



THE HEALTH OF YUKON'S CHILDREN

Presentation to Association of Yukon
School Councils, Boards & Committees

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16 April 2011

Education and Health

There is increasing recognition that health and educational outcomes are inextricably linked and that the **school can be an ideal setting to strive for both.**

World Health Organization, 2006

HEALTH
OUTCOMES



EDUCATION
OUTCOMES

Education and Health

Education is a key determinant of health

- Education is associated with higher income, greater job security and better working conditions
 - Literacy provides a tool that individuals can use to take charge of their own health
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Education and Health

Life long learning 

Life course

Accumulation of positive and negative effects on health

Prenatal

Pre-school

School

Training

Employment

Retirement

Family building

Adapted from: Marmot (2010)

Education and Health

Health is a key influence on education

- Good health improves educational performance and attainment
- Unhealthy behaviours (e.g., smoking, poor nutritional, alcohol and drug use, obesity) have a negative impact on educational outcomes
- Physical exercise has a positive impact on academic performance
- Sleep disorders hinder academic performance

World Health Organization, 2011

The broader context

- Glorification of violence and bullying
 - Increased exposure to sexualized images, pornography
 - Increased accessibility and affordability of computers, Internet, electronic games
 - Impact of social networking
 - Increased access to junk foods
 - Direct marketing to children and youth
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The Health Behaviours of School-aged Children Survey

Background

- An international survey of Grade 6-10 students
 - Completed by 40 countries every 4 years
 - Canadian partners:
 - Public Agency of Canada,
 - Joint Consortium for School Health,
 - Queens University,
 - YG Departments of Education, and Health and Social Services
 - Yukon Bureau of Statistics
 - For the first time, every participating Can P/T will have reliable jurisdiction-specific data courtesy of PHAC
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Topics covered

- Background and resources
 - Family
 - Peer group
 - School experiences
 - Health risk behaviours
 - Healthy living
 - Eating and dieting
 - Violence and bullying
 - Injuries
 - Emotional and mental health
-

Methodology

- Survey administered in fall 2009 by YBS
 - Animators went to every classroom; survey read aloud in each Grade 6-8 class
 - School administrators indicated roll out was successful
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Data Availability

Yukon data received one year earlier
than other jurisdictions

BUT

- No comparison data are available
until the national report is released in
Fall 2011
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Sample size

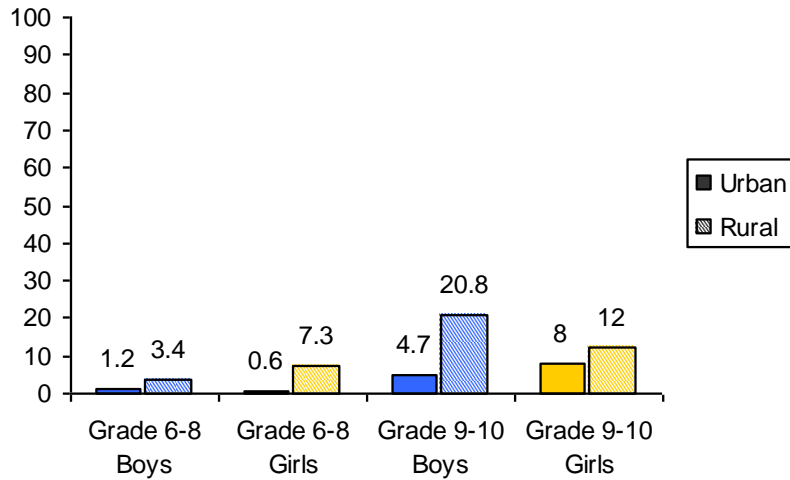
Student participation in survey				
Location	Gr. 6-8		Gr. 9-10	
	#	%	#	%
Rural YT	192	77%	104	62%
Whitehorse	684	80%	437	69%
TOTAL	876	79%	541	67%

