

Feedback Report for Anyplace School

...a  SHAPES project



CBRPE

Centre for Behavioral Research and
Program Evaluation
Centre de recherche sur le comportement
et l'évaluation des programmes

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Introduction

During 2008, SHAPES data was collected in seventeen schools in the XYZ School District. We would like to thank you for your participation and support of this project, and we are pleased to provide this report of results for your school.

The results for your school – provided in this feedback report – are intended for your use in planning and evaluating your school’s health-improvement initiatives. We hope you find the feedback report useful, and we encourage you to share the results with your school’s staff, students, parents, and the community. More ideas on what to do with the information contained in this report can be found on the following two pages.

This report is made available to your school contact and any results that are published or otherwise disseminated provincially and/or nationally will maintain the anonymity of your school.

If the number of students responding is small enough that it might be possible to identify individual student responses, findings are not reported. In some cases, results in table columns or rows and charts may not add to 100% due to rounding.

For more information on this report, please contact:

How to Use this Report

Use this report to identify areas of strength to build on or areas that can be addressed concerning student health and health promotional activities. Share the results with students, school staff, parents and community members. Overall student wellness can be improved through contributions at many levels. For example:

Students can:

- Explore ways to take action on areas of concern through student government and other student-led groups
- Engage teachers and administrators in dialogue about the results to better understand the issues, seek solutions and create student-driven action plans
- Join a school-based action team or student club dedicated to healthy living
- Organize new initiatives at school (e.g. intramural sports program, recognition/awards program for people who have made a difference in promoting healthy living, initiate student/staff healthy living challenge, organize a health fair)
- Connect with students from other schools in the district to share what has been done and explore partnership opportunities

School Staff can use the report data to:

- Support recommendations within school improvement plans
- Plan and deliver health, physical education or other related curricula
- Develop opportunities for staff to model healthy behaviours
- Initiate new partnerships with parents/community resources to promote healthy living
- Support requests for funding (e.g. grant programs)
- Advocate for new community programs or resources
- Enhance implementation of health policies
- Enhance delivery of services or programs for students (e.g. counselling, school cafeteria)
- Follow-up and evaluate implemented actions
- Share data with local public health units and/or school boards to identify potential areas for collective action among schools
- Look for opportunities to engage students in problem solving and planning
- Advocate for increased emphasis on health as a priority in school activities and curricula.

Parents/Families and the Community can:

- Plan activities with school council or parent council
- Consider hosting a forum or approaching media to gain support for healthy living initiatives
- Create opportunities to model healthy behaviours at home
- Support the school! Share skills, talents or resources to help address the issues identified in the report
- Participate in an open house where community groups can share health and wellness programs

Change is more likely to succeed when schools...

- Engage all stakeholders, especially students. By genuinely considering various perspectives and voices in your planning, you can expect increased support for solutions. You will also build capacity and improve your ability to achieve your main objective. Consider adding parents, community and health organizations.
- Use a comprehensive school health approach to promote healthy behaviours. This includes activities that address all of the following: (1) *A healthy physical environment*, (2) *Instruction and programs* (3) *A supportive social environment and* (4) *Community partnerships*. Communication through education is necessary but not sufficient for achieving change. To facilitate healthy behaviours, consider all components of a comprehensive school health approach. Promote environments that make the healthy choice the easy choice.
- Link with other resources (people and/or programs in the community)
- Communicate, coordinate, collaborate
- Evaluate results.

Part A: Healthy Eating

The Issue

Healthy Eating is a School Issue

- Schools are an ideal setting to establish and promote healthy eating amongst children and youth.¹
- Well-nourished children and adolescents are more likely to be better prepared to learn, be active, and maintain their health as adults.²
- There is a growing body of evidence demonstrating that children who eat poorly do not perform as well as they could academically, and that improvements in nutrition can result in improvements in academic performance.³

Healthy Eating is a Student Issue

- In the past 25 years there has been a dramatic increase in the percentage of Canadian adolescents who are overweight or obese. Overweight/obesity in adolescence often persists into adulthood.⁴
- In 2004, 59% of Canadian children aged 2–17 ate less than 5 servings of vegetables and fruit per day.⁵
- During adolescence, youth become more responsible for making choices about what they eat.

Healthy Eating is a Community Issue

- Home and family have a significant impact on a child's nutrition and health. Children who eat home-prepared meals are more likely to include more milk and milk-alternatives, vegetables, fruits, and other fibre- and nutrient-dense foods. Of equal importance, they also eat fewer fried foods and soft drinks than children who eat out.⁶
- Both fast food consumption and food portion sizes have increased significantly in the past 20 years, coinciding with increases in the incidence of childhood overweight and obesity.⁷

Healthy Eating with Canada's Food Guide

Canada's Food Guide provides a practical pattern of eating to help Canadians make healthy food choices and reduce their risk of obesity and chronic diseases. For more information on the food guide go to:

www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide

The recommended number of servings for each food group for children ages 9-18 are as follows:

Vegetables & Fruit	6 - 8
Grain Products	6 - 7
Milk and Alternatives	3 - 4
Meat and Alternatives	2 - 3

Schools Can Make a Difference...

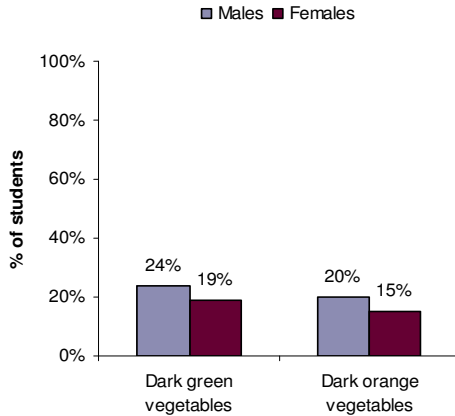
Health and learning go hand in hand. When schools, families and the broader community work together to make healthy choices easy, student health and academic achievement improve.⁸ Currently, schools in Canada are involved in promoting healthy eating through activities such as providing school nourishment programs (SNPs), hosting student forums to discuss healthy eating, inviting chefs to teach about healthy cooking, promoting a fruit or vegetable of the month, and partnering with local food producers to help students learn about locally-grown foods.

Food Intake

Fruit and Vegetables

Students were asked how many times they ate dark green and dark orange vegetables. The results show 23% of students consumed dark green vegetables at least once and xx% of students consumed dark orange vegetables at least once in the day before the survey.

Percentage of Students Who Consumed Dark Green and Orange Vegetables Yesterday by Gender

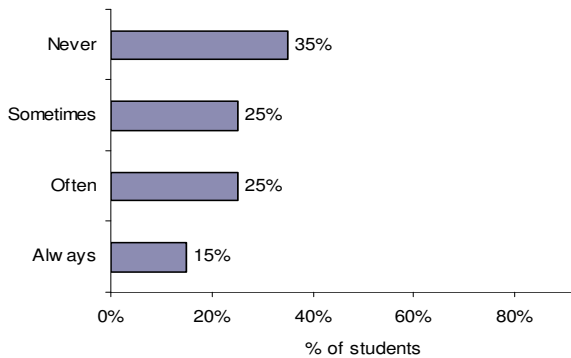


Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide encourages people to eat at least one dark green and one orange vegetable each day. Dark green and orange vegetables are mentioned specifically because they are rich in folate and vitamin A, respectively. Eating these vegetables each day will ensure that people consume adequate amounts of these nutrients⁹.

