

CHAPTER 11: THE SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY

Each year, students in various grades complete the School Climate Survey. The results provide a snapshot of student's attitudes and feelings about various aspects of the school environment. This chapter will focus on the following three dimensions assessed by the survey:

- (1) Feelings of safety in the school environment,
- (2) Personal experiences of bullying and harassment in school, and
- (3) Drug and alcohol use (for the older grades).

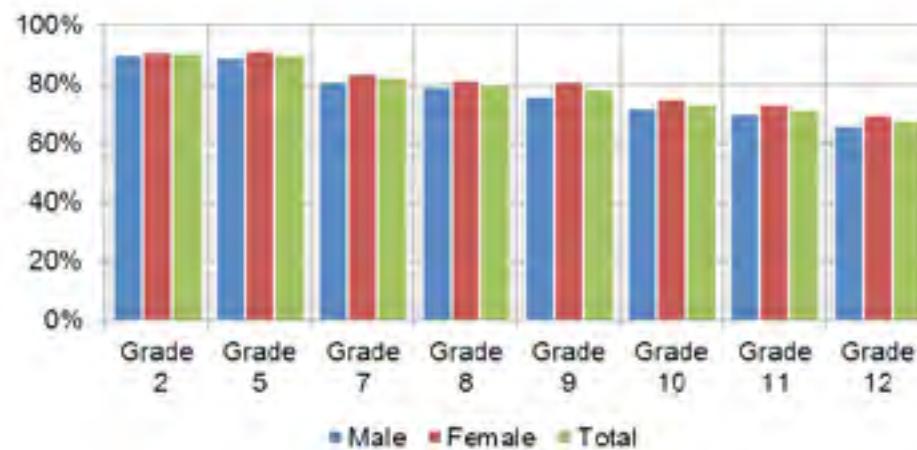
For each dimension, students are asked if they agree or disagree with a series of statements. The complete list of statements included in each dimension is provided in Appendix C.

The percentages reported in this chapter represent the percentage of students in agreement with each statement. However, this does not mean the inverse (i.e. 100% - % agree) represents the percentage of students who disagree. There may be students who were unsure or did not provide a response to one or more statements.

The 2012/13 administration

In 2012/13, 16,767 students from eight grades (2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12) completed the School Climate Survey. This represents close to 80.0% of all the students in these grades. Figure 35 shows the participation rate for each of the grades surveyed. As shown, participation rates drop off as the grade level increases. In Grade 2, 90.6% of students completed the survey compared to 67.7% of Grade 12 students. The participation rates for males and females mirror the overall rate for each grade.

Figure 35: Student participation rate



(Source: Table 35)

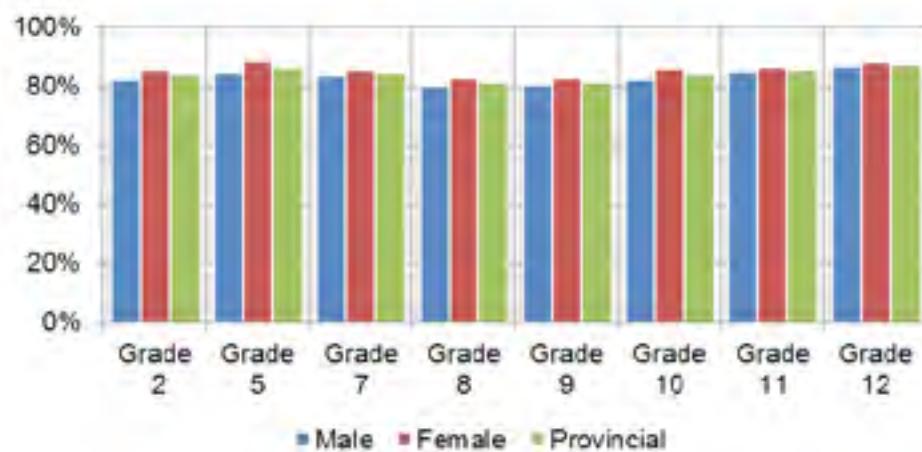
Feelings of safety and security in the school environment

Overall, students feel safe in school. This is the case across each of the grades. The percentage of students ranged between 81.5% and 87.0% (see figure 36a). Grades 8 and 9 had a slightly lower percentage of students who felt safe. Along gender lines, while there was little difference in the percentages, the percentage of females who felt safe was always slightly higher than the males.

