



Youth'07

The Health
and Wellbeing of
Secondary School
Students in New Zealand

Initial Findings



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Further publications by the AHRG are available at www.youth2000.ac.nz.



Foreword

Our young people are our future. We need to prepare them fully to become the future parents, working adults and leaders that New Zealand needs to become a vibrant and healthy society.

Unfortunately, New Zealand has a poor record when it comes to young people's health. The rates of youth suicide, death from motor vehicle injuries, unplanned pregnancy, and drug and alcohol use in New Zealand are among the highest in the western world.

Marian Wright Edelman, an advocate and champion for children and youth, has pointed out that "the health and social needs of vulnerable and disenfranchised young people serve as an early-warning system of threats that will ultimately engulf larger populations". Issues such as poor mental health, poor education attainment, obesity and delinquent behaviours are common among vulnerable and disenfranchised young people in New Zealand, signifying the serious impact on the health of our future society if not acted upon.

The information contained in this report, from 9,107 secondary school students who participated in Youth'07, is important and unique. Using innovative technology developed by the researchers, Youth'07 has provided the most accurate and up-to-date information we have on the health and wellbeing of young people in New Zealand. Moreover as Youth'07 builds on the first survey in 2001, we have for the first time, two time points for comparison. Detailed information from the young people themselves is now available for their teachers, schools and communities. Policy-makers will be able to focus resources and programmes on communities and populations in need. Parents and caregivers now have relevant information so that they can support their young people as they navigate the teenage years.

Although there are several facets of health which have improved from 2001 to 2007, as shown by the reduced proportions of young people with serious mental health issues and those currently smoking cigarettes, there are still worrying areas. A concerning number of young people are in families facing significant adversity, including food insecurity, due to economic hardship, and some are unable to access health care or dental care when they need it. Of concern too is the number of young people who suffer physical harm themselves, or witness the physical abuse of others in their home.

To improve the health of young people in New Zealand, we need to understand the issues they face, realising that young people's health and wellbeing depends on healthy families and communities, and environments that nurture and inspire them. But without good information the efforts of policy-makers, community leaders, families and schools to improve young people's health and wellbeing are hindered. Findings within this report suggest that young people need to be given a higher priority in policy and resources if we are to truly acknowledge their importance to the future wellbeing of New Zealand society.

We are grateful to the young people and schools who participated in this survey and congratulate the Youth '07 research team and their sponsors for this important work and its timely reporting.



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Executive Summary

This report presents findings from the 9,107 secondary school students who took part in New Zealand's second national youth health and wellbeing survey, conducted in 2007. The findings are compared with those from the first survey conducted in 2001.

Almost all students continue to be healthy, vibrant and fully participating in their families, schools and communities. Most report good health and emotional wellbeing. The majority of students feel part of their school and many help others at their school and in their communities.

Caring and connected relationships with parents and other responsible adults are important predictors of good outcomes for young people. The majority of students surveyed in 2007 report good relationships with parents, family and people at school.

In general, today's students are less distressed, have more positive mental health, less cigarette and marijuana use, and report better nutrition and physical activity behaviours than students in 2001. The proportion of students with concerning levels of depressive symptoms, suicidal thoughts and behaviours has decreased since 2001.

However, there remain some areas of concern. The numbers of students who binge drink, experience physical or sexual abuse, or witness violence in their homes, remains high.

To address these issues and improve the health and wellbeing of young people in New Zealand requires coordinated efforts that cut across the traditional silos of health care, social services and education, and a re-orientation towards a more holistic approach to youth health and wellbeing. This approach needs to recognise the fundamental importance of families, schools and communities in nurturing healthy and vibrant young people.



Introduction

This report presents information on Youth'07: the National Survey of the Health and Wellbeing of New Zealand Secondary School Students. This is New Zealand's second national survey of secondary school students following on from the first conducted in 2001. Both these surveys are part of Youth2000, run by the Adolescent Health Research Group from The University of Auckland. The aim of Youth'07 is to provide information on health and wellbeing issues among secondary school students - information that is current, accurate and representative of young people growing up in New Zealand.

The Adolescent Health Research Group (AHRG) was established by researchers at The University of Auckland in 1997 with the goal of improving the health and wellbeing of New Zealand's young people. The AHRG aims to provide accurate and timely information on New Zealand's youth that communities, schools, parents and policy makers can use to improve the health status of young people.

In 2001, the AHRG carried out its first national secondary school health survey, which collected comprehensive health and wellbeing data from nearly 10,000 randomly selected students, from randomly selected schools across New Zealand, using a self-report questionnaire administered on laptop computers. The results of the 2001 survey have been presented and published extensively, and are available via the project's website: www.youth2000.ac.nz.

The AHRG has continued to provide information on the health and wellbeing of New Zealand's young people and in 2005 was successful in obtaining funding to repeat the national secondary school survey in 2007.

The funding of Youth'07 is a partnership between the Health Research Council of New Zealand (grant 05/216) and eight government agencies: the Department of Labour, the Families Commission, the Accident Compensation Corporation, Sport and Recreation New Zealand, the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand and the Ministries of Youth Development, Justice, and Health.





The Survey



How we did the Survey

One of the aims of the national secondary school surveys is to be able to provide information that is representative of most young people growing up in New Zealand. To do this, we randomly picked 115 schools in New Zealand (from those with 50 or more students in years 9 to 14) and then randomly selected students from these schools to take part. The survey therefore did not include young people who are no longer in school.

"This was a very well-organised survey. Many thanks to the team for their unobtrusive work in the school."

"Thanks for the opportunity to be involved."

"Professionally conducted/ students were respected. All excellent!"

Comments from Youth'07 schools

In total, 96 (83.5%) of the 115 schools selected took part in the survey. Of the participating schools, the majority were state funded, co-educational and large schools. Only 13 schools declined to participate and a further 6 schools withdrew their agreement to participate during 2007. Of the non-participant schools, 14/19 (74%) were in Auckland, Wellington or Hamilton, 11/19 (58%) were state schools, 13/19 (68%) were co-educational, and 17/19 (89%) were large schools.

To be eligible to participate, students had to be 18 years old or younger. In total, 12,549 students were invited to participate in the survey. Three-quarters (9,107) agreed to take part. This represents about 3% of the total 2007 New Zealand secondary school roll. The reasons that students did not take part in the survey included not being at school on the day of the survey, being unavailable during the time the survey was conducted, or not wanting to take part in the survey.

Ethical Procedures

Before we started the Youth'07 project its design was checked by The University of Auckland Human Subject Ethics Committee. The responsibility of this committee is to advocate on behalf of the research participants, and to ensure that the way in which researchers at The University of Auckland conduct their research is of the highest ethical standard. Thus before we began, the methods and the questionnaires we used for conducting the survey had all been scrutinized by an independent group of academics and community representatives. We then obtained consent to carry out the survey from the principal of each participating school. A few weeks before the survey was conducted at each school, information materials about the survey were sent to each school for distribution to parents and students. They were assured that participation in the survey was voluntary and that all information collected would be anonymous and confidential. All participating students gave their own consent to being surveyed.

"this survey was really helpfull. it made made me notice alot of things i was doing currecting things to help me more 4 the future and journies that lie a head of me."

"it was very good survey excellent questions very understandsble like the way it has been lay out choice excellent.very private and confidential."

Comments from students on the Youth'07 Survey



Using Internet Tablets in Health Surveys

The survey was carried out using internet tablets – essentially hand-held computers. At the start of the survey students were given an anonymous code that enabled them to log-in to the questionnaire. The survey questions were displayed on the internet tablet's screen and also read out through headphones. Response options were also read out when the corresponding text on the screen was selected. This 'voiceover', as well as the questionnaire, were available in both English and Māori languages, with students able to toggle between the two. Students answered the questions by using a small stylus to touch the appropriate response on the screen. Students could choose not to answer any question or section of the survey. The branching program meant that students were not asked detailed questions about issues that were not part of their life experiences.

During the survey, we also measured each student's height, weight and waist circumference to obtain data on the physical measurements of New Zealand secondary school students. These measurements were taken in private part way through the survey. At this time students were also asked to provide

the address of their usual place of residence, from which we ascertained their census meshblock number. This was used to derive New Zealand Deprivation Index scores based on the neighbourhood where the student lived, and to identify students who lived in rural settings.

Before sensitive sections of the questionnaire, reminders were given that involvement in the survey was voluntary and that answers would remain confidential and anonymous. For questions thought to be potentially upsetting for students, 'safety' messages were added providing advice and contact details of people to talk to (including the people administering the questionnaire).

The questionnaire used in Youth'07 covered important health and wellbeing topics as well as risk and protective factors that increase or decrease the likelihood of positive and negative outcomes for young people in New Zealand. The questionnaire contained a total of 622 questions, but students answered fewer than this number due to the branching questionnaire design. This allowed for more in-depth questions in certain areas while limiting exposure to sensitive questions for students with no direct experience in these particular areas.



"having the handhelds was a great idea it made the questionere very enjoyable. thank you."

"I liked it. It was fun to answer the questions i found things i didn't know about myself."

Student comments on the Youth'07 Survey



How to use the information in this report

This survey and the 2001 survey are the largest surveys of the health and wellbeing of young people in New Zealand and are of considerable importance for the purposes of planning and programme development for communities, schools and policy-makers. However, caution needs to be taken when interpreting the results, especially in relation to whether the findings reflect the wider youth population and in interpreting differences between groups of students.

The survey does not include young people who are not in school, have left school, or are in alternative education settings.

Furthermore, there were a number of students who did not take part in this survey, often due to not being at school on the day of the survey. This means that the results are likely to be skewed towards a slightly 'healthier' picture of the youth population in New Zealand.