Whole Grain Products

Canada's Food Guide recommends making at least half of your grain products whole grain each day. At your school, xx% of students reported always or often choosing whole wheat options when they eat pizza, subs, sandwiches, hot dogs or hamburgers.

Percentage of Students Who Choose Whole Wheat Products



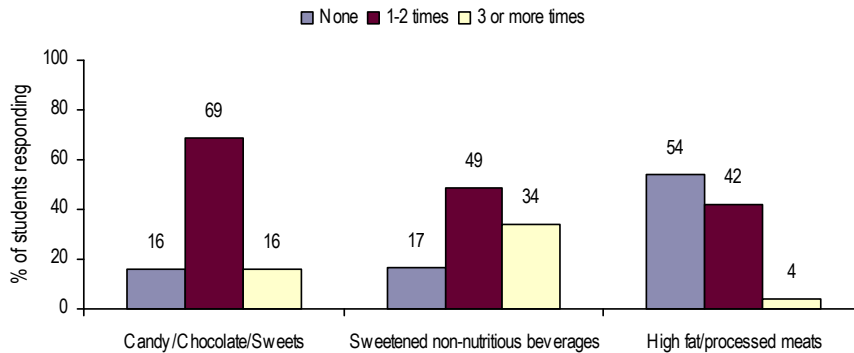
Grain products, particularly whole grains, are a source of fibre and typically are low in fat. Fibre rich foods can help people feel full and satisfied. A diet rich in whole grains may also help reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease⁹.

Information and ideas for supporting increased consumption of whole grains in schools can be found at: <http://www.wholegrainscouncil.org/resources/schools-and-whole-grains>

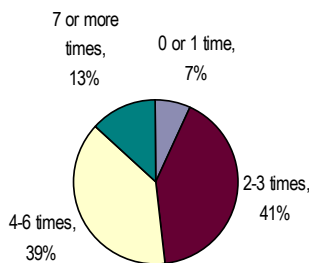
Other Foods

Students were asked about their consumption of foods that provide few nutrients and are generally high in fat and sugar. The results show 80% of students report eating candy, chocolate or sweets and 87% report drinking sweetened non-nutritious beverages at least once the previous day. Limiting foods and beverages high in calories, fat, sugar and salt (sodium) is an important step towards better health and a healthy body weight.⁹

Number of Times Students Consumed High Fat or Sugar Snacks and Drinks Yesterday



Combined Number of Times Students Consumed High Fat or Sugar Snacks or Drinks Yesterday



The number of times students ate any of the above foods during the previous day was summed to provide a picture of their total daily consumption of non food-group foods*.

According to the 2004 Canadian Community Health Survey, 25% of all calories consumed by teens come from non-food group foods, which include high fat, sugary and/or salty foods.⁵

Quick Facts

A snack of a 600 mL bottle of pop and a chocolate bar provides almost 25 tsp of sugar and 600 calories!

*The following non-food group foods are included in the total: Candy and chocolate, baked sweets, frozen treats, salty snacks, sweetened non-nutritious beverages (including; fruit flavoured drinks, sports drinks, regular pop, diet pop, high energy drinks and slurpees) and high fat/processed meats (including; fish sticks, chicken nuggets, hot dogs, sausage etc.).

Schools Can Make a Difference...

Alberta now has nutrition guidelines in place! The goal of the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth is to equip facilities and organizations with the tools they need to provide children and youth with healthy food choices in childcare settings, schools, in recreation centres, at special events, and in the community at large. Download the document at:

www.health.alberta.ca/public/Nutrition-Guidelines-2008.pdf

Student Eating Behaviour

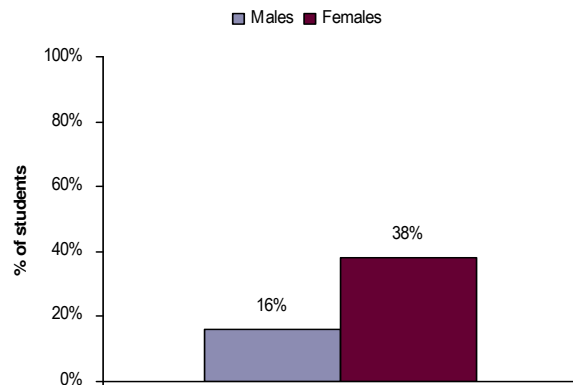
Breakfast Consumption

The results show 29% of students reported that they usually eat breakfast every school day (Monday to Friday). Eating breakfast is associated with improved academic performance¹⁰ and has been shown to be associated with lower rates of obesity.¹¹

Eating breakfast usually declines with age.¹² A number of factors, including concerns with body weight and decreases in shared family meals appear to influence the decline in breakfast consumption in adolescents.¹²

The chart below shows students who usually eat breakfast every school day; 27% of students reported eating breakfast 0-2 times in a usual school week.

Percentage of Students Who Usually Eat Breakfast Every School Day by Gender



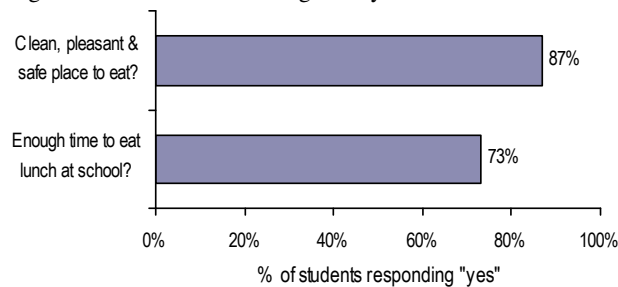
Students who reported they do not eat breakfast every day gave the following reasons for skipping breakfast:

<i>If you do not eat breakfast every day, why do you skip breakfast?</i>	% responding "yes"
I don't have time for breakfast	47%
The bus comes too early	40%
I sleep in	7%
I'm not hungry in the morning	10%
I feel sick when I eat breakfast	14%
I'm trying to lose weight	13%
There is nothing to eat at home	13%

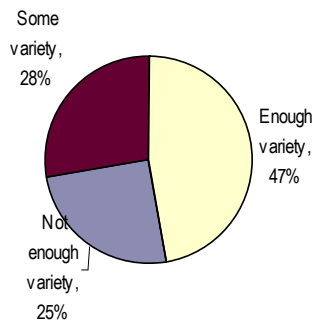
School Environment

The environment can have a powerful influence on eating behaviour. A pleasant eating area encourages students to pay attention to what they are eating and to enjoy the sensory and social aspects of a healthy meal.²² Providing students with an adequate amount of time and an appropriate place to eat lunch are key factors in the development of healthy eating habits and send the message that your school values mealtime.²³

The results show that 87% of students feel they have a clean, pleasant and safe place to eat their lunch. Moreover, 73% of students said that they have enough time to eat their lunch at school.



What do you think of the variety of food offered at your school?



The results show that 47% of students said that there is enough variety of foods offered at school.

Quick Facts

Increasing choices and student input into food service decisions may increase the appeal and acceptance of nutritious foods¹³.

Schools Can Make a Difference...

