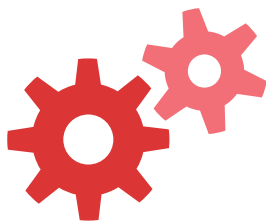
Satisfaction with the quality of recreation and culture facilities

Whether or not respondents were satisfied with recreation and culture facilities. Satisfied respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: “The quality of the recreation and culture facilities in my community is very high.”



Barriers to Recreation

Barriers to recreation reported by respondents, including: “I do not have enough time to participate,” “I do not have anyone to participate with,” “I do not have the money to participate,” “There is not a recreation center nearby that I can get to,” “There is not a park nearby that I can get to,” “I do not have access to public transportation.” Respondents perceiving barriers to recreation are those who agreed or strongly agreed with at least one of these statements.



Systemic barriers

Systemic barriers are barriers that are best addressed with changes to programs, services, and systems that perpetuate inequities. Agreement with any of the following statements indicated experience of systemic barriers: “I do not have the money to participate,” “There is not a recreation centre nearby that I can get to,” “There is not a park nearby that I can get to,” “I do not have access to public transportation.”



Young people living with a disability

Respondents were asked if they had a long-term physical or mental condition that limited their ability to fully participate in their community, school, work, or other activities. Respondents who had a limitation in at least one of those environments were considered as respondents living with a disability.¹



Food insecurity as a proxy for inadequate income

Food insecurity means not having consistent access to enough food for a healthy and active life. It is when people worry about running out of food or do not have the resources to buy the types of food they need. The Halton Youth Impact Survey assessed food insecurity with seven items.² Respondents with at least one affirmative answer to any of the seven items were considered to have experienced some degree of food insecurity in the previous year.

Household food insecurity is a marker of material deprivation, closely linked to other social and economic disadvantage indicators.³ This indicator is used as a proxy for inadequate income in this bulletin. When households have inadequate income, they may struggle to consistently afford enough food, leading to food insecurity. Inadequate income impacts not only food security but also other basic needs with health consequences beyond poor nutrition.^{4,5} Although we have chosen to adopt food security as a proxy for inadequate income, it is essential to recognize that it does not capture the entirety of a household's financial situation.

1 The definition of disability employed here is in line with that adopted by UNICEF and described on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This is a human rights-based definition where persons with disabilities are "those who have a long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others".

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. (2006). United Nations. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html> UNICEF (2014). Definition and Classification of Disability. <https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/reports/definition-and-classification-disability>

2 "Some young people go to school or to bed hungry because there is not enough food at home. How often does this happen to you?" and how often were the following things true for you in the past 12 months: "I ate only a few kinds of low-cost foods because we could not buy food," "Our family could not afford the food for more balanced meals," "I did not eat enough because there was not enough money for food," "I ate smaller meals because there was not enough money for food," "I skipped meals because there was not enough money for food," "I did not eat for a whole day because there was not enough money for food." Our Kids Network (2022). *Supporting Families to Champion Positive Youth Development: an outlook on youth's experiences of discrimination, homelessness and food insecurity*.

3 Tarasuk, V., Li, T., Fafard St-Germain, A.A. (2022). Household food insecurity in Canada, 2021. Retrieved from <https://proof.utoronto.ca/>.

4 Ibid.

5 PROOF. (2022). Food Insecurity: A problem of inadequate income, not solved by food. FACTSHEET - OCTOBER 2022.

A young woman with dark hair, wearing a striped shirt and a necklace, is sitting in a wheelchair. She is smiling and looking to her right while holding an open book. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees. The entire image is overlaid with a blue tint.

Key Findings from the Halton Youth Impact Survey

The key findings section highlights differences between youth based on their diverse abilities, and socioeconomic status.* It is essential to build awareness of the impact of inequities** on the lives of young people living in Halton and reflect on these differences using an intersectional lens. When interpreting the data, it's recommended to combine these key findings with other sources of information, and to hear from youth themselves. These findings are intended as a conversation starter. It is one more piece of information to add to what you already know about children, youth, and families in Halton.

- Participation in leisure and recreation opportunities is **associated with higher levels of social connectedness and improved levels of wellbeing**, as measured by life satisfaction scores.¹
- **6 in 10 respondents** experienced high availability of leisure and recreation opportunities and reported the quality of recreation and culture facilities in their community as very high.
- Some young people were more likely to report experiencing systemic barriers.

Who reported systemic barriers?

- **24%** of respondents living with a disability.
- **52%** of respondents living with inadequate income.
- **64%** of respondents living both with a disability and with inadequate income.
- **16%** for Respondents who did not report living with inadequate income or a disability.