Good news

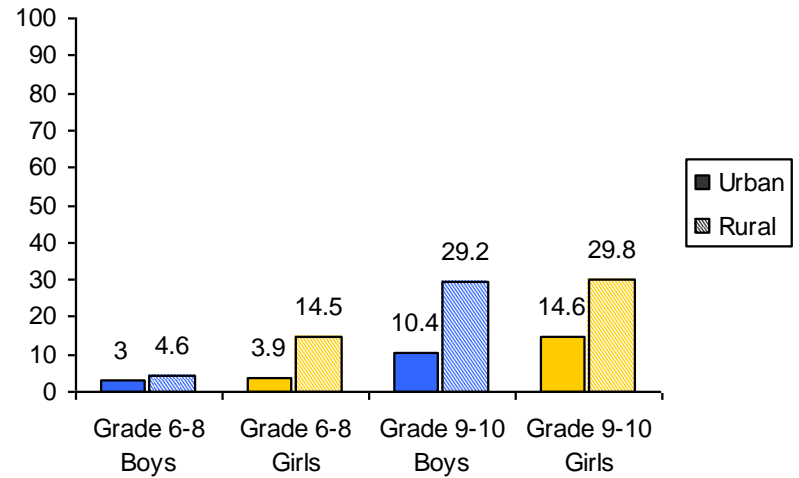
- Low use of glue, solvents
 - Few daily cigarette smokers among young students and older females
 - Condom use/knowledge good
 - Good access to material resources
 - Have friends
 - Neighbourhoods are safe for children
 - Majority rate health as good or excellent
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Daily smoking

% of students who smoke on a daily basis



% of students who have smoked in last 30 days



Areas of Concern

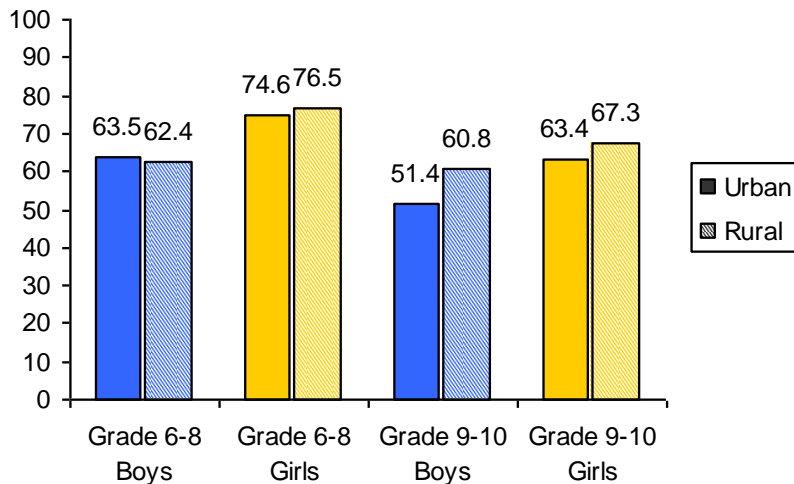
Bullying

We say a student is BEING BULLIED when another student, or a group of students, say or do nasty and unpleasant things to him or her. It is also bullying when a student is teased repeatedly in a way he or she does not like or when he or she is deliberately left out of things. It is not NOT BULLYING when two students of about the same strength or power argue or fight. It is also not bullying when the teasing is done in a friendly or playful way.