This report describes differences between male and female students, older and younger students, students from different deprivation backgrounds and students from the national secondary school survey conducted in 2001 and this survey in 2007. Differences between groups are described in the text only when they are significant. For more information on how these comparisons were made between groups please refer to the technical report which accompanies this report (available from www.youth2000.ac.nz).

NZ Deprivation Index

In this report students are grouped by their level (high, medium, or low) of deprivation or socio-economic hardship, based on the New Zealand Deprivation Index for the neighbourhood in which they live. The New Zealand Deprivation Index is calculated from 9 variables (including household income, home ownership, single parent families, employment, qualifications, overcrowding, and access to telephone and car) from the 2006 census data for each meshblock or neighbourhood area.

Comparisons between the 2001 survey and the 2007 survey

Comparisons between the 2001 and 2007 survey results are shown at the end of each section. To allow for these comparisons the Youth'07 survey followed a similar methodology to the 2001 survey with respect to sampling of schools, sampling of students, use of technology to enhance accuracy of reporting, and the use of similar or identical questions and response items within the survey questionnaire.

The overall sample target size in both 2001 and 2007 was 10,000 students. The response rates among schools and among students were remarkably similar between the two surveys. In 2001, 86% of invited schools took part compared to 84% in 2007. In 2001, 75% of invited students took part, compared to 74% in 2007.

Participating students were very similar by age and year of schooling between the 2001 and 2007 surveys. However, there were differences with respect to the proportion of male and female students. In 2001 there were fewer male students than female students (46% vs. 54%). In 2007 these proportions were reversed, with more male students than female students (54% vs. 46%). To allow for this we have examined differences among males and females separately and presented these when appropriate. Some of the questions used changed slightly between the two surveys - these changes are explained in the accompanying technical report (available from www.youth2000.ac.nz).

"thankyou for taking time to get to know about our health"

Student comment on the Youth'07 Survey





The Results



Culture and Ethnicity

Since 2001, New Zealand's population has grown and has continued to become more ethnically diverse, especially among young people. Currently, young people aged between 12 and 24 make up 19% of the total population in New Zealand with 11% of the population aged between 12 and 18 years. This section reports on the general ethnic-specific findings from Youth'07. Further in-depth reports will be available from Youth'07 for each of the main ethnic groups of young people.

Ethnic Groups

Approximately 40% of students in Youth'07 report that they belong to more than one ethnic group, compared to about one third of students in 2001.

The main ethnic groups that students belong to are: European (76%); Māori (19%); Asian (14%) and Pacific (13%). These groups are not exclusive; as indicated above, many students reported that they belong to more than one group.

Apart from Māori, each of these categories is made up of smaller ethnic groups. The European group included: New Zealand European (68%), English (15.3%), Australian (3.5%), Dutch (3.5%) and other European ethnicities (5.9%). The Pacific grouping included: Samoan (5.8%), Tongan (2.7%), Cook Island Māori (3.1%), Niuean (1.4%), Tokelauan (0.9%), and other Pacific ethnicities. The Asian grouping included students who belonged to ethnic groups from Southeast Asia through to Pakistan with Chinese (5.9%) and Indian (4.0%) ethnicities making up the largest groupings.

Country of Birth

Approximately three-quarters of students were born in New Zealand. This is less than in 2001 when almost 89% of students were born in New Zealand. Nine percent of students were born in an Asian nation and fewer in Australia (2.5%), or a Pacific Island nation (2.5%). Most students reported that their parents were born in New Zealand (66% of mothers and 64% of fathers). The next most common place of birth of students' parents was the United Kingdom (4.8% of mothers and 5.7% of fathers) and then Samoa (3.3% of mothers and 3.6% of fathers).





Most students are very proud to belong to their particular ethnic group

Māori Youth

Most Māori students (71%) are very proud of being Māori. Almost 78% indicated that it was very important, important, or somewhat important to be recognised as Māori. About 48% of Māori students are satisfied with their knowledge of things Māori, with most students getting their knowledge of Māori culture from whānau (parents and relatives), on the marae and/or from school. Almost one-third of Māori students can speak Māori fairly well, well or very well and about 37% of Māori students can understand spoken Māori fairly well, well or very well.



Samoan Youth

Most Samoan students (88%) are very proud of being Samoan. Almost 93% indicated that it was very important, important or somewhat important to be recognised as Samoan. About 63% of Samoan students are satisfied with their knowledge of things Samoan. About 61% of Samoan students can speak Samoan fairly well, well or very well and about 71% of Samoan students can understand spoken Samoan fairly well, well or very well.



Niuean Youth

Most Niuean students (76%) are very proud of being Niuean. Almost 84% indicated that it was very important, important or somewhat important to be recognised as Niuean. About 48% of Niuean students are satisfied with their knowledge of things Niuean. About 24% of Niuean students can speak Niuean fairly well, well or very well and about 49% of Niuean students can understand spoken Niuean fairly well, well or very well.



Cook Island Youth

Most Cook Island students (81%) are very proud of being Cook Island. Almost 87% indicated that it was very important, important or somewhat important to be recognised as Cook Island. About 60% of Cook Island students are satisfied with their knowledge of things Cook Island. About 30% of Cook Island students can speak Cook Island Māori fairly well, well or very well and about 43% of Cook Island students can understand spoken Cook Island Māori fairly well, well or very well.

Tongan Youth

Most Tongan students (89%) are very proud of being Tongan. Almost 92% indicated that it was very important, important or somewhat important to be recognised as Tongan. About 69% of Tongan students are satisfied with their knowledge of things Tongan. About 65% of Tongan students can speak Tongan fairly well, well or very well and about 72% of Tongan students can understand spoken Tongan fairly well, well or very well.



Chinese Youth

Approximately 56% of Chinese students are very proud of being Chinese. Almost 79% indicated that it was very important, important or somewhat important to be recognised as Chinese. About 47% of Chinese students are satisfied with their knowledge of things Chinese. About 70% of Chinese students can speak a Chinese language fairly well, well or very well and about 76% of Chinese students can understand a spoken Chinese language fairly well, well or very well.



Many students understand and speak their own language

Indian Youth

Most Indian students (71%) are very proud of being Indian. Almost 85% indicated that it was very important, important or somewhat important to be recognised as Indian. About 71% of Indian students are satisfied with their knowledge of things Indian. About 68% of Indian students can speak an Indian language fairly well, well or very well and about 73% of Indian students can understand a spoken Indian language fairly well, well or very well.



European Youth (includes New Zealand European and other European)

Most European students (74%) are very proud of being a person from their family's culture. Eighty percent indicated that it was very important, important or somewhat important to be recognised as a person from their family's culture. About 65% of European students are satisfied with their knowledge of their family's culture. About 87% of European students can speak the language of their family's culture fairly well, well or very well and about 89% of European students can understand the language of their family's culture fairly well, well or very well.



Middle Eastern, Latin American, African

Most of these students (82%) are very proud of being a person from their family's culture. Almost 90% indicated that it was very important, important or somewhat important to be recognised as a person from their family's culture. About 35% of students who indicated they belong to Middle Eastern, Latin American, or African ethnicities are satisfied with their knowledge of their family's culture. About 87% of these students can speak the language of their family's culture fairly well, well or very well and about 89% can understand the language of their family's culture fairly well, well or very well.



Other Pacific (includes Tokelauan, Fijian and other Pacific)

Most of these students (78%) are very proud of being a person from their family's culture. Almost 88% indicated that it was very important, important or somewhat important to be recognised as a person from their family's culture. About 68% of students who indicated they belong to these Pacific ethnicities are satisfied with their knowledge of their family's culture. About 67% of these students can speak the language of their family's culture fairly well, well or very well and about 72% can understand the language of their family's culture fairly well, well or very well.



Other Asian (includes Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Cambodian and other Asian)

Most of these students (72%) are very proud of being a person from their family's culture. Almost 83% indicated that it was very important, important or somewhat important to be recognised as a person from their family's culture. About 64% of students who indicated they belong to these Asian ethnicities are satisfied with their knowledge of their family's culture. About 82% of these students can speak the language of their family's culture fairly well, well or very well and about 87% can understand the language of their family's culture fairly well, well or very well.



Home and Families

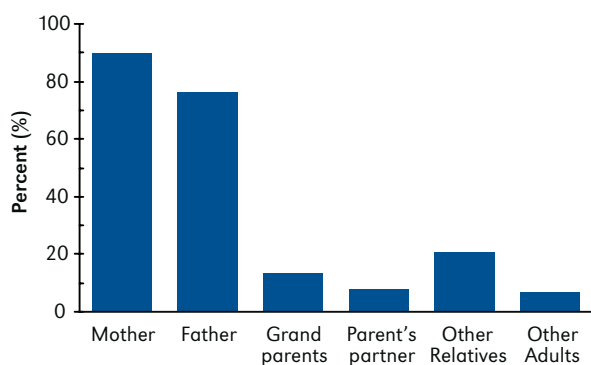
Supportive, safe and caring homes and families are essential to the health and wellbeing of young people.

Young people need adults who care about them, support them, supervise and look out for them. They also need meaningful participation in family life, high expectations for their behaviour and safety from physical and emotional harm.

Family background and circumstances

Most students (71%) live in one home, with 29% of students living in two or more homes. While mothers and fathers were the most common people acting as parents for students, grandparents and other relatives acting as parents are relatively common. This was more common among younger students and students living in more deprived neighbourhoods.

Who Acts as a Parent for Students?



A concerning number of students are living in families that are facing significant adversity due to economic hardship. About 13% of students had moved home 2 or more times in the last 12 months. This was more common among students who lived in neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation (19%) compared to students from less deprived neighbourhoods (9%).

Eight percent of young people reported that their family often or always worries about not having enough money for food.

