



Cannabis use

Obesity

Mental health

Physical activity

Alcohol use

Smoking

Sedentary behaviour



Prince Edward Island



Thank you for your support of the 2022-23 COMPASS survey.

This is the province's customized School Health Profile.

This report shows the 2022-23 COMPASS survey results from participating grade 7 to 12 students enrolled at **18** schools across the province. In some cases, results may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Among participating schools, 64% of students participated in COMPASS this year.

Examples of recommended actions and resources can be found in "Recommendations and Resources" section at the bottom of the page. These recommendations and resources are targeted to individual schools. A more detailed list of health promotion resources can be accessed on the COMPASS website.

If you have questions about the data that are not reported in the profile, please contact the COMPASS Research Project Lead (see below).

For more information about this profile, additional resources, or the COMPASS project in general, visit www.uwaterloo.ca/compass-system/about or contact:

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Listed below are contacts from the PEI Chief Public Health Office and the Department of Education and Early Years. These contacts may be helpful in providing additional health resources.

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Healthy Eating Outcomes in Prince Edward Island

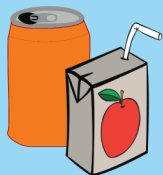
Among students
in PEI:



79% drink
plain water 7
days per
week



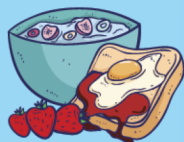
23% drink high-
energy drinks at
least once a
week



77% drink
sugar-
sweetened
beverages at
least once a
week



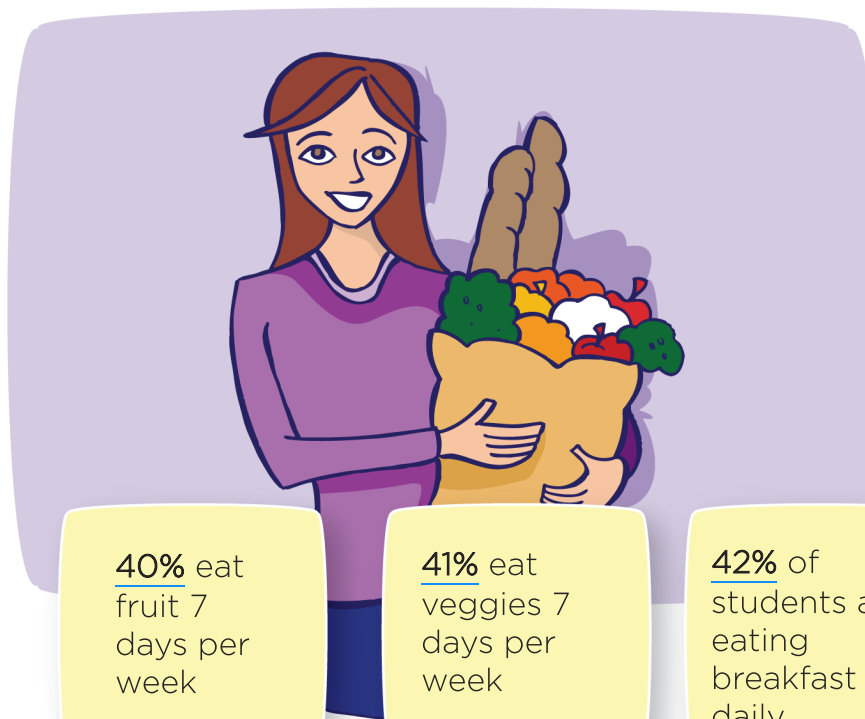
5% sometimes go
to bed hungry
because there is
not enough money
to buy food



27% ate
breakfast
provided from a
school breakfast
program at least
once a week



22% ate lunch
provided from a
school food
lunch program at
least once a
week



40% eat
fruit 7
days per
week

49% COMPASS average*

41% eat
veggies 7
days per
week

54% COMPASS average*

42% of
students are
eating
breakfast
daily

*2021-22 COMPASS Survey

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

Healthy eating is important for growth and development and helps youth to learn, succeed, and achieve academic success. Healthy eating is about food choices and how, when, where and why one eats. Eating a healthy diet is important for youth to attain and maintain good health and reduce risk of many chronic diseases.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES

