



Cannabis use

Obesity

Mental health

Physical activity

Alcohol use

Smoking

Sedentary behaviour



Prince Edward Island

2023-24



## Thank you for participating in the 2023-24 COMPASS survey.

This is the province's customized School Health Profile.

This report shows the 2023-24 COMPASS survey results from participating grade 7 to 12 students enrolled at 35 schools across the province. In some cases, results may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Among participating schools, 79% of students participated in COMPASS this year.

Examples of recommended actions and resources can be found in the "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](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/compass-system/about) or contact:

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## Sample of demographics in Prince Edward Island

### Among students in PEI:

#### Sample by **grade**:

18% Grade 7  
17% Grade 8  
17% Grade 9  
18% Grade 10  
15% Grade 11  
13% Grade 12

#### Sample by **age**:

1% 11 years or younger  
18% 12 years  
17% 13 years  
17% 14 years  
18% 15 years  
16% 16 years  
12% 17 years  
1% 18 years  
1% 19 years or older

#### Sample by **race**:

71% White  
21% Another race or multiple  
5% I don't know  
2% I prefer not to say

#### Sample by **sex at birth\***:

50% Female  
48% Male

#### Sample by **years lived in Canada:**

76% Born in Canada  
11% 1 to 5 years  
13% 6 or more years

#### Sample by **place of birth:**

67% PEI  
17% Elsewhere in Canada  
16% Outside of Canada

#### Sample by **gender\***:

47% Girl/Woman  
48% Boy/Man  
3% Gender-diverse\*\*

### WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Demographic data helps to assess the extent to which the survey has collected a diverse range of perspectives and experiences. This data can be used by schools to build evidence-informed initiatives that aim to improve equity.



\*Values will not add up to 100% since some students selected "I prefer not to say"

\*\*Gender-diverse includes non-binary person, Two-Spirit, and "I describe my gender differently"

# Healthy Eating Outcomes in Prince Edward Island

Among students in PEI:



**85%** drink plain water 7 days per week



**19%** drink high-energy drinks at least once a week



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



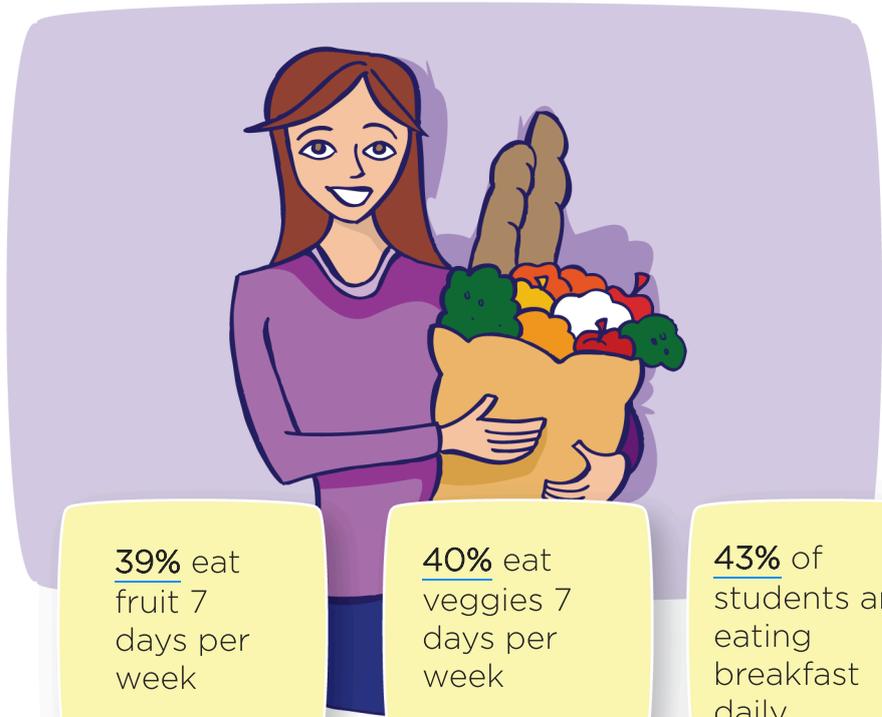
**5%** sometimes go to bed hungry because there is not enough money to buy food