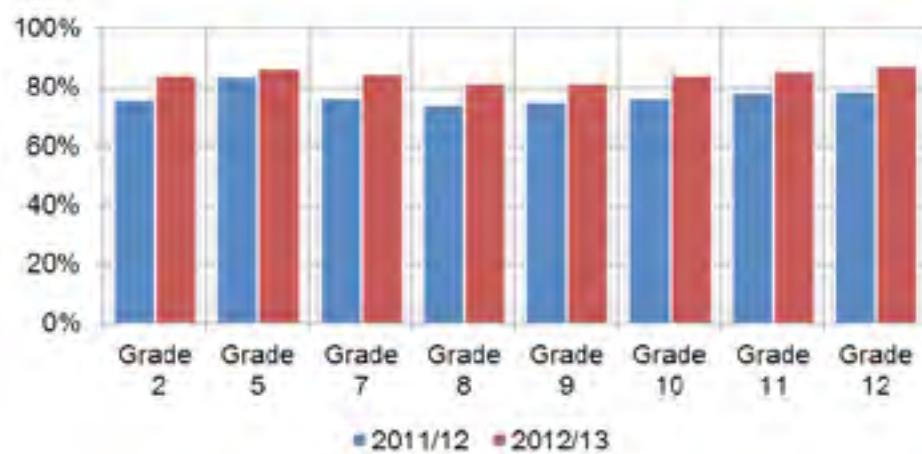
The percentage of students who feel safe in school increased from the previous year (2011/12). This was the case in each of the grades surveyed. With the exception of Grade 5, the 2012/13 percentages were approximately eight percentage points higher (see figure 36b).

Figure 36: Percentage of students who feel safe in school

(a) Grade level and gender trends



(b) Provincial year to year change



(Source: Table 36)



Personal experiences with bullying and harassment

Students were asked about their experiences at school with any behaviour that could be interpreted as bullying and/or harassment in the month before they completed the survey. These behaviours included such things as being:

- hit, kicked, pushed or shoved (physical);
- teased/made fun of in a hurtful way or called mean names (emotional); and/or
- left out of activities/ignored by others on purpose (social exclusion).

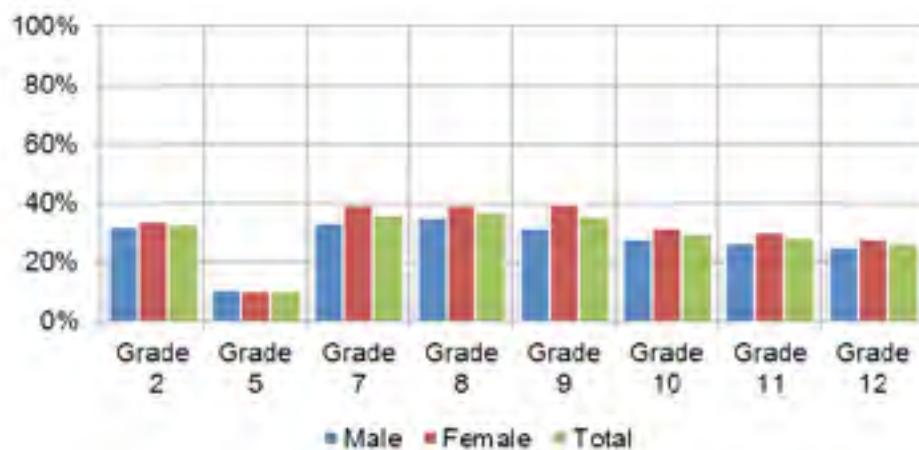
Approximately one third of all students experienced some form of bullying in the month before the survey was completed. As shown in figure 37a, this percentage peaked in Grade 8 (37.8%) and then declined across the other grades until it reaches 26.9% in Grade 12. Overall, the percentage who felt they were bullied was highest in the intermediate grades (i.e. Grades 7 to 9) and lowest in the high school years (Grades 10 to 12). Along gender lines, a higher percentage of girls than boys experienced bullying in each of the grades surveyed.