- Actively promote student nutrition programs, such as breakfast and healthy school lunch programs, that are available to students every day. Check out the [PEI School Food program](#).
- Ensure your school is following the school board's [Nutrition in Schools](#) policy which bans energy drinks on school property to decrease risk of excessive caffeine intake among youth.
- Consider establishing a school nutrition committee which could include students, teachers, parents, and community members, such as registered dietitians (RDs). Youth often voice a desire for healthier options in schools and to be involved in deciding what foods are offered for sale.
- Encourage students to make good food choices that follow [CANADA'S FOOD GUIDE](#). Foster awareness by incorporating lessons that teach [CANADA'S FOOD GUIDE](#) in the classroom.
- Encourage students to drink water throughout the day by making it more accessible (e.g., installing water bottle filling stations, allowing water bottles at desks). Consider implementing a [Rethink Your Drink](#) activity at school or home to educate the importance of making water your drink of choice.
- Encourage students to stay at school for lunch by providing more youth-friendly and less busy eating spaces. Consider ways to reduce congestion in the cafeteria.
- Avoid using low nutrient-density food as a reward or in fundraising initiatives.

Healthy Weight Outcomes in Prince Edward Island

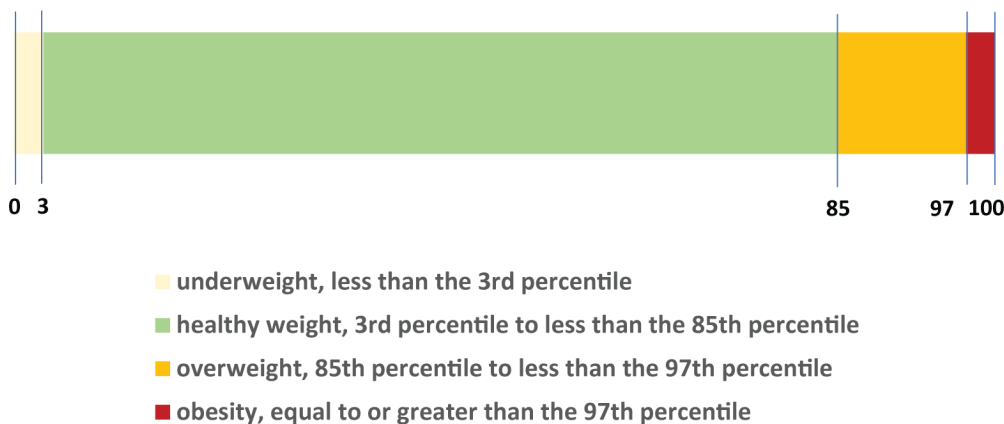
Among students in PEI:

58% are trying to change (lose or gain) their weight

53% describe themselves as being about the right weight

72% of students had BMIs in the "healthy weight" percentile range (3rd to 84th percentile)

BMI Percentile Ranges for Youth



Body Mass Index (BMI) is a measure of weight in relation to height and is a screening tool to help health professionals assess weight in relation to health risks.

BMI percentiles are used to describe a child's weight in relation to other children of the same age and sex. For example, a BMI percentile of 70 means a child's weight is higher than the weight of 70% of children of the same age and sex.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

At present, BMI is the only Canadian guideline and measure available, but it's only one piece of the puzzle to assess if a child is at a healthy weight. A child's BMI is a valuable screening tool used by health professionals to support families who have concerns about their child's weight. A normal and healthy body weight is influenced by numerous factors, including biology, behaviours, mental health, and social/environmental factors (e.g., where someone lives, their income, social relationships). Excess body fat puts youth at risk of developing preventable health problems, including type-2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and joint problems. However, focusing on obesity and weight loss may have unintended harmful effects, including weight-based bullying, poor body image, and unhealthy weight-control behaviours. Research from COMPASS and elsewhere shows weight dissatisfaction and perceptions of being overweight predict lower engagement in health behaviours and poor mental health, regardless of actual body size.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES

- Consider adopting a strength-based program and avoid weight-targeted messaging. See the [National Eating Disorders Association Toolkits](#) for guidance on addressing body image, eating, fitness, and weight concerns.
- Model healthy behaviours and avoid weight, diet and "fat talk" around students.
- [PEI Bridge the gap](#) provides online resources and support to PEI youth in healthy eating, eating disorders, self-esteem and body image, stress/anxiety, and other related topics.
- The [National Eating Disorder Information Centre \(NEDIC\)](#) provides information, resources, referrals, and support. It offers free online workshops and presentations to help youth prevent further development of food and body-related concerns.

