



2023 Insights into Youth Mental Health and Well-Being

Indicator dictionary

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Acronyms

HCDSB – Halton Catholic District School Board

HDSB – Halton District School Board

Census indicators

Indicator	Description
Total population	Total population in 2021
Population growth (since 2016)	Percentage change in the population from 2016 to 2021
Youth population aged 12-17	Number and percentage of the population aged 12-17
Top 3 non-official languages spoken at home	<p>Language spoken most often at home for the total population excluding institutional residents. Does not include official languages (English or French).</p> <p>For a person who lives alone, the language spoken most often at home is the language they feel most comfortable using. For a child who has not yet learned to speak, this is the language spoken most often to the child at home. If more than one language is spoken equally often to the child, then these languages are both included here. [1]</p> <p>Languages were ranked in order from most common to least common.</p>
Racialized persons (%)	<p>Percentage of the population in private households who are visible minorities, based on the definition of visible minority as defined by the Employment Equity Act. The Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour." The visible minority population in Canada consists mainly of the following groups: South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Arab, Latin American, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean and Japanese. [1]</p> <p>In 2021 Census products, the term "visible minority" has been replaced by the terms "racialized population" or "racialized groups", reflecting the increased use of these terms in the public sphere. [1]</p>
One parent families (%)	<p>Percentage of children living in a one-parent family.</p> <p>Includes children living with one or more grandparent without a parent present. [1]</p>
Children 0-17 in low income (LIM-AT) (%)	<p>Percentage of the population aged 0 to 17 years living in private households that were considered low income in 2020, based on the Low Income Measure – After Tax (LIM-AT).</p> <p>The LIM-AT refers to a fixed percentage (50%) of median-adjusted after-tax income of private households. The household after-tax income is adjusted by an equivalence scale to take economies of scale into account. This adjustment for different household sizes</p>

	<p>reflects the fact that a household's needs increase, but at a decreasing rate, as the number of members increases. [1]</p> <p>Using data from the 2021 Census of Population, the low income line applicable to a household is defined as half the Canadian median of the adjusted household after-tax income multiplied by the square root of household size. The median is determined based on all persons in private households where low-income concepts are applicable. [1]</p> <p>When the unadjusted after-tax income of household pertaining to a person falls below the threshold applicable to the person based on household size, the person is considered to be in low income according to LIM-AT. Since the LIM-AT threshold and household income are unique within each household, low-income status based on LIM-AT can also be reported for households. [1]</p> <p>See Footnote 33 in the Statistics Canada Census Profile for more details on this indicator. [1]</p>
Newcomer population (%)	<p>Percentage of the population in private households who immigrated to Canada between 2016 and 2021.</p> <p>'Immigrants' include persons who are, or who have ever been, landed immigrants or permanent residents. Such persons have been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Immigrants who have obtained Canadian citizenship by naturalization are included in this category [1]</p>

Indicators of well-being

Indicator	Description
Self-rated mental health	<p>% of students who indicated that in general, their mental health is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor or fair • Good • Very good or excellent <p>Question source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2021</p>

Happiness	<p>% of students who indicated that in the past month, they feel happy every day or almost every day</p> <p>Question source: <u>Adolescent Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF)</u></p>
General interest in life	<p>% of students who indicated that in the past month, they feel interested in life every day or almost every day</p> <p>Question source: <u>Adolescent Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF)</u></p>
Life satisfaction	<p>% of students who indicated that in the past month, they feel satisfied with their life every day or almost every day</p> <p>Question source: <u>Adolescent Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF)</u></p>
Emotional well-being	<p>% of students who, across all measures of emotional well-being (happiness, general interest in life, life satisfaction), on average reported these experiences every day or almost every day.</p> <p>Question source: <u>Adolescent Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF)</u></p>
Loneliness	<p>% of students who indicated that in the past month, they feel lonely often or always</p> <p>Question source: <u>Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey, 2021</u></p>
Self-esteem	<p>The self-esteem indicator was based a series of eight scale questions:</p> <p>How do you feel about yourself?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel good about myself • I feel I am a person of worth • I am able to do most things as well as other people can • I feel I can't do anything right* • I feel I do not have much to be proud of* • I think I am no good at all* • I feel in control of my life • I feel hopeful about my future <p>Students were given the following response options, with the corresponding values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0=Never • 1=Rarely • 2=Sometimes

- 3=Often
- 4=Always

For questions marked with an asterisk (*), the coding was done in reverse:

- 4=Never
- 3=Rarely
- 2=Sometimes
- 1=Often
- 0=Always

For the self-esteem indicator, the student's average response across the eight questions was calculated. If the average response was greater than two, they were considered to have positive self-esteem. Students were only included in the self-esteem indicator if they answered at least half of the eight questions.