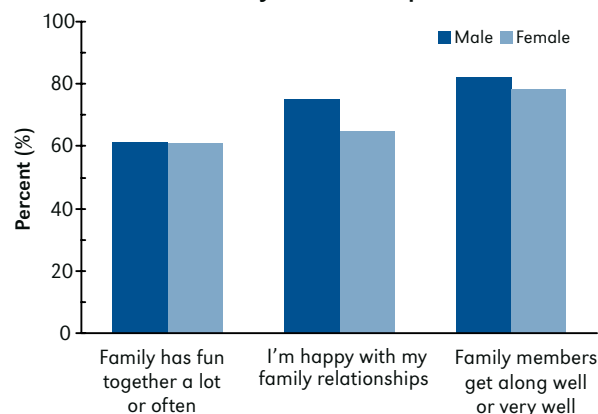
This proportion is higher among students from disadvantaged neighbourhoods where almost 14% of students reported that their family worries about not having enough money for food. These students were also much more likely to report overcrowding, with more than 2 people per bedroom (12%) compared to students from less deprived neighbourhoods (1%). In neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation, 20% of students reported that in their homes living rooms were used as bedrooms and a further 11% reported that garages were used as bedrooms.

Family relationships

Having a close and caring relationship with a parent is one of the most important predictors of good health and wellbeing for young people.

In 2007, most students are happy with their family relationships (71%), have fun with their families (60%) and report that their families get on well (81%).

Family Relationships



Most students feel close to their parent(s) (72%) and the great majority feel that their parent(s) care a lot about them (90%). Overall 62% of males and 50% of females said that they got enough time with their mother or father. About half of students felt that they get enough time with their mothers, 40% reported that they sometimes get enough time and 14% of students reported that they hardly ever get enough time with their mothers. The most common reason for not getting enough time was that their mother was at work (62%) followed by being busy with housework, other children or family members (51%).

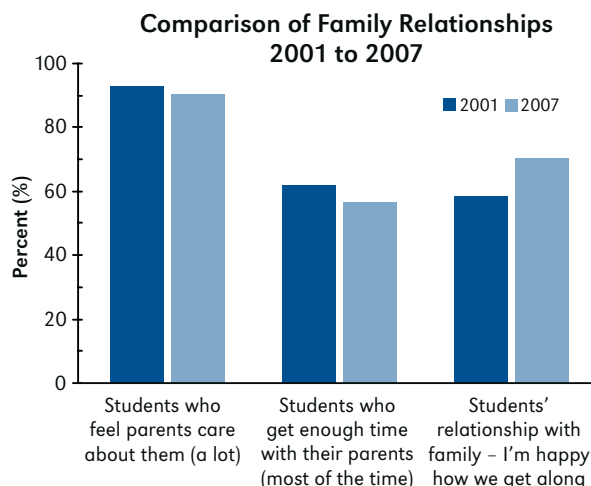
Similarly, only 40% of students felt that most of the time they get enough time with their fathers. The most common reason was their father being at work (72%) followed by their father being 'out' (25%) and/or not living with them (26%).



Comparisons 2001 to 2007

Between 2001 and 2007 the proportion of students who report that their parents care a lot about them and that they feel close to their parents has not changed substantially. Fewer female students in 2007 than in 2001 reported that they get enough time with their parents (down from 61% in 2001 to 50% in 2007), but there was very little change between the years among males.

Students' relationships with their families appear to have improved with 59% reporting in 2001 that they were happy with how they got on with their families, rising to 71% in 2007.



Indicators of family adversity have not changed markedly since 2001, with similar proportions of students reporting moving home 2 or more times in the last 12 months, parents worrying about not having enough money to pay for food and 2 or more people per bedroom in their homes.



School

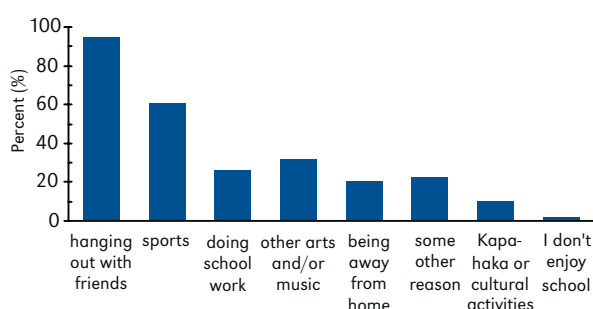
Students spend a considerable amount of time in school settings and active engagement in school is associated with better health and wellbeing outcomes for them.

Schools need to provide effective learning environments and school staff should have high expectations for their students, provide opportunities for meaningful participation in school life and offer caring adult relationships for students.

School engagement

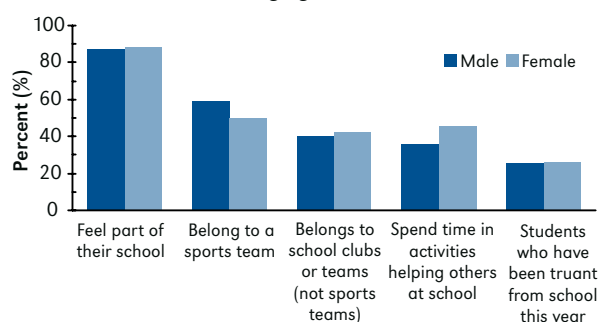
In general most students like school and this did not vary by the age, gender or level of neighbourhood deprivation of the student. The most common reason students gave why they enjoy school is hanging out with friends at school (95%). Male students were more likely to report enjoying sports at school (69%) compared to female students (51%), while female students were more likely to enjoy arts and/or music (37%) and doing school work (30%) compared to male students (27% and 23%, respectively). Female students were also more likely to report being away from home as a reason they enjoy school (25%) compared to male students (16%).

What do Students Enjoy about School?



Eighty-eight percent of students feel part of their school and this did not vary by age, gender, level of deprivation or urban/rural background. Most students are involved in sports teams (55%) and many belong to other groups or clubs at school (41%). About one-quarter of students have been truant from school in the past year and this was more common among older students and among students from more deprived neighbourhoods.

Student Engagement in School



Relationships at school

Teachers and other adults at school provide positive relationships for the great majority of students.

Almost all students (91%) report that people at school care about them.

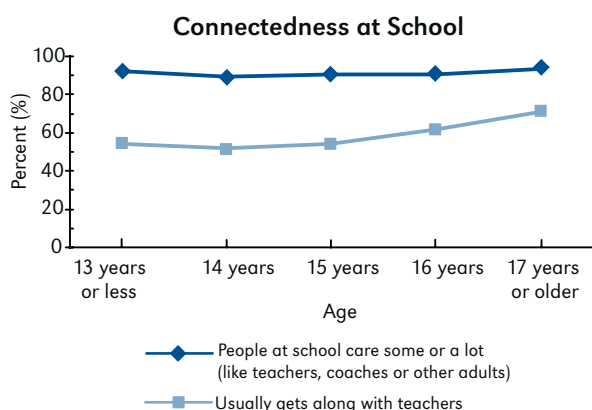
Just under half (49%) of students report that teachers at school treat students fairly most of the time.

Among students from neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation, only 41% report that teachers at school treat students fairly most of the time.

In general most students like school



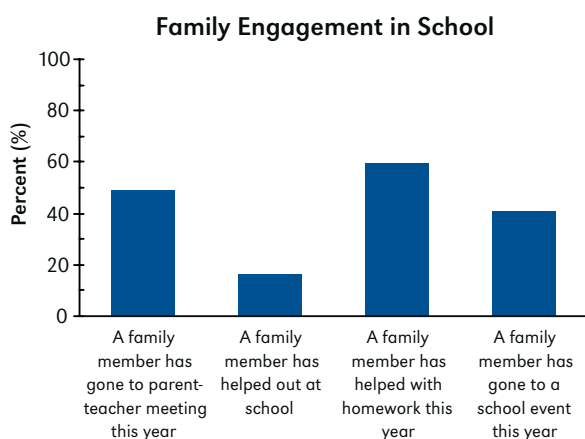
Six out of ten students report that they get along with their teachers and this increased with the age of the student. Almost all students (92%) report that people at school expect them to do well and almost all students (93%) report that it is important for them to be proud of their school work. These indicators did not vary by age, gender, urban/rural background or deprivation index of the student.



Families and school

Just under half of the students reported that someone from their family had attended a parent-teacher meeting in the past year.

This was more common among younger students and students from less deprived neighbourhoods. Only 16% of families had helped out at school in the last year, and this level was similar among all groups of students. Many families (60%) had helped the student out with homework in the last year. About 40% of families had attended a school event in the last year. Only 4% of students had never talked to someone in their family about school.



School safety

Safety at school is of increasing concern among parents and educators. Being bullied at school can lead to mental health problems such as anxiety and depression.

Most students (84%) feel safe at school all or most of the time and the proportion who feel safe at school increased with age. However, a small but significant number of students (10%) report being afraid several times during the past school year that someone at school would hurt or bother them and 6% of students report being bullied at school weekly or more often. This was more common among younger students.

...a small but significant number of students (10%) report being afraid several times during the past school year that someone at school would hurt or bother them...

Plans following school

About two thirds of students report that they intend to get further training or education when they leave secondary school. This was higher among female students (73%) compared to male students (62%). About 10% of students reported that either they had no plans for what they would do after leaving school, would do nothing, or they intended to start a family.

About two thirds of students report that they intend to get further training or education when they leave secondary school.