Physical Activity Outcomes in Prince Edward Island



Among students in PEI:



78% are meeting the national guideline of 60 min/day of physical activity

67% COMPASS average*

*2021-22 COMPASS Survey



52% reported strength training at least 3 days/week



41% reported participating in intramural sports or non-competitive sports clubs



41% reported participating in varsity sports



54% reported participating in sports outside of school

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

Being physically active is an effective way to improve and maintain physical and mental health, reduce risk of chronic diseases (e.g., heart disease, stroke, type-2 diabetes, some cancers), support growth and development, and help youth to concentrate, learn, and achieve academic success. Unfortunately, physical activity levels tend to decline over adolescence, particularly among females. Teens report dropping out of sports and physical activities due to increased competition, not feeling “good enough,” and lack of time-related to greater academic demands.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES

- Promote adherence to the [24-Hour Movement Guidelines](#), which encourages 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day alongside light physical activity throughout the day.
- Share equipment-free exercise resources with students, such as those from [ACTIVE Kids](#) and [PHE Canada](#) for a fun, physically active break during class, while on breaks, or at home.
- Consider creating a yoga room or yoga club, or designate female-only times in weight or exercise rooms to increase female participation.
- Provide student leadership opportunities to coordinate peer physical activities (e.g., intramurals, non-competitive clubs, physical movement activities, or have students supervise open fitness facility times).
- Engage students in conversation to understand the barriers related to intramural and varsity sport participation at school.
- Encourage students to access [PEI Island Trails](#) to explore outdoor recreation and nature, [Recreation PEI](#) tools and resources, and [Go PEI](#) for free community recreational activities.

Screen Time Outcomes in Prince Edward Island

Among students
in PEI:

3% are meeting the national guideline of 2
hours or less of recreational screen time/day

4% COMPASS average*

*2021-22 COMPASS Survey



Surfing the
internet:
1.2 hours/day



Texting,
messaging,
emailing:
1.1 hours/day



Browsing/
scrolling social
media:
2.0 hours/day



Watching/
streaming TV
shows or movies:
1.6 hours/day



Playing video/
computer
games:
1.3 hours/day



Video calling
(e.g., Facetime,
Skype, Zoom):
0.7 hours/day

Average time spent
doing homework:
0.9 hours/day



WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

Youth spend a considerable amount of time sitting throughout the school day, often in front of screens or using devices. Studies suggest that the amount of time spent being sedentary increases physical and mental health risks, regardless of the amount of time spent being physically active.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES

- Consider creating “screen-free” spaces at your school to encourage students to actively engage without their phones.
- Create a screen time reduction challenge at your school to encourage students to set goals to reduce daily screen time.
- Educators and parents can access information and tools at [Cyber Safe Care](#) to help youth develop the critical thinking skills they need to interact with media, and tackle internet safety concerns in a positive way.
- Organizations such as [ParticipAction](#) offer resources to promote healthy living and reduce sedentary behaviour.
- Refer to the [school-related sedentary behavior guidelines](#) recently released by the Sedentary Behavior Research Network for screen time recommendations and suggestions to reduce sedentary behaviour during the school day.

Sleep Outcomes in Prince Edward Island

Among students in PEI:

64% are meeting the national guideline of 8 to 10 hours of sleep per night

66% COMPASS average*

On average, students reported getting **8.1** hours of sleep per weekday night

On average, students reported getting **8.9** hours of sleep per weekend night

74% reported their sleep quality as good in the past week



*2021-22 COMPASS Survey

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

Shorter sleep duration during adolescence has been associated with depressed mood, reduced motivation, lower academic achievement, and behavioural and physical health problems. Adequate sleep, both in quantity and quality, is shown to improve adolescents' cognitive functioning, alertness, and energy throughout the day. A natural shift in circadian rhythms occurs at puberty, causing adolescents to get tired and fall asleep later, which conflicts with early school start times. As a result, sleep durations typically decline over the duration of secondary school. Using screens and electronic media and being exposed to the screen's light before trying to sleep, especially within 1-2 hours of bedtime, can make it harder to fall asleep. Sugar-sweetened beverages (e.g., pop) and energy drinks can also impact sleep.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES

- Promote adherence to the [Canadian Sleep Guidelines](#) which encourage teens to get 8-10 hours of uninterrupted sleep, with consistent bed and wake-up times.
- Based on your school's Health and Physical Education curriculum, promote healthy [sleep hygiene](#), including behaviours aimed at mitigating sources of stress (e.g., completing schoolwork before dinner as opposed to late at night and avoiding phones in bed).
- Ensure students are being physically active throughout the school day and get natural daylight, which can improve sleep quality and quantity.
- At [Caring for Kids](#), educators and parents can access information about teens, sleep, and other healthy living, behaviour and development topics (like screens and digital media).