**24%** ate breakfast provided from a school breakfast program at least once a week



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



**39%** eat fruit 7 days per week

**40%** eat veggies 7 days per week

**43%** of students are eating breakfast daily

45% COMPASS average\*

48% COMPASS average\*

\*2022-23 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

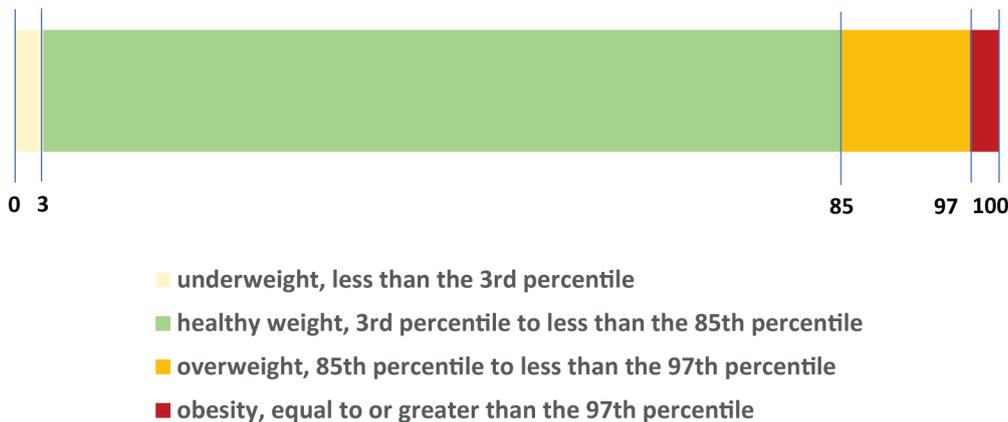
Among students in PEI:

**54%** are trying to change (lose or gain) their weight

**54%** describe themselves as being about the right weight

**71%** 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, 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 gapp](#) 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:



**75%** are meeting the national guideline of 60 min/day of physical activity

72% COMPASS average\*

\*2022-23 COMPASS Survey



**54%** reported strength training at least 3 days/week



**40%** reported participating in intramural sports or non-competitive sports clubs



**41%** reported participating in varsity sports



**55%** 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:

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

4% COMPASS average\*

\*2022-23 COMPASS Survey



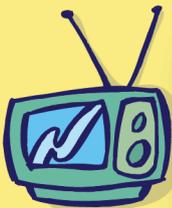
Surfing the internet:  
**1.0** hours/day



Texting, messaging, emailing:  
**1.0** hours/day



Browsing/scrolling social media:  
**1.9** hours/day



Watching/streaming TV shows or movies:  
**1.5** hours/day



Playing video/computer games:  
**1.4** hours/day



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

Average time spent doing school work on a screen: **1.2** 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 recommendations](#) 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:

**61%** are meeting the national guideline of 8 to 10 hours of sleep per night

55% COMPASS average\*

\*2022-23 COMPASS Survey

On average, students reported getting **8.2** hours of sleep per weekday night

On average, students reported getting **9.1** hours of sleep per weekend night

**75%** reported their sleep quality as good in the past week



### 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 24-Hour Movement 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:

**26%** have never smoked but are susceptible to begin smoking in the future



**7%** have smoked a cigarette in the past 30 days

6% COMPASS average\*

**16%** have used an e-cigarette (vape) in the past 30 days



19% COMPASS average\*

\*2022-23 COMPASS Survey

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.

## Among students that reported vaping in the past 30 days:

**44%** have used an e-cigarette (vape) to relax and/or relieve stress/anxiety

**38%** have used an e-cigarette (vape) because they were curious / to try something new

**4%** 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:

**14%** reported binge drinking in the past 30 days (consuming 5 drinks of alcohol or more on one occasion)

**21%** COMPASS average\*

Among students that reported drinking alcohol in the past month, **39%** of them reported drinking alcohol when they were all by themselves



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

**23%** reported drinking alcohol in the past 30 days

\*2022-23 COMPASS Survey

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:

**11%** reported using cannabis in the past 30 days

12% COMPASS average\*

\*2022-23 COMPASS Survey

Among students that reported using cannabis in the past month, **60%** of them reported using cannabis when they were all by themselves

**11%** 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.

### 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:

**31%** have been bullied

19% COMPASS average\*

\*2022-23 COMPASS Survey

**12%** have bullied others

## Types of Bullying



**21%** have been verbally attacked

**5%** have been victims of sexual harassment



**8%** have been victims of cyber-attacks

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



**6%** have been physically attacked

## Reasons for being bullied



**3%** have been bullied for their race/ethnicity/culture

**6%** have been bullied for a physical, learning, or emotional challenge



**2%** have been bullied because their family isn't as wealthy as others

**3%** have been bullied for their sexual orientation



**3%** have been bullied for their gender identity

**8%** have been bullied due to their weight

**10%** have been bullied due to another aspect of their image/appearance

### 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.
- Additional resources are available through [PEI Bridge the gap](#) and [211-PEI](#).

