



## ENVIRONMENTS

The New Brunswick Student Wellness Survey (NBSWS) is a provincial initiative of the Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport (WCS). Data collection and analysis is conducted by the Health and Education Research Group (University of New Brunswick and Université de Moncton) in collaboration with WCS, and in cooperation with the Department of Education. The purpose of the survey is to examine the health and wellness attitudes and behaviours of students in grades 6-12.

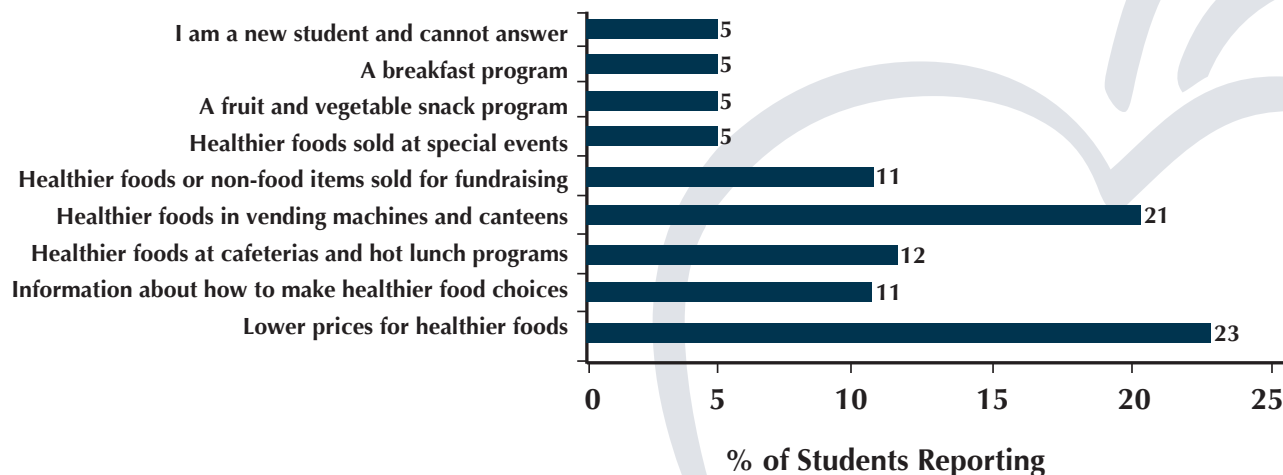
The environments in which people live, work and play can either support or discourage their plans to undertake and sustain positive healthy lifestyle changes (Health Canada, 1998).

### Healthy Eating

Research shows that undernourished children are typically fatigued and uninterested in their environment compared to their well-nourished peers. Children who eat breakfast have improved memory, problem-solving skills and creative abilities. Unfortunately, children are increasingly skipping meals, do not have access to healthy food choices, or are not provided with enough time to eat their lunch (Health Canada, 2007).

- 68% of students said that they have enough time to eat their lunch at school.
- 26% of students reported that there is enough variety of foods offered at school.
- 59% of students said they ate at a fast food place at least one time in the week prior to the survey.
- 69% of students reported eating meals while watching television at least one time in the week prior to the survey.

Students reported noticing the following regarding healthy eating at school in the last 12 months:



## Physical Activity

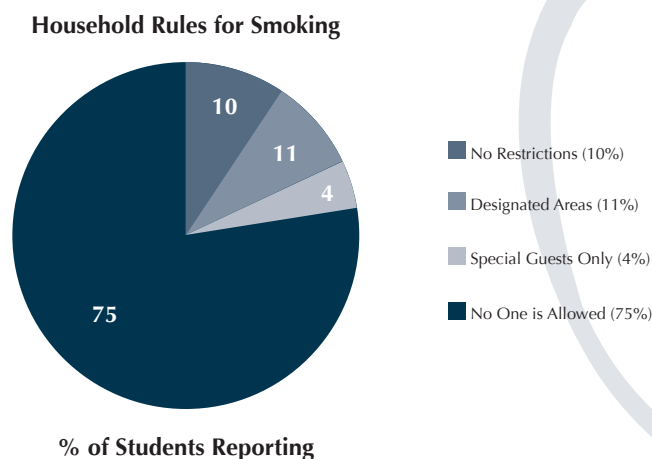
Community support, sports and recreation facilities, and school buildings including classrooms, as well as the surroundings in which schools are situated, are key factors for the success of implementing physical activity policies (World Health Organization, 2008). School environments that support and encourage physical activity have been shown to be effective in increasing student activity levels (Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, 2005).

- 11% of students reported using active transportation modes, such as cycling, walking, running or skateboarding to get to and from school; 74% indicated using inactive modes such as getting a ride or taking a bus; while 15% indicated using a mix of active and inactive modes of transportation.
- 55% of students reported that they had more than one physical education class during the week before the survey.
- 75% of students reported that they did not have opportunities to be physically active in classes other than Physical Education.
- 87% of students felt that importance is placed in schools on student participation in competitive sports, and 69% of students indicated that there are awards recognizing student participation in competitive sports.
- 75% of students felt importance is placed on participation in non-competitive sports or clubs; and 41% of students indicated their school has awards recognizing student participation in non-competitive sports or clubs.