Tobacco Use and Vaping Outcomes in Prince Edward Island

Among students in PEI:

31% have never smoked but are susceptible to begin smoking in the future



8% have smoked a cigarette in the past 30 days

6% COMPASS average*

Note: Substance use rates tend to increase as students progress through secondary school. The inclusion of grade 7 and 8's in these measures will likely result in lower overall percentages in substance use than expected when comparing to COMPASS schools with only grade 9-12's. Please refer to the grade comparison page to gain more perspective on substance use among students at your schools.



18% have used an e-cigarette (vape) in the past 30 days

21% COMPASS average*

*2021-22 COMPASS Survey

Among students that reported vaping in the past 30 days:

51% have used an e-cigarette (vape) to relax and/or relieve stress/anxiety

42% have used an e-cigarette (vape) because they were curious / to try something new

5% have used an e-cigarette (vape) to help quit smoking cigarettes



WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

Cigarettes and most e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive and can harm the developing adolescent brain and increase risk for future addiction to other drugs. Evidence suggests that vaping and cigarette use co-occur, raising concern about the rise in vaping prevalence in young adolescents. Youth perceptions of nicotine use as low risk for both danger and addiction make this important for public health education and prevention efforts.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES

- Maintain, enforce, and clearly communicate the school board's tobacco and smoke-free school [policy](#) and [procedure](#), which prohibits tobacco and e-cigarette use - including cigarettes, vaping devices, and cigars on school property.
- Educate students on the risks of vaping and tobacco products. Educator resources and interactive games are available from [Not an Experiment](#) and [LungNSPEI](#).
- Educators, parents, and health professionals can access resources and cessation program supports for youth through the [PEI Smoking Cessation Program](#), including PEI's Quit Your Way Guide to support youth in their quit journey.
- Continue the conversation with students regarding vaping risks through [Health Canada's "Consider the Consequences"](#) virtual awareness tour and the [Quit4Life Youth Cessation Program](#)
- Introduce the [QUASH mobile App](#), developed by the Lung Association, to help students quit smoking or vaping.

Alcohol Use Outcomes in Prince Edward Island

Among students in
PEI:

16% reported binge drinking in the past 30 days (consuming 5 drinks of alcohol or more on one occasion)

18% COMPASS average*

Among students that reported drinking alcohol in the past month, **36%** of them reported drinking alcohol when they were all by themselves

37% COMPASS average*

*2021-22 COMPASS Survey



13% reported riding in a vehicle when the driver had been drinking alcohol, in the past 30 days

27% reported drinking alcohol in the past 30 days

Note: Substance use rates tend to increase as students progress through secondary school. The inclusion of grade 7 and 8's in these measures will likely result in lower overall percentages in substance use than expected when comparing to COMPASS schools with only grade 9-12's. Please refer to the grade comparison page to gain more perspective on substance use among students at your schools.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

Alcohol is the most common drug used by high school students. Research demonstrates that delayed onset of alcohol use is vital to healthy brain development and good mental health. Alcohol use by youth increases drastically between grades 9 to 12. Evidence from COMPASS has shown a clear link between drinking onset and declines in academic achievement. Alcohol impairs decision-making and is a major cause of early mortality among youth via accidents and self-harm. Early experience with alcohol use is a serious risk factor for developing long-standing problems that continue into adulthood, including dependence and chronic disease.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES

- Maintain, enforce and clearly communicate the school board's [Alcohol and Drugs](#) policy to ensure schools are alcohol and drug-free. Involve students in creating or updating the policy and implementation. Create space for supportive and non-judgmental dialogue with students.
- Consider providing information to sports team coaches about the dangers and misconceptions of heavy drinking or combining alcohol and energy drinks.
- Use awareness campaigns, like [MADD Youth](#), to target misperceptions of student drinking norms as students tend to overestimate peer alcohol consumption.
- Utilize [Canada's Guidelines on Alcohol and Health](#) and access resources for [educators](#) and [youth](#) through the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA).
- Ensure students are aware of resources and supports available to them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, through [PEI Bridge the gap](#) and [211-PEI](#)
- Consider introducing the [Saying When app](#), a program created by the Centre of Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) that provides guidance for youth to take charge of their drinking.

Cannabis Use Outcomes in Prince Edward Island



Among students in PEI:

13% reported using cannabis in the past 30 days

9% COMPASS average*

Among students that reported using cannabis in the past month, **59%** of them reported using cannabis when they were all by themselves

62% COMPASS average*

12% reported riding in a vehicle when the driver had been using cannabis, in the past 30 days

Note: Substance use rates tend to increase as students progress through secondary school. The inclusion of grade 7 and 8's in these measures will likely result in lower overall percentages in substance use than expected when comparing to COMPASS schools with only grade 9-12's. Please refer to the grade comparison page to gain more perspective on substance use among students at your schools.