Schools can provide opportunities for and promote healthy eating among students by acting on the following recommendations:

- ✓ Provide dining areas that are attractive, safe and have sufficient space for seating.
Schools should ensure:
 - All students have access to a table and chair of appropriate height.²²
 - All tables and chairs are cleaned before each meal.
- ✓ Make amenities to support healthy eating available to students.
Schools should ensure:
 - Drinking fountains are available for students to get water at meals and throughout the day.
 - Microwaves are available for students to use.
- ✓ Provide meal and snack periods that are long enough for students to eat and socialize.
Schools should:
 - Provide students and staff with a minimum of 20 minutes to eat lunch.
 - Ensure that all students have equal opportunities and time to eat.
 - Schedule meals and other activities so they complement each other, rather than compete.

Social Influences on Healthy Eating

Peers, family members, and school staff can influence student behaviours directly (peer pressure) or indirectly (modeling).

Family meals are perceived positively by both children and parents¹⁴. In a usual week, [XX%] of students at your school report eating meals with at least one adult family member five or more times.

Comment [I1]: Add week day and week end 'times'

Generally, family presence at the evening meal is positively associated with children's higher consumption of vegetables, fruits, and dairy foods¹⁵.

Recognizing and supporting family connectedness is critical to the success of programs aimed at improving the nutrition of children and youth.¹⁶

<i>Meals with adult family member in a usual week</i>	Percentage of Students	
	Ate vegetables & fruit < 6 times yesterday	Ate vegetables & fruit ≥6 times yesterday
Eats 5 or more meals/week with adult family member	31%	69%
Eats less than 5 meals/week with adult family member	48%	52%

Comment [I2]: This cut-off can be adjusted based on the data.

Quick Facts

Compared with those who watch little television, adolescents who watch more television are more likely to have unhealthy eating habits and unhealthy conceptions about food.¹⁷

25% of Canadian adolescents report watching 15 or more hours of television per week.¹⁸

The media, particularly television, also influence eating in children and youth,¹⁹ Food advertising rarely promotes healthy choices and promotes more frequent consumption of less healthy foods, including higher fat and sugary energy dense foods, such as candy and gum, sugary breakfast cereals, soft drinks, and snacks.

The results show that [XX]% of students at your school reported eating meals while watching television three or more times in the previous school week.

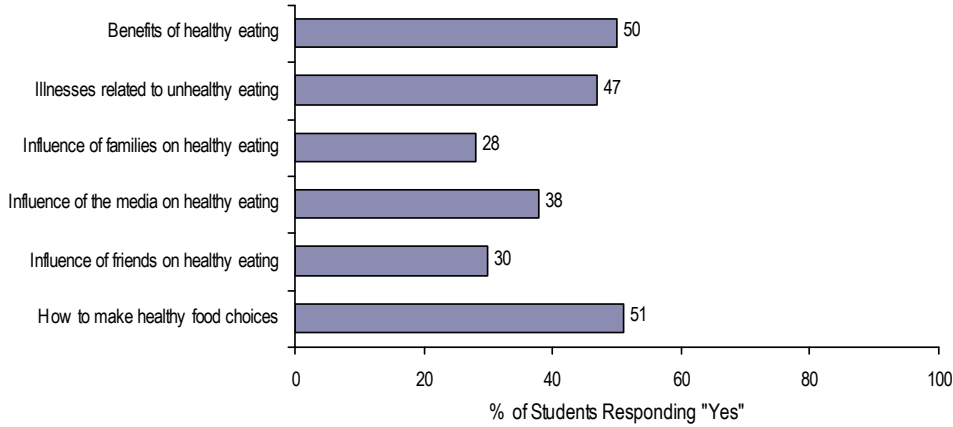
Schools Can Make a Difference...

Teaching about healthy eating extends beyond the classroom health curriculum into the school environment and the community. Schools can help students learn about the many factors that contribute to food choices, including advertising, media, friends, and family. The more students are aware of these influences the better prepared they will be to make healthy choices.

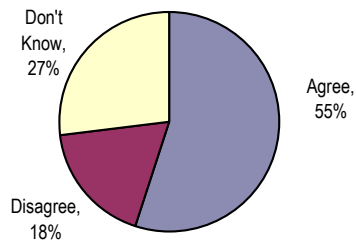
Learning about Healthy Eating

Schools are ideal settings for teaching about healthy eating. Students reported they had learned about the following healthy eating topics at school in the last 12 months.

Percentage of Students Who Report Learning about Healthy Eating Topics in the Past 12 months



Students' Agreement that "Students Who Eat Healthy Do Better at School"



Quick Facts

Evaluations of nutrition education programs have shown they can be effective in increasing nutrition knowledge, developing positive attitudes about nutrition and increasing consumption of nutritious foods and beverages.²⁰

Students report noticing the following changes at school:

<i>Have you noticed any of the following changes in your school in the last 12 months?</i>	% responding "yes"
Healthier foods offered at cafeteria or hot lunch program	47%
Healthier foods in vending machines/canteens	40%
Lower prices for healthier foods	7%
Healthier foods or non-food items sold for fundraising	10%
Healthier foods sold at sporting events or other special events	14%
Information in your cafeteria about how to make healthier food choices	13%

Part B:
Physical Activity

The Issue

Physical Activity is a School Issue

- Students who participate in school sports are less likely to drop out of school and tend to have higher educational aspirations.²¹
- Increased participation in physical education is associated with improved classroom behaviour, as well as increased enthusiasm toward school and school work.²²
- Physical activity is associated with improved behaviour and cognitive functioning among youth with attention-deficit disorders and for youth with problems controlling impulsive actions.²³

Physical Activity is a Student Issue

- Over half of Canada's youth are physically inactive; 79% of youth are not active enough for optimal growth and development.²⁴
- 91% of children and youth aged 5 to 19 do not accumulate the 16,500 daily steps associated with Canada's fitness guidelines.²⁵
- Physical activity strengthens the heart, bones and muscles, improves fitness and can help achieve a healthy body weight.²⁶
- Physical activity is associated with increased self-esteem and decreased depression and anxiety.²²

Children today spend 40% less time being physically active than they did 15 years ago.

"If the trend isn't reversed, today's children could become the first generation that dies at a younger age than their parents."

(Dr. Rick Bell, Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance)

Physical Activity is a Community Issue

- Behaviours started in childhood and adolescence tend to carry over to adulthood; 56% of Canadian adults 20 years and older are considered physically inactive.²⁷
- Physical inactivity is associated with an increased risk of type 2 diabetes, obesity, coronary heart disease, cancer and osteoporosis, which can lead to decreased quality of life and premature death.²⁸
- In 2001, the economic burden of physical inactivity in Canada was estimated at \$5.3 billion. This represented 2.6% of all health care costs in Canada that year.²⁹

Schools Can Make a Difference...

Effective action to increase youth physical activity will promote healthy lifestyles. Youth physical activity can be increased by letting students know that their school and community care about their health, by increasing awareness through education, by creating a supportive school environment, and by providing services and supports (facilities and programs that facilitate or promote and value physical activity). Schools, in partnership with municipal, health and community agencies and businesses, can work together to achieve common goals for physical activity.