* Statistical differences between groups were tested using Poisson regressions including gender and age as control. The threshold for statistically significant differences was $p < 0.05$.

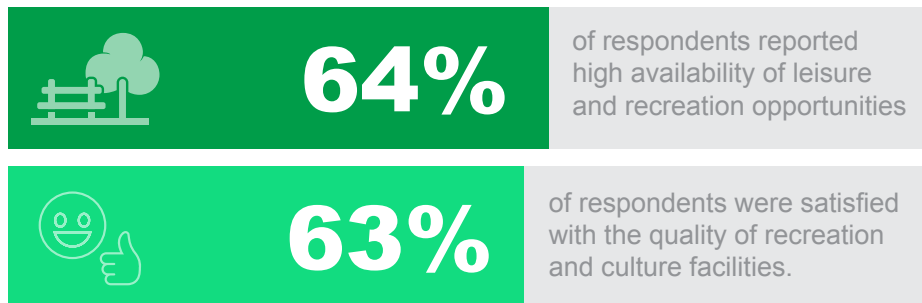
** While this bulletin primarily addresses disparities related to diverse abilities and socioeconomic status, it's crucial to acknowledge that racialized youth, Indigenous youth, gender diverse youth, and other equity-deserving groups may also face inequalities in accessing recreation. When reflecting on these findings, please consider your existing knowledge of the young people who are not accessing your services/programs.

¹ Gao, M., Smale, B., Wells, E., & Redoschi, B. (2023). Moderating effect of perceived quality of and access to recreation opportunities on the relationship of leisure and wellbeing among children and youth. 17th Canadian Congress on Leisure Research. Ottawa.

Recreation and Access: the numbers

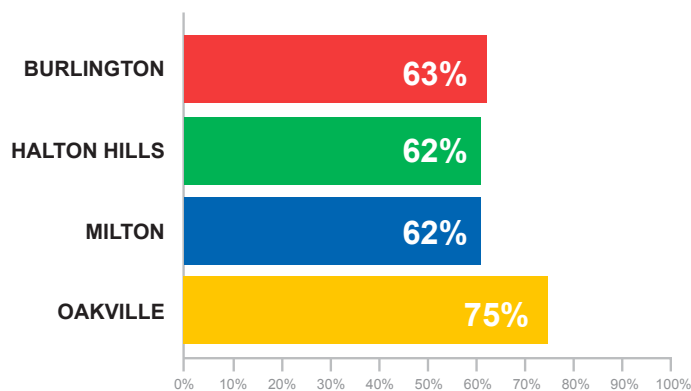
In the Halton Youth Impact Survey, 60% of youth were satisfied with the quality of recreation and cultural facilities in their communities. Sixty percent of youth reported high availability of recreation opportunities.

The 40% of youth who did not have recreation opportunities available to them were more likely to report lower levels of wellbeing* than their peers who had recreation opportunities available to them.



Our Kids Network (2021). Halton youth Impact Survey. In partnership with UNICEF CANADA and the Canadian Index of Wellbeing.

Percentage of youth reporting high availability of recreation opportunities by municipality

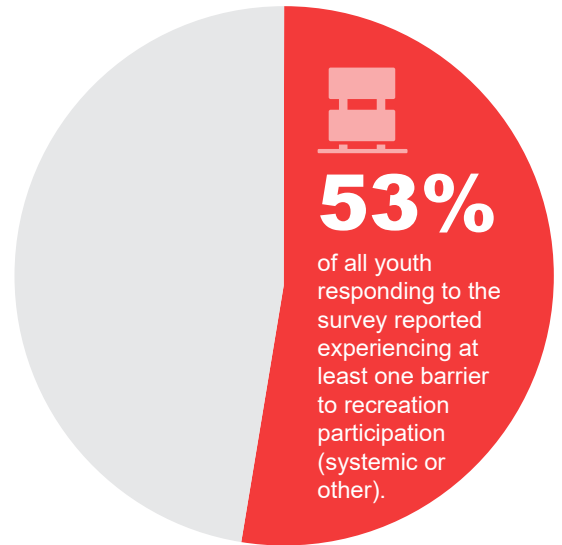


Our Kids Network (2021). Halton youth Impact Survey. In partnership with UNICEF CANADA and the Canadian Index of Wellbeing.