*2021-22 COMPASS Survey

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

Cannabis is one of the most commonly used substances among young people. Evidence from COMPASS and elsewhere has shown that students who use cannabis are more likely to report using other substances, report greater symptoms of anxiety and depression, and may experience a decrease in academic achievement over time. High-risk cannabis use (e.g., high frequency, high potency) among youth is an important issue to address as it has been shown to negatively impact a teen's perception, memory, judgment, reasoning, motivation, school performance, and risk-taking behaviour.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES

- Maintain, enforce and clearly communicate the school board's [Alcohol and Drugs](#) policy to ensure schools are alcohol and drug-free. Involve students in creating or updating the policy and in its implementation. Create space for supportive and non-judgmental dialogue with your students.
- Utilize [Canada's Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines](#) as recommended by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).
- Provide or facilitate meaningful education-based programming, ideally in small-group or individual settings, to help students learn about the risks associated with cannabis use in a safe and non-stigmatizing way.
- Share information about local resources and supports available through [211-PEI](#).
- Cannabis resources can be found on PEI [Just the Facts](#). Educator toolkits are available from CAMH, and the Drug Free Kids [Cannabis Talk Kit](#) to initiate discussion about cannabis with students.

Bullying Outcomes in Prince Edward Island

Among students in PEI, within the past 30 days:



22% have been verbally attacked



7% have been victims of cyber-attacks

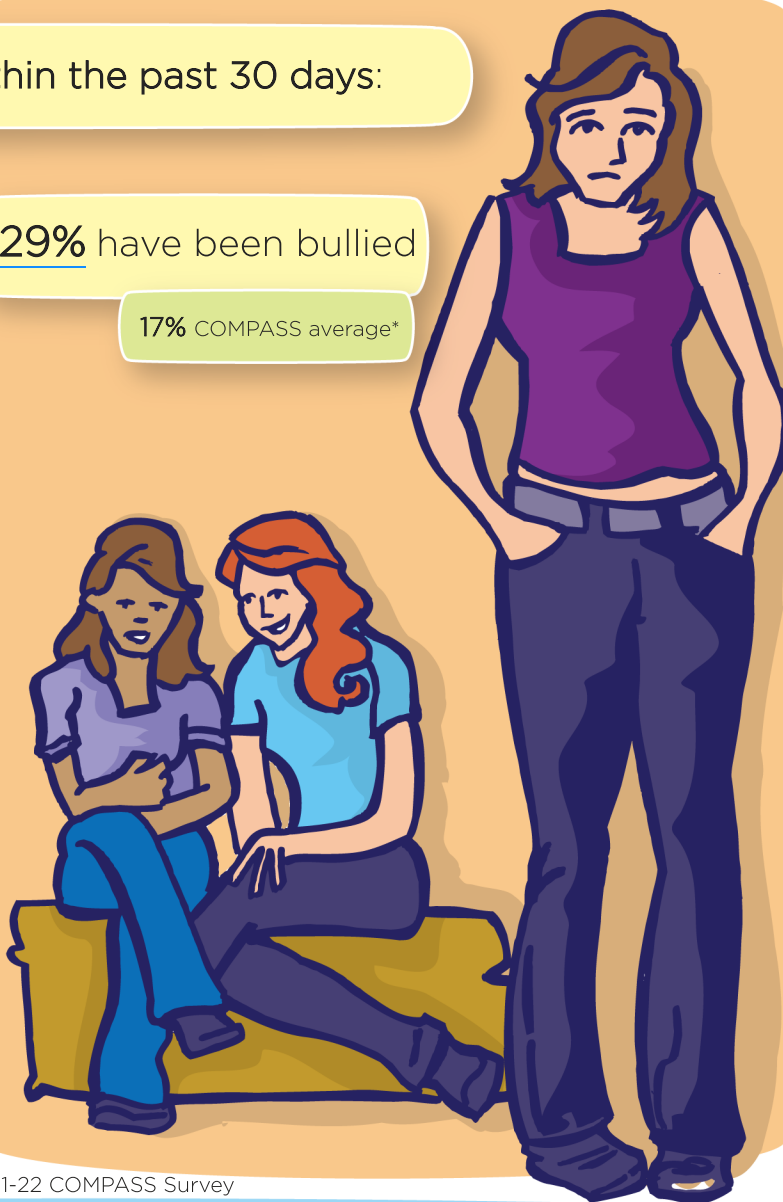


5% have been physically attacked

11% have been victims of social bullying (e.g. being purposely excluded from a group)