## Exposure to Tobacco Smoke

Smoking within the home is related to student smoking behaviour – the greater the number of smokers inside the home, the more likely a student is to smoke (Youth Smoking Survey, 2002). Smoking bans reduce exposure to secondhand smoke and reduce smoking prevalence (Callinan, Clarke, Doherty & Kelleher, 2010).

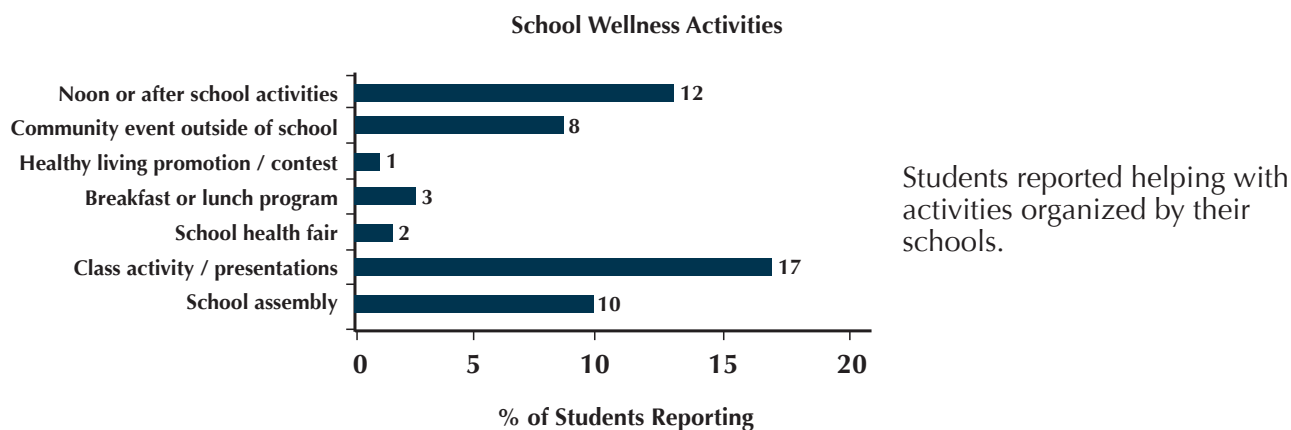
- When asked, “Does your school, have a clear set of rules about smoking for students to follow?”, students responded:
  - Yes (70%)
  - No (11%)
  - I don’t know (19%)
- 32% of students rode in a car with someone who was smoking during the week preceding the survey.
- 23% of students reported at least one person smoked inside their home every day or almost every day.



Students reported on household rules that expose them to tobacco smoke; in the majority of homes, no one is allowed to smoke.

## Promoting Wellness at School

Health promoting schools are characterized by collaborative efforts among school and community members designed to create experiences and environments that promote and protect the health of students (World Health Organization, 1997). School-based initiatives that adopt a whole-school approach and include: student skill development; changes in the school environment; participation of parents and members of the local community; and are implemented continuously beyond one year, have been identified as most likely to be effective (Stewart-Brown, 2006).



The school-wide and classroom climate can contribute to the enhancement of students' engagement socially, academically and intellectually. Addressing student engagement involves understanding and responding to the school experience and perspectives of students. Students' sense of connectedness with their schools has been positively associated with academic motivation, performance, and adjustment (Willms, Friesen and Milton, 2009). Similarly, school connectedness has been found to relate to students' sense of belonging and self-esteem, whereas it has been negatively correlated with the presence of delinquency, oppositional behaviour and high-risk health behaviours (Juvonen, 2007).

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements	% of Students Reporting			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel close to people at my school.	26%	56%	14%	5%
I feel I am part of my school.	25%	55%	14%	6%
I am happy to be at my school.	24%	51%	16%	9%
I feel the teachers at my school treat me fairly.	22%	57%	14%	7%
I feel safe in my school.	24%	59%	11%	6%
I feel my learning needs are met at my school.	22%	58%	13%	7%

## Comparison of NB Student Wellness Survey Results

The following provides a comparison of 2006-2007 and 2009-2010 outcomes of selected New Brunswick Wellness Strategy Indicators and Targets related to environments.

Target	Wellness Indicator	2006-2007 Baseline	2009-2010 Results	Progress
↓	Youth exposed to tobacco smoke in vehicles	38%	32%	👍

### References

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The New Brunswick Student Wellness Survey Provincial Fact Sheets are available at [www.unbf.ca/education/herg](http://www.unbf.ca/education/herg) and [www.gnb.ca/wellness](http://www.gnb.ca/wellness)

- 127 schools participated in the 2009-2010 New Brunswick Student Wellness Survey.
- The survey data was collected from 21,078 students across New Brunswick.
- The students surveyed were in grades 6 to 12.