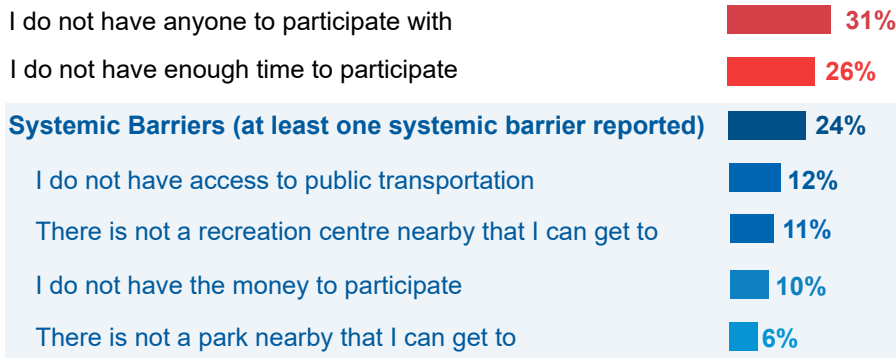
* High social isolation, lower life satisfaction, lower scores in supportive relationships in their lives.

Barriers to Recreation

- In the Halton Youth Impact Survey, a little over half of the respondents **reported at least one barrier to participating in recreation.**
- Of those who had experienced a barrier, **45% faced systemic barriers**, such as not having money for recreational activities and not having access to public transportation, recreation centres, or parks.
- Respondents differed as to how likely they were to mention systemic barriers. **Some were more likely to report systemic barriers** independent of gender and age:
 - Youth living with a disability.
 - Youth living in a household with inadequate income.
 - Youth living with inadequate income and a disability.



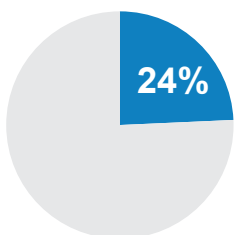
Barriers to Recreation



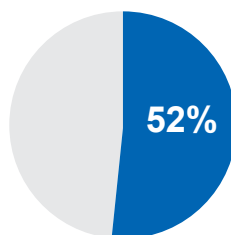
Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could report more than one barrier

Systemic Barriers

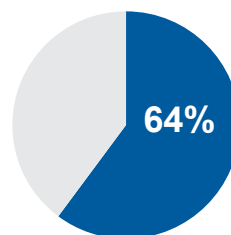
Percentage of respondents who experienced at least one systemic barrier in accessing recreation.



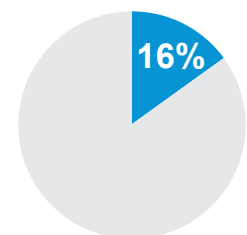
24% of respondents living with a disability.



52% of respondents living in households with inadequate income.



64% of respondents living with a disability AND in a household with inadequate income.



16% of other respondents experienced systemic barriers in their access to recreation.

Did you know?

Disability numbers in Canada and Ontario.

- In 2016, 13.5% of children aged 0 to 14 years had one or more affirmative responses to census questions that identified them as likely to have a disability. These questions addressed topics such as whether a person experiences difficulties with daily activities in five different functional domains, as well as the presence of other health problems or long-term conditions.¹
- The proportion of children with activity limitations in the 2016 Census was higher among children from households with lower levels of income and parental education. Caring for a child with a disability may constrain parents' labour and educational opportunities, which may contribute to lower economic status among families of children with disabilities.²
- In 2017, the prevalence of disability among those aged 15 to 24 years was 13% in Canada. In this age group, mental health-related disabilities were the most prevalent type of disability (59.6%), followed by learning (41.6%), and by pain-related (33.1%).^{3,4}
- In 2019 13.1% of children and youth aged 5 to 17 in Canada and 12.3% in Ontario reported at least one functional difficulty.⁵

PERCENTAGE OF 5- TO 17-YEAR-OLDS BY TYPE OF FUNCTIONAL DIFFICULTY. ONTARIO, 2019.

TYPE OF FUNCTIONAL DIFFICULTY	PERCENTAGE
Hearing	0.24
Self-care	0.42
Seeing	0.47
Communication	0.8
Walking	0.9
Concentrating	0.9
Depression	1.28
Remembering	2
Learning	2.5
Controlling behaviour	2.9
Making friends	3
Accepting change	4
Anxiety	5
Functional difficulties in at least one domain	12.3

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0765-01 Functional difficulties for children aged 5 to 17 years, Canadian Health Survey on Children and Youth 2019

1 Charters, T., Schimmele, C., & Arim, R. (2022). *A profile of children with affirmative responses to the 2016 census questions on difficulties with activities of daily living*. Statistics Canada.

