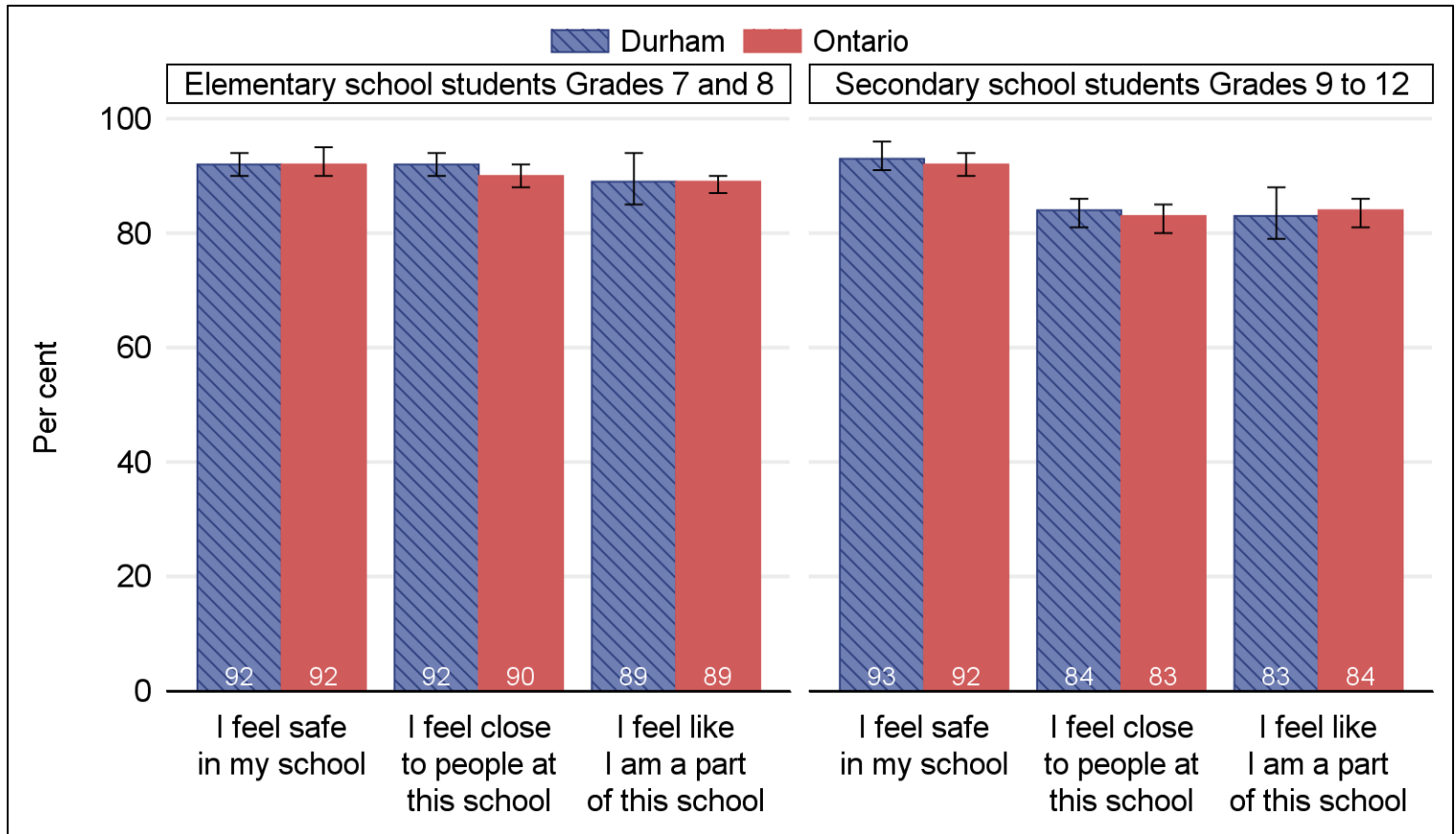


Quick facts:

# School life: students' attitudes about school, 2016-2017



Release date: December 2018



## Notes

Results were weighted and sex-by-grade adjusted to the Ontario 2014-2015 student enrollment.

Error bars represent the 95 per cent confidence intervals around the percentage. The true or actual percentage falls within the range of values, 95 out of 100 times. Categories may not sum to 100 per cent as item non-response is not presented in the results above.

Source: Public Health Monitoring of Risk Factors in Ontario – Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Study (OSDUHS), 2016-2017.

## Summary

Most Durham Region elementary and secondary school students felt safe at school (92 and 93 per cent, respectively); felt close to people at school (92 and 84 per cent, respectively); and felt that they were a part of their school (89 and 83 per cent, respectively). These results were similar for students across Ontario.

Related analysis (not shown in figure) about the school climate and perceived social status at school in Durham Region students showed that:

- 52% of elementary school students liked school very much or quite a lot which was significantly higher than secondary school students at 34%,
- 20% of elementary school students and 13% of secondary school students were very worried or somewhat worried that someone would harm, threatened or taken something from them,
- 7% of elementary school students and 14% of secondary school students were suspended or expelled from school at least once in their lifetime,
- 17% of Durham Region elementary school students and 23% of secondary school students ranked their subjective social status (SSS) at school as low, that is, they felt that no one respects them and no one wants to hang out with them.

## Questions

I feel safe in my school; I feel close to people at this school; I feel like I am a part of this school.

- Strongly agree; somewhat agree
- Strongly disagree; somewhat disagree

Some people like school very much while others don't. How do you feel about going to school?

- I like school very much; quite a lot
- I like school to some degree; I don't like school very much; at all

At school, how worried are you that someone will harm you, threaten you, or take something from you?

- Very worried; somewhat worried
- Not very worried; not at all worried

Have you ever been suspended, expelled or excluded from any school in your lifetime?

- Yes; No

The MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status measures perceived status at school. The questionnaire showed a 10-rung ladder to represent the social hierarchy at school. Students were asked to choose the rung that best shows where they would place themselves. The higher the rung, the higher the subjective social status (SSS); low school SSS= rungs 1– 5 on the ladder, average school SSS= rungs 6–8 and high school SSS= rungs 9–10.

## Survey methods

The Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS) targets students, Grades 7 to 12, enrolled in the public and catholic regular school system. The OSDUHS uses a two-stage (school, class) stratified (region and school type) cluster sample design, and oversampling in PMO-participating public health units. The survey is self-administered in the classroom, taking, on average, 35 minutes to complete. Participation is voluntary and anonymous. Students 17 years old and younger absent or without signed consent forms on the day of the survey do not participate.

This survey excluded groups, such as street youth and dropouts, in which health behaviours such as healthy eating, physical activity, drug use, etc. may be underestimated. In addition, self-reporting may result in under-reporting whether from social desirability or recall bias.

For a detailed description of the OSDUHS, visit the [CAMH website](#).

## **Data analysis**

Data were analyzed using SAS 9.4. For 2016-2017, the analysis was based on a design of 17 strata (7 geographical strata for elementary schools and 10 for secondary schools), 214 schools, 764 classes and 11,435 students. Variables accounting for the probability of selection, stratification and clustering were used when analyzing the data. The final sampling weight was based on each regional stratum's sex-by-grade structure according to the provincial population structure.

Differences in two percentages may be clinically important. However, when error bars overlap, the difference cannot necessarily be interpreted as real or statistically significant.

## **Acknowledgement**

The data used in this publication came from the OSDUHS conducted at the 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 CAMH.

For more information, contact Durham Region Health Department at 1-800-841-2729, by fax at 905-666-6241 or by visiting the [Durham Region website](#).