

2023 YOUTH IMPACT SURVEY

AGE SNAPSHOT

The Youth Impact Survey (YIS) is our community's opportunity to hear directly from young people about their well-being. It's based on the Canadian Index of Child and Youth Well-being, a framework developed by UNICEF Canada to better understand how children and youth are doing across the country.

The Children and Youth Planning Table's (CYPT) vision is happy, healthy children and youth— today and tomorrow, applies to all children and youth in our community. Given the importance of centering equity, social inclusion, and anti-discrimination in our belonging-related work, we are disaggregating the 2023 YIS across several demographic and identity-based dimensions.

WHAT IS DISAGGREGATED DATA?

Disaggregated data is data that is broken down into smaller units or groups; in our case, demographic categories. When possible, we disaggregate data to paint a more reflective picture of the experiences and needs of the diverse children and youth in our community. (For example, what are the experiences of 9 to 12 year olds, as opposed to all youth ages 9 to 18.) This helps us reveal trends or patterns that might be hidden when focusing only on the total (i.e., aggregate) numbers.

It is important to remember that the data presented in this snapshot only reflects the responses from the children and youth who filled out the 2023 YIS. While we are excited to have received 1,876 responses in 2023, we also recognize that our survey does not capture the experiences and input of ALL children and youth in Waterloo Region. Any percentages in red are based on a smaller number of individual respondents (less than 25) and comparisons between 2021 and 2023 survey responses should be interpreted with caution.

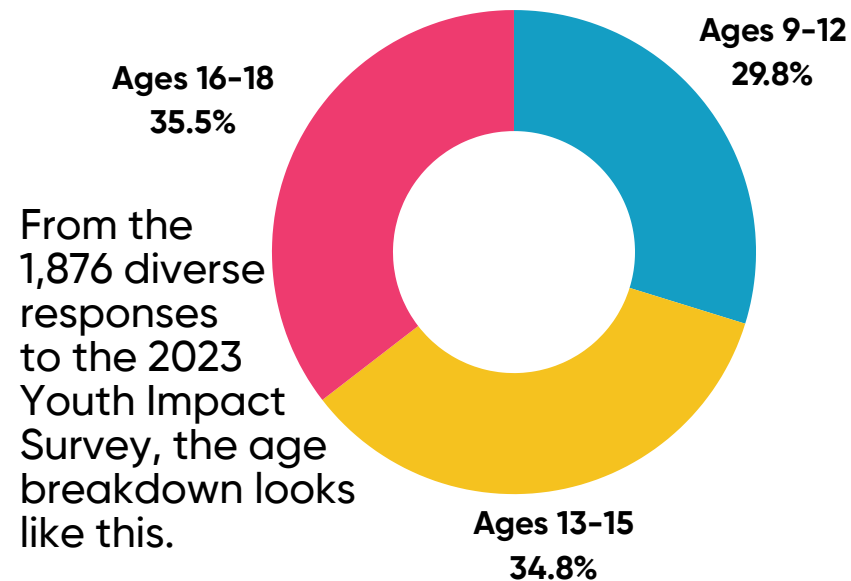
TAKING ACTION

The Youth Impact Survey lets us learn directly from young people in Waterloo Region about their well-being—how they're doing and what they're doing. Listening to what children and youth have to say is a good first step to making our community a better place.

After completing the survey, young people were asked what they think should happen next with the data. Here's what they think adults should do:

- **Make Changes:** Take the initiative to change programs to make things better for young people in Waterloo Region. Do their best to make our whole community better, including the places that young people use.
- **Understand Everyone:** Learn and better understand the diverse needs of young people in our community, and work at being inclusive.
- **Share Results:** Young people want us to share the results of the YIS with others in the community, including schools, community centres, government, and other institutions.
- **Reach Out:** Personally reach out to young people more often.

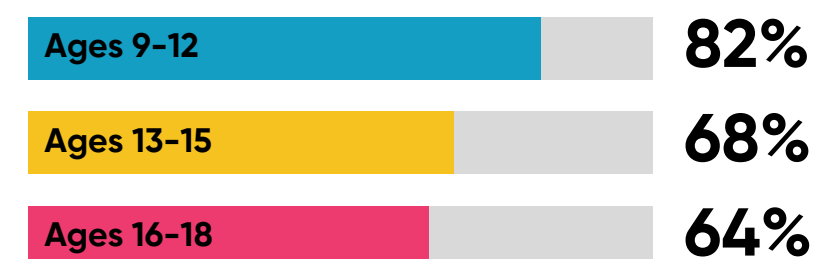
RESPONDENT BREAKDOWN



SENSE OF BELONGING

71% of all YIS respondents said they felt a very strong or somewhat strong sense of belonging to their community.