## Mental Health Outcomes in Prince Edward Island

### Among students in PEI:

**77%** reported feeling they actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others

**81%** reported feeling competent and capable in the activities that are important to them

**66%** reported feeling that their life is purposeful and meaningful

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

**67%** COMPASS average\*

**68%** reported feeling optimistic about their future

**68%** reported feeling engaged and interested in their daily activities

**70%** reported having supportive and rewarding social relationships

**56%** feel they can talk about their problems with their family

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



\*2022-23 COMPASS Survey



**29%** reported feeling lonely on most days in the past week



**22%** felt depressed most days in the last week



**35%** felt nervous, anxious, or on edge on most days in the last 2 weeks

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

Mentally healthy youth 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:

**74%** feel they are part of their school

72% COMPASS average\*

\*2022-23 COMPASS Survey

**81%** feel safe at school

**85%** feel that teachers treat them fairly

**78%** feel close to people at school



**66%** feel happy to be at their school



**62%** would like to complete a post-secondary education

**89%** think getting good grades is important

## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

School connectedness is an important and modifiable protective factor for multiple youth health outcomes. School connectedness is defined as a sense of belonging and safety at school, and positive relationships with classmates and teachers. Youth who feel more connected to their school report lower rates of depression, problematic substance use, and violence. COMPASS research has found school connectedness to be one of the strongest preventative factors for anxiety and depression, and to provide protective effects among youth. The benefits of school connectedness are particularly significant for students who are at higher risk for adverse health outcomes, including racialized, gender diverse, and lower socioeconomic status populations; however, these youth report less favourable perceptions of their school environments.

## 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.

## Equity and Inclusion Outcomes in Prince Edward Island

Among students in PEI:

51% report ever feeling unwelcome or uncomfortable at school due to...

their race:  
7%

their religion:  
4%

their image/  
appearance:  
27%

their sexual  
orientation:  
5%

their  
gender  
identity:  
5%

their marks  
at school:  
13%

a physical  
challenge:  
4%

a learning  
challenge:  
6%

an  
emotional  
challenge:  
12%

their family  
not being as  
wealthy/rich  
as others: 4%

other  
reasons: 18%



### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

When students feel welcomed and accepted in their school, they are more likely to succeed academically. How welcome a student feels at school tends to vary by race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, and socioeconomic status. These variations may contribute to disparities in academic achievement, mental well-being, and physical health among different student populations. Staff training and school-based initiatives can help to reduce these disparities and increase all students' sense of belonging. Educators should work to create inclusive school resources (e.g., posters) and environments where all students see themselves represented in the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Helping students feel valued, appreciated, and respected in school can support student's academic achievement and overall well-being, as well as promote participation in school-based activities that foster positive health behaviours.

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES

- Recognize the importance of a welcoming and safe school environment with caring adults who demonstrate concern and respect for all students.
- Ensure every student has a supportive adult in the school.
- Keep students, including those from diverse backgrounds, at the center. Encourage student-led initiatives, events, and programs that promote inclusiveness and foster a positive school culture. Student-led initiatives tend to be more effective compared to those led by adults (i.e., school staff, parents, or community partners).
- Share the [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Report \(PDF\)](#) with educators to provide them with strategies for incorporating these concepts into their teaching journey.
- Embrace and honour the diversity of languages, identities, cultures, abilities and family practices in your school and community.
- Contact the Student Well-being Team for Gender Allyship and Bullying and Social Inclusion presentations for grade 7 and 8 students, respectively.

# Climate Change and Eco-Anxiety Outcomes in Prince Edward Island

Among students in PEI:



**5%** reported thinking about climate change often or almost always makes it difficult for them to sleep

**3%** reported climate change often or almost always interferes with their ability to get work or school assignments done

**14%** reported they often or almost always try to reduce behaviours that contribute to climate change

**11%** reported they often or almost always believe they can do something to help address the problem of climate change

**14%** COMPASS average\*

\*2022-23 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.

