

School Climate Among Students in Grades 7 to 12 in the NBPSDHU Region

Methodology, Data Source and Limitations

The data presented in this report is from the Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS) conducted by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and administered by the Institute for Social Research, York University. Its contents and interpretation are solely the responsibility of the author and do not necessarily represent the official view of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

The data presented in this report was collected during the 2014/2015 school year, and when noted, for a combined sample of the 2010/2011 & 2014/2015 school years. It provides an update of the health of Ontario youth, updating data that were previously reported in [The Health of Youth in the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit Region](#) (North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit, 2012).

The survey was administered to students from grades seven through twelve enrolled in public and Catholic school systems (French and English). Excluded from this report are youth enrolled in private schools or home-schooled, those institutionalized for correctional or health reasons, and those schooled on native reserves, military bases, or in the remote northern region of Ontario. Data in this report has been presented for the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (NBPSDHU), other northern regions in Ontario (excluding the NBPSDHU region) and Ontario. The NBPSDHU region sample includes 580 students from 19 regional schools within three school boards.

The term “significant” is used within this report to describe differences between health regions or groups that are statistically meaningful. Without statistical significance you cannot say with certainty that the differences are real, or simply due to chance. Sampling variability associated with each estimate is described using 95% confidence intervals (95% CI), which indicate the precision of the estimate. Confidence intervals were used to determine significant differences between estimates.

Estimates with a coefficient of variation (ratio of standard error to its estimate) equal to or higher than 33.3, or based on less than 50 responses were suppressed due to high sampling variability. Estimates were calculated using complex survey analysis in Stata 14.2 (StataCorp LP, College Station, TX).

Definitions and Comparison Groups

Aboriginal Identity

Only students who identified themselves as Aboriginal on the survey are included in this group. It is possible that some students did not self-identify, and are thus excluded from this group.

Perceived Socio-Economic Status (SES)

Students were asked to identify where they thought their family would be on the socioeconomic status (SES) ladder, on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being “worst off”, and 10 being “best off”. Students who selected a rating of 1-6 were considered to be of low SES, while students who selected 7-10 were considered to be of high SES.

School Connectedness

Students were asked their agreement on three statements to determine how connected they felt to their school community: “I feel safe in my school”, “I feel close to people at this school” and “I feel like I am part of this school”. Students who responded that they somewhat or strongly agreed to all three statements were considered “connected”, otherwise they were considered “disconnected”.

In 2014/15, over eight of every ten students felt safe at school, close to people at school, or felt part of school in any of the three regions (Table 1). In the Health Unit region, about 74.1% (95% CI: 68.0, 79.4) of students were connected to their school (i.e., felt safe at school, felt close to people at school, and felt part of their school), statistically similar to students in other northern regions (81.0%; 95% CI: 77.5, 84.2) and Ontario (79.2%; 95% CI: 77.5, 80.8). This percentage has not changed between 2010/11 and 2014/15 school years in the Health Unit and other northern regions, but has decreased significantly in Ontario.

School connectedness was analyzed among selected demographic subgroups (Tables 2 through 4). About 65.4% of female students in the Health Unit region were connected to their school, significantly lower compared to 77.2% of female students in Ontario (Table 2). A significantly higher percentage of elementary students within the Health Unit region were connected to their school compared to students in secondary school (Table 3). In other northern regions and Ontario, significantly higher percentages of students with high perceived socioeconomic status were connected to their schools compared to students with low perceived socioeconomic status, however percentages were similar among students in the Health Unit region (Table 4).

Table 1. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Agreed with Each School Connectedness Item, by School Connectedness Items & Region, 2014/15

School Climate Item	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Felt safe at school	91.7 (83.1, 96.2)	95.5 (93.4, 97.0)	95.0 (94.0, 95.8)
Felt close to people at school	84.8* (82.5, 86.9)	88.7 (86.5, 90.6)	88.2 (87.1, 89.2)
Felt part of school	84.1 (76.5, 89.5)	85.9 (82.3, 88.9)	86.2 (84.8, 87.5)

* Estimate is significantly different from provincial estimate

Table 2. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Were Connected to School, by Gender & Region, 2014/15