29% have been bullied

17% COMPASS average*



*2021-22 COMPASS Survey

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

Adolescents who have been bullied are more likely to report detentions, suspensions, receiving a failing grade, carrying weapons, and skipping school. Weight-based bullying tends to be the most frequently reported cause of bullying. Students who are victims of bullying are also more likely to start bullying others. Bullying can have a lifelong impact on mental health and future relationships.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES

- Provide resources to teachers, students, and parents about cyberbullying and outline procedures to follow when cyberbullying occurs.
- Educators and other school staff can access resources from [PREVNet](#), and [Legal Info PEI Cyberbullying](#) to learn more about bullying and engage students in conversations about bullying.
- Consider implementing [CAST \(Coping and Support Training\)](#) to assist youth aged 13-18 with substance misuse, mental well-being, and school performance. Additional resources are available through [PEI Bridge the gap](#) and [211-PEI](#).

Mental Health Outcomes in Prince Edward Island

Among students in PEI:

75% reported feeling they actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others

80% reported feeling competent and capable in the activities that are important to them

62% reported feeling that their life is purposeful and meaningful

59% rated their mental health as good, very good, or excellent

Average NA*

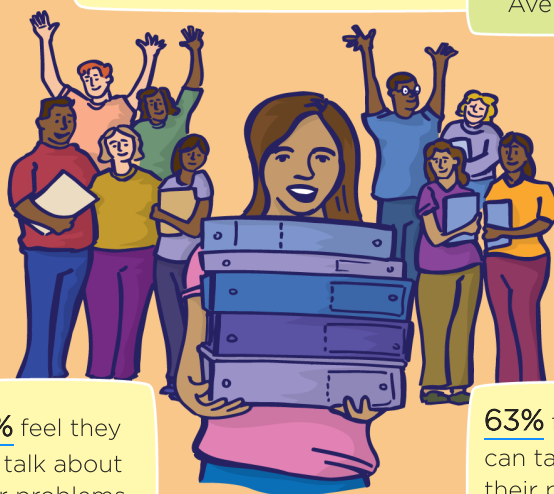
65% reported feeling optimistic about their future

66% reported feeling engaged and interested in their daily activities

67% reported having supportive and rewarding social relationships

53% feel they can talk about their problems with their family

63% feel they can talk about their problems with their friends



30% reported feeling lonely on most days in the past week



24% felt depressed most days in the last week



38% felt nervous, anxious, or on edge on most days in the last 2 weeks

*This measure was not available in the 2021-22 COMPASS Survey

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

Youth with higher levels of mental health are better able to learn and manage life's challenges. Positive mental health is characterized by engagement and motivation, self-awareness, self-efficacy, hope for the future, and a sense of purpose and belonging. All students can benefit from learning self-regulation and social-emotional skills to better cope with negative emotions, reduce the probability of some mental disorders, and improve the management of existing mental health issues. Students' mental health and well-being can be impacted by a wide variety of social, cultural, structural, and systemic factors. Meaningful and trusting relationships with adults and feeling like one "matters" are among the strongest predictors of student mental health and well-being.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES

- Use a comprehensive approach in teaching social-emotional skills, positive mental health practices, and mental health literacy involving students, parents, staff, and community partners.
- Help reduce the stigma associated with mental health by prioritizing it within the school environment and programming. The [Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health](#) provides several tool kits to assist schools in developing a healthy school environment.
- Learn how to spot signs of distress among students, but also recognize that signs of struggle may not be obvious. Encourage open-door policies and equip staff with [mental health literacy](#) tools and resources to help recognize when students need support.
- Use culturally appropriate approaches when discussing mental health with minority groups. Some helpful resources include the [School Mental Health Action Kit](#) and the [We Matter Campaign](#).
- Share resources for mental health and addiction [helplines](#) and [supports](#) available through 211-PEI.

School Connectedness & Academic Achievement Outcomes in Prince Edward Island

Among students in PEI:

70% feel they are part of their school

74% COMPASS average*

*2021-22 COMPASS Survey

77% feel safe at school

81% feel that teachers treat them fairly

75% feel close to people at school

63% feel happy to be at their school



64% would like to complete a post-secondary education

86% think getting good grades is important

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

Academic achievement outcomes can be influenced by student engagement in a number of health behaviours (substance use, physical inactivity, screen time, and adherence to healthy eating recommendations). The [Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health](#) recognizes the importance of taking a comprehensive approach to school health to support improvement in students' academic achievement outcomes. This approach addresses health through social and physical environments, teaching and learning, policy and partnerships, and services. School climate influences the experiences of students, teachers, and staff within a school. Creating a positive school climate can promote positive self-esteem and mental health in students, improve their attendance and academic success, and reduce the likelihood of engaging in risky behaviours (e.g., drugs, alcohol).