2 Ibid.

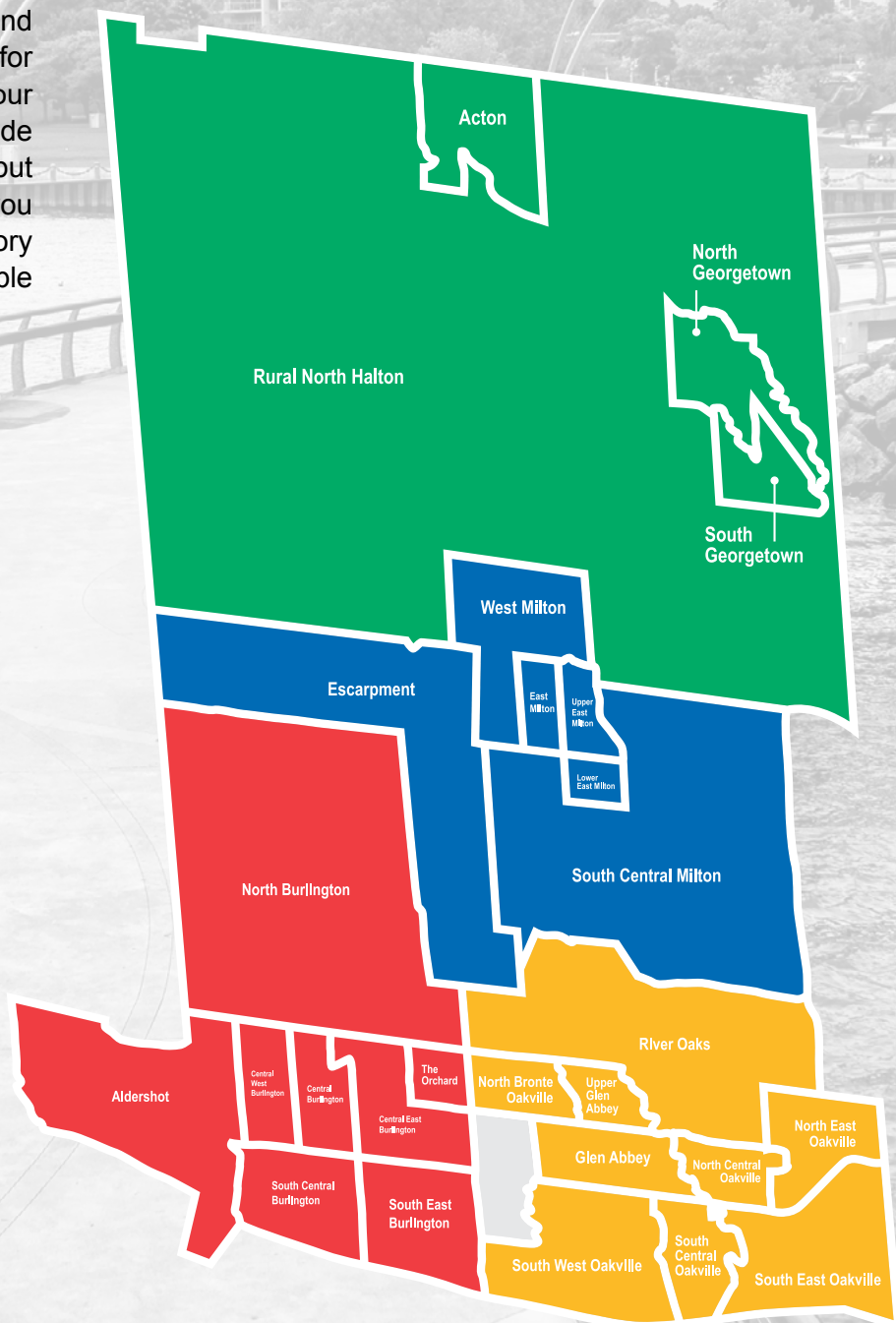
3 Morris, S., Fawcett, G., Brisebois, L., & Hughes, J. (2018). *Canadian Survey on Disability Reports. A demographic, employment and income profile of Canadians with disabilities aged 15 years and over, 2017*. Statistics Canada.

4 Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0376-01 Type of disability for persons with disabilities aged 15 years and over, by age group and sex, Canada, provinces and territories

5 Statistics Canada. Table 13-10-0765-01 Functional difficulties for children aged 5 to 17 years, Canadian Health Survey on Children and Youth 2019

Explore the Numbers by Municipality

On the following pages, you will find data points that can support planning for more inclusive recreation in your municipality. These indicators provide limited insight individually, but combined with the information you already have, they can help tell a story about community needs for accessible leisure and recreation opportunities.



Burlington



POPULATION*

0-6 yr.-olds

12,625

-5.1% since 2016

7-12 yr.-olds

12,730

-2.8% since 2016

13-18 yr. olds

13,510

+4.8% since 2016



63%

reported high availability of leisure and recreation opportunities.