A higher percentage of students experienced bullying in 2012/13 than 2011/12. This was seen in each grade except Grade 2. However, both years follow the same general pattern - decreasing percentages as the grade level increases (see figure 37b).

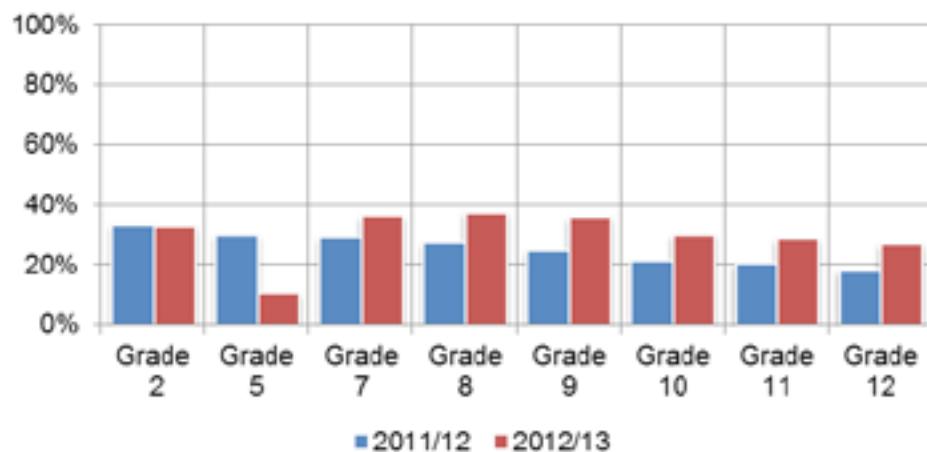


Figure 37: Percentage who experienced some form of bullying in the month before the survey

(a) Grade level and gender trends



(b) Year to year change



(Source: Table 37)

Note: The 2012/13 percentage of Grade 5 students who were bullied should be viewed with caution. This percentage was much lower than both the other grades and the percentage from the 2011/12 survey.





Electronic/cyber bullying

Students in Grades 7 to 12 were asked about their experiences with cyberbullying during the month preceding the survey. Specifically they were asked if they had been bullied or harassed electronically (teased or bullied via a computer or mobile phone).

In 2012/13, 16.4% of students in these grades personally experienced some form of cyberbullying. There is little difference in this percentage through the grades, ranging between 15.8% and 17.6%. A higher percentage of females reported experiencing cyberbullying in each grade than males. Interestingly, the trend seen throughout the grades is opposite for males and females. As the grade level increased, the percentage of females who experienced cyberbullying decreased from 21.4% in Grade 7 to 16.9% in Grade 12. For males, this percentage increased from 10.7% in grade 7 to 14.6% in Grade 12 (see figure 38a).