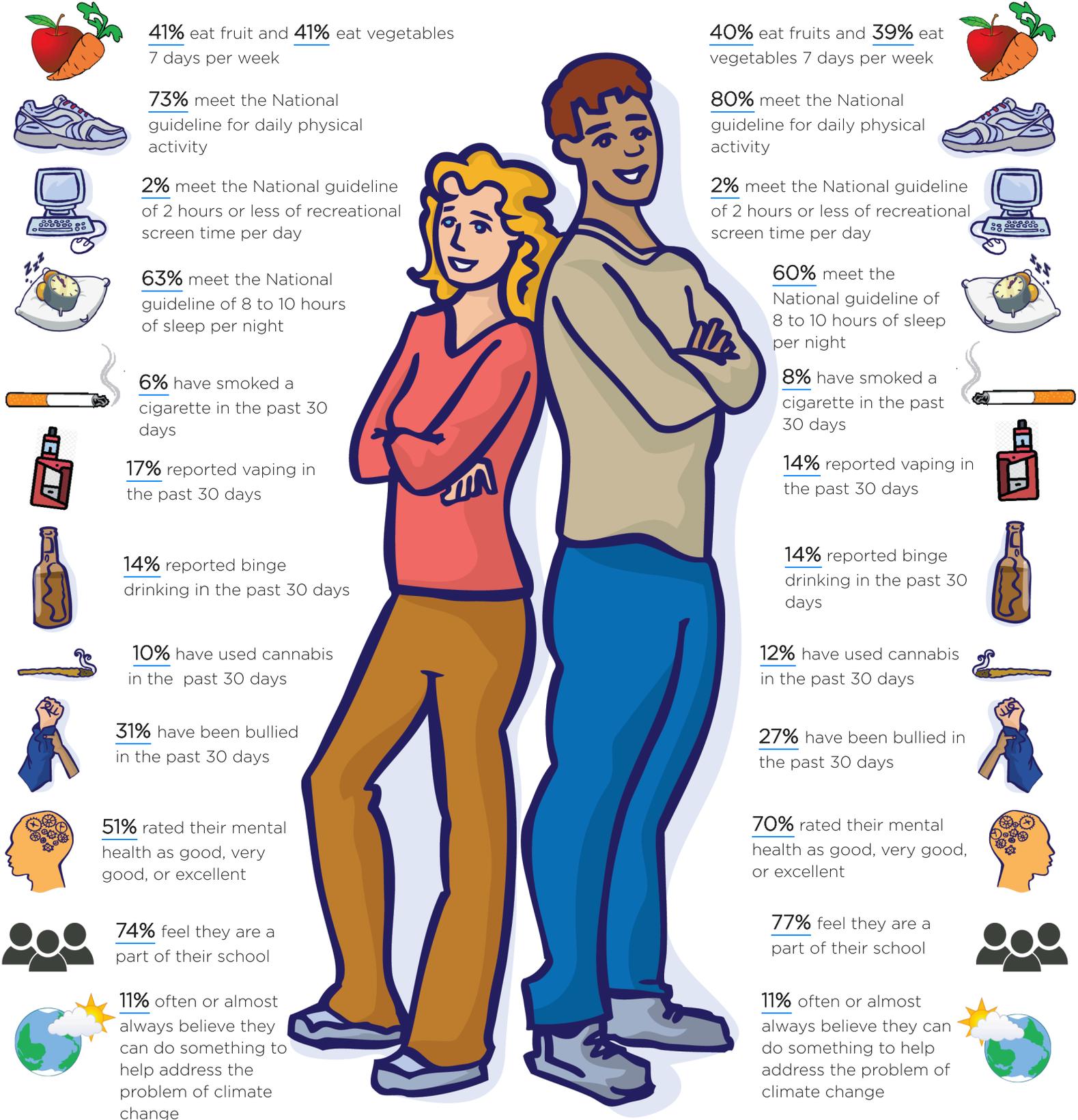
## RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOURCES

- 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	38%	39%	42%	41%	39%	39%
Eat fruit 7 days per week	45%	44%	41%	38%	33%	33%
Meet the national guideline for daily physical activity	78%	77%	76%	79%	71%	68%
Meet the national guideline of 2 hours or less of recreational screen time per day	5%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Meet the national guideline of 8 to 10 hours of sleep per night	69%	69%	63%	54%	55%	51%
Reported smoking a cigarette in the past 30 days	2%	4%	6%	9%	12%	14%
Reported vaping in the past 30 days	3%	6%	11%	20%	28%	32%
Reported binge drinking in the past 30 days	1%	4%	7%	17%	28%	33%
Have used cannabis in the past 30 days	1%	5%	8%	12%	21%	25%
Have been bullied in the past 30 days	32%	36%	33%	28%	27%	25%
Rated their mental health as good, very good, or excellent	72%	64%	59%	56%	52%	49%
Feel they are a part of their school	82%	75%	76%	73%	70%	65%
Believe they can do something to help address the problem of climate change	11%	9%	10%	11%	14%	15%