61%

were satisfied with the quality of recreation and culture facilities.



50%

reported barriers accessing recreation.



24%

reported systemic barriers to accessing recreation.

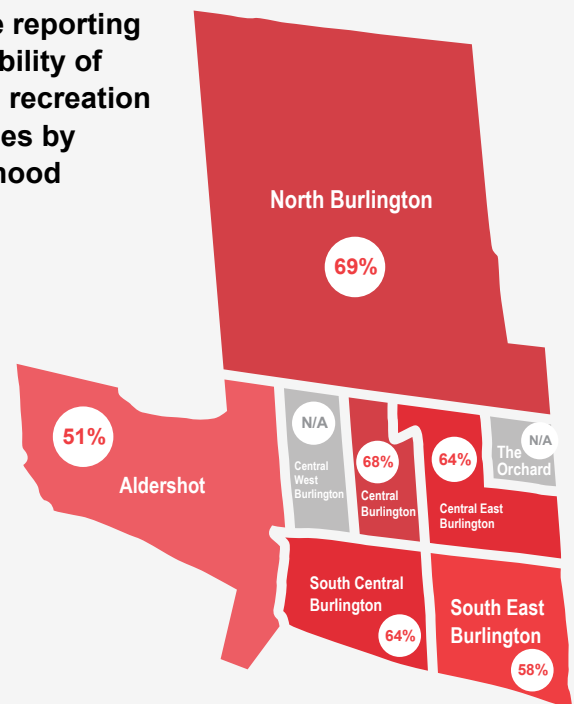
Equity deserving children and youth, who may need support accessing recreation and leisure opportunities:

15% of elementary and secondary students are registered for special education**.

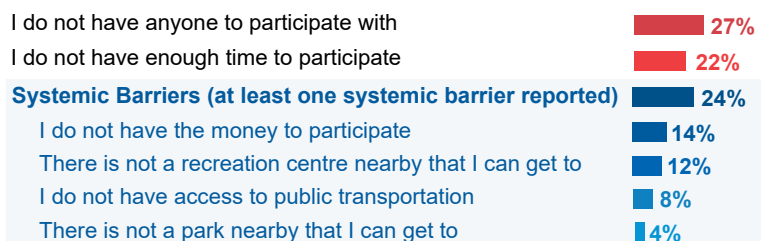
27% of kindergarten children developmentally vulnerable in at least one domain (2018)***.

3.3% of the population lives at or below the low-income threshold*.

Percentage reporting high availability of leisure and recreation opportunities by neighbourhood



BARRIERS TO RECREATION: BURLINGTON



Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could report more than one barrier

* Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census Profile.

** Source: Board School Identification Database (BSID) / Ontario School Information System (OnSIS) as updated/maintained by boards July 2023 OnSIS Preliminary 2020-2021 (Student Population)

*** The EDI is a population-based tool used to assess children's development in five key domains. This percentage shows kindergarten children vulnerable in at least one of the domains. To learn more: https://ourkidsnetwork.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/OKN-EDI-Report-2003-2018_FNL.pdf

Halton Hills

POPULATION*

0-6 yr.-olds

4,275

-4.7% since 2016

7-12 yr.-olds

4,675

-8.8% since 2016

13-18 yr. olds

5,420

-1.6% since 2016



62%

reported high availability of leisure and recreation opportunities.



52%

were satisfied with the quality of recreation and culture facilities.



56%

reported barriers accessing recreation.



38%

reported systemic barriers to accessing recreation.

Equity deserving children and youth, who may need support accessing recreation and leisure opportunities:

18% of elementary and secondary students are registered for special education**.

29% of kindergarten children developmentally vulnerable in at least one domain (2018)***.

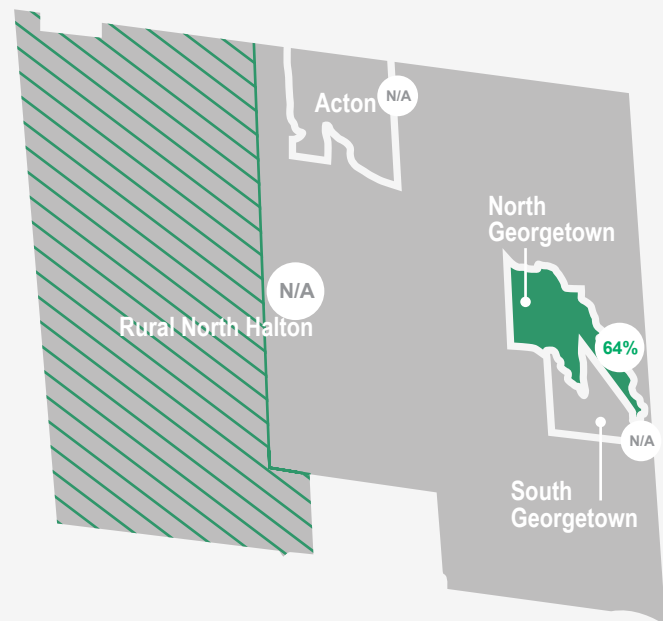
3.8% of the population lives at or below the low-income threshold*.

* Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census Profile.

** Source: Board School Identification Database (BSID) / Ontario School Information System (OnSIS) as updated/maintained by boards July 2023 OnSIS Preliminary 2020-2021 (Student Population)

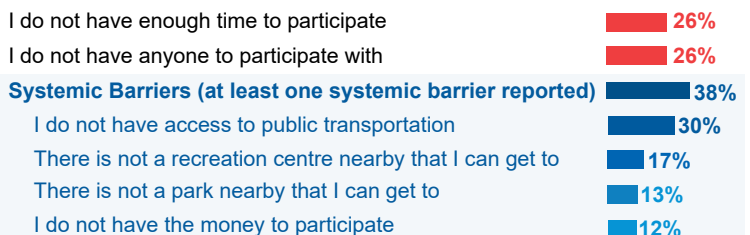
*** The EDI is a population-based tool used to assess children's development in five key domains. This percentage shows kindergarten children vulnerable in at least one of the domains. To learn more: https://ourkidsnetwork.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/OKN-EDI-Report-2003-2018_FNL.pdf

Percentage reporting high availability of leisure and recreation opportunities by neighbourhood



Note: the hatched area is included as Halton Hills in OKN data. For Statistics Canada and school data this area is included in Milton statistics.

BARRIERS TO RECREATION: HALTON HILLS



Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could report more than one barrier

Milton



POPULATION*

0-6 yr.-olds

13,100

-2.4% since 2016

7-12 yr.-olds

14,090

+18.3% since 2016

13-18 yr. olds

12,690

+53% since 2016



62%

reported high availability of leisure and recreation opportunities.



62%

were satisfied with the quality of recreation and culture facilities.



54%

reported barriers accessing recreation.



18%

reported systemic barriers to accessing recreation.

Equity deserving children and youth, who may need support accessing recreation and leisure opportunities:

11% of elementary and secondary students are registered for special education**.

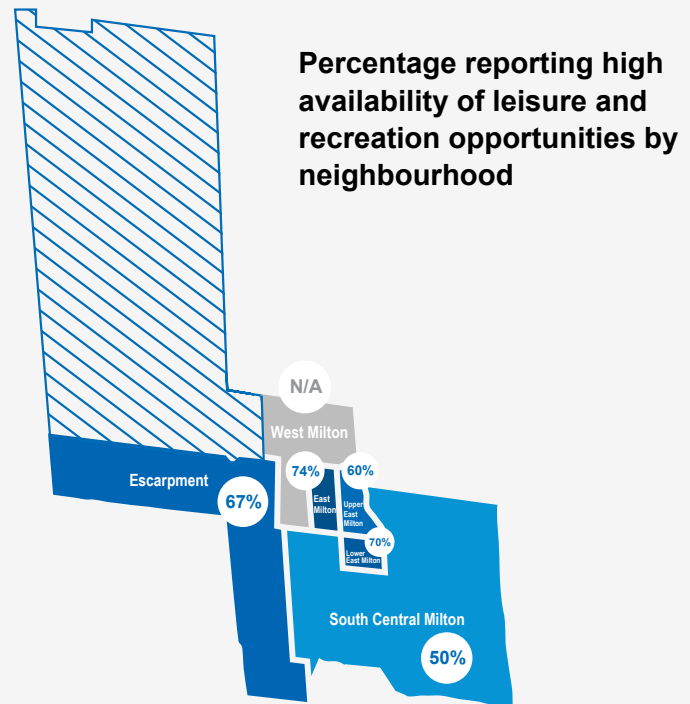
29% of kindergarten children developmentally vulnerable in at least one domain (2018)***.

2.4% of the population lives at or below the low-income threshold*.

* Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census Profile.