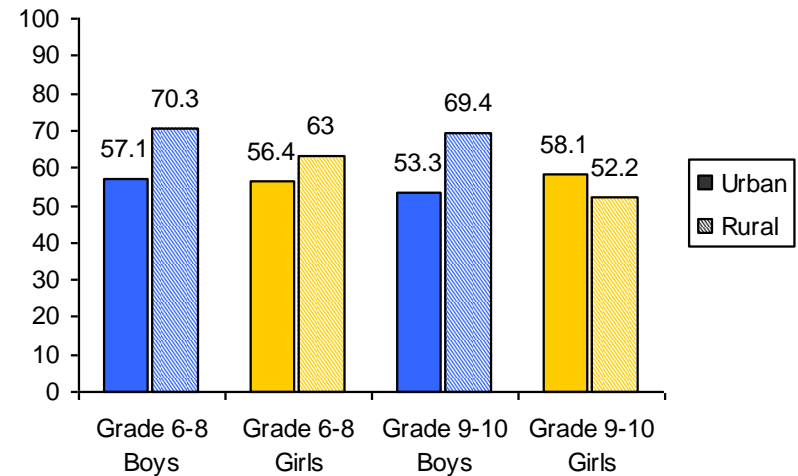
A culture of bullying

In past couple of months, % of students who report

Being bullied



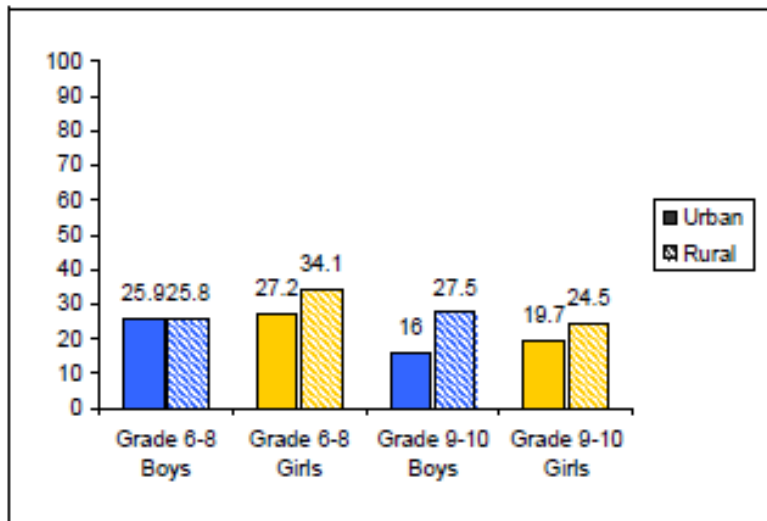
Bullying others



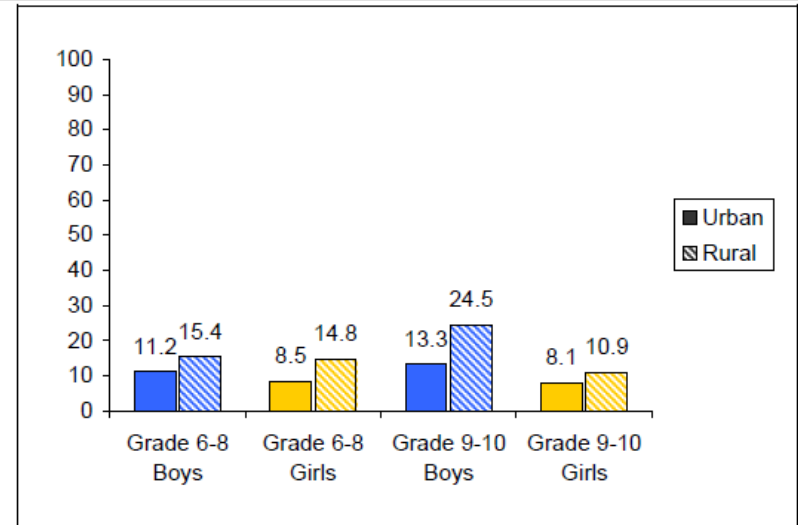
A culture of bullying

% of students who report regularly

Being bullied



Bullying others



What forms does bullying take?

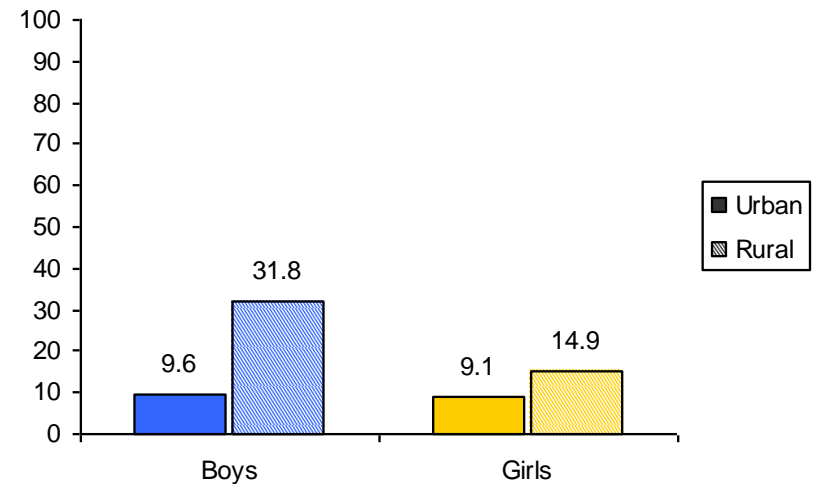
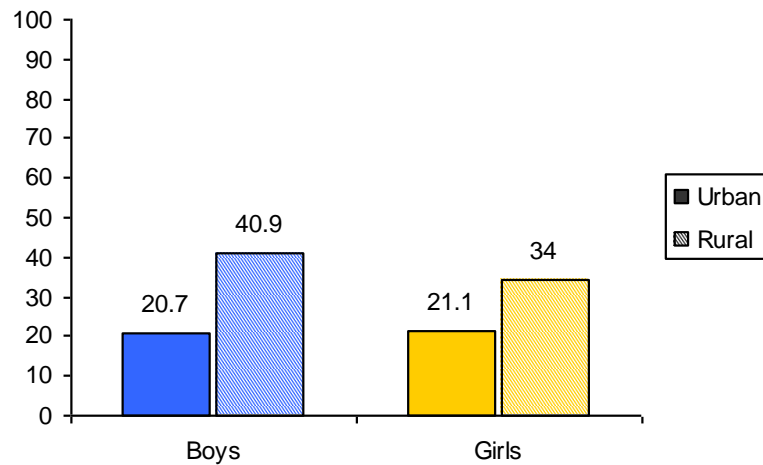
Name calling and teasing	30-50%
Lies and rumours	21-43%
Being excluded	16-40%
Sexual harassment	12-30%
Physical harassment	11-33%
Racism	6-26%
Religion	0-24%
Cyber-bullying	7-16%