Question source: From Our Kids Network's Halton Youth Survey, adapted from the Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Ability to handle unexpected and difficult problems

% of students who indicated that they would rate their ability to handle unexpected and difficult problems, such as a family or personal crisis, as very good or excellent

Question source: Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey, 2021

Community and social connectedness

Indicator	Description
Peer support for learning	<p>The peer support indicator was based on a series of seven scale questions:</p> <p>In your opinion, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are students at my school who care about me • Students at my school are there for me when I need them • Other students here like me the way I am • I enjoy talking to the students here • Students here respect what I have to say • I have some friends at school

- I have at least one good friend outside of school who cares about me

Students were given the following response options, with the corresponding values:

- 1=Strongly disagree
- 2=Disagree
- 3=Agree
- 4=Strongly agree

For the peer support indicator, the student's average response across the seven questions was calculated. If the average response was greater than two, they were considered to have positive peer support. Students were only included in the peer support indicator if they answered at least half of the seven questions.

Question source: Student Engagement Instrument, University of Minnesota

Connectedness to students at school

% of students who indicated that they feel:

- Not at all or slightly connected
- Somewhat connected
- Quite or extremely connected

to other students at their school.

Question source: Panorama Back to School Survey, 2020/2021

Parent involvement

The parent involvement indicator was based on a series of six scale questions:

My parents or other adults at home:

- Encourage me to talk with my teachers²
- Encourage me to talk with my classmates²
- Help me to be organized²
- Notice when I work hard in class²
- Help me with my homework¹
- Talk to me about school¹

Students were given the following response options, with the corresponding values:

- 1=Strongly disagree
- 2=Disagree
- 3=Agree

- 4=Strongly agree

For the parent involvement indicator, the student's average response across the six questions was calculated. If the average response was greater than two, they were considered to have positive parent involvement. Students were only included in the parent involvement indicator if they answered at least half of the six questions.

Question source: ¹adapted from [Community and Youth Collaborative Institute](#). ²Other items inspired by [Borup, Stevens & Hasler Waters, 2015](#), and [Borup, Chambers & Srimson, 2019](#)

Having family or another adult outside of school they can count on

% of students who indicated that they have a family member or other adult outside school whom they can count on to help them, no matter what

Question source: [Panorama Well-Being Survey](#)

Inclusion

The inclusion indicator was based on a series of eight scale questions:

In your opinion, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- I enjoy being at school
- My school is a friendly place
- My school building is a comfortable place to learn
- I feel accepted by other students in my school
- I feel accepted by other adults in my school
- I can get extra help at my school when I need it
- I feel like I belong at my school
- I feel that school staff listen to students' ideas

Students were given the following response options, with the corresponding values:

- 1=Strongly disagree
- 2=Disagree
- 3=Agree
- 4=Strongly agree

For the inclusion indicator, the student's average response across the eight questions was calculated. If the average response was greater than two, they were considered to have positive feelings of inclusion. Students were only included in the inclusion indicator if they answered at least half of the seven questions.

	Question source: Ontario Ministry of Education (2009) School Climate Survey (Students)
Community belonging	% of students who would describe their sense of belonging to their local community as very or somewhat strong. Question source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2021

Safety

Indicator	Description
Safety at school	<p>% of students who indicated that they feel quite a bit or very safe at school</p> <p>Note that students were provided with the following definition of safety: “Feeling safe” means feeling comfortable, relaxed, and not worried that someone could harm your body, hurt your feelings, or damage your belongings.”</p> <p>Question source: Ontario Ministry of Education (2009) School Climate Survey (Students)</p>
Safety on the way to and from school	<p>% of students who indicated that they feel quite a bit or very safe on their way to and from school</p> <p>Note that students were provided with the following definition of safety: “Feeling safe” means feeling comfortable, relaxed, and not worried that someone could harm your body, hurt your feelings, or damage your belongings.”</p> <p>Question source: Ontario Ministry of Education (2009) School Climate Survey (Students)</p>
Safety in the neighbourhood	<p>% of students who indicated that they feel quite a bit or very safe in their neighbourhood or community</p> <p>Note that students were provided with the following definition of safety: “Feeling safe” means feeling comfortable, relaxed, and not worried that someone could harm your body, hurt your feelings, or damage your belongings.”</p> <p>Question source: Ontario Ministry of Education (2009) School Climate Survey (Students)</p>