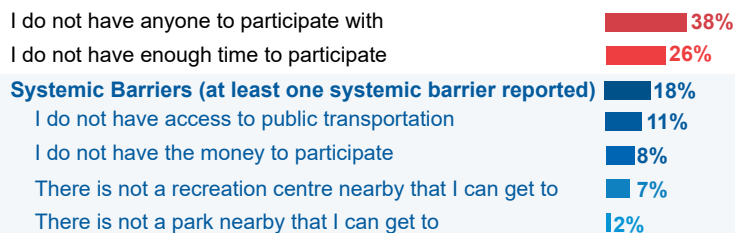
** Source: Board School Identification Database (BSID) / Ontario School Information System (OnSIS) as updated/maintained by boards July 2023 OnSIS Preliminary 2020-2021 (Student Population)

*** The EDI is a population-based tool used to assess children's development in five key domains. This percentage shows kindergarten children vulnerable in at least one of the domains. To learn more: https://ourkidsnetwork.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/OKN-EDI-Report-2003-2018_FNL.pdf



Note: the hatched area is included as Halton Hills in OKN data. For Statistics Canada and school data this area is included in Milton statistics.

BARRIERS TO RECREATION: MILTON



Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could report more than one barrier

Oakville



POPULATION*	0-6 yr.-olds	7-12 yr.-olds	13-18 yr. olds
	14,080	17,575	20,335
	+2.6% since 2016	+3.2% since 2016	+13.8% since 2016

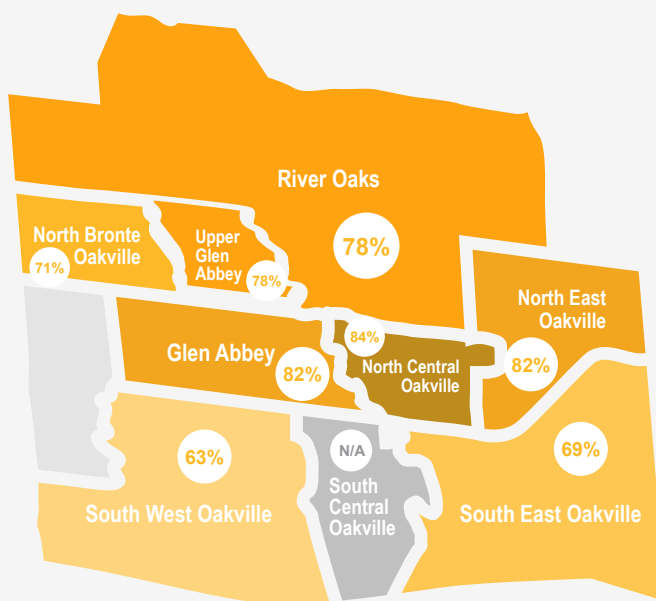
75% reported high availability of leisure and recreation opportunities.

71% were satisfied with the quality of recreation and culture facilities.

49% reported barriers accessing recreation.

18% reported systemic barriers to accessing recreation.

Percentage reporting high availability of leisure and recreation opportunities by neighbourhood



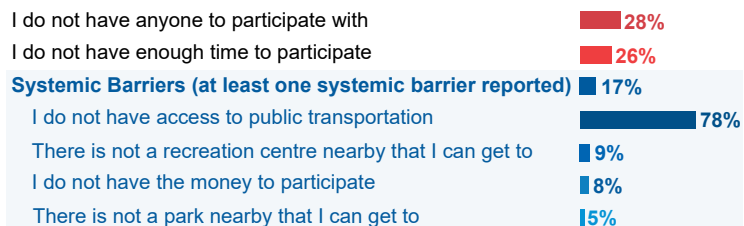
Equity deserving children and youth, who may need support accessing recreation and leisure opportunities:

11% of elementary and secondary students are registered for special education**.

29% of kindergarten children developmentally vulnerable in at least one domain (2018)***.

5.7% of the population lives at or below the low-income threshold*.

BARRIERS TO RECREATION: OAKVILLE



Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could report more than one barrier

* Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census Profile.

** Source: Board School Identification Database (BSID) / Ontario School Information System (OnSIS) as updated/maintained by boards July 2023 OnSIS Preliminary 2020-2021 (Student Population)

*** The EDI is a population-based tool used to assess children's development in five key domains. This percentage shows kindergarten children vulnerable in at least one of the domains. To learn more: https://ourkidsnetwork.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/OKN-EDI-Report-2003-2018_FNL.pdf



What next? Data to action

The findings from the HYIS provide our community with new, comprehensive data, informed by a youth engagement strategy, and validated by youth from across Halton. Now, it is time for organizations serving youth in Halton to move the data into action.

How can we work together so all children and youth in Halton can benefit from leisure and recreation opportunities?

STEP 1

Consider the conditions we want to see for child and youth wellbeing in Halton. The findings from the HYIS suggest three key conditions we should strive for:

- The wellbeing of children and youth is enhanced when they can access recreation and leisure opportunities.
- Barriers need to be removed so all children and youth have equitable opportunities to participate in leisure and recreation.
- All children and youth have the right to leisure, and to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child.