Gender	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Males	82.2 ^{E‡} (71.4, 89.6)	84.3 ^E (77.8, 89.2)	81.2 (79.2, 83.0)
Females	65.4* (60.7, 69.8)	77.6 (72.4, 82.0)	77.2 (74.9, 79.3)

‡ Estimate is significantly different from female students in the same region

* Estimate is significantly different from provincial estimate

E Interpret with caution; the estimate is associated with high sampling variability

Table 3. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Were Connected to School, by Grade Level & Region, 2014/15

Grade Level	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Grades 7 - 8	85.4 ^{E‡} (78.1, 90.6)	85.0 (79.8, 89.0)	82.6 (78.9, 85.9)
Grades 9 - 12	69.6 (59.7, 78.0)	79.5 (74.4, 83.7)	78.0 (76.2, 79.8)

E Interpret with caution; the estimate is associated with high sampling variability

‡ Estimate is significantly different from secondary students in the same region

Table 4. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Were Connected to School, by Perceived Socioeconomic Status & Region, 2014/15

Perceived Socioeconomic Status (SES)	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Low SES	66.3 ^E (47.4, 81.0)	70.6 (64.3, 76.3)	70.9 (67.9, 73.8)
High SES	78.4 ^Δ (73.8, 82.4)	85.6 [‡] (82.5, 88.2)	83.2 [‡] (81.7, 84.7)

E Interpret with caution; the estimate is associated with high sampling variability

‡ Estimate is significantly different from students with low perceived socioeconomic status, in the same region

Δ Estimate is significantly different from students in other northern regions

Feelings About School

In 2014/15, about four of every ten students in the Health Unit region liked school very much or quite a lot (39.6%; 95% CI: 28.1, 52.3), statistically similar to students in other northern regions (29.6%; 95% CI: 24.7, 35.1) and Ontario (32.3%; 95% CI: 30.1, 34.7).

Data from 2010/11 & 2014/15 was combined to analyze students' feelings about school, for selected demographic subgroups in the Health Unit region, and other northern regions. These estimates are compared to 2014/15 Ontario estimates. About half of females in the Health Unit region reported liking school very much or quite a lot, significantly higher compared to about one in three female students in

Ontario (Table 5). A significantly higher percentage of secondary students in the Health Unit region reported liking school very much or quite a lot in the Health Unit region (44.2%) compared to Ontario secondary students (27.6%; Table 6). Significantly higher percentages of students with either a low perceived socioeconomic status or high perceived socioeconomic status in the Health Unit region reported liking school very much or quite a lot, compared to students in either group within Ontario (Table 7).

Table 5. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Liked School Very Much or Quite a Lot, by Gender & Region, 2010/11 & 2014/15 Combined (NBPSDHU Region & Other Northern Regions) & 2014/15 (Ontario)

Gender	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Males	36.7 (29.6, 44.5)	28.6 (24.9, 32.6)	32.5 (29.0, 36.2)
Females	51.4* (43.5, 59.2)	42.1*‡ (36.4, 47.9)	32.1 (29.8, 34.5)

* Estimate is significantly different from provincial estimate

‡ Estimate is significantly different from male students in the same region

Table 6. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Liked School Very Much or Quite a Lot, by Grade Level & Region, 2010/11 & 2014/15 Combined (NBPSDHU Region & Other Northern Regions) & 2014/15 (Ontario)

Grade Level	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Grades 7 - 8	42.8 (37.8, 48.0)	41.9 (35.7, 48.3)	44.4 ‡ (40.0, 48.8)
Grades 9 - 12	44.2* (36.3, 52.4)	32.3 (28, 36.9)	27.6 (25.6, 29.8)

* Estimate is significantly different from provincial estimate

‡ Estimate is significantly different from secondary students in the same region

Table 7. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Liked School Very Much or Quite a Lot, by Perceived Socioeconomic Status & Region, 2010/11 & 2014/15 Combined (NBPSDHU Region & Other Northern Regions) & 2014/15 (Ontario)