Cannabis (marijuana) use

% of Grade 9 and 10 students who have used cannabis

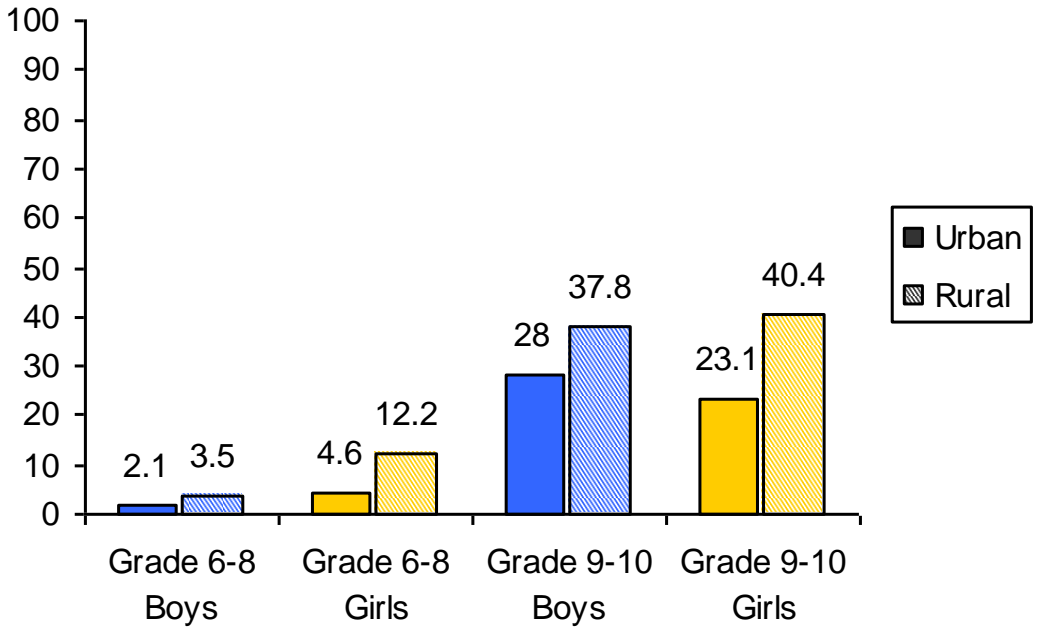
In the last 30 days

6 times or more in the last 30 days



Recent drunkenness

% of students who have been drunk in the last 30 days



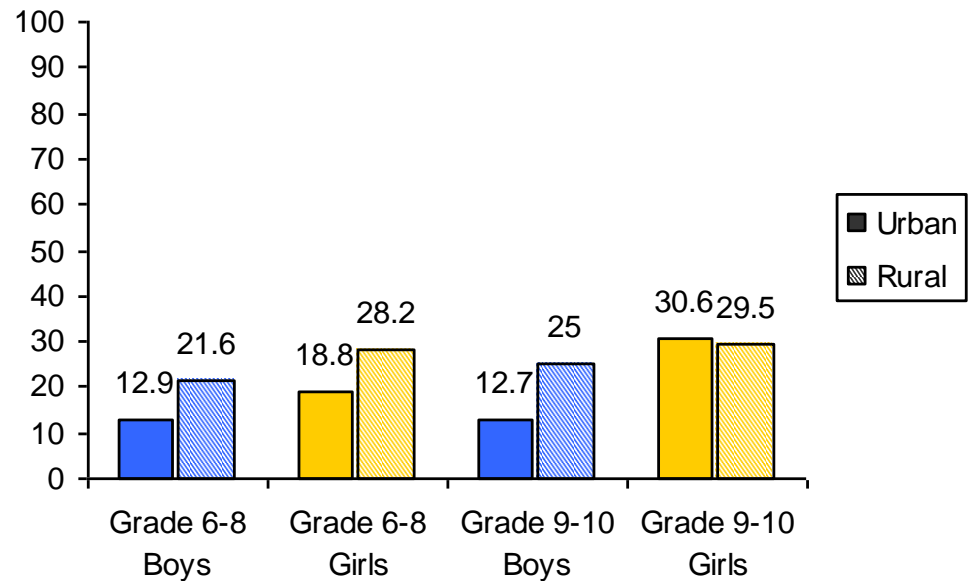
Perception of risk

% of Grade 9 and 10 students who indicate that regularly engaging in risk behaviours poses a “slight” or “no risk” to health

	Male		Female	
	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Smoking	8.5	13.6	6.7	14.6
Drinking	22.3	8.9	10.7	14.6
Getting stoned	23.5	38.6	18.4	26.8