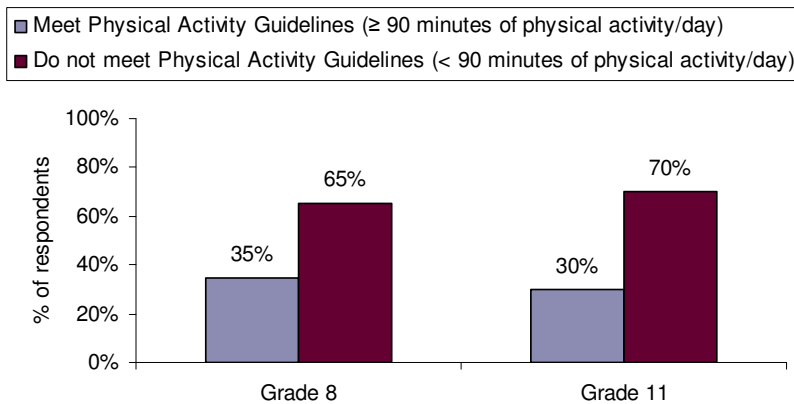
Physical Activity Levels

According to Canada's 2007 Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth, Canada has received a failing grade (D) for the third year in a row, indicating that the progress toward improving physical activity among children and youth has slowed down.³⁰ Levels of activity for youth in Canada are low. In fact, only 49% of Canadian youth are physically active, and according to international guidelines, just 21% are considered to be active enough to meet recommendations for optimal growth and development³¹.

Canada's Physical Activity Guide for Youth (aged 10-14) recommends that youth should increase their physical activities until they reach 90 minutes per day. They also recommend reducing "non-active" time spent on TV, video, computer games in the same amount. For a copy of the guide see: www.paguide.com

Based on student reports at your school, 35% of students were physically active for at least 90 minutes every day of the previous week.

Percent of Students Who Meet Canada's Physical Activity Guidelines By Grade



Please use caution in assessing these results; our testing of the questionnaire indicates that students tend to over-estimate their time spent being physically active.

For example, time spent waiting in line for a ski lift or at lights to cross a street may be counted as active time on questionnaires.

Schools Can Make a Difference...

Schools can help to increase the number of students who are physically active and who meet the activity guidelines for optimal growth and development by providing opportunities for physical activity at school, beyond physical education class, and by encouraging students to be active outside of school. For a resource guide that teachers can use to lead discussions about the importance of physical activity to achieving health benefits go to:

http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/child_youth/pdf/yth_teachers_guide_e.pdf

Strength and Flexibility Training

Strength Training

Strength training involves resistance training to enhance one's ability to exert or resist force, and helps develop and maintain strong muscles, healthy bones and healthy body weight and image. It is recommended that youth train 2-3 days per week to achieve gains in strength.³²

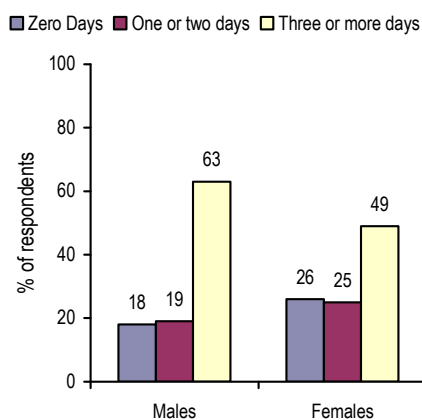
The results show 78% of students reported participating in strength training activities such as push-ups, sit-ups, pilates and weight lifting in the week preceding the survey (please note that weight training is generally not recommended for students under age 15 years). Of students that reported participating in strength training, males reported that they strength trained an average of 3.3 days, and females reported that they strength trained an average of 2.6 days.

Flexibility Training

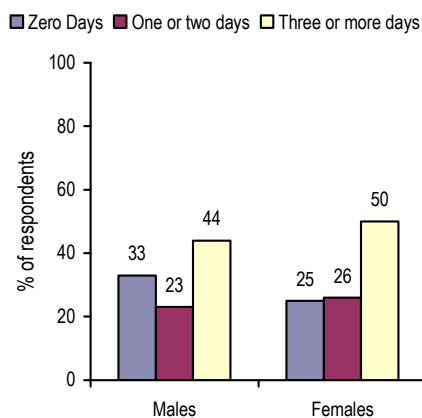
Flexibility training ("stretching") helps to maintain the ability to use joints through the full range of motion. It is an important component of living a healthy active lifestyle, but is often overlooked in physical activity programming. Canada's Physical Activity Guide recommends that youth stretch their muscles every day and that adults do flexibility activities 4 to 7 days a week as part of a regular physical activity program.³³

The results show 71% of students reported doing exercises for flexibility such as stretching and yoga in the week preceding the survey. Of students that reported participating in flexibility training, males reported that on average they exercised for flexibility 2.4 days, and females reported that they averaged 2.7 days of flexibility training.

Frequency of Strength Training in the Past 7 Days



Frequency of Flexibility Training in the Past 7 Days



Schools Can Make a Difference...

Strength and flexibility are important components of being physically fit. As with any activity, students should know how to do these activities safely and properly. Students can be encouraged to do strength and flexibility training through exposure to these activities in physical education classes and through participation in clubs or teams. Strength training clubs organized through the school can also be useful for high school students. Consider a range of activities, such as weight lifting, pilates, yoga, plyometrics, and circuit training. Clubs should emphasize participation and proper technique (rather than amount of weight lifted). Students should use appropriate individual exercises and workloads, and regularly monitor their progress. It may be beneficial to start a gender-specific club; this can allow girls or boys to train without feeling self-conscious of their abilities.

When Students are Active

There are various times and ways that students can be physically active. We asked students questions about the different opportunities they have for physical activity – while going to school, at school, and outside of school.

We asked students about how they usually get to and from school each day.

- 47% of students use active transportation modes, such as cycling, walking, running or skateboarding,
- 21% of students use inactive modes, such as getting a ride or taking a bus, and
- 32% of students use a combination of active and inactive modes of transport.

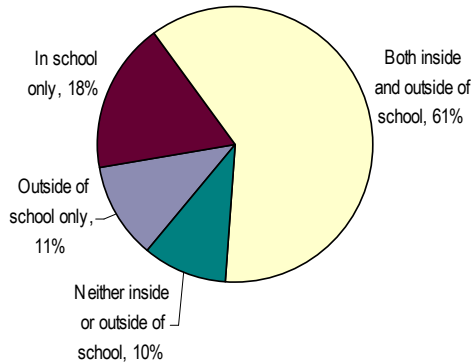
Students were also asked whether they had a chance to be physically active in other classes besides physical education.

- 72% said they did not have a chance to be active in other classes.
- 27% said they were physically active in “*some other classes*”.
- 1% said they had opportunities to be active in “*all other classes*”

Extracurricular activities, both those offered at school and outside of school, are important opportunities for physical activity.

This graph compares the percentage of students who participate in physical activity only in school, only outside of school, both inside and outside of school, and neither. The results show 61% of students participate in physical activity both in and out of school; this illustrates the importance of school physical activity programs for students. However, 18% of students participate in physical activity in school only and 10% do not participate in physical activity at either time, and could benefit from school programs.

Participation in Extracurricular Activity



Schools Can Make a Difference...