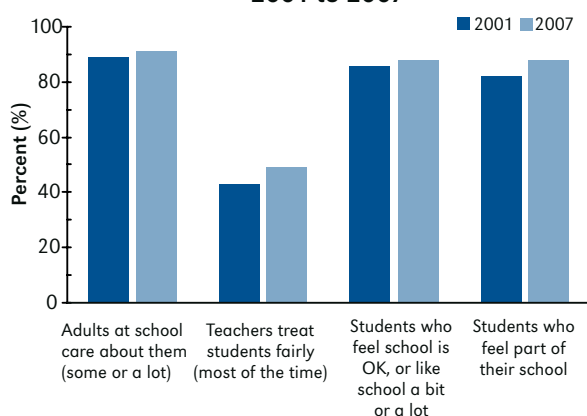


Comparisons 2001 to 2007

Student engagement in school appears to have improved from 2001 to 2007 with the proportion of students who report that they feel part of their school increasing from 82% in 2001 to 88% in 2007.

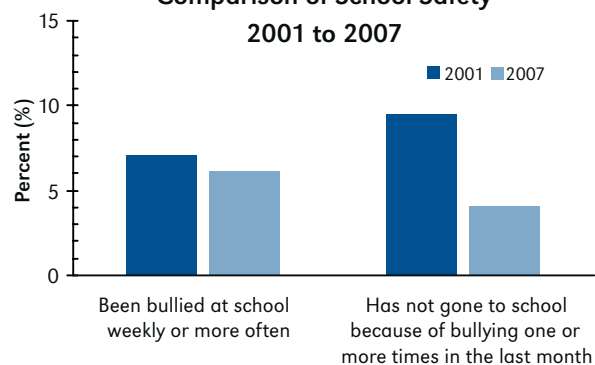
The proportion of students who report that teachers treat students fairly has also increased from 43% in 2001 to 49% in 2007. There were similar proportions in 2001 and 2007 of students who reported that adults at school care and that they felt that school was ok or they liked school.

**Comparison of School Engagement Indicators
2001 to 2007**



School safety appears to have improved with a greater proportion of students in 2007 feeling safe at school (84%) than in 2001 (78%). In addition, the proportion of students who reported avoiding going to school because of bullying decreased from 10% in 2001 to 4% in 2007.

**Comparison of School Safety
2001 to 2007**



....the proportion of students who reported avoiding going to school because of bullying decreased from 10% in 2001 to 4% in 2007.



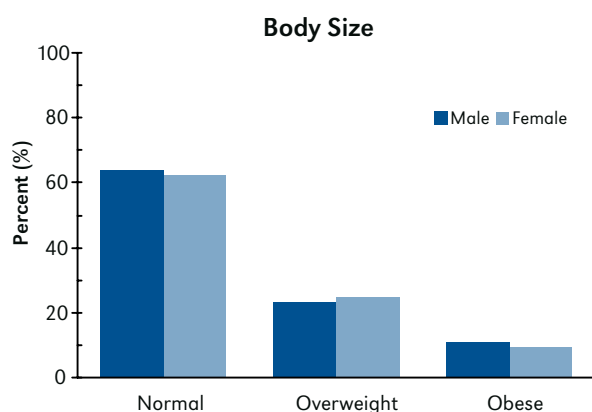
Nutrition and Exercise

Healthy eating and physical activity are important for maintaining an appropriate body weight and preventing chronic diseases later in life.

Good nutrition ensures that young people have a lot of energy to do well in sport and in school.

Body Size

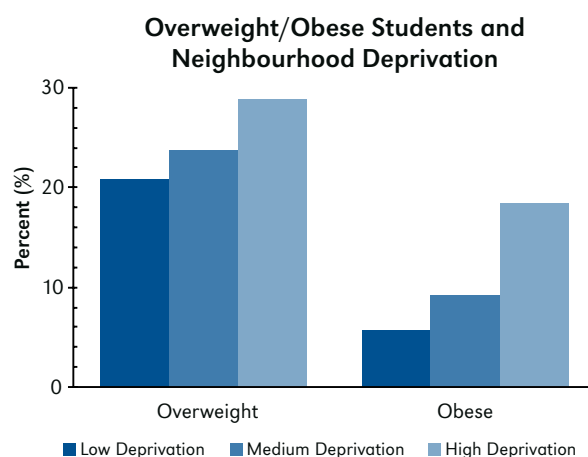
Using the measurements of students' height and weight to calculate each student's Body Mass Index showed that approximately one-third of secondary school students are overweight or obese. This was similar among male and female students, among students from urban and rural backgrounds, and among all age groups.



However, students from neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation were more likely to be overweight and about three times more likely to be obese than students from neighbourhoods with low levels of deprivation.

Two thirds of female students had tried to lose weight in the last 12 months and about 71% were worried about gaining weight. Female students (33%) were also much more likely to have been teased about their weight than male students were (13%).

Two thirds of female students had tried to lose weight in the last 12 months and about 71% were worried about gaining weight.



Nutrition

Eating breakfast is an important part of a healthy diet and missing breakfast is a marker for poor nutritional outcomes. Foods purchased outside the home generally make it difficult for young people to eat well because those foods tend to have a lot of energy (kilojoules or calories), fat, saturated fat, and/or sugar. In contrast, young people who eat breakfast and eat meals with their families tend to have more nutritious diets that extend into adulthood.

Two thirds of male students and 50% of female students always eat breakfast.

Fifteen percent of students reported that they get breakfast from shops or takeaways and 35% of students reported that they get lunch from shops or takeaways. This was more common among students from more deprived neighbourhoods, where 30% bought their breakfast from shops or takeaways and 47% bought their lunch from shops or takeaways.

Just over half the students reported that their family ate meals together on 5 or more days in the past week.



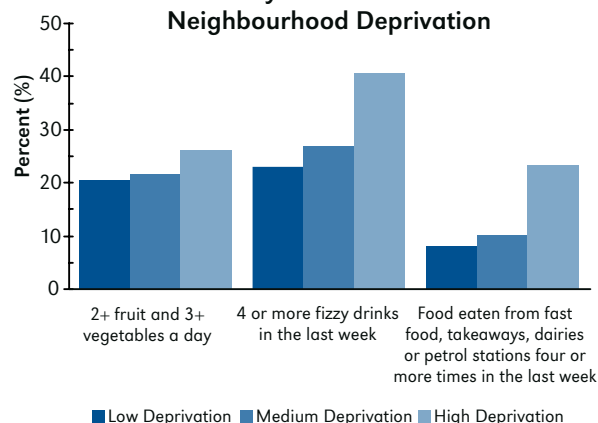
Dietary behaviours

Only 22% of students reported a diet over the last week that met the current recommendations for 2 or more fruits and 3 or more vegetables a day. On the other hand 30% of students had consumed 4 or more fizzy drinks in the last week. Thirteen percent of students had eaten food from fast food outlets, takeaways, dairies or petrol stations four or more times in the last week.

More students from neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation had consumed 4 or more fizzy drinks in the last week (41%) compared to students from neighbourhoods with low levels of deprivation (23%). Similarly, more students from neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation had eaten fast food four or more times in the last week (23%) compared to students from neighbourhoods with low levels of deprivation (8%). However, fruit and vegetable consumption showed the opposite trend: students from neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation were more likely to have eaten two or more fruit and three or more vegetables a day (26%) than students from neighbourhoods with low levels of deprivation (21%).

...students from neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation were more likely to have eaten two or more fruit and three or more vegetables a day (26%) than students from neighbourhoods with low levels of deprivation (21%).

Dietary Behaviours and Neighbourhood Deprivation



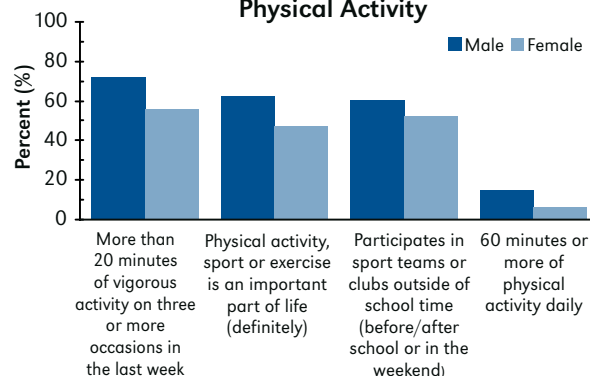
Exercise

Approximately two-thirds of students reported engaging in 20 minutes or more of vigorous activity on three or more occasions in the last week.

However, only 11% of students had met current recommendations of 60 minutes of physical activity daily.

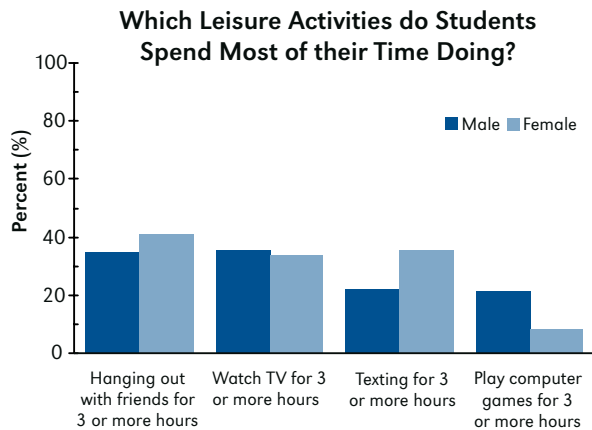
Overall, physical activity was more common among male students than female students and levels of physical activity tended to decrease with age.

Physical Activity

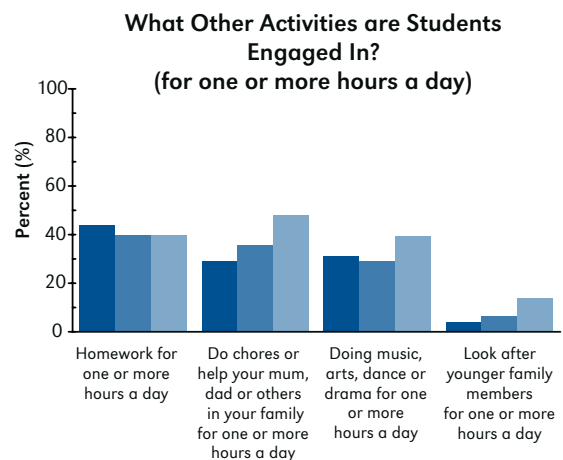


Activities

Leisure activities are common among students and significant numbers spend three or more hours each day spending time with friends (38%), watching TV (35%), texting (28%) or playing computer games (15%). Cell phone use for texting was more common among female students (36%) than male students (22%), but female students (8%) were less likely to play computer games than male students (21%).