Perceived Socioeconomic Status (SES)	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Low SES	39.8* (33.3, 46.8)	27.7 (21.5, 34.8)	26.9 (23.8, 30.1)
High SES	46.3* (39.0, 53.7)	38.4 (34.4, 42.4)	34.9 ‡ (32.0, 38.0)

* Estimate is significantly different from provincial estimate

‡ Estimate is significantly different from students with low perceived socioeconomic status, in the same region

Worried About Being Harmed, Threatened, or a Victim of Theft at School

In 2014/15, about three of every 20 students in the Health Unit region were worried about being harmed, threatened, or a victim of theft at school (14.2%; 95% CI: 9.9, 19.9), similar to the percentages for students in other northern regions (9.9%; 95% CI: 6.9, 14.0) and Ontario (12.1%; 95% CI: 10.2, 14.4).

Data from 2010/11 & 2014/15 was combined to analyze students worried about being harmed, threatened, or a victim of theft at school, among selected demographic subgroups in the Health Unit region and other northern regions. These estimates are compared to 2014/15 Ontario estimates. In the Health Unit region, worry of being harmed, threatened or a victim of theft at school did not vary by gender, grade level, or perceived socioeconomic status (Tables 8 through 10).

Table 8. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Reported Feeling Worried About Being Harmed, Threatened or a Victim of Theft at School, by Gender & Region, 2010/11 & 2014/15 Combined (NBPSDHU Region & Other Northern Regions) & 2014/15 (Ontario)

Gender	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Males	11.7 (8.7, 15.7)	10.1 (7.8, 13.1)	11.4 (9.4, 13.8)
Females	13.4 (10.5, 16.9)	16.3 (12.9, 20.4)	12.9 (10.5, 15.8)

Table 9. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Reported Feeling Worried About Being Harmed, Threatened or a Victim of Theft at School, by Grade Level & Region, 2010/11 & 2014/15 Combined (NBPSDHU Region & Other Northern Regions) & 2014/15 (Ontario)

Grade Level	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Grades 7 - 8	14.3 (10.6, 19.1)	16.4 (12.4, 21.4)	15.8 ^E (10.1, 23.9)
Grades 9 - 12	12.1 (9.5, 15.2)	11.8 (9.1, 15.2)	10.7 (9.2, 12.3)

E Interpret with caution; the estimate is associated with high sampling variability

Table 10. Percentage (95% CI) Students Who Reported Feeling Worried About Being Harmed, Threatened or a Victim of Theft at School, by Perceived Socioeconomic Status & Region, 2010/11 & 2014/15 Combined (NBPSDHU Region & Other Northern Regions) & 2014/15 (Ontario)

Perceived Socioeconomic Status (SES)	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Low SES	13.7 (10.0, 18.7)	16.6 (12.4, 21.8)	16.8 ‡ (14.1, 19.8)
High SES	12.3 (9.0, 16.7)	11.7 (9.4, 14.5)	9.6 (7.9, 11.7)

‡ Estimate is significantly different from students with high perceived socioeconomic status, in the same region

Subjective Social Status at School

In 2014/15, the MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status was used to measure perceived status at school. Students were asked “Imagine this ladder below is a way of picturing your school. At the top of the ladder are the people in school with the most respect and the ‘highest standing.’ At the bottom of the ladder are the people who no one respects and no one wants to hang out with. Please check off the numbered box that best shows where you would place yourself on this ladder.” For the purposes of this report, social status was categorized as low (rungs 1 – 3 on the ladder), average (rungs 4 – 7), and high (8 – 10).

A majority of students in the Health Unit region ranked their school’s social status as average or high. Comparable percentages of students in all three regions felt their social status at school was low, average, or high (Table 11).

Table 11. Percentage (95% CI) Students, by Level of Subjective Social Status & Region, 2014/15

Social Status Level	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Low	7.9 ^E (5.3, 11.6)	5.6 (4.0, 7.7)	4.6 (4.0, 5.4)
Average	49.1 (37.5, 60.7)	47.8 (43.9, 51.8)	50.4 (48.4, 52.4)
High	43.0 (31.3, 55.7)	46.6 (43.7, 49.5)	45.0 (42.9, 47.0)

E Interpret with caution; the estimate is associated with high sampling variability