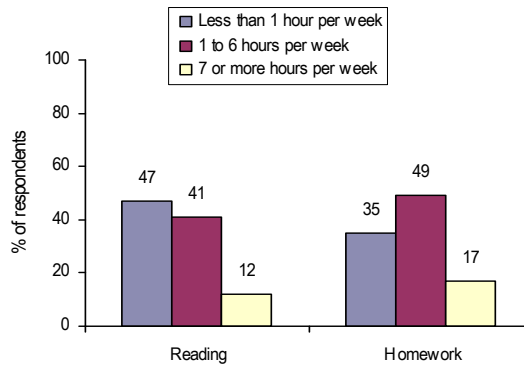
Remind students that **active transportation** - biking or walking to school - can help them to achieve their daily physical activity requirements, and is also environmentally friendly. Schools can encourage active transportation by providing a safe bike lock-up area for students and providing secure areas where students can leave equipment (e.g. in-line skates, skateboards, helmets). **Increasing active time in physical education classes** is a good way for schools to increase student activity levels. One way to increase active time is using small groups to decrease wait times during activities. **Physical activity should not be forced or taken away as a form of punishment**, since this deters youth from participating and getting the health benefit from activity.³⁴

Sedentary Behaviour

Sedentary behaviour includes things such as watching television, using the computer, reading, and doing homework. By definition, these behaviours tend to be counterproductive to physical activity; however, learning activities (e.g. reading and doing homework) help students achieve other goals. Therefore, to promote overall health, students should decrease the total amount of time they are inactive while maintaining homework and reading time.

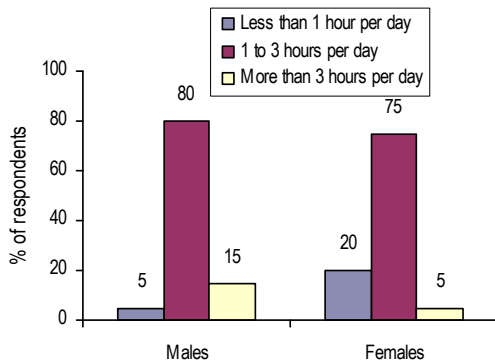
Leisure time reading has well known benefits to students. We asked students how much time they spend reading (not including for school or work) and doing homework per week. Results are shown in the first graph.

Time Reading or Doing Homework per Week

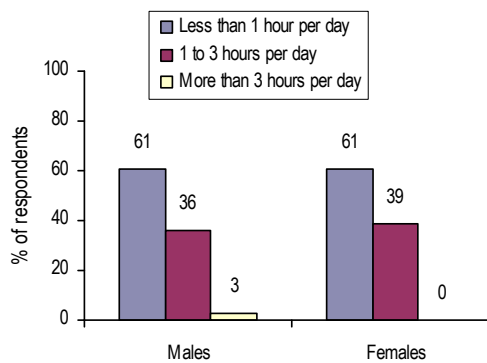


Sedentary behaviour, like watching television, is incompatible with healthier, more active choices for leisure time activities. Also, watching a lot of television has been linked to increases in smoking uptake in youth.³⁵ Students should aim to decrease their “screen time”, which is time spent in front of the television, playing video games, or on the internet. The graphs below show (by gender) the amount of time per day that students spend watching TV/movies, or playing video/computer games and talking on the phone, surfing the internet, or instant messaging. Results show that **TV_TIME_1**% of students report they typically spend more than 3 hours per day watching TV/movies or playing video/computer games and **PHONE_TIME_1**% spend more than 3 hours per day on the phone, internet or instant messaging.

Time watching TV, playing Video or Computer Games per Day



Time on Phone, Internet, or Instant Messaging per Day



Schools Can Make a Difference...

Help students build awareness of the time they spend inactive by having them keep track of their activities for a period of time. Students can set goals for reducing inactive time and record their progress. Consider running a personal challenge where students commit to being active in place of one half-hour TV programme for one or two weeks. Offer in-class discussion so students can share their activities with peers to encourage and provide new ideas.

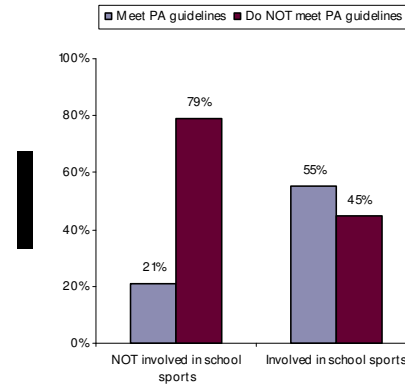
Physical Activity at School

We asked students about their involvement in sports or clubs at school, and whether they were physically active “outside of classes” at school. The results show:

- Q26_A% participate in school-organized non-competitive activities (e.g. intramurals) (males Q26_M%, females Q26_F%)
- Q27_A% participate in competitive (e.g. Varsity) sports (males Q27_M%, females Q27_F%)
- Q28_1% reported participating in other physical activities at school

Overall, SCH_SPORT_Y% of students participated in at least one competitive or non competitive school sport/club (males SCH_SPORT_Y_M%, females SCH_SPORT_Y_F%); in this group, PA_LEVEL_Y% of students meet Physical Activity guidelines. Compare this to the SCH_SPORT_N% of students who do not take part in competitive or non competitive school sports/clubs (males SCH_SPORT_N_M%, females SCH_SPORT_N_F%); PA_LEVEL_N% of these students meet Physical Activity guidelines. As the graph to the right shows, students who participate in school sports are more likely to be active.

Student Physical Activity When Involved in School-Organized Activities



We also asked students what they thought about the number of sports offered at their school:

- 45% said there are too few sports offered
- 39% said the number of sports offered is just right
- 14% said it did not matter to them

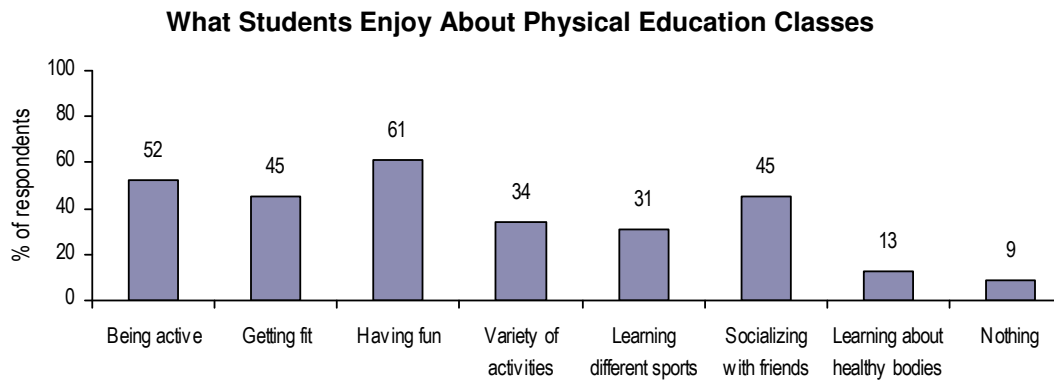
Schools Can Make a Difference...