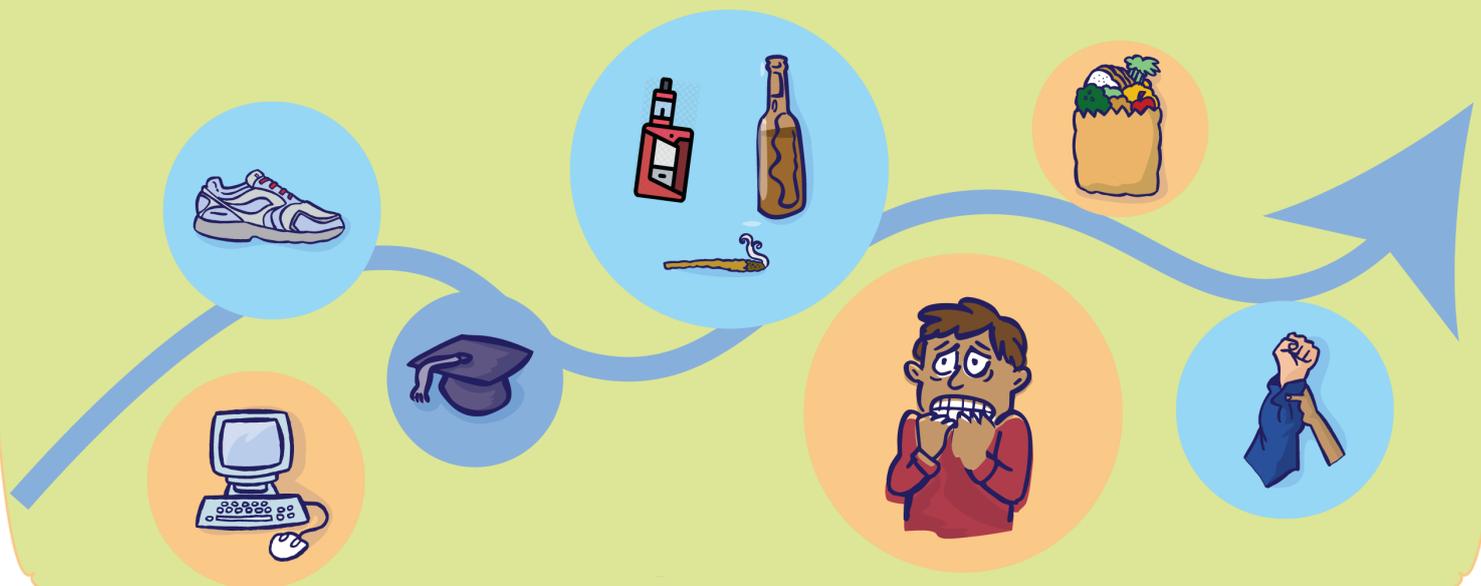


Note: To maintain student confidentiality, grade results are reported as <5% for small percentages if the grade sample size is less than 95 and N/A if the grade sample size is less than 30.

## Year Comparisons in Prince Edward Island

Among students in PEI:

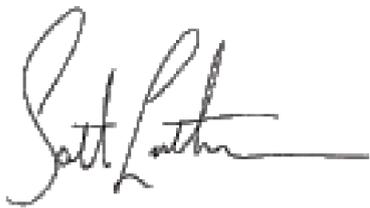
	2022-23	2023-24
Eat vegetables 7 days per week	41%	40%
Eat fruit 7 days per week	40%	39%
Meet the national guideline for daily physical activity	78%	75%
Meet the national guideline of 2 hours or less of recreational screen time per day	3%	2%
Meet the national guideline of 8 to 10 hours of sleep per night	57%	61%
Reported smoking a cigarette in the past 30 days	8%	7%
Reported vaping in the past 30 days	18%	16%
Reported binge drinking in the past 30 days	16%	14%
Have used cannabis in the past 30 days	13%	11%
Have been bullied in the past 30 days	29%	31%
Rated their mental health as good, very good, or excellent	59%	59%
Feel they are a part of their school	70%	74%
Believe they can do something to help address the problem of climate change	13%	11%



Note: Small differences in percentages with previous reports may be due to rounding.

## 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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