Between 2021 and 2023, we see that belonging held mostly steady for youth aged 9-12 and 13-15, but it increased 13% for 16-18 year olds.



13%
Regional Average



HOUSING (IN)SECURITY

Youth experiencing homelessness or hidden homelessness has increased from 8% in 2021 to 13% in 2023. Younger respondents were 5 percentage points less likely to have experienced homelessness or hidden homelessness compared to their older counterparts.

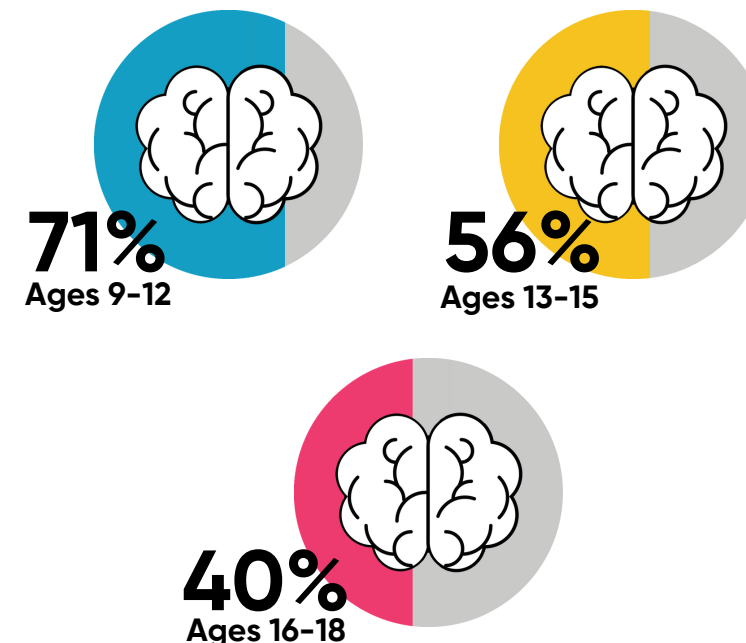
10%
Ages 9-12

15%
Ages 13-15

15%
Ages 16-18

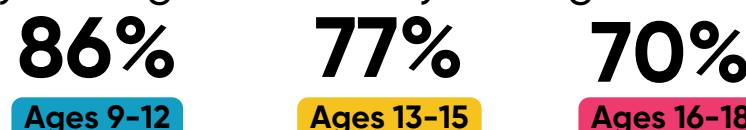
SELF-ASSESSED MENTAL HEALTH

55% of respondents described their mental health as more positive, however it varied 30 percentage points between youth aged 9-12 and youth aged 16-18.



LIFE SATISFACTION

78% of young people said they had at least a moderate level of life satisfaction—an increase (7 percentage points) from 2021. There is a 16 percentage point difference between youth aged 9-12 and youth aged 16-18.



VALUED MEMBER OF COMMUNITY

51% of respondents felt like they are a valued member of their community. This number varied 15 percentage points between age groups. Between 2021 and 2023, this number decreased 12% for youth aged 9-12.



61%
Ages 9-12

47%
Ages 13-15

46%
Ages 16-18

SELF-ASSESSED PHYSICAL HEALTH

While the majority of respondents across Waterloo Region (76%) described their physical health as positive, there were differences across each age group.

86%
Ages 9-12

77%
Ages 13-15

65%
Ages 16-18



FOOD (IN)SECURITY



The number of young people who at least sometimes go to school or bed hungry has increased from 5% in 2021 to 15% in 2023. Younger youth, however, were less likely to report this.

15%
Regional Average

13%
Ages 9-12

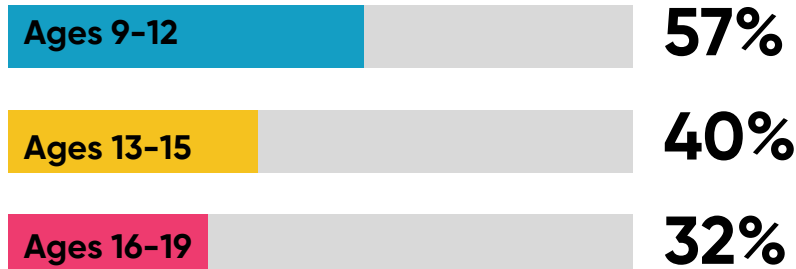
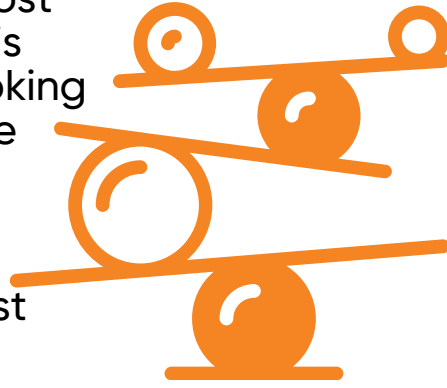
14%
Ages 13-15