Activities also included doing chores to help their families, looking after younger family members, doing arts or music, and doing homework. Thirty-six percent of students did chores for the family for 1 or more hours a day and about 7% of students looked after younger family members for one or more hours a day. Helping out the family either by doing chores or looking after younger family members was more common among students from neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation compared to students from neighbourhoods with low levels of deprivation. Among students with someone at home seriously unwell due to illness or mental health problems, 31% do extra work around the home.



Comparisons 2001 to 2007

The proportion of students who are unhappy with their weight has decreased in 2007 (18%) compared to 2001 (23%).

However, among male students, a higher proportion had attempted to lose weight in 2007 (36%) compared to 2001 (29%).

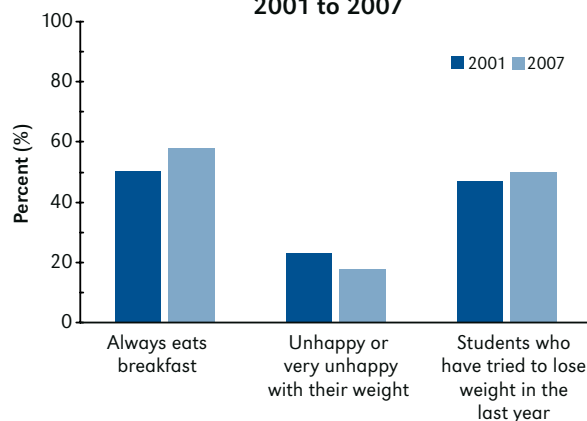
Among female students the proportion who had attempted to lose weight has not changed markedly.

Some nutrition and physical activity behaviours appear to have improved. The proportion of students who always eat breakfast has increased from 51% in 2001 to 58% in 2007 and the proportion of students who reported engaging in 20 minutes of vigorous activity on three or more occasions in the last week increased from 54% in 2001 to 64% in 2007. However, some sedentary behaviours have also increased.

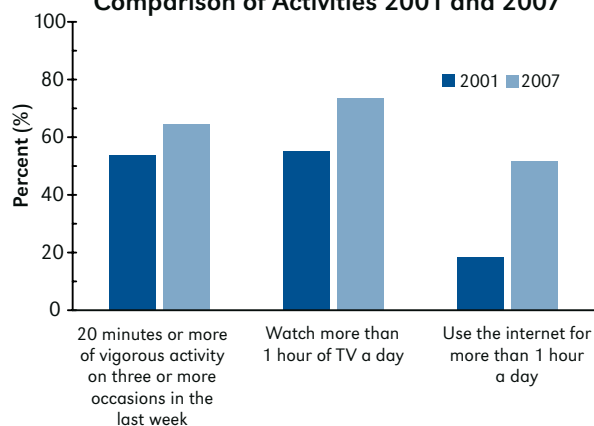
The proportion of students watching more than 1 hour of TV each day increased from 55% in 2001 to 73% in 2007.

The proportion of students who use the internet for more than one hour each day has increased even more, from 18% in 2001 to 52% in 2007.

Comparison of Nutrition Behaviours and Issues 2001 to 2007



Comparison of Activities 2001 and 2007

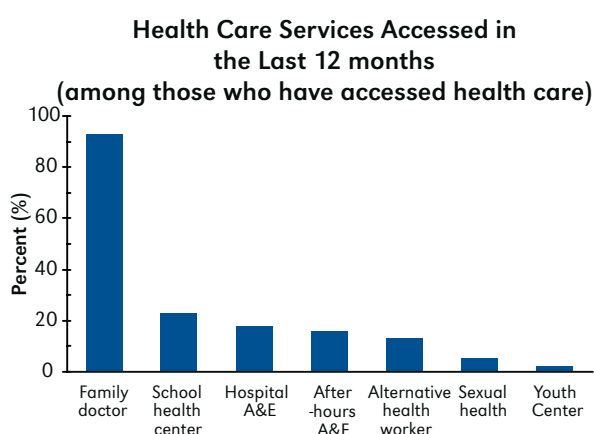


General Health

Almost all students (92%) reported that their health is excellent, very good or good – a result that has not changed since 2001.

About 17% of students report a chronic health condition and 5% report a chronic disability. The proportion of young people with a chronic health condition or disability did not vary by age, gender or living in an urban or rural area.

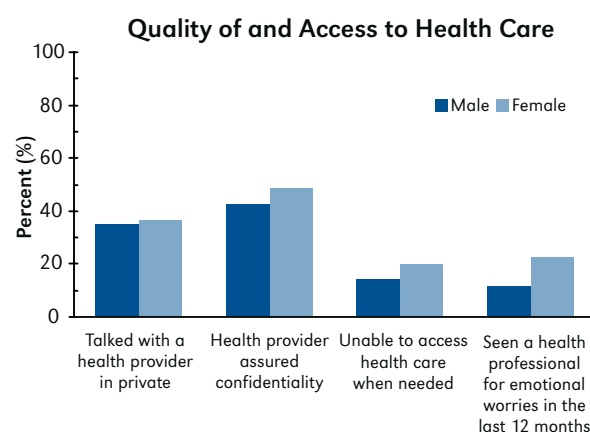
Eighty-three percent of students had received health care in the last 12 months and this did not vary significantly by age, gender or location. Among those students who had accessed health care in the last 12 months, 93% had been to a family doctor, 23% to a school health clinic, 18% to a hospital Accident and Emergency Department and 15% to an after-hours A&E clinic.



Private and confidential health care are important indicators of quality health care services for young people. Among students who had accessed health care in the last 12 months, only one-third reported having the chance to talk with a doctor or other health professional in private and only 45% had been assured that their health care services would be confidential.

Seventeen percent of students indicated that they had been unable to access health care when they needed to at some time in the last 12 months.

Female students (20%) were more likely to have been unable to access health care in the last 12 months than male students (14%). Students from more deprived neighbourhoods (22%) were also more likely to have been unable to access health care in the last 12 months than students from less deprived neighbourhoods (15%). About 10% of students had been unable to access dental care when they needed to at some time in the last 12 months.



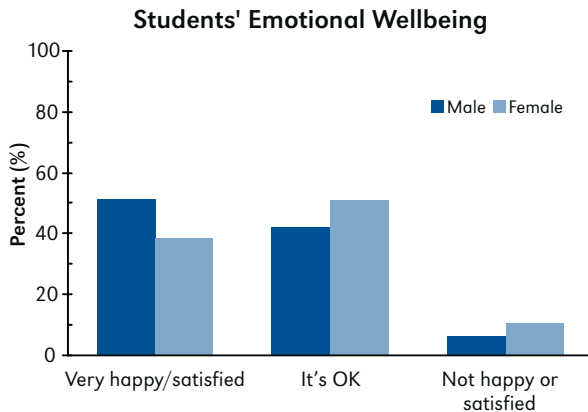
Almost all students (92%) had seen a dentist or other dental health worker in the last 2 years.

Almost three quarters of students reported having had a tooth filled, almost one-quarter reported experiencing pain in their teeth or mouth that had kept them awake at night and 14% had had teeth removed due to decay or gum infection.

Emotional Wellbeing

The majority of students (86%) report being ok or very happy/satisfied with their life.

Older students and female students were less likely to report being ok or very happy/satisfied with their life compared to younger students and male students.

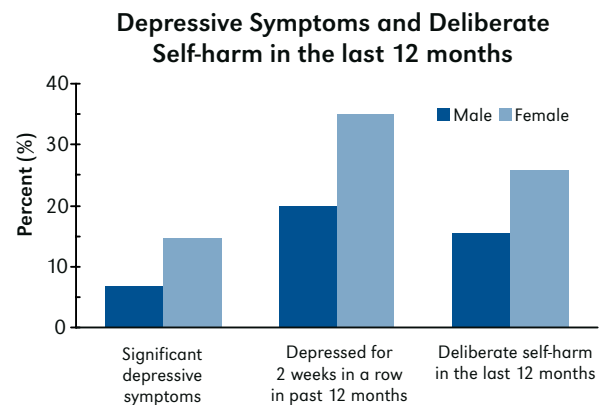


When asked in more detail about their mental and emotional wellbeing there were similar findings with older students and female students less likely to report high levels of mental and emotional wellbeing. Interestingly, students from neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation were more likely to report high levels of mental and emotional wellbeing than students from neighbourhoods with low levels of deprivation.

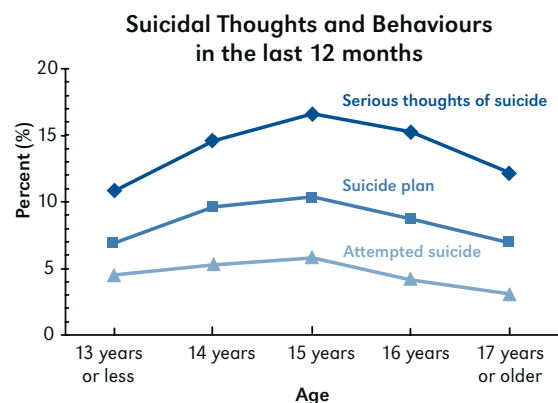
However, 15% of female students and 7% of male students reported significant symptoms of depression.

Approximately 1 in 4 female students but only 1 in 10 male students had seen a health professional for emotional worries in the last 12 months.