Bullying

Indicator	Description
Any bullying behaviour experiences	<p>Students were asked the following series of questions:</p> <p>During the last month, how often has another student from your school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made fun of you¹ • Purposefully left you out of something¹ • Called you mean names¹ • Ignored or excluded you¹ • Told lies about you¹ • Tried to make others dislike you¹ • Stolen your belongings¹ • Pushed or shoved you¹ • Threatened you¹ • Pushed you around, punched or slapped you¹ • Made comments or jokes about your body² • Touched, pinched or grabbed you in a way that made you uncomfortable² • Spread sexual rumours about you (<i>grade 10 only</i>)² <p>Students were given the following response options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Once or twice a month • About once a week • Many times a week • Every day <p>Note that only grade 10s were asked about the category “spread sexual rumours about you”. It is possible that some students in grade 7 experienced this type of bullying as well, but the category was not available to them in the surveys.</p> <p>Question source: ¹Bullying Participant Behaviours Questionnaire, ²Ontario Ministry of Education (2009) School Climate Survey (Students)</p>
Reasons for being bullied	Students in grade 10 were asked the following:

During the last month, were you bullied by a student at your school for any of the following reasons (select all that apply):

- Gender identity
- Ethnicity or culture
- Race
- Language
- Grades or marks
- Looks or appearance
- Religion or faith
- Money/income
- Extra-curricular activities or hobbies
- A disability or learning need
- Homophobia
- Mental Health
- Other
- Not applicable (*HCDSB only*)

“Other” response options were reviewed and recoded into existing categories where appropriate.

To determine the top three reasons for being bullied among grade 10s, the percentage of students who experienced each bullying behaviour among those who experienced any bullying was calculated. The denominator for each calculation was the number of students who selected one or more of the reasons above for being bullied. The “Not applicable” response option was not factored into these calculations as it was only asked of students in the HCDSB. The proportion of students who experienced each bullying behaviour was similar between the two school boards, therefore it was considered appropriate to combine the data from the two boards for analysis, even though the “Not applicable” response option was only available for HCDSB students. However, it is still possible that this difference in question wording impacted how students responded to the surveys.

For grade 7s, there were too many differences in question wording about reasons for being bullied between the HCDSB and HDSB to combine the data and report on the results.

It is important to note that since students were specifically asked about bullying by another student at their school, this indicator would not capture bullying by individuals who do not attend their school. This indicator may therefore underestimate the percentage of students who experience bullying. Note that a separate question on the surveys was asked to determine whether students had been bullied in the past month by someone who does not attend their school.

Question source: [Ontario Ministry of Education \(2009\) School Climate Survey \(Students\)](#)

Cyber bullying experiences

Students were asked the following series of questions:

How often have these things happened to you in the last month?

- I have received a text or online message from another student from my school that made me upset or uncomfortable
- I have been afraid to go on social media/online because of another student from my school
- Another student from my school has posted/shared something or commented about me on social media/online that made me upset or uncomfortable (for example, on snapchat or Instagram)
- I felt left out on social media/online group chats involving students from my school
- Another student from my school has made fun of how I talk or write online

Students were given the following response options:

- Never
- Once or twice a month
- About once a week
- Many times a week
- Every day

Students were considered to have experienced any type of cyber bullying in the last month if they indicated once or twice a month, about once a week, many times a week, or every day to any one or more of the options above. Responses were ranked from highest to lowest in order to determine the top three cyber bullying behaviours experienced.

	<p>It is important to note that students were specifically asked about experiencing cyber bullying by another student at their school. It is therefore possible that this indicator underestimates cyber bullying experiences, since it would not capture students who were cyber bullied only by someone who did not attend their school.</p> <p>Question source: Adapted from Holfeld & Leadbeater (2015), cyber victimization scale; Rating scale adapted from Ministry of Education School Climate Survey</p>
Helping another student being bullied	<p>% of students who indicated that in the last month they had tried to help another student who was being bullied</p> <p>Question source: Ontario Ministry of Education (2009) School Climate Survey (Students)</p>
Locations where bullying occurs	<p>Students were asked the following:</p> <p>To your knowledge, where does bullying most often occur in your school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classrooms • Gym • Washrooms, change rooms, or locker rooms • Lunchrooms or eating area/cafeteria • Other rooms (for example, library, computer room) • Hallways, stairwells, entrances, exits • Open common area (for example, forum, foyer, piazza) <i>(Not asked of HCDSB grade 7s)</i> • In or around portables • Outside on school property (for example, parking lot, field) • School buses • Outside of school property • Electronically (for example, Snapchat, Instagram, text messages) • Other location _____ <p>“Other” response options were reviewed and recoded into existing categories where appropriate.</p> <p>Response options were ranked from highest to lowest in order to determine the top three locations where bullying occurs. Note that students in grade 7 in the HCDSB did not have the option “Open common area (for example, forum, foyer, piazza)” available to them, therefore this category was excluded from the rankings for grade 7. However, among</p>

