



## BALANCE AND CONNECTION IN EAST KOOTENAY



THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING  
OF OUR YOUTH



Image credits (clockwise from top left):

The High Fin Sperm Whale

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## THE HEALTH & WELL-BEING OF OUR YOUTH

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The BC AHS was administered in East Kootenay by Public Health Nurses and nursing students from College of the Rockies. Their role in the survey was fundamental to its success. Not only did they reassure students that they could answer honestly because their answers would remain confidential, but they were also available to answer any questions that students had about their health.

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Quotes from East Kootenay youth who completed the 2018 BC AHS are included throughout this report.



# KEY FINDINGS

■ East Kootenay youth are becoming increasingly diverse. The percentage of youth of European heritage decreased, while those of East Asian descent increased. Also, there was an increase in the percentage of students born outside of Canada (12% vs. 8% in 2013 and 4% in 2008).

■ Around a third (32%) of East Kootenay youth reported having at least one health condition or disability. This was a local increase from 28% in 2013, and higher than the 2018 provincial rate (29%). More than 4 in 10 (42%) reported that their condition prevented them from doing things their peers could do.

■ Reflecting the provincial picture, there was an increase in East Kootenay youth who reported having a mental health condition. For example, 25% reported they had Anxiety Disorder/panic attacks, compared to 9% in 2013. There was also an increase in youth who missed out on needed mental health services in the past year (from 11% in 2013 to 19%).

■ One in five local youth (20%) had seriously considered suicide in the past year, which was an increase for females (from 19% in 2013 to 26%) and comparable to five years ago for males (14%). However, the percentages who attempted suicide were similar to previous years (11% of females and 5% of males).

■ Just over half (52%) of students got eight or more hours of sleep on the night before taking the survey, and 42% went offline after their expected bedtime (e.g., turned off their phone or put it in silent mode). Those who went offline were more likely to wake up feeling rested.

■ East Kootenay youth have typically been more physically active than their peers across the province, and this was also the case in 2018. For example, 24% engaged in extreme sports on a weekly basis, compared to 9% across BC, and 61% participated weekly in informal sports (vs. 52% across BC). Also, youth aged 12–17 were more likely than their peers across the province to have met Canadian physical activity recommendations in the week before taking the survey (23% vs. 18%).

■ Youth in East Kootenay were more likely than their peers across the province to have suffered a concussion in the past year (17% vs. 13%), including 4% who experienced two or more concussions. Around half (52%) of local youth who experienced a concussion received medical treatment for their injury.

■ Local students were more likely than their peers across BC to have lost someone close to them as a result of an accident (19% vs. 13%) and suicide (14% vs. 9%). Also, 25% had a family member or close friend who had attempted or died by suicide in the past year (compared to 20% provincially).

■ Seven percent of East Kootenay students with a phone had used it on their most recent school day to engage in sexting (a decrease from 15% in 2013), and 9% used their device to watch pornography.

■ Similar to results in 2013, 57% of students had tried alcohol, 33% had used marijuana, and 23% had tried a substance other than alcohol or marijuana.

■ Vaping was the most commonly used smoking product. In the past month, 29% of local youth had vaped with nicotine and 25% had vaped without nicotine.

■ Among students who drank alcohol on the Saturday before taking the survey, 70% engaged in binge drinking, which was a decrease from 79% in 2013.

■ In the past year, 45% of students had been verbally sexually harassed, and 25% had been physically sexually harassed. This represented an increase for males and females in physical sexual harassment, and an increase for females in verbal sexual harassment from 51% in 2013 to 58% in 2018.

■ Students in East Kootenay were more likely than their peers across BC to feel quite or very connected to their community, and were more likely than local youth in 2013 to feel this way (47% vs. 42%).

■ Most East Kootenay youth (75%) felt there was an adult in their neighbourhood or community (outside their family or school) who really cared about them. This reflected a local increase from 69% in 2013 and was above the provincial rate of 65%.

■ Overall, 68% of East Kootenay students felt safe at school (vs. 73% across BC). Locally, the rate was lower than five years earlier (74% in 2013), and comparable to a decade ago. Males were the most likely to feel safe at school and non-binary youth were the least likely to feel safe.