Deliberate self-harm was relatively common among students. One quarter of female students and 16% of male students had deliberately harmed themselves in the last 12 months. Most of this self-harm was relatively minor; only 3% of students reported deliberate self-harm in the last 12 months that required treatment by a doctor or nurse.

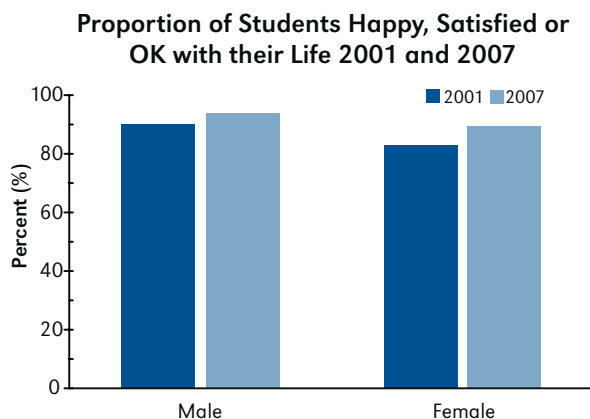


In New Zealand, suicide continues to be a leading cause of youth mortality. Suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts were not uncommon among students with 19% of female students and 9% of male students thinking seriously about suicide in the past 12 months, and 7% of female students and 3% of male students having made a suicide attempt in the last 12 months. Fewer students (1.3%) required treatment by a doctor or nurse after attempting suicide.

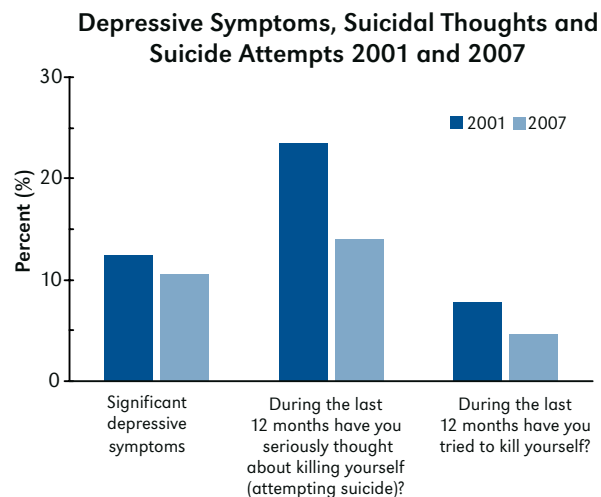


Comparisons 2001 to 2007

Overall there has been a marked improvement in students' emotional wellbeing and associated behaviours from 2001 to 2007. A higher proportion of students in 2007 (92%) reported being OK or very happy/satisfied with their lives compared to 2001 (86%).



There was a reduction in the proportion of students with suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts. In 2001, 8% of students had attempted suicide in the preceding 12 months, but in 2007 this had almost halved to 5% of students.



Overall there has been a marked improvement in students' emotional wellbeing and associated behaviours from 2001 to 2007.

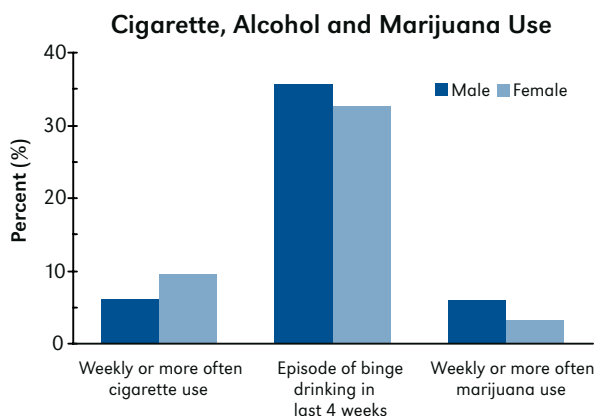


Substance Use

Most adult smokers started smoking and became addicted to cigarettes during their teenage years. In 2007, almost 8% of students reported smoking cigarettes weekly or more often. This was more common among female students (10%) than male students (6%). Among students who smoke, one-third (37%) buy their own cigarettes and of these the majority (60%) are not routinely asked to show ID.

Many of the students who smoke cigarettes have tried to cut down or give up smoking.

Alcohol use is associated with a range of poor health and wellbeing outcomes, usually from engaging in risky behaviours while drunk.



Seventy-two percent of students have tried alcohol and the majority of students (61%) currently drink alcohol.

The amount of alcohol drunk by many students is substantial with about one-third (34%) of students reporting that they had engaged in binge drinking (5 or more drinks within 4 hours) in the last 4 weeks. Among students who currently drink alcohol, three quarters have drunk alcohol in the last four weeks and almost one-third (30%) drink weekly or more often.

Among current drinkers, substantial numbers of students reported problems from drinking alcohol such as unsafe sex (14%), unwanted sex (7%), or injuries (22%). Sixteen percent of students who currently drink alcohol had been told by friends or family that they needed to cut down their drinking.

Among current drinkers, substantial numbers of students reported problems from drinking alcohol such as unsafe sex (14%), unwanted sex (7%), or injuries (22%).

The most common sources of alcohol for students were their parents (54%) and friends (53%). About 14% of students buy alcohol themselves and 35% get someone else to buy alcohol for them.

Marijuana use can impact significantly on a student's performance at school and on their mental health.

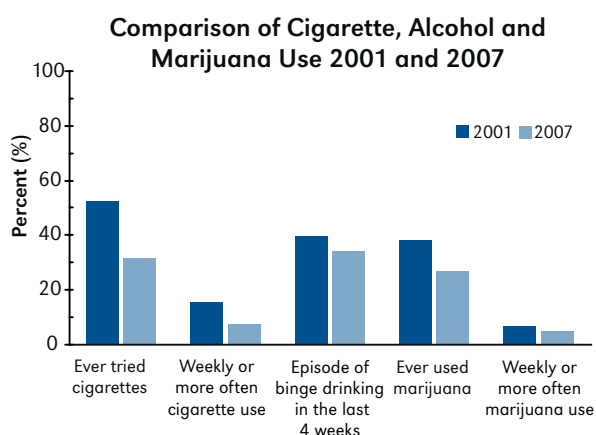
Approximately 5% of students use marijuana weekly or more often. Among students currently using marijuana, about 1 in 4 use it before or during school. Almost one-third of students using marijuana have tried to cut down or give up using it.

The use of other drugs such as acid, heroin, 'P', speed or ecstasy was uncommon among students. For example, only 1.2% of students reported using 'P' and of these most had used it only once or a couple of times. Party pills were the most common of the 'other drugs' used by students with just over 11% of students having tried these pills.



Comparisons 2001 to 2007

The proportion of students smoking cigarettes has fallen considerably. In 2001, 52% of students had tried smoking cigarettes and 16% were smoking cigarettes weekly or more often; while in 2007, 32% of students have ever tried smoking cigarettes and only 8% smoke cigarettes weekly or more often. Similarly, the proportion of students who use marijuana has also decreased; in 2001 39% of students had tried marijuana, compared to 27% of students in 2007.



Gambling

About one-quarter of students had gambled in the past year and 7% of students in the past week.

Gambling was more common among male students and older students. Among students who engaged in gambling, the most common forms reported were bets with friends (61%), Instant Kiwi (45%), Lotto (21%), cards or coins (23%). Very few students spend more than \$20 a week on gambling (1%) or spend more than 30 minutes a day gambling (1%).

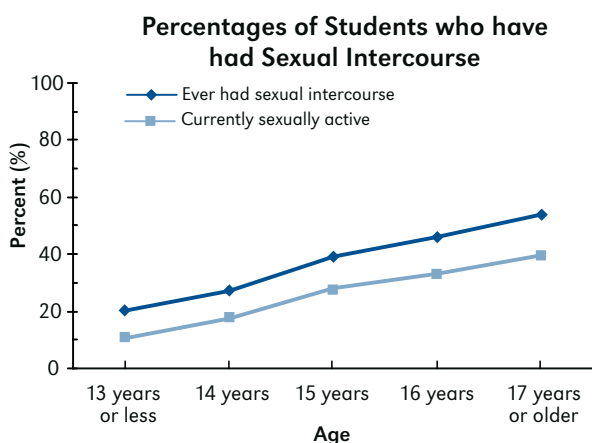


Sexual Health

Adolescence is a period of life when young people begin to experience sexual attractions and behaviours, which are a part of healthy and normal development. However, unsafe sexual behaviours place young people at risk of negative health outcomes, such as sexually transmitted infections (STIs), unwanted pregnancy and distress.

Most students have never had sexual intercourse. Overall 38% of male students and 35% of female students reported ever having had sexual intercourse.

Older students are more likely to have had sexual intercourse and are more likely to be currently sexually active. Among those who have had sexual intercourse, older students are also more likely than younger students to report enjoying sex.



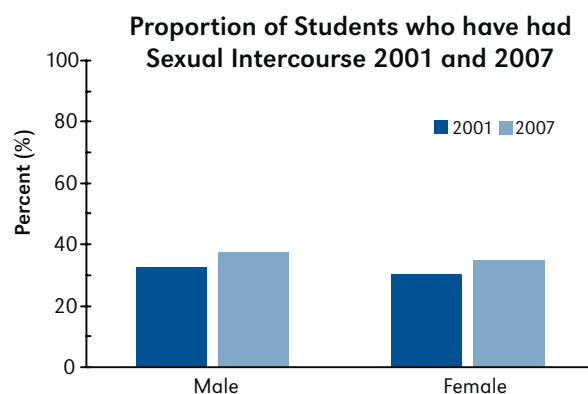
Among students who are sexually active, about two-thirds had talked with their partner about preventing pregnancy and 45% had discussed preventing sexually transmitted infections. Eighty percent report using contraception most or all of the time. A similar proportion (72%) of students who are sexually active report using condoms most or all of the time to protect against sexually transmitted infections.