	<p>students who did receive this response option in the version of the survey they received (all grade 10s, and grade 7s in the HDSB), this response was not commonly selected as a location where bullying most often occurs.</p> <p>Question source: Ontario Ministry of Education (2009) School Climate Survey (Students)</p>
Bullying by someone who does not attend their school	<p>% of students who indicated that during the last month they were bullied by someone who does not attend their school</p> <p>Note that there were very slight differences in question wording between the HDSB and HCDSB surveys. Students in the HDSB were asked "...<i>were you</i> bullied by someone who does not attend your school" while students in the HCDSB were asked "...<i>have you been</i> bullied by someone who does not attend your school". Responses were similar between the two school boards, therefore it was determined that the difference in wording was unlikely to have had a significant impact on how students interpreted the question and it was therefore appropriate to combine and report on the results for the two school boards.</p>

Sleep and screen-time

Indicator	Description
Sleep according to the 24 hour movement guidelines	<p>Students were asked the following:</p> <p>On an average school night, how many hours of sleep do you get?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 hours or less • 5 hours • 6 hours • 7 hours • 8 hours • 9 hours • 10 hours • 11 or more hours <p>The Canadian 24 Hour Movement Guidelines recommend getting an "uninterrupted 9 to 11 hours of sleep per night for those aged 5-13 years and 8 to 10 hours per night for</p>

those aged 14-17 years, with consistent bed and wake-up times”. [2] For grade 7s, students who indicated that they were getting 9 or more hours of sleep per night were considered to be getting the recommended minimum hours of sleep for their age, and for grade 10s, students who indicated that they were getting 8 or more hours of sleep per night were considered to be getting the recommended minimum hours of sleep for their age.

Question source: [Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey](#)

Recreational screen-time

Students were asked the following:

In the last 7 days, about how many hours a day, on average, did you spend: watching TV/movies/videos, playing video games, texting, messaging, posting, or surfing the internet in your free time (include time on any screen, such as a smartphone, tablet, TV, gaming device, computer or wearable technology)?

- None
- Less than 1 hour a day
- 1 to 2 hours a day
- 3 to 4 hours a day
- 5 to 6 hours a day
- 7 to 9 hours a day
- 10 or more hours a day
- Not sure

The Canadian 24 Hour Movement Guidelines recommend “no more than 2 hours per day of recreational screen-time”. [2] Students were considered to be spending more than the recommended two hours per day of recreational screen-time if they indicated that they spent an average of 3 to 4 hours a day or more on screens, during their free time in the last seven days.

Question source: [Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey](#)

Social media use

% of students who indicated that they spend more than two hours per day on social media sites or apps, either posting or browsing. The term “social media” refers to social network sites (such as Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, Facebook, etc.), and instant messengers (such as SnapChat, Whatsapp, Facebook messenger).

Question source: [Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey](#)

Substance use

Indicator	Description
Use of alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, cannabis, and other drugs	<p>Students in grade 10 were asked the following series of questions:</p> <p>In the past month, how often have you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drank beer, wine, coolers, or hard liquor• Used tobacco? (i.e. smoked cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, had flavoured tobacco)• Used vaping products? (i.e. used vapes, vape pens, e-cigarettes, e-hookahs, mods, tank systems; tried brands like JUUL, Eleaf)• Used cannabis? (i.e. smoked, vaped, or eaten marijuana/weed or hash)• Used drugs other than cannabis/marijuana/weed/hash? (i.e. illegal drugs, over-the-counter or prescription drugs for non-medical purposes) <p>Students were given the following response options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Never• Once or twice• Once a week• 2-3 times a week• Daily or almost daily <p>Students were considered to have used a substance in the past month if they selected any response option other than never.</p> <p>Question Source: University of Waterloo Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey (CSTADS), 2021-22</p>

References

- [1] Statistics Canada. (2023 March 29). *Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Retrieved September 26, 2023, from <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>
- [2] Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology. (2021). *Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Children and Youth (5-17 years): An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep*. Retrieved September 27, 2023, from <https://csepguidelines.ca/guidelines/children-youth/>