

CHILDREN & YOUTH in Guelph and Wellington County

Health, Child Protection, Bullying & Crime

This fact sheet highlights select trends and issues related to children and youth in the City of Guelph and the County of Wellington.

HEALTH

Food Programs

Healthy eating during childhood supports development, prevention of obesity and chronic disease, and improves behaviour and concentration in school.^{1,2}

- Food and Friends* supports 67 nutrition programs for children and youth in Guelph, Wellington and Dufferin counties.³ In the 2009/2010 school year, onsite programs provided meals to over 11,800 students.⁴

Physical Exercise

For children and youth, regular physical activity has positive impacts on academic performance, body weight, physical health, and mental health.⁵

- Canada's Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth for 2009 found that 87% of children and youth in Canada are not meeting Canada's activity guidelines of 90 minutes a day.⁶

Physical & Mental Health

- In 2007, 21.6% of grade 9-12 students in the Region of Waterloo, County of Wellington, and City of Guelph reported poor physical health and 15.9% reported poor mental health. In the rest of Ontario, 15.9% of students reported poor physical health and 13% reported poor mental health. In addition, 17.3% of local youth reported suicidal ideation which is higher than Ontario's rate of 10.3%.⁷

Sex

- In the 2008 Health Status Report prepared by Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph (WDG) Public Health, 34% of the surveyed youth (aged 15 -18) reported they had had sex.⁸

- In 2005, 88.4% of surveyed sexually active youth (aged 15-18) reported they had used birth control in the last 12 months.⁹
- From 2001 to 2004, teen pregnancy rates in WDG showed an overall decline from 24.1 to 19.0 recorded pregnancies per 1000 females 15 to 19 years old.¹⁰

Drug & Alcohol Use

- In 2005, about two-thirds (62%) of all Ontario students (grades 7-12) reported drinking alcohol at least once in the past year. This is about 603,400 students. One in 10 students drank alcohol once a week.¹¹
- In Ontario, one in four male students and one in five female students reported binge drinking (five or more drinks at one time) in the past month.¹²
- Three per cent of Ontario grade 7 students have tried marijuana in the past year. By the time Ontario students reach grade 12, nearly half (46%) have used marijuana in the past year.¹³

Video Games

- Among grade 7-12 students across Ontario, 9% may have a video gaming problem. This represents about 86,000 students.¹⁴

CHILD PROTECTION

Children who live in homes where there is violence may experience negative impacts including: emotional, behavioural and developmental problems; negative peer interactions; depression and anxiety; violence to others; developmental delays; irregular school attendance; and inappropriate sexual behaviour.¹⁵

- In 2009-2010, Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County admitted a total of 34 children and youth aged 6-15 into their care. During the same time period, 11 youth 16 years and older were admitted into care.¹⁶

BULLYING

- In 2007, a study of grade 7-12 students across Ontario revealed that bullying behaviour and fighting at school peak in early adolescence and gradually declined over time.¹⁷
- Students in younger grades were more likely to be worried for their personal safety at school than students in older grades (14% of 7th graders versus 8% of 12th graders).¹⁸
- 23%-26% of grade 7 and 8 students reported physical fighting at school. These findings decreased as children got older, with only 7% of grade 12 students reporting physical fighting at school.¹⁹
- About 1 in 3 grade 7-10 students (33%) in Ontario reported being victims of bullying. In addition, 10-14% reported being bullied on a daily/weekly basis.²⁰
- Among surveyed grade 9-12 students in the Region of Waterloo, County of Wellington, and City of Guelph in 2007, students reported that 35.4% were bullying others, 12.7% had been threatened or injured with a weapon at school, and 12.1% carried a weapon on them.²¹

CRIME

- Male and female youth (aged 12-17) were charged for 281 crimes by the Guelph Police in 2008. Charges against youth decreased between 2007 and 2008 (see Table 2). Although youth committed some violent crimes (70), property crimes (67), and drug related crimes (28), the highest number of charges was in the “Other” category (116 or 41.3%).²²

Table 2: Total charges laid against youth (aged 12-17) in the City of Guelph per 100,000 people²³

Gender	2007	2008
Youth Male	230	206
Youth Female	99	75
TOTAL	329	281

* United Way funded Program

¹ Nutrition Resource Centre, Ontario Public Health Association (2010). *At-A-Glance Guide to Ontario's School Food and Beverage Policy*. Retrieved from http://www.eatrightontario.ca/CentralAttachments/At_A_Glance_Final.pdf

² Health Canada (2009). *Do Canadian Children Meet their Nutrient Requirements through Food Intake Alone? Cat: H164-112/1-2009E-PDF*. Retrieved from <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/surveill/nutrition/commun/art-nutr-child-enf-eng.php>

³ Personal Correspondence (May 2010) Anita McFarlane Food and Friends Coordinator

⁴ The Children's Foundation of Guelph and Wellington (2010). *How We Help Kids*. Retrieved from <http://www.childrensfoundation.org/how-we-help-kids>