STEP 2

Explore and share the findings. More data can be found on the [OKN Data Portal](#).

Have conversations about what the results mean, and how we can work together in Halton to respond to these findings.

STEP 3

This Data Action Bulletin posits a series of questions, or Data Actions, to guide discussion and ultimately, action at your organization. We encourage you to work through and discuss each question as a group. It is our vision that the conversations catalyzed by these questions will be unique to your organization and create pathways for mobilizing the data within your organization and our communities.

How we achieve these outcomes will be determined by the actions we take, individually in our respective work, and collaboratively as a community. The Data Actions below are designed to guide discussion at your organization.

The wellbeing of children and youth is enhanced when they can access recreation and leisure opportunities.

- How does your organization positively impact children and youth through recreation and leisure opportunities?
- How does your organization communicate the benefits of recreation and leisure?
- What organizations and individuals are your allies in supporting accessible recreation opportunities for all children and youth?

Barriers need to be removed so all children and youth have equitable opportunities to participate in leisure and recreation.

- What are some of the barriers your organization has successfully addressed, or is working to address? What strategies have you used?
- What knowledge and resources does your organization require to advocate for the removal of barriers you cannot tackle on your own?
- Think about some of the children and youth your organization might not be reaching right now. Can you think of ways your organization could better support them?

All children and youth have the right to leisure, and to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child.

- What is the story of your program or service, and the children and youth you serve? What do you think are the top three key messages about your work?
- How can you use your story to support your advocacy work for inclusive recreation and leisure opportunities?
- What partners may help you in ensuring your organization has everything it needs to offer inclusive programs?

Turning the Curve: Recommendations for Action

Ultimately, every person will have their own perspective on how well Halton youth are doing and some issues will be perceived as more important than others. Regardless of any perspective, the next step is to share the insights gained from this bulletin and begin conversations about what the results mean and how we might respond. Based on these conversations, you will determine which issues you need to act upon.

This is referred to as “turning the curve”. In other words, you want to take action on indicators that reflect a negative trend in order to turn the trend or curve in a more positive direction. The following is an easy tool designed by Mark Friedman, developer of Results Based Accountability (www.raguide.org), that can move you from talk to action in 45 to 60 minutes. We suggest you use this tool as a way to discuss the results in this bulletin and the detailed data available online at www.ourkidsnetwork.ca.

How to get started

01

It doesn't matter where you start, just get started! Anywhere leads to everywhere.

02

Start where people are passionate. Create groups where people can work on what they are passionate about.

03

Know “what works”. Evidence-based best practices will help guide you on what could work.

04

Get from talk to action as quickly as possible. Make sure there is an action track to “turn the curve” early in the work.

Key questions for Turning the Curve



STORY BEHIND THE BASELINE (TREND)

What are the causes and forces at work? Talking about our experiences and sharing the data help us better understand what's going on in our community and what might work to help us do better.

PARTNERS



Who are the potential partners (people and agencies, public and private) who have a role to play in doing better?



WHAT WORKS

What would it take to do better? What has worked in other places outside your community? What does research tell us? The answers should draw on the possible contributions of partners and should involve no-cost or low-cost ideas.

CRITERIA



What criteria should guide this selection process? Some criteria to think about include: **specificity** (specific action not rhetoric), **leverage** (will it make a big or little difference?), **values** (is it consistent with our personal and community values?), and **reach** (is it feasible and if so, when?).



STRATEGY, ACTION PLAN AND BUDGET

What action do we propose to take? This should be in the form of a multi-year strategy and action plan laying out what is to be accomplished by when. We can then assign responsibilities and get started.



Advancing Beyond the Data

As you take the steps to move the data into action, consider reflecting on what we still need to understand.

- Is something missing from these key findings?
- Has your organization identified an area that should be explored further?
- How can we work together to address these knowledge gaps?

Limitations

- This bulletin covers only responses of youth in the 13-18 age range.
- Open invitation sampling strategy (non-probabilistic).
- Sample is not necessarily representative of all children and youth living in Halton.
- It is not possible to determine a response rate.
- However, considering the geographic coverage and the size of the final sample, it's fair to assume that we have a reasonably good cross-section of children and youth living in Halton.
- A higher degree of diversity within this sample calls for caution when interpreting overall ratios. For more details on the composition of the sample see the sociodemographic table.
- The data are meant to provide a snapshot of youth wellbeing during COVID, and caution should be used when comparing across time.
- While each indicator is important, using multiple indicators as evidence of strengths and needs provides a more comprehensive representation.
- This is a self-report survey and several types of response bias have been identified related to self-report surveys. Use caution when interpreting the findings.