

Mental Health Care Access Among Students in Grades 7 to 12 in the NBPSDHU Region

Methodology, Data Source and Limitations

The data presented in this report is from the Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS) conducted by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and administered by the Institute for Social Research, York University. Its contents and interpretation are solely the responsibility of the author and do not necessarily represent the official view of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

The data presented in this report was collected during the 2014/2015 school year, and when noted, for a combined sample of the 2010/2011 & 2014/2015 school years. It provides an update of substance use in Ontario youth, updating data that were previously reported in [The Health of Youth in the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit Region](#) (North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit, 2012).

The survey was administered to students from grades seven through twelve enrolled in public and Catholic school systems (French and English). Excluded from this report are youth enrolled in private schools or home-schooled, those institutionalized for correctional or health reasons, and those schooled on native reserves, military bases, or in the remote northern region of Ontario. Data in this report has been presented for the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (NBPSDHU), other northern regions in Ontario (excluding the NBPSDHU region) and Ontario. The NBPSDHU region sample includes 580 students from 19 regional schools within three school boards.

The term “significant” is used within this report to describe differences between health regions or groups that are statistically meaningful. Without statistical significance you cannot say with certainty that the differences are real, or simply due to chance. Sampling variability associated with each estimate is described using 95% confidence intervals (95% CI), which indicate the precision of the estimate. Confidence intervals were used to determine significant differences between estimates.

Estimates with a coefficient of variation (ratio of standard error to its estimate) equal to or higher than 33.3, or based on less than 50 responses were suppressed due to high sampling variability. Estimates were calculated using complex survey analysis in Stata 14.2 (StataCorp LP, College Station, TX).

Definitions and Comparison Groups

Aboriginal Identity

Only students who identified themselves as Aboriginal on the survey are included in this group. It is possible that some students did not self-identify, and are thus excluded from this group.

Perceived Socio-Economic Status (SES)

Students were asked to identify where they thought their family would be on the socioeconomic status (SES) ladder, on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being “worst off”, and 10 being “best off”. Students who selected a rating of 1-6 were considered to be of low SES, while students who selected 7-10 were considered to be of high SES.

Mental Health Care Visit

In 2014/15, about one of every three students in our region reported seeing a doctor, nurse, or counsellor about their emotional or mental health at least once in the previous 12 months (30.9%; 95% CI: 21.5, 42.2); similar to the percentage for other northern regions (22.4%; 95% CI: 18.1, 27.4) and Ontario (20.9%; 95% CI: 18.9, 23.0). This percentage has not changed between 2010/11 and 2014/15 school years in our region, or in other northern regions. In Ontario, about 5% more students saw health care professional in 2014/15 compared to 2010/11.

Data from 2010/11 & 2014/15 was combined to analyze those who saw a health professional for emotional/mental health concerns among selected demographic subgroups (Tables 1 through 4). In Ontario and other northern regions, significantly high percentages of female students saw a health care professional compared to males (Table 1). However, in our region, this percentage was similar among males and females, and the percentage of males who saw a health professional was significantly higher compared to male students in other northern regions and Ontario.

Table 1. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Saw a Health Care Professional for their Emotional or Mental Health at Least Once in the Previous 12 Months, by Gender and Region, 2010/11 & 2014/15 Combined

Gender	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Males	23.4* (17.5, 30.6)	12.7 (9.8, 16.3)	14.1 (12.4, 16.0)
Females	28.8 (20.8, 38.3)	26.4 ‡ (21.2, 32.3)	21.9 ‡ (20.1, 23.9)

‡ Estimate is significantly different from males in the same region

* Estimate is significantly different from provincial estimate

Table 2. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Saw a Health Care Professional for their Emotional or Mental Health at Least Once in the Previous 12 Months, by Grade Level and Region, 2010/11 & 2014/15 Combined

Grade Level	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Grades 7 - 8	25.6 (19.4, 33)	19.9 (16.3, 24.1)	U
Grades 9 - 12	26.1 (19.1, 34.5)	19.1 (14.6, 24.8)	17.4 (15.8, 19.1)

U - Estimate for combined sample unavailable as estimate changed significantly between 2010/11 & 2014/15 school years

Table 3. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Saw a Health Care Professional for their Emotional or Mental Health at Least Once in the Previous 12 Months, by Aboriginal Identity & Region, 2010/11 & 2014/15 Combined