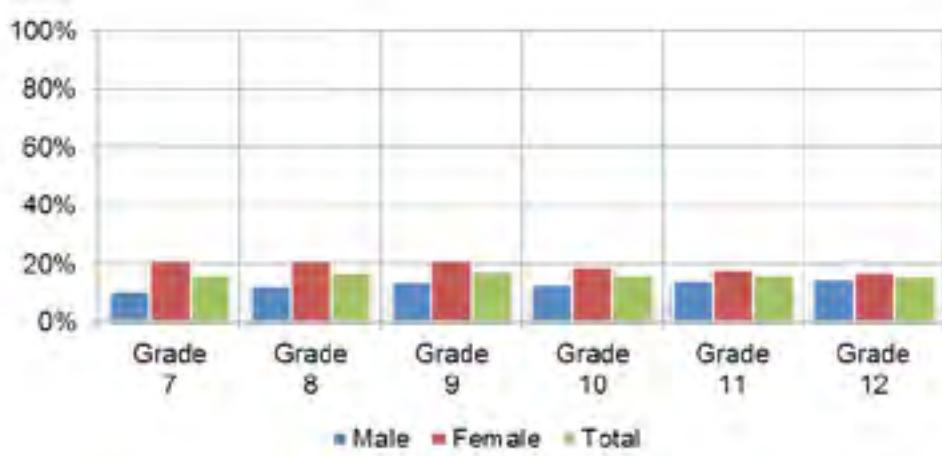
A slightly higher percentage of students experienced cyberbullying in 2012/13 than 2011/12. This difference between the two years ranged from a low 2.2 percentage points in Grade 7 to 4.6% in Grade 12 (see figure 38b).



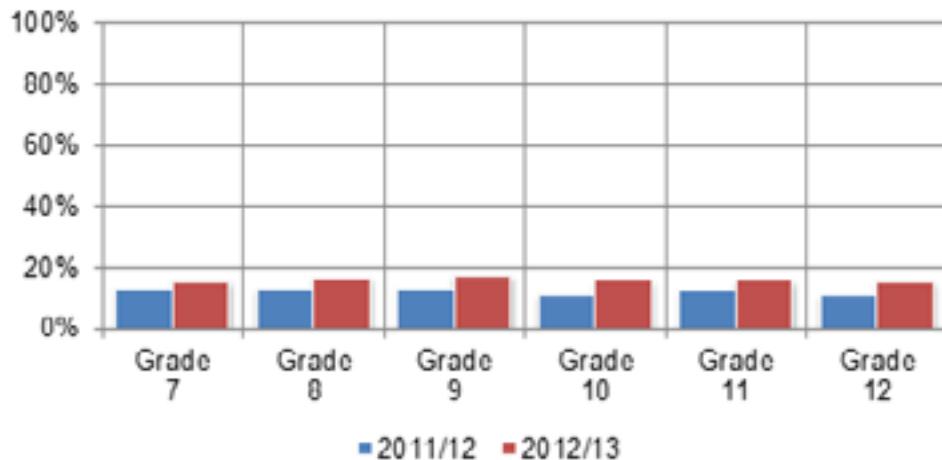


Figure 38: Experiences with cyberbullying

(a) Grade level and gender trends



(b) Year to year change



(Source: Table 38)



Drug and alcohol Use

The School Climate Survey includes a section on drug and alcohol use for students in Grades 7 to 12. It asks students about their use of illicit drugs (including abusing prescription medications), cigarettes and alcohol during the preceding month.

In 2012/13, the percentage of students who used drugs or alcohol increased as the grade level increased. From Grade 7 to 12, this percentage increased from 2.8% to 27.3%. Along gender lines, the percentage for males is always higher than females regardless of the grade. As the grade level increases, so does the gender gap. For example, in Grade 7, 3.2% of males and 2.8% of females (a difference of 0.4 points) used drugs and/or alcohol. This increases to a difference of 6.6 points (30.7% of males and 24.1% of females) in Grade 12 (see figure 39a).