Emotional health and well-being

% of students who feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 weeks or more during the past 12 months and stopped doing some usual activities



Grade 9 and 10 Rural Girls – a population at risk

- Feelings of helplessness
 - Wish they were someone else
 - Engage in more risk-taking
 - driving while impaired
 - riding with an impaired driver
 - not wearing a helmet
 - Want to leave home
 - Physically inactive
-

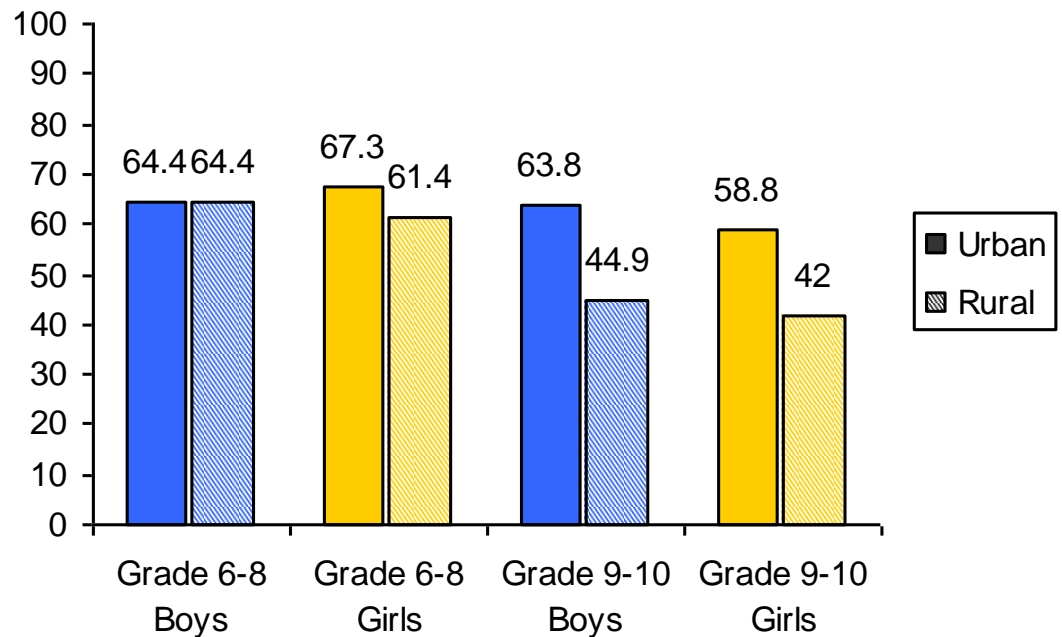
School Climate & Connectedness

School climate refers to factors that contribute to the tone and attitudes of staff and students.