School-sponsored sports/clubs offer a great way for getting more students involved in physical activities. Students who are involved in school sports or clubs are more likely to continue being physically active throughout their adulthood.³⁶ Participation also has social benefits; it offers opportunities to meet new friends and builds camaraderie amongst students, especially if teams are co-ed or represent multiple grades. Focus on broadening **participation** by offering a balance of both competitive and non-competitive opportunities in a **variety** of activities, including individual activities such as dance and walking clubs, as well as team activities. Community groups/experts may be willing to provide a tailored program for students at the school, based on their interests.

Intramural activities are a great way to increase participation, since everyone at school is encouraged to participate and students can have fun taking part regardless of their athletic ability. Ways to increase quality and impact of intramurals include: providing regular evening/weekend intramural programs, including teacher or parent teams, or developing “super teams” where the students play together as a team in a variety of activities for the entire year.

Competitive teams can include more students by having practice squads, which can expand participation in team-based events and develop skilled players for subsequent years. Individual events, like track and field, can include everyone interested, or select students for meets based on performance, or by rotating team members.

Physical education classes offer many benefits. The graph below shows which aspects of their physical education class students enjoyed.



In regards to physical activity facilities:

- 79% of students felt the indoor facilities met their needs,
- 60% of students felt the outdoor facilities met their needs

Schools Can Make a Difference...

Schools can help make students aware of physical activity opportunities and benefits in many ways. Participation in physical activity can be increased through developing environments supportive of physical activity, that demonstrate that all types of physical activity is valued and supported. Reminders (announcements, bulletin board notices, etc.) about extracurricular activities and programs can increase students' awareness of the facilities available at your school. Recognition of accomplishments, rewarding increased participation rather than competition, meaningful involvement of students in deciding which opportunities should be offered, and planning programs are all important strategies. Physical education and health classes are not the only subjects where influences on activity can be taught. Consider opportunities to include physical activity issues in other courses (e.g. media awareness, social influences, etc).

Social Influences on Physical Activity

Peers and family members can influence student behaviours directly (peer pressure) or indirectly (modeling). We asked students a series of questions relating to peer and family physical activity.

All students were asked, “How many of your closest friends are physically active?” Active youth are more likely to report that they have friends who are active compared to inactive students.

How many of your closest friends are physically active?	Percentage of Students (%)	
	Do not meet PA Guidelines	Meet PA Guidelines
0	2%	0%
1 or 2	15%	7%
3 or more	83%	93%

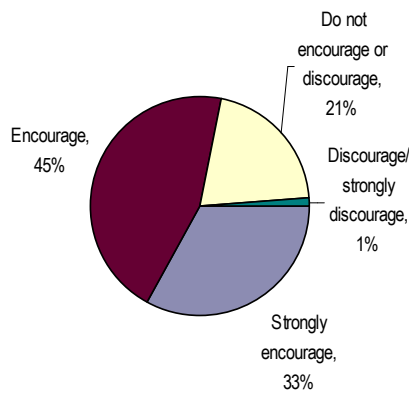
Students were asked about how often their parents were physically active. Generally, active youth are more likely to report that they have active parents.

Your results may not show inactive students reporting fewer active friends or inactive parents. This may point to a need to correct perceptions as to what “active” actually is. Our previous studies have found that students may over-report time spent being physically active.

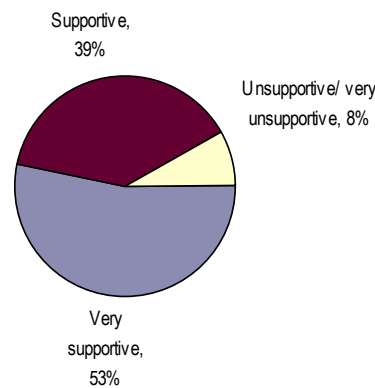
Student reports about parents' activity levels	Percentage of Students (%)	
	Do not meet PA Guidelines	Meet PA Guidelines
Parents are Active	60%	75%
Parents are Inactive	40%	25%

Students were asked how much their parents encouraged them and supported them to be physically active (i.e. driving them to sporting team games, buying equipment). The results show 74% of students had parents who both encouraged and supported them.

Parental Encouragement of Physical Activity



Parental Support for Physical Activity



Schools Can Make a Difference...

Physical activity is often defined by leisure activity with peers. Supporting students to develop skills that enable them to positively influence their peers can be helpful. Direct instruction, modelling, and rehearsal are most effective for learning these skills.³⁷

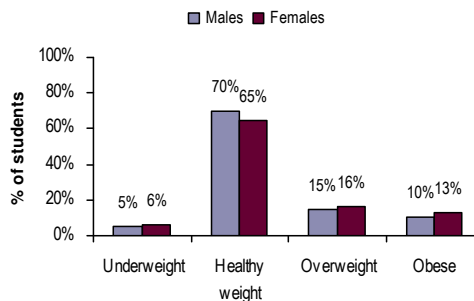
Physical Activity & Healthy Body Weight

Physical activity and healthy eating are important determinants of a person's body weight. This section focuses primarily on physical activity; however, it is also important to consider healthy eating when interpreting these results. A healthy body weight is only one component of a well-balanced lifestyle.

Students' BMI Categories
(calculation based on self-reported height and weight)

One way of determining healthy body weight is using the body mass index (BMI).³⁸ BMI is a measure of a person's weight in comparison to their height. In this survey, BMI has been calculated using student self-reported height and weight. Caution should be used in interpreting these figures as we know these figures may be under- or over-estimated.

According to the 2005 Canadian Community Health Survey, 29% of Canadian youth (ages 12-17) are considered overweight or obese using measured BMI.



Being overweight during childhood can lead to increased illness and risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer and type-2 diabetes.³⁹ Overweight and obese youth are often stigmatized by peers and adults.⁴⁰ These youth may experience psychological stress, and have a poor body image, as well as poor self-esteem.⁴¹ Although this report does not detail issues related to being underweight, it is also important to be conscious of the risks of excessive exercising, improper dieting and eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia.

Using student self reported data, the results show 72% of students fall within the recommended healthy weight category for their age.

Schools Can Make a Difference...

In addition to achieving a healthy body weight, proper nutrition and healthy eating habits are important to the growth, development and cognitive function of adolescents. A physical education unit about nutrition and weight should include teaching students about proper weight and false perceptions. Having students keep a food diary for a few days can help them become aware of what foods they are eating and where they can improve their dietary habits. The recently updated Canada's Food Guide and additional resources for promoting healthy eating can be found on Health Canada's website:
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index_e.html.

Part C:
Mental Wellbeing

The Issue

What is Mental Wellbeing?

- *Mental Wellbeing* refers to an individual's innate capacity to be **self-determined**.
- *Self-Determined* refers to a person's capacity to think about, plan, and act on personal decisions that contribute to emotional and physical growth.
- Through gathering and sharing information about our health, we are challenged to think about ways that individuals and the school community can promote the importance of **healthy lifestyle choices and actions**. Our capacity to make positive changes in our daily routines, whether this be *healthy eating, physical activity, or living tobacco-free*, is impacted by our Mental Wellbeing.

What are Mental Wellbeing Needs?