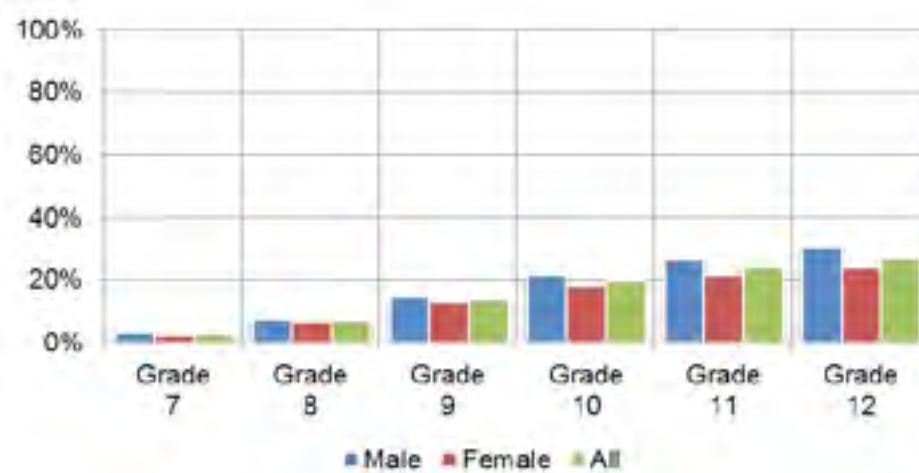
There was little overall difference from 2011/12 and 2012/13 (see figure 39b). The percentage of Grade 7 to 9 students who used drugs or alcohol was slightly lower than 2011/12 but for the other grades (10 to 12) the percentages were virtually identical.

While the percentage of students who reportedly used drugs and/or consumed alcohol during the preceding month increased from grade to grade, alcohol use showed the most dramatic increase (see figure 40). In Grade 7, 4.9% of students used alcohol in the month before the survey. This increased to 57.3% of Grade 12 students. For cigarette smoking, the percentage increased from 2.7% in Grade 7 to 23.5% in Grade 12.

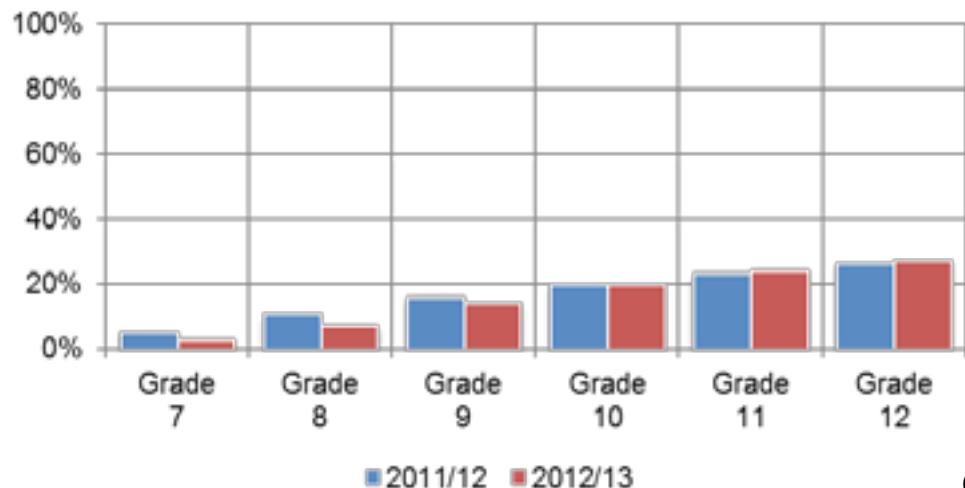
Figure 41 shows the gender difference in drug and alcohol use. Overall, a higher percentage of males than females reported used drugs or smoked cigarettes. However, there was virtually no difference in alcohol use.

Figure 39: Drug and alcohol use in the month prior to the survey

(a) Grade level and gender trends (2012/13)