School connectedness refers to students' school experiences and their perceptions and feelings about school

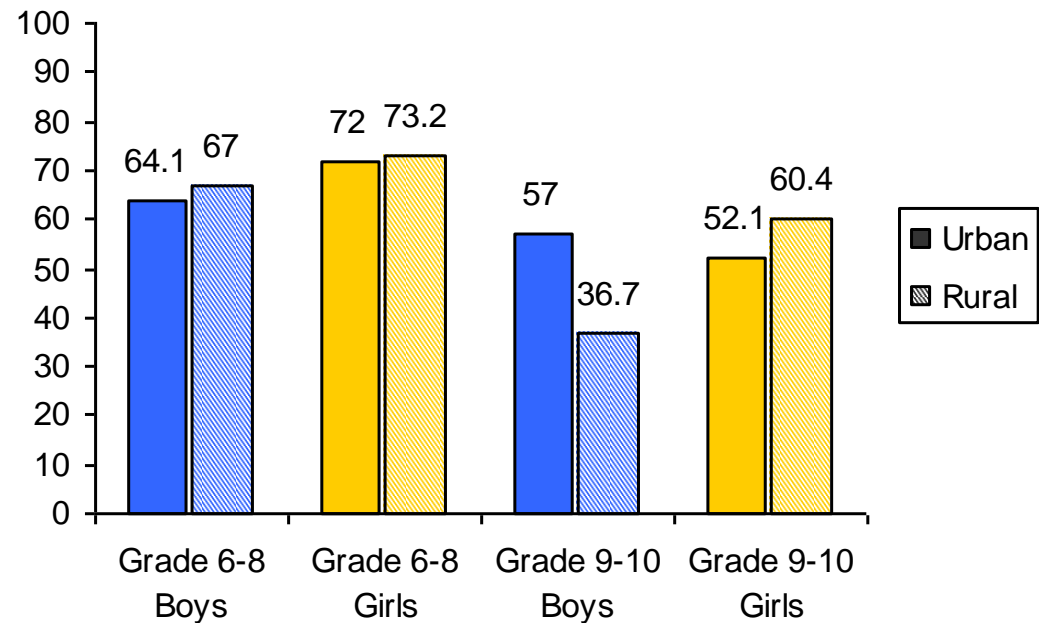
School belongingness

% of students who agree or strongly agree that they feel that they belong at school



Grade 9 and 10 Rural boys – School is a negative experience

% of students who agree or strongly agree that teachers care about them as persons



Grade 9 and 10 Rural boys – School is a negative experience

Same pattern of results for other aspects of the school experience

- like school least
 - experience teachers as less accepting of them as persons
 - view school rules and teachers as unfair
 - school is not a nice place to be
-

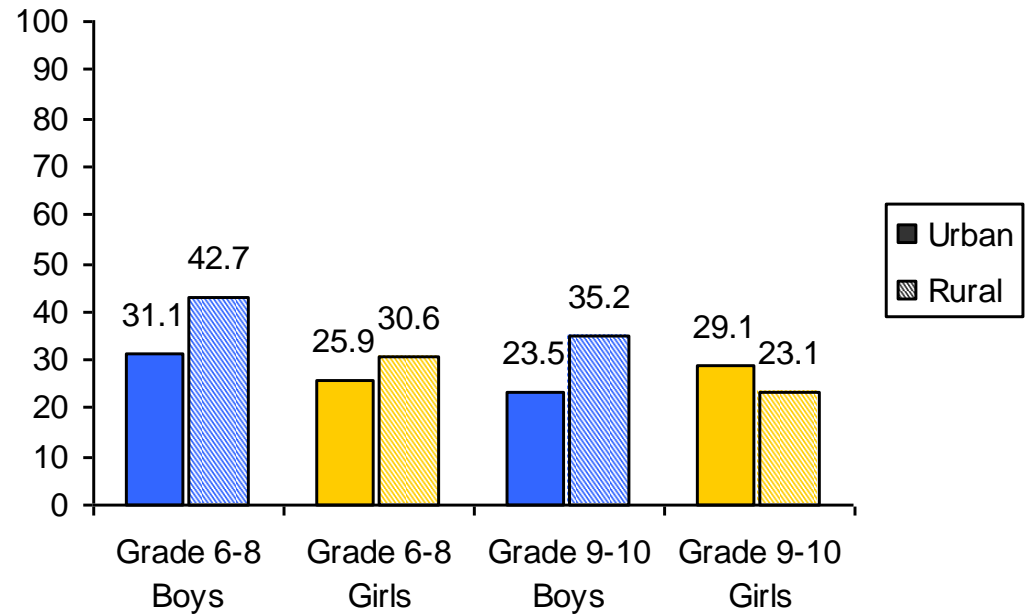
Eating and nourishment

Rural students

- less likely to eat breakfast
 - less likely to eat dinner with parents
 - less likely to eat healthier foods,
more likely to eat unhealthier foods
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Hunger

% of students who go to school or bed hungry at least sometimes because there is not enough food at home



School support and risk behaviours

Teacher support (7-item scale)

- My teachers try to understand how I see things before suggesting a new way to do things.
- My teachers guide me on how to solve school tasks.
- My teachers make sure I really understand my goals and what I need to do.