However, there were a small but concerning number of students engaging in risky sexual health behaviours. Approximately 15% of sexually active students don't use or only sometimes use condoms and/or contraception. This proportion was higher among students from neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation.

Most students (94% of males, 91% of females) report being exclusively attracted to the opposite sex. About one in every 12 students reported otherwise - i.e. being attracted to the same sex or both sexes (4%), neither sex or not being sure of their sexual orientation (4%). These proportions have not changed markedly since 2001.

Comparisons 2001 to 2007

The sexual health behaviour of students has not changed appreciably since 2001. The same proportion of students in 2001 and 2007 reported ever having had sexual intercourse (approximately one-third) and the proportion of students who report always using contraception and who used a condom the last time they had sexual intercourse has remained unchanged from 2001 to 2007. Similarly, the proportions reporting different sexual orientations have not changed between 2001 and 2007.



Approximately 15% of sexually active students don't use or only sometimes use condoms and/or contraception.



Injuries and Violence

Motor Vehicle Risk Behaviours

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading causes of death among young people. Almost three-quarters of students always wear a seatbelt when driving or being driven in a car. This did not vary by age, gender or location of the student. Twenty-three percent of students reported that at least once during the last month they had been driven by someone who had been drinking. A similar proportion (24%) of students reported that during the last month they had been driven in a car dangerously (e.g. speeding, car chases, burnouts).

Among students who themselves drive, 8% had in the last month driven after they had drunk more than 2 glasses of alcohol in the two hours before driving.

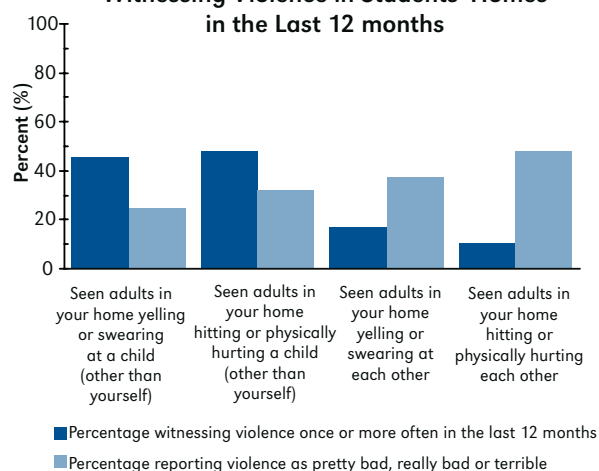
Witnessing Violence

For young people, experiencing violence is associated with a range of poor health outcomes.

Being a witness, a victim or a perpetrator of violence is a threat to their health and wellbeing.

Approximately 17% of students had witnessed adults hitting or physically hurting a child in their home in the last 12 months and 10% had witnessed adults physically hitting or hurting other adults. A large proportion of students witnessing violence in their homes report it as severe. Witnessing violence in the home was more common among students from neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation.

Witnessing Violence in Students' Homes in the Last 12 months

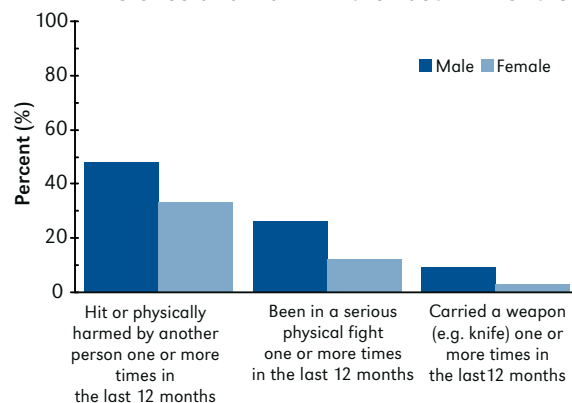


A large proportion of students witnessing violence in their homes report it as severe.

Violence

Being hit or physically harmed in the last 12 months was reported by 41% of students. It was more common among male students and younger students. Among those who had been hit or physically harmed, approximately one-quarter reported the severity of the violence was pretty bad, really bad or terrible. About one in five students report being in a serious physical fight in the last 12 months and 6% of students had carried a weapon in the last 12 months. Male students were more than twice as likely as females to report being in a fight and/or carrying a weapon.

Violence and Harm in the Last 12 months

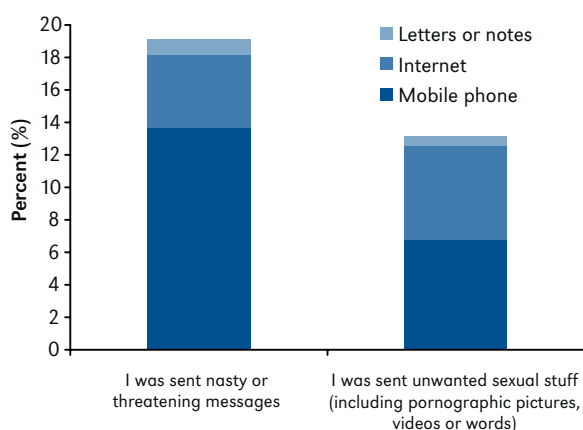


Young people can experience various types of violence and bullying. The most common types of bullying students reported were people spreading lies or false rumours about them (48%), people making sexual jokes, comments or gestures to them (38%), calling them hurtful names (41%), or threatening them physically (33%). In general, experiencing these behaviours was more common among younger students.

Technology such as cell phones and the internet are increasingly being used to harass and bully people, including young people.

One in five students reported being sent nasty or threatening messages by cell phone or internet. Thirteen percent of students were sent unwanted sexual material, of which 52% was received by cell phone and 44% by the internet.

Cyber-bullying during the Last 12 months



Unwanted sexual behaviour

One in five female students (20%) and one in twenty male students had experienced one or more episodes of unwanted sexual behaviour from another person. About half of these episodes had occurred in the last 12 months. Among those episodes of sexual abuse occurring in the last 12 months, one-third of the students reported the abuse as severe (pretty bad, really bad or terrible).

The majority (60%) of students suffering sexual abuse had not told anyone about it.

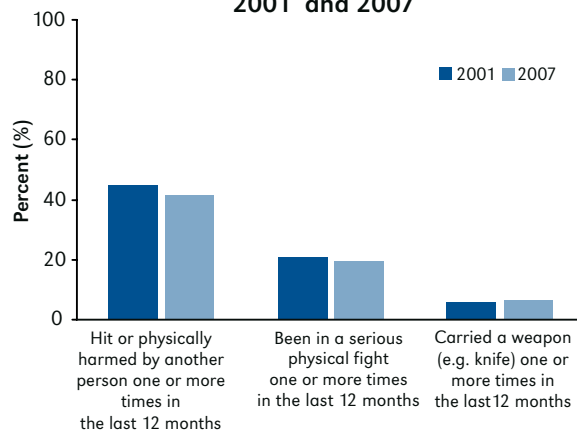
Comparisons 2001 to 2007

The proportion of students who reported always using a seatbelt has increased from 66% in 2001 to 74% in 2007. The proportion of students who had been driven in the last month by someone who had been drinking alcohol has fallen from 28% in 2001 to 23% in 2007. Similarly, the proportion of students who had been driven in the last month by someone driving dangerously has fallen from 39% in 2001 to 24% in 2007.

... the proportion of students who had been driven in the last month by someone driving dangerously has fallen from 39% in 2001 to 24% in 2007.

The proportion of students who in the last 12 months had been in a serious physical fight or carried a weapon has not changed appreciably since 2001. There has been a small reduction in the proportion of students who report being physically harmed by someone in the last 12 months, from 45% in 2001 to 41% in 2007.

Violent Behaviours during the Last 12 months 2001 and 2007

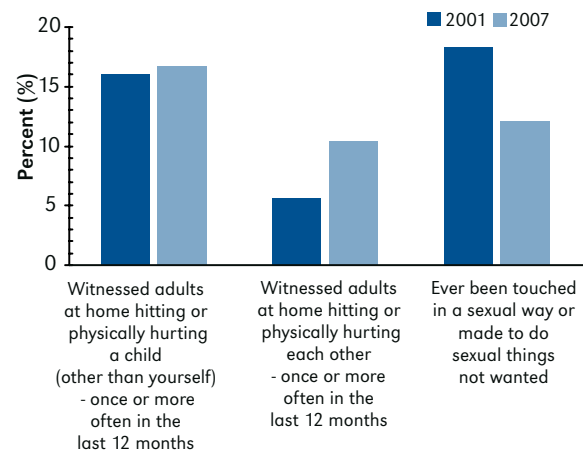


Of concern is the proportion of students who witnessed adults physically hitting or hurting other adults in the home in the last 12 months which has increased from 6% in 2001 to 10% in 2007.

Of concern is the proportion of students who witnessed adults physically hitting or hurting other adults in the home in the last 12 months which has increased from 6% in 2001 to 10% in 2007.

There has been a reduction in the proportion of students who reported ever experiencing unwanted sexual behaviours from another person from 18% in 2001 to 12% in 2007.

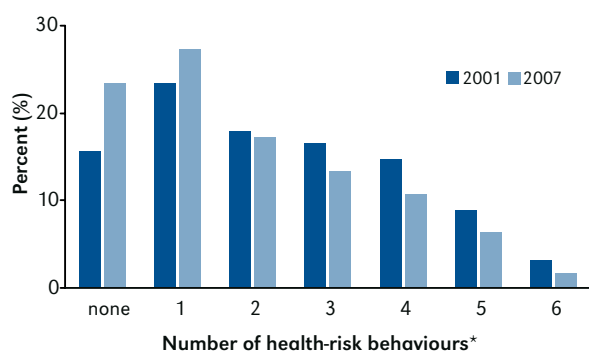
Witnessing Violence Within the Home and Sexual Abuse 2001 and 2007



Multiple Health-Risk Behaviours

Just over half (51%) of students engage in none or only one of the following six health-risk behaviours: ever having drunk alcohol, ever smoked a cigarette, ever used marijuana, ever had sexual intercourse, been in a fight in the last year or seriously thought about killing themselves in the last year. The proportion of students engaging in 5 or more of these health-risk behaviours has decreased from 12% in 2001 to 8% in 2007.