Mental Wellbeing Needs: Autonomy, Relatedness and Competency

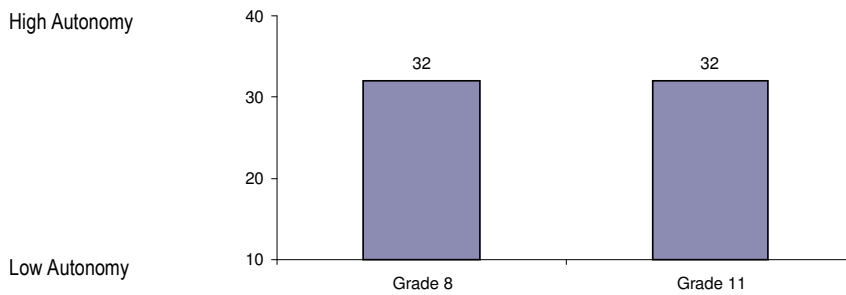
Mental wellbeing is fostered in **environments and relationships** that address important psychological needs. These include the interrelated needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competency. There is considerable evidence that satisfaction of all three needs is associated with emotional well-being or **resilience**, as well as participation in healthy lifestyle choices and actions during middle childhood and adolescence. In contrast, when mental wellbeing needs are not met, youth may be at higher risk for experiencing difficulties related to their emotional, social, and physical growth.

We asked students questions about each of these need areas.

Please note that the following results are not percentages, but based on a scale from 10 to 40. A score of 40 indicates responses of *"Really True for Me"* when students were asked questions related to fulfillment of mental wellbeing needs, while a score of 10 indicates responses of *"Really False for Me"*.

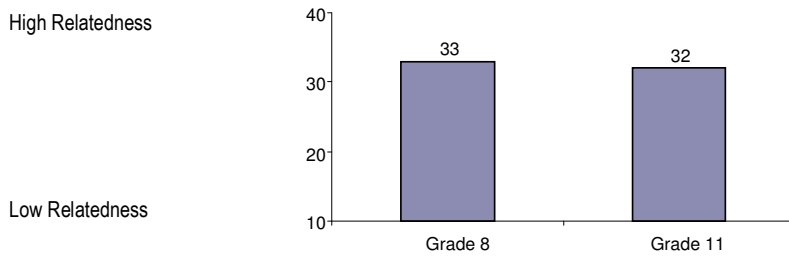
Autonomy refers to our need for personal freedom to make choices or decisions that affect our lives. When this need is satisfied in conjunction with other need areas, freedom and choice are expressed in ways in which respect is demonstrated for self and others.

Autonomy: Levels by Grade



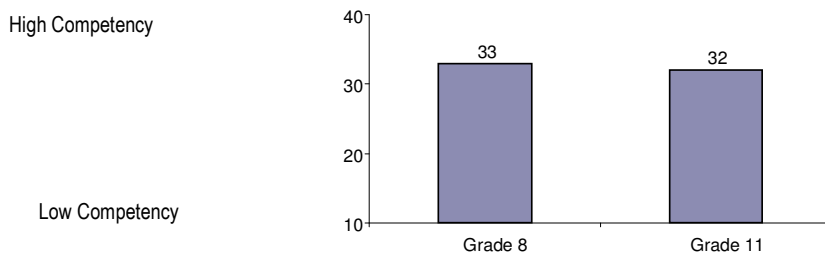
Relatedness refers to our need for connection to and closeness with family, peers, and other significant individuals. Fulfillment of this need is met through interaction with others, our membership in groups, and the support and encouragement we receive from others.

Relatedness: Levels by Grade



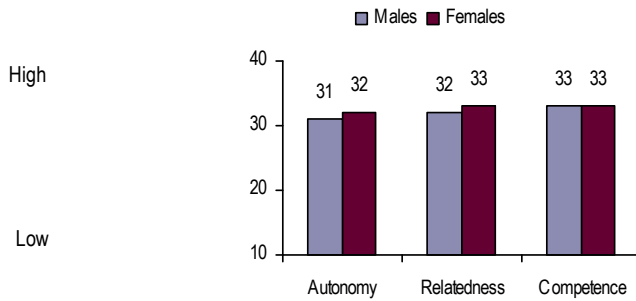
Competency refers to our need for recognizing and using our personal gifts and strengths in achieving personal goals. Fulfillment of this need provides individuals with a sense of personal achievement and accomplishment.

Competency: Levels by Grade



Additional findings indicate gender differences for the basic psychological needs.

Mental Wellbeing Needs in Boys and Girls at Your School



At your school, boys attained scores of 31, 32, and 33 for autonomy, relatedness, and competence, respectively. Girls scored at 32, 33, and 33 on the same scales.

What are the Results of Meeting Mental Wellbeing Needs?

Impact of Meeting Mental Wellbeing Needs

When mental wellbeing needs are sufficiently met, people become more **self-determined** in adopting attitudes and behaviours that contribute to their own personal wellness and that of others. The **impact of meeting** mental wellbeing needs may:

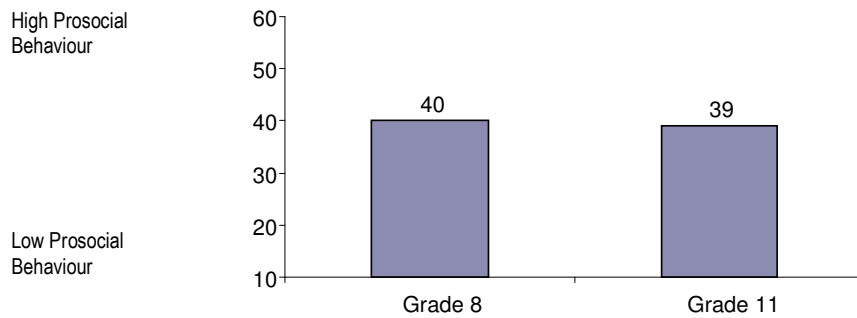
1. **Increase prosocial attitudes and behaviours** – expressing a social interest in others, a willingness to help, or being generous.
2. **Increase social responsiveness** – demonstrating respect and consideration for social boundaries, rules, and routines.
3. **Increase pleasant emotions** – expressing feelings such as contentment and optimism vs. discontentment and discouragement.
4. **Decrease unpleasant emotions** – expressing feelings such as discontentment and discouragement.

Prosocial Attitudes and Behaviours and Social Responsiveness

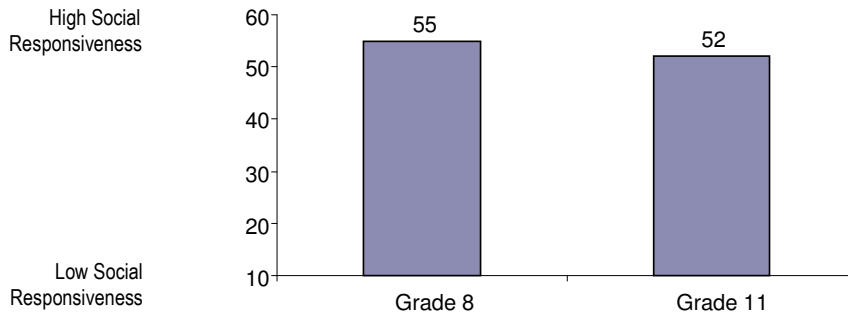
We asked students five questions related to prosocial behaviour and seven questions related to social responsiveness. The following graphs present students' prosocial behaviour and social responsiveness results by grade and gender.