17%
Ages 16-18



MANAGING DAILY RESPONSIBILITIES

43% of young people said they felt good at managing the responsibilities of their daily life at least almost every day. In 2021, this number was 53%. Looking closer at the data, we see that there is a difference of 25 percentage points between our youngest and oldest survey respondents.



BULLYING

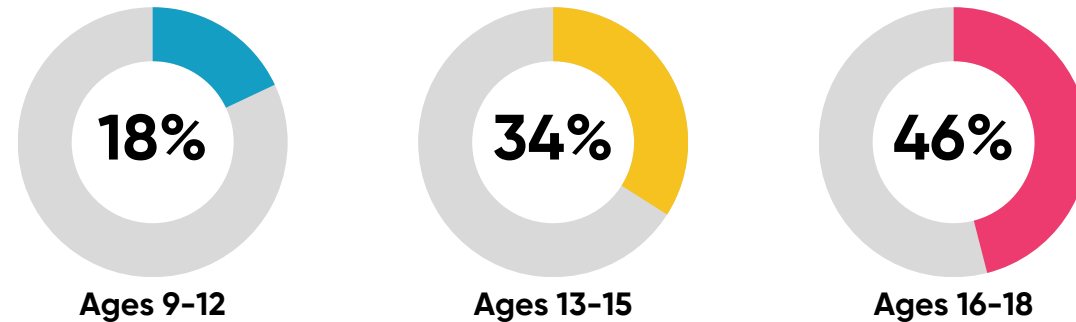


Collectively, 62% of youth experienced at least one type of bullying once or twice in the last month. Looking closely, we see that there isn't much difference between each age group.



FEELING ANXIOUS

33% said they felt anxious more than once a week in the last 6 months, but we can see that when we break this down, there is a 28 percentage point difference between our youngest and oldest survey respondents.



I GET THE EMOTIONAL HELP AND SUPPORT I NEED FROM MY FAMILY



72% of young people agreed that they received the emotional support they needed from their family. Youth aged 9-12 were 21 percentage points more likely to agree with this statement compared to youth aged 16-18.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



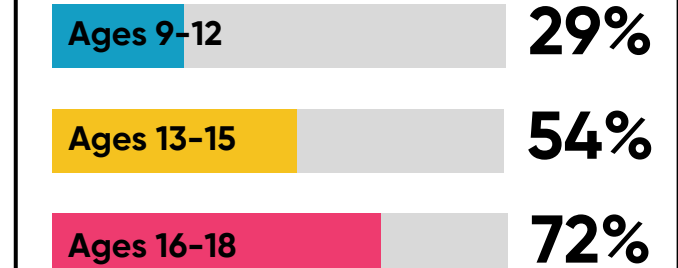
34% of youth respondents said they spent 3 or more hours doing physical activity in a typical day. Breaking this down, we see a 19 percentage point difference between 9-12 year olds and 16-18 year olds.



COMPUTER USE



Collectively, 52% of YIS respondents were using the computer 3 or more hours per day. We see a 43 percentage point difference between our youngest and oldest respondents.

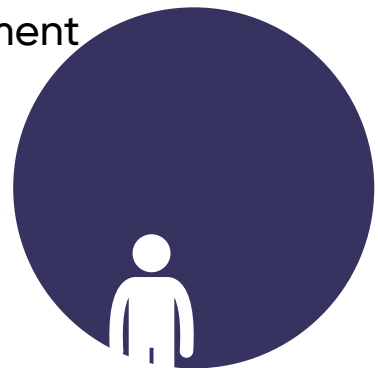


"BE YOURSELF. IT'S IMPORTANT. MAYBE MAKING 'PEOPLE TO TALK TO' MORE AVAILABLE FOR YOUNGER KIDS TOO, SO THAT THEY CAN TALK ABOUT THINGS."

-YIS 2023 Respondent

FEELINGS OF LONLINESS

Collectively, 27% of YIS respondents agreed with the statement "I often feel lonely". Breaking this down, we see a 20 percentage point difference between YIS respondents in the 9-12 year old age group and the 16-18 year old age group. For youth aged 16-18, this number decreased by 14% between 2021 and 2023.



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