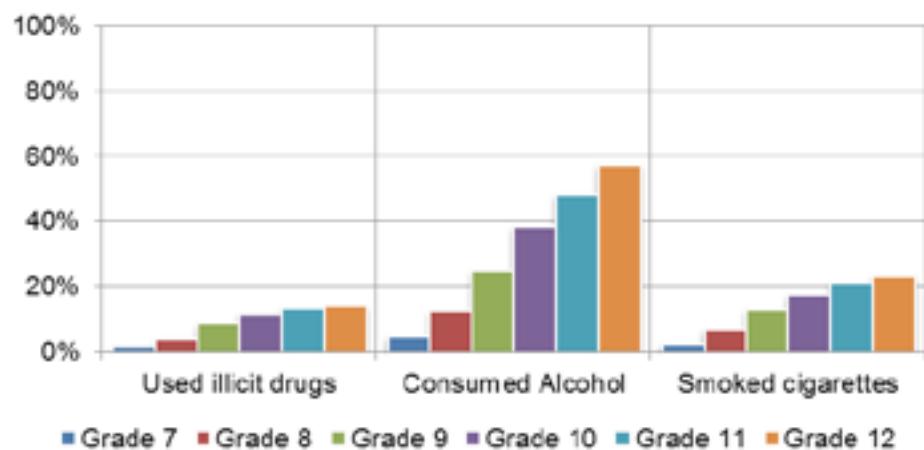


(b) Year to year difference (2011/12 and 2012/13)



(Source: Table 39)

Figure 40: Alcohol, tobacco and drug use in the month preceding the survey (2012/13)



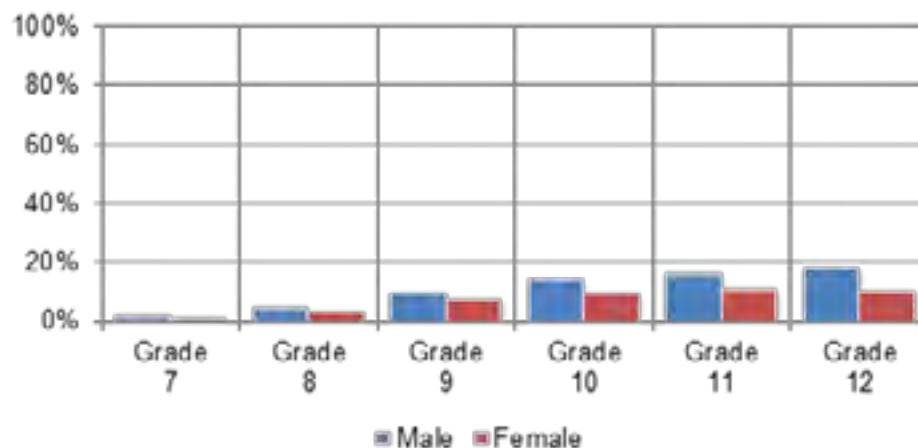
(Source: Table 40)



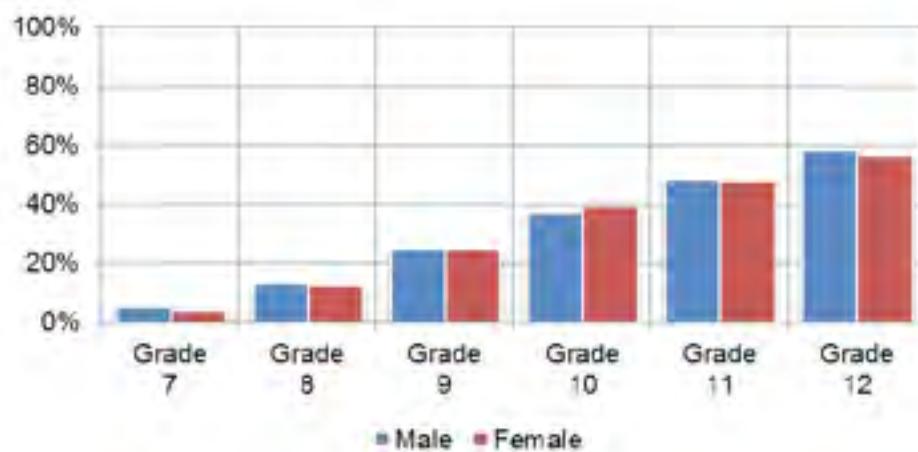


Figure 41: Gender differences in drug and alcohol use in the month before the survey

(a) Percentage who used illicit drugs or abused prescription drugs (2012/13)



(b) Percentage who consumed alcohol (2012/13)



(c) Percentage who smoked cigarettes (2012/13)