School Climate (7-item scale)

- My teachers are interested in me as a student.
 - The rules of this school are fair.
 - Our school is a nice place to be.
-

School support and student well-being

Students who experience the school climate as positive, and their teachers are supportive are

- Less likely to smoke, use alcohol and cannabis, and engage in bullying
 - More likely to enjoy emotional well-being and engage in more pro-social behaviour
 - Less likely to report emotional or behavioural problems
 - Report higher academic achievement
-

Parent support

Parent relationship (7 item scale)

- My parents understand me.
- I have a lot of arguments with my parents.
- There are times I would like to leave home.

Student support (5 item scale)

- The students in my class(es) enjoy being together.
 - Other students accept me as I am.
-

Relationship with parents

Students who feel supported at home are

- Less likely to use tobacco, alcohol and cannabis
 - Less likely to engage in bullying
 - More likely to enjoy emotional well-being and engage in pro-social behaviours
 - Less likely to report emotional and behavioural problems
 - More likely to achieve academically
-

Relationship with peers

Students who feel supported by their fellow students are

- Less likely to use tobacco, alcohol and cannabis
 - Less likely to engage in bullying
 - More likely to enjoy emotional well-being and engage in pro-social behaviours
 - Less likely to report emotional and behavioural problems
 - More likely to achieve academically
-

Home and school environments

- Positive home, peer and school environments have positive effects on physical and mental well-being, and school achievement
 - Relationships with parents are the strongest predictor of health and school achievement
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A call to action

Imagining the future

[We want] a future where all children feel loved, are free from poverty, have supportive relationships with other children and adults, feel happy and safe, and are free to imagine and explore as they journey through their local neighbourhoods. A future where all children feel valued; where they give their ideas, time, passions and creativity to everyone they meet and to all that they do.

From: Backing the future: Why investing in children is good for all of us.
United Kingdom.

It takes a village....

These findings compel us to talk, plan and work together to build a different future as

- parents
 - neighbours and community members
 - as volunteers and board members
 - professionals and senior government officials
-

Developmental assets

Developmental assets are positive experiences, relationships, and personal qualities that help young people avoid risks and thrive.

- the more assets a young person has, the less likely they are to drink alcohol, use street drugs, engage in violence
 - the more assets a young person has, the more likely they are to take on leadership roles, maintain good health, show tolerance for diversity, and be successful in school
-

Asset building communities

- Assets are nurtured in all youth.
 - Relationships are key.
 - Everyone contributes to the vision.
 - Asset building never stops.
 - Community is filled with consistent messages.
 - Duplication and repetition are valued.
-

Comprehensive School Health



- Social and physical environment
 - Teaching and learning
 - Partnerships and services
 - Healthy school policy
-

Comprehensive School Health – Yukon style

School environment

- Food for Learning
- JV Clark – Stewart Valley Voice
- FH Collins – planning for new school

Teaching and learning

- FN language instruction
- Chief Zzeh Gittlet – Learning on the land
- Classroom resource on cyber-bullying

Partnerships & services

- CKES – Reading Power Lunch and Learn
- Bison hunts
- Selkirk – Family Literacy Day
- Drop the Pop
- DVG – Girls night out

Healthy school policy

- CKES – “Roles, goals & guidelines

Group exercise

Pick a health issue of concern to you.

- Who would you want to share these results with?
 - What community resources would you invite to be part of the discussion?
 - What could you do as school council members to take a small, first step in addressing this health issue in your school?
 - How can you use the developmental assets to tackle this issue?
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Useful resources

<http://www.hss.gov.yk.ca/healthpromotion.php>

http://www.hss.gov.yk.ca/ads_prevention.php

<http://www.search-institute.org/>

<http://www.jcsh-cces.ca/>