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES

- The [Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health](#) provides a number of resources to assist schools in developing a healthy school environment.
- The [BC School Connectedness Action Guide](#) and the [Secondary School Toolkit](#) developed by Middlesex London Health Unit are resources that can assist schools in creating positive and safe school cultures.

Climate Change and Eco-Anxiety Outcomes in Prince Edward Island

Among students in PEI:



6% reported thinking about climate change often or almost always makes it difficult for them to sleep

4% reported climate change often or almost always interferes with their ability to get work or school assignments done

16% reported they often or almost always try to reduce behaviours that contribute to climate change

13% reported they often or almost always believe they can do something to help address the problem of climate change

15% COMPASS average*

*2021-22 COMPASS Survey

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

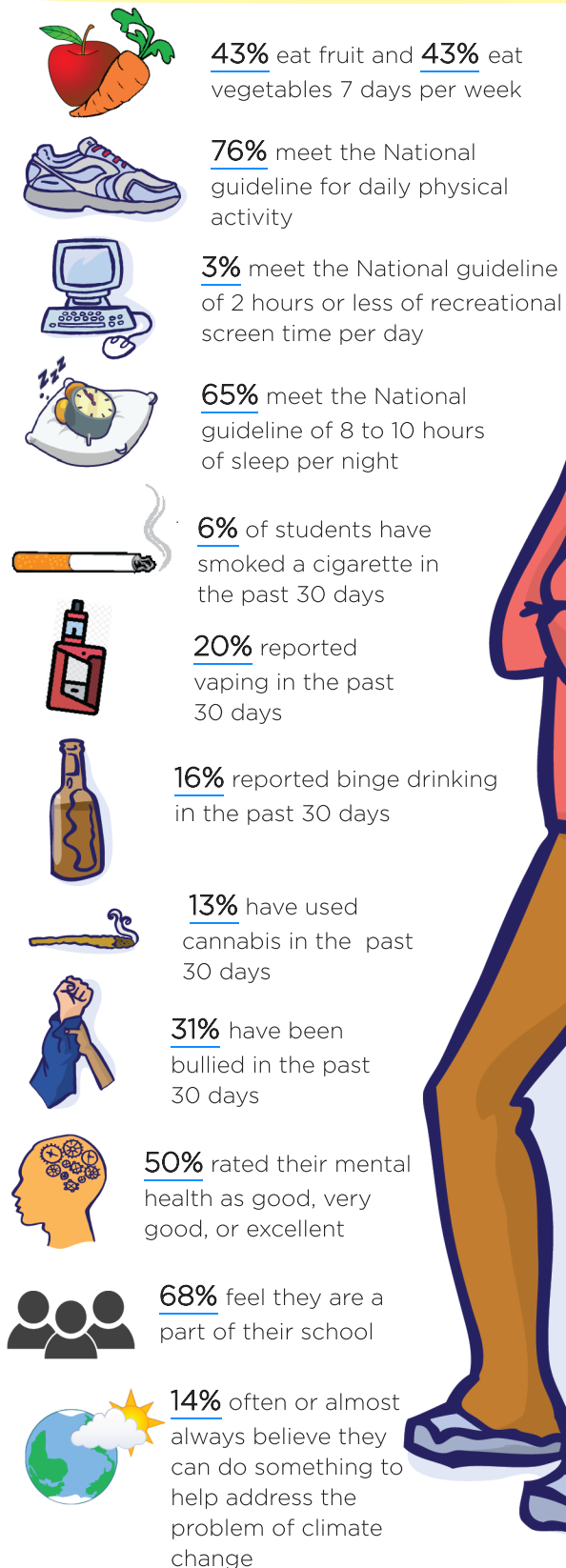
Eco-anxiety is a growing issue facing adolescents as climate change progresses. Often defined as anxiousness about the effects of climate change on both future generations and the environment, eco-anxiety more often affects children and youth than adults. Climate change anxiety is found to be linked to poorer mental health outcomes, including low mood, helplessness, and depression. Equipping youth with the skills needed to cope with these worries can positively impact their mental health and ability to make positive contributions to combating climate change.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES

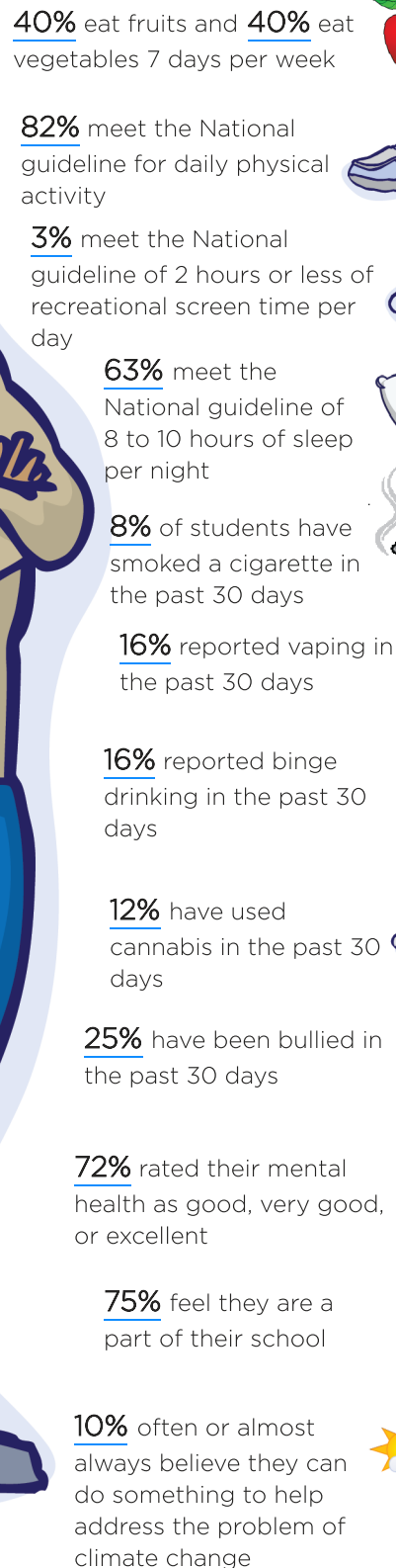
- Expand knowledge on the topic of eco-anxiety and how to cope through resources such as those provided by the [Mental Health Commission of Canada](#).
- [Eco-Anxious Stories](#) provides resources, stories, and workshops to help people cope and connect to others dealing with eco-anxiety. Consider sharing their [Quick Tips for Eco-Anxiety](#) resource that covers steps to accepting your climate emotions.
- Consider spending time in nature with students and youth before, during, or after school to help manage eco-anxiety symptoms.
- Encourage youth to take action on climate change through engagement in [GenAction](#) and by learning more about [PEI's Climate Adaptation Plan](#).
- Support students in setting up a club at their school to learn more and engage with climate change/adaptation leaders in PEI (e.g., work underway through [UPEI School of Climate Change and Adaptation](#)).

Gender Comparisons in Prince Edward Island

Among girls in PEI:



Among boys in PEI:



Note: Other gender response options are collected, but to maintain student privacy due to small sample size, findings are presented here in boys and girls only

Grade Comparisons in Prince Edward Island

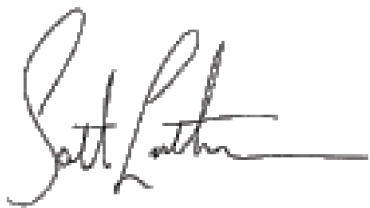
Among students in PEI:

	7	8	9	10	11	12
Eat vegetables 7 days per week	41%	40%	41%	41%	40%	44%
Eat fruit 7 days per week	47%	40%	44%	37%	37%	35%
Meet the national guideline for daily physical activity	83%	82%	77%	81%	74%	68%
Meet the national guideline of 2 hours or less of recreational screen time per day	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Meet the national guideline of 8 to 10 hours of sleep per night	81%	71%	64%	59%	53%	51%
Reported smoking a cigarette in the past 30 days	3%	5%	6%	10%	13%	13%
Reported vaping in the past 30 days	6%	10%	15%	21%	30%	35%
Reported binge drinking in the past 30 days	4%	5%	10%	21%	29%	37%
Have used cannabis in the past 30 days	4%	6%	8%	16%	23%	27%
Have been bullied in the past 30 days	33%	33%	32%	26%	26%	20%
Rated their mental health as good, very good, or excellent	70%	63%	61%	55%	52%	50%
Feel they are a part of their school	75%	72%	71%	68%	67%	65%
Often or almost always believe they can do something to help address the problem of climate change	15%	11%	10%	13%	14%	14%



A Message from COMPASS Leadership

Thank you for participating in the COMPASS survey. We hope you find this report informative and useful. By participating in the COMPASS study, schools from your province will help to shape future youth health research and practice across Canada and internationally for years to come. We have enjoyed working with your schools and hope to continue working with you and your local public health professionals to help make schools the healthiest environment possible for students.



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