Aboriginal identity	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Aboriginal	30.7 ^E (18.2, 47.0)	21.5 (14.1, 31.5)	22.5 (15.0, 32.2)
Non-Aboriginal	25.2 (19.5, 32.0)	19.0 (15.3, 23.4)	U

E Interpret with caution; the estimate is associated with high sampling variability

U - Estimate for combined sample unavailable as estimate changed significantly between 2010/11 & 2014/15 school years

Table 4. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Saw a Health Care Professional for their Emotional or Mental Health at Least Once in the Previous 12 Months, by Perceived Socioeconomic Status and Region, 2010/11 & 2014/15 Combined

Perceived Socioeconomic Status (SES)	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Low SES	28.7 ^E (19.8, 39.6)	21.3 (16.0, 27.7)	20.7 (18.3, 23.2)
High SES	23.3 (16.8, 31.3)	18.2 (14.9, 22.1)	U

E Interpret with caution; the estimate is associated with high sampling variability

U - Estimate for combined sample unavailable as estimate changed significantly between 2010/11 & 2014/15 school years

Unmet Need for Mental Health Support

About one of every four students in our region wanted to talk to someone about a mental health problem during the previous 12 months but did not know where to turn (28.2%; 95% CI: 19.9, 38.4). This rate was similar to that of other northern regions (27.3%; 95% CI: 23.7, 31.3) and Ontario (28.4%; 95% CI: 26.1, 30.9).

Data from 2010/11 & 2014/15 was combined to analyze those who wanted to talk to someone about a mental health problem but did not know where to turn, among selected demographic subgroups (Tables 5 through 8). In Ontario and other northern regions, about four of every ten female students wanted to talk to someone and did not know where to turn; significantly higher compared to about one in every eight male students (Table 5). In Ontario, one of every three students with low perceived socioeconomic status wanted to talk to someone and did not know where to turn; significantly higher compared to about one in four students with high perceived socioeconomic status (Table 7).

Table 5. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Wanted to Talk to Someone About a Mental Health Problem But Did Not Know Where to Turn During the Previous 12 Months, by Gender and Region, 2010/11 & 2014/15 Combined

Gender	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Males	22.0 ^E (14.7, 31.7)	15.9 (11.3, 21.9)	18.6 (16.2, 21.3)
Females	34.4 ^E (22.5, 48.6)	40.2 [‡] (33.6, 47.2)	39.0 [‡] (35.8, 42.3)

‡ Estimate is significantly different from males in the same region

E Interpret with caution; the estimate is associated with high sampling variability

Table 6. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Wanted to Talk to Someone About a Mental Health Problem But Did Not Know Where to Turn During the Previous 12 Months, by Grade Level and Region, 2010/11 & 2014/15 Combined

Grade Level	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Grades 7 - 8	27.1 (19, 37.1)	21.6 (13, 33.7)	23.2 (17.8, 29.6)
Grades 9 - 12	28.6 ^E (16.2, 45.4)	29.5 (25.5, 33.9)	30.5 (28.4, 32.7)

E Interpret with caution; the estimate is associated with high sampling variability

Table 7. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Wanted to Talk to Someone About a Mental Health Problem But Did Not Know Where to Turn During the Previous 12 Months, by Aboriginal Identity & Region, 2010/11 & 2014/15 Combined

Aboriginal identity	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Aboriginal	F	39.4 (25.6, 55.1)	30.4 (20.7, 42.2)
Non-Aboriginal	28.1 ^E (18.2, 40.6)	26.0 (22.3, 30.1)	28.3 (25.9, 30.9)

E Interpret with caution; the estimate is associated with high sampling variability

F Estimate suppressed; too unreliable to be released

Table 8. Percentage (95% CI) of Students Who Wanted to Talk to Someone About a Mental Health Problem But Did Not Know Where to Turn During the Previous 12 Months, by Perceived Socioeconomic Status and Region, 2010/11 & 2014/15 Combined

Perceived Socioeconomic Status (SES)	NBPSDHU Region	Other Northern Regions	Ontario
Low SES	33.1 (27.1, 39.8)	33.7 (27.6, 40.3)	33.0 ‡ (29.6, 36.7)
High SES	24.3 ^E (14.8, 37.2)	24.6 (19.0, 31.2)	26.1 (23.3, 29.2)

‡ Estimate is significantly different from students with high perceived socioeconomic status, in the same region

E Interpret with caution; the estimate is associated with high sampling variability