⁵ Active Healthy Kids Canada (2009). *Canada's Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth for 2009*. Retrieved from http://www.activehealthykids.ca/ecms.ashx/ReportCard2009/AHKC-Longform_WEB_FINAL.pdf

⁶ Active Healthy Kids Canada (2009). *Canada's Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth for 2009*. Retrieved from http://www.activehealthykids.ca/ecms.ashx/ReportCard2009/AHKC-Longform_WEB_FINAL.pdf

⁷ Adlaf, E., Paglia-Boak, A., Beitchman, J., Wolfe, D. (2007). *The Mental Health and Well-Being of Ontario Students 2001-2007. CAMH Research Document Series, 23*. Retrieved from http://www.camh.net/Research/Areas_of_research/Population_Life_Course_Studies/OSDUS/OSDUHS2007_MentalHealth_Highlights_Final.pdf

⁸ Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (2008). *2008 Health Status Report: Sexual and Reproductive Health in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph*. Retrieved from http://www.wdghu.org/CMSPDF/WDG%20Sexual%20Health%20Report%202008_PUBLIC%20VERSION.pdf?CFID=1587363&CFTOKEN=14688634

⁹ Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (2008). *2008 Health Status Report: Sexual and Reproductive Health in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph*. Retrieved from <http://www.wdghu.org/CMSPDF/WDG%20Sexual%20Health>

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¹⁰ Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (2008). *2008 Health Status Report: Sexual and Reproductive Health in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph*. Retrieved from http://www.wdghu.org/CMSPDF/WDG%20Sexual%20Health%20Report%202008_PUBLIC%20VERSION.pdf?CFID=1587363&CFTOKEN=14688634

¹¹ Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (2009). *About Alcohol*. Retrieved from http://www.camh.net/About_Addiction_Mental_Health/Drug_and_Addiction_Information/about_alcohol.html

¹² Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (2009). *About Alcohol*. Retrieved from http://www.camh.net/About_Addiction_Mental_Health/Drug_and_Addiction_Information/about_alcohol.html

¹³ Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (2009). *About Marijuana*. Retrieved from http://www.camh.net/About_Addiction_Mental_Health/Drug_and_Addiction_Information/about_marijuana.html

¹⁴ Adlaf, E., Paglia-Boak, A., Beitchman, J., Wolfe, D. (2007). The Mental Health and Well-Being of Ontario Students 2001-2007. *CAMH Research Document Series, 23*. Retrieved from http://www.camh.net/Research/Areas_of_research/Population_Life_Course_Studies/OSDUS/OSDUHS2007_MentalHealth_Highlights_Final.pdf

¹⁵ Public Health Agency of Canada (2009). *The Effects of Domestic Violence on Children -- Where does it Hurt?* Retrieved from <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf/publications/rcmp-grc/fem-vioeffects-eng.php>.

¹⁶ Personal Correspondence (August 2010). Shelley Welstead (Supervisor of Quality Assurance, Research & Planning Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County)

¹⁷ Adlaf, E., Paglia-Boak, A., Beitchman, J., Wolfe, D. (2007). The Mental Health and Well-Being of Ontario Students 2001-2007. *CAMH Research Document Series, 23*. Retrieved from http://www.camh.net/Research/Areas_of_research/Population_Life_Course_Studies/OSDUS/OSDUHS2007_MentalHealth_Highlights_Final.pdf

¹⁸ Adlaf, E., Paglia-Boak, A., Beitchman, J., Wolfe, D. (2007). The Mental Health and Well-Being of Ontario Students 2001-

2007. *CAMH Research Document Series, 23*. Retrieved from http://www.camh.net/Research/Areas_of_research/Population_Life_Course_Studies/OSDUS/OSDUHS2007_MentalHealth_Highlights_Final.pdf

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²⁰ Adlaf, E., Paglia-Boak, A., Beitchman, J., Wolfe, D. (2007). The Mental Health and Well-Being of Ontario Students 2001-2007. *CAMH Research Document Series, 23*. Retrieved from http://www.camh.net/Research/Areas_of_research/Population_Life_Course_Studies/OSDUS/OSDUHS2007_MentalHealth_Highlights_Final.pdf

²¹ Adlaf, E., Paglia-Boak, A., Beitchman, J., Wolfe, D. (2007). The Mental Health and Well-Being of Ontario Students 2001-2007. *CAMH Research Document Series, 23*. Retrieved from http://www.camh.net/Research/Areas_of_research/Population_Life_Course_Studies/OSDUS/OSDUHS2007_MentalHealth_Highlights_Final.pdf

²² Guelph Police Service (2008). *2008 Annual Report*. Retrieved from <http://www.guelphpolice.com/assets/2008-Annual-Report-GPS-website.pdf>

²³ Guelph Police Service (2008). *2008 Annual Report*. Retrieved from <http://www.guelphpolice.com/assets/2008-Annual-Report-GPS-website.pdf>