Please note that these results are not percentages, but based on a scale from 10 to 60. For prosocial behaviour, a score of 60 indicates responses of "Definitely Like Me" when students were presented with positive statements (e.g. "I often do favours for people without being asked"). For social responsiveness, a score of 60 (reversed) indicates responses of "Definitely Not Like Me" when students were presented with negative statements (e.g. "I cut classes or skip school").

Prosocial Behaviour: Levels by Grade

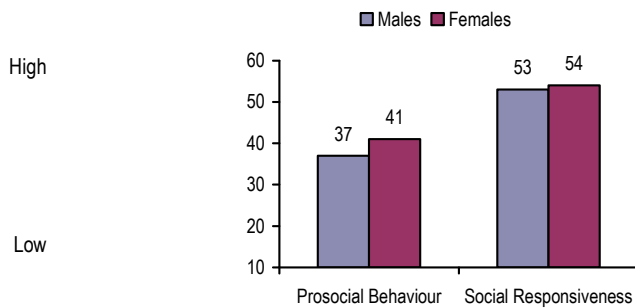


Social Responsiveness: Levels by Grade



Additional findings indicate gender differences for prosocial behaviour and social responsiveness.

Prosocial Behaviour and Social Responsiveness in Boys and Girls at Your School

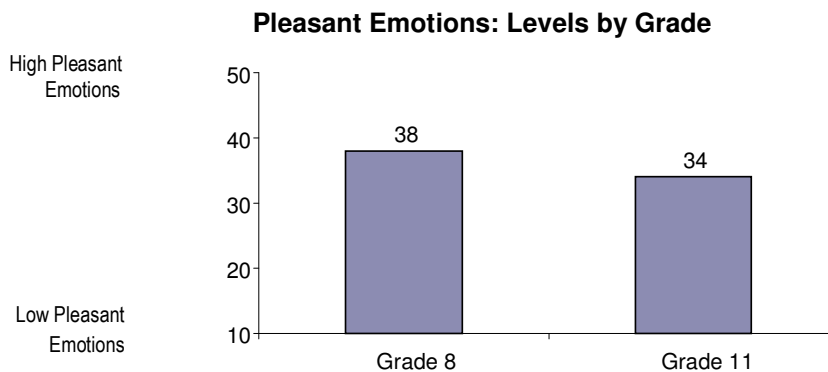


At your school, boys attained scores of 37 for prosocial behaviour and 53 for social responsiveness, respectively. Girls scored 41 and 54 on the same scales.

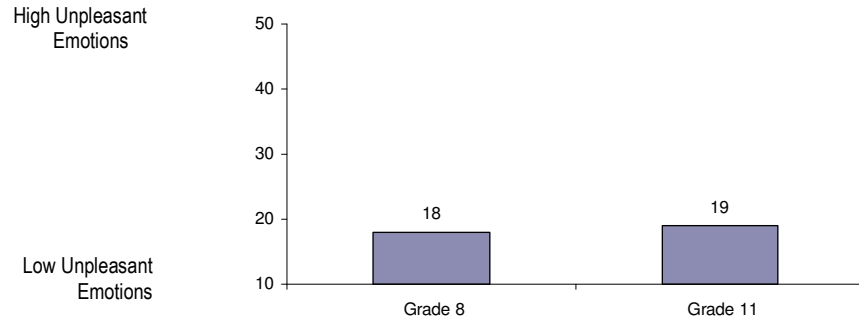
Pleasant and Unpleasant Emotions

Students were asked to what extent they felt a range of emotions (e.g., happy, energetic, active, sad, scared) during the week preceding the survey. The following graphs present students' reported pleasant and unpleasant emotions by grade and gender.

Please note that these results are not percentages, but based on a scale from 10 to 50. A score of 50 indicates responses of "Extremely" when students were asked questions related to either pleasant or unpleasant emotions, while a score of 10 indicates responses of "Very Slightly or Not at All".

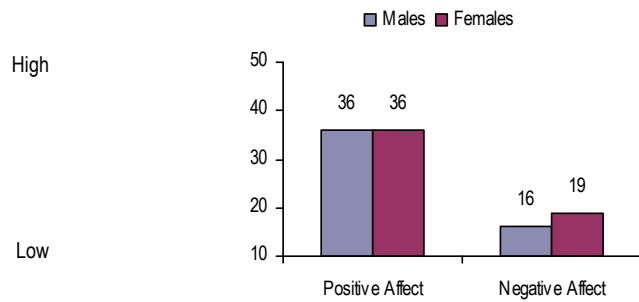


Unpleasant Emotions: Levels by Grade



Additional findings from the *Student Wellness Survey* indicate gender differences for pleasant and unpleasant emotions.

Pleasant and Unpleasant Emotions In Boys and Girls at Your School



At your school, boys attained scores of 36 for pleasant emotions and 16 for unpleasant emotions. Girls scored 36 and 19 on the same scales.

How Can We Meet Mental Wellbeing Needs?

- **School personnel, family and community** members should work together to create environments in which mental wellbeing needs are met.
- **Social environments that contribute to the satisfaction of mental wellbeing needs:**
 - are non-judgmental, understanding and provide opportunities to hear the voice and perspectives of youth
 - provide choices
 - encourage youth to take initiative and assume responsibility
 - provide reasons for the establishment of rules and limits
 - minimize pressure and avoid the use of coercive approaches
- **Social environments that impede the satisfaction of mental wellbeing needs:**
 - are judgmental, lack understanding and are unresponsive to the voice of youth
 - limit choices
 - minimize opportunities for youth to make decisions and take initiative
 - impose rules without explanation or rationale
 - use pressure and forcing approaches to control behaviour
- **Schools can contribute to the satisfaction of mental wellbeing needs by:**
 - empowering students to collaborate with their peers in development of their own solutions for specific problems (youth engagement).
 - suspending judgment and encourage the expression of students' thoughts and feelings in classroom discussions.
 - providing opportunities for students to identify and use their strengths in academic work or projects.
 - encouraging students to be involved in a wide range of activities that include emphasis on their interests and preferences.
 - emphasizing fairness and social inclusion in small group and school-wide learning activities.
 - reaching out and involving students or specific groups who do not feel part of the school.
 - focusing on developing positive working relationships with parents and members of the community.

More About this Report:

The School Health Action, Planning and Evaluation System (SHAPES) is a data collection and feedback system designed to support population-based intervention planning, evaluation, and field research related to youth. SHAPES is developed by the Centre for Behavioural Research & Program Evaluation (CBRPE) at the University of Waterloo.

The development of report content was a collaborative effort between several groups including:

- The Population Health Research Group (PHR) at the University of Waterloo
- The Centre for Behavioural Research and Program Evaluation at the University of Waterloo

The Population Health Research Group at the University of Waterloo generates individual school reports from survey data. This year, each of the schools participating in the *Alberta Battle River Project* are receiving School Feedback Reports detailing healthy eating and physical activity behaviours, as well as mental wellbeing. Through a largely automated system with quality control and editing procedures we can ensure that the data you receive are accurate and can be returned to your school in a timely manner.

We value your input and would welcome your feedback on this report. Please contact us by email at: shapes@healthy.uwaterloo.ca.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

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