**Number of Health-Risk Behaviours
2001 and 2007**



*Of the following health-risk behaviours: Ever having drunk alcohol, Ever smoked a cigarette, Ever used marijuana, Ever had sex, Been in a fight in the last year or seriously thought about, killing themselves



Community

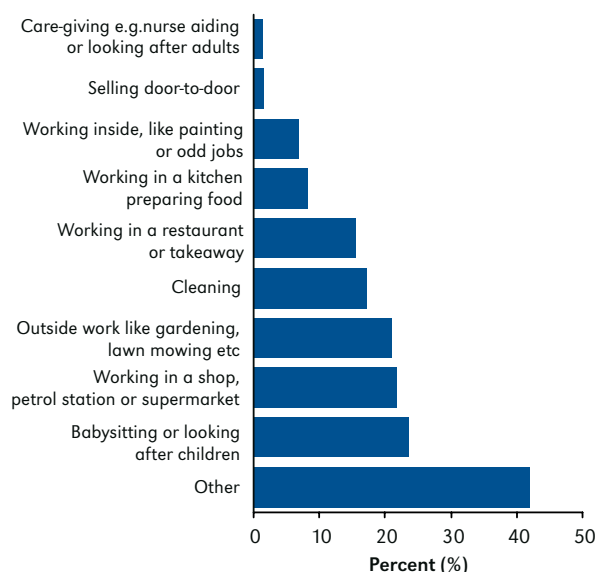
Employment

About 40% of students have a regular part-time job; a further 14% have occasional work during the school term; and 27% have a school holiday job. Regular part-time employment was more common among older students. Students from rural backgrounds were more likely to have a school holiday job.

Most (68%) students with regular part-time employment worked less than 10 hours per week. A few students (6%) worked more than 20 hours per week. Among students with a regular part-time job, about one in five had been injured at work in the past year.

A concerning proportion, almost one-third, of students with a regular part-time job worked in the evenings or later at night during the school week.

Type of Work done by Students in the Last Year



Overall about 60% of students belong to a youth group or club.

Friends and Peers

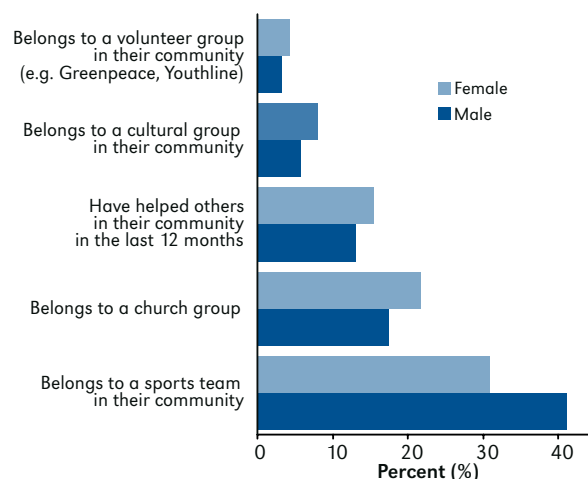
Having friends and socialising with them is an essential part of adolescence. Friends provide support and a sense of belonging for young people.

Almost all students reported that they have a group of friends they hang out with (97%) and have fun with (99%). Most students (89%) have a friend or friends who they can talk to about anything and almost all (96%) have friends who help them and look out for them. These proportions did not vary by age, gender or location of the student.

Participation in the community

Young people need to be fully engaged and participating meaningfully in their communities. A third of students were involved in a sports team in their community and one in five students belonged to a church group. About 14% of students have helped others in their community in the last 12 months and a few students (4%) belonged to a volunteer group such as Greenpeace or Youthline. Overall about 60% of students belong to a youth group or club.

Community Participation



Most students (83%) trust people in their neighbourhood and most students (87%) like the neighbourhood where they live. Just over half of all students have an adult in their neighbourhood that they would feel okay talking to about a serious problem. In urban areas about 6% of students report that there is nothing to do in their neighbourhood; this proportion was much higher (38%) among students from rural backgrounds.

Ten percent of students had painted graffiti in their neighbourhood in the last year and 12% had been in trouble with the police.

The most common reasons students had been in trouble with the police were for: stealing, fighting, graffiti, driving offences or damaging property.

Most students (83%) trust people in their neighbourhood and most students (87%) like the neighbourhood where they live.

Spiritual Beliefs

Spiritual beliefs are very important for about 29% of students. A similar proportion attend a place of worship weekly or more often and 36% report that they feel that they belong to their church, mosque or temple. These findings were similar among male and female students and among older students compared to younger students. Students from neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation were more likely to report that their spiritual beliefs were important to them, more likely to go to a place of worship weekly or more often and more likely to feel that they belong in their church, mosque or temple.

Spiritual beliefs are very important for about 29% of students.

Comparisons 2001 to 2007

The proportion of students who report that their friends care about them has increased from 63% in 2001 to 72% in 2007. The proportion of students who belong to a youth group or club has also increased, from 51% in 2001 to 59% in 2007.

The proportion of students who feel safe in their neighbourhood is not markedly different in 2007 compared to 2001 and neither has there been any change in the proportion of students who report that they have an adult outside their family to talk to in their community.

The proportion of students who felt that there was nothing to do in their neighbourhood decreased from 16% in 2001 to 11% in 2007.

The proportion of students attending church weekly or more often and the proportion who report that their spiritual beliefs are very important to them has not changed between 2001 and 2007.

The proportion of students who report that their friends care about them has increased from 63% in 2001 to 72% in 2007.



Useful Links

General Health and Wellbeing

Health information for young people	http://youthline.co.nz/
Kidsline	http://www.kidsline.org.nz/
Sport & Recreation NZ (SPARC) SPARC for teachers	http://www.sparc.org.nz/education/sportfit/overview http://www.sparc.org.nz/dashboard/school-teachers
Heart Foundation – School Food Programme	http://www.nhf.org.nz/index.asp?pageID=2145820280
ERO Review of Sexuality Education	http://ero.govt.nz/ero/publishing.nsf/Content/sex-ed-jun07
Sexuality Education Family Planning – training for teachers	http://www.fpanz.org.nz/EducationTraining/TrainingforTeachersandCommunityWorkers/tabid/201/Default.aspx
Youth2000 – for results from Youth2000 surveys & general information	www.youth2000.ac.nz

Mental Wellbeing

Mental Health Foundation Education Packages for Schools Coping with depression	http://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/ http://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/page.php?p=155&fp=6&sp= http://www.depression.org.nz/HelpMe/?SubGroupName=ResourcesHelpMe
Low down – for young people with depression	http://thelowdown.co.nz/#/home/
Suicide Prevention Suicide Prevention in Schools	http://www.spinz.org.nz/ http://www.moh.govt.nz/suicideprevention http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/0/567A24EE4A6EB85ACC2570A7000C1C45/\$File/youthsuicidepreventioninschools.pdf
Internet Safety in Schools	http://www.cybersafety.org.nz/kit/
Netsafe	http://www.netsafe.org.nz/index_for_ie6.htm
Drug Education NZ Drug Foundation	http://www.educating.co.nz/services/drugeducation/ http://www.nzdf.org.nz/drug-education
Alcohol – ALAC Alcohol & young people	http://www.alcohol.org.nz http://www.alcohol.org.nz/InfoForYouth.aspx
Coping with grief	http://www.skylight.org.nz/young-people.aspx
Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Takataapui and Fa'afafine young people and their families/whānau.	http://www.rainbowyouth.org.nz/
National queer youth development project	http://www.outthere.org.nz/

Big Picture

Ministry of Youth Development – Youth development & youth participation Strengthening Youth Development in Schools	http://www.myd.govt.nz/ http://www.myd.govt.nz/Publications/youthdevelopment/makingithappenstrengtheningyouthde1.aspx
Māori Student Achievement (Te Kotahitanga) Ka Hikitia	http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/Māori_education/9977 http://kahikitia.minedu.govt.nz/kahikitia/What+is+Ka+Hikitia.htm
Youth Law	http://www.youthlaw.co.nz/default.aspx?_z=126
STA Health & Safety in Schools	http://www.nzsta.org.nz/RexDefault.aspx?PageID=6c95540a-758a-4d16-8796-03061080c234
Making Schools Safe for People of Every Sexuality – PPTA Guidelines	http://www.ppta.org.nz/cms/imagelibrary/102066.pdf
Safe Schools: Strategies to Prevent Bullying (Education Review Office, 2007)	http://ero.govt.nz/ero/publishing.nsf/Content/safe-schs-strats-bullying-may07
Supporting Positive Behaviours (Ministry of Education, curriculum development)	http://www.tki.org.nz/r/governance/positive_behaviours/information/pro_development_e.php#2
Maori Health Action Plan	http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pagesmh/5583
Safer Communities Plan	http://www.justice.govt.nz/pubs/reports/2004/action-plan-community-sexual-violence/index.htm
Officer of the Children’s Commissioner	http://www.occ.org.nz/
Families Commission	http://www.nzfamilies.org.nz/

Parent Involvement in School

Team Up (Secondary)	http://www.teamup.co.nz/secondary/default.htm
Bullying (Secondary)	http://www.teamup.co.nz/search.htm?query=bullying&filter=s





Adolescent Health Research Group
www.youth2000.ac.nz