■ Around 7 in 10 local youth (69%) felt the activities they engaged in were quite or very meaningful to them. These youth were more likely to report positive mental health, to feel an adult in their community cared about them, and to feel connected to their community.

■ Most East Kootenay youth could identify something they were really good at, felt good about themselves, reported satisfaction with their life, and were hopeful for their future.

■ The most common topic East Kootenay youth identified as wanting to learn more about was mental health.





# INTRODUCTION

## 2018 BC ADOLESCENT HEALTH SURVEY

The BC Adolescent Health Survey (BC AHS) is the most reliable, comprehensive survey of youth aged 12–19 in British Columbia. The survey has been completed every five years since 1992. In 2018, over 38,000 students in 58 of BC’s 60 school districts participated.

The 2018 BC AHS was developed in consultation with young people, parents, and other experts in youth health. It was extensively pilot tested before being administered by Public Health Nurses and nursing students to students in mainstream public schools between February and June 2018.

A report of the provincial findings was released in March 2019 (*Balance and connection in BC*) and can be accessed at [www.mcs.bc.ca](http://www.mcs.bc.ca).

## REGIONAL REPORTS

This report is one of 16 regional reports of the BC AHS results. It shares data provided by students in Grades 7–12 in the East Kootenay Health Service Delivery Area (HSDA).

East Kootenay HSDA is comprised of three school districts: Southeast Kootenay (SD 05), Rocky Mountain (SD 06), and Kootenay Lake (SD 08). All school districts in this region have participated in the survey since 2003, and two of the three have participated in all six waves of the survey. One school district changed consent procedures for the survey between 2013 and 2018, which may have affected 2% of the sample in this region. Additional analyses were conducted to ascertain if this may have affected the regional results, and this did not appear to be the case.

The results presented in this report provide the most comprehensive and representative picture of youth health in East Kootenay. It focuses on the 2018 local results with relevant comparisons to the 2018 provincial results, as well as to local results in 2008 and 2013.

*“Thanks for doing this survey—tho I think there should have been more questions about vaping.”*

**Grade 9 student**

## A GUIDE TO THIS REPORT

This report is intended for a community audience, and therefore does not detail all aspects of the methodology, including analyses conducted and statistical testing applied. This information is available at [www.mcs.bc.ca](http://www.mcs.bc.ca) or by email from [mccreary@mcs.bc.ca](mailto:mccreary@mcs.bc.ca).

The report is divided into five main sections. The first provides background information about the young people who completed the survey, the second focuses on their health profile, the next section considers some potentially adverse experiences or challenges to growing up healthy, and precedes a section which looks at factors that can support young people to thrive. The final section offers East Kootenay students' suggestions for health topics they would like to learn more about.

The 2018 BC AHS included many questions which have been asked on the BC AHS in previous years. This allowed us to report trends over time. The survey also included some new items which reflected the changing challenges and opportunities experienced by the province's young people. These items were deemed important to include by stakeholders who participated in consultations during the development of the survey.

Based on the feedback we received about the 2013 BC AHS and through consultations during the development of the 2018 survey, one of the areas which was updated was gender identity. Following recommendations from Statistics Canada, the 2018 survey included two new questions: one about sex/gender assigned at birth

(what is listed on a student's original birth certificate, with an option of male or female) and one about current gender identity (which included the response options of male, female, neither male nor female, and not yet sure).

Previous versions of the BC AHS only included male and female options for gender. Therefore, in this report, trends are reported only for males and females (based on the question about sex/gender assigned at birth). For analyses conducted exclusively with the 2018 data, results are reported using the second question about current gender identity (male, female, and non-binary). Non-binary youth include those who identified as neither male nor female as well as those who were not yet sure of their gender identity.

All reported comparisons and associations within East Kootenay and to previous survey years which are included in this report are statistically significant at  $p < .05$ . This means there is up to a 5% likelihood these results occurred by chance. Comparisons between East Kootenay and the province are statistically significant at  $p < .01$ , which means there is up to a 1% likelihood that the results occurred by chance. Differences in tables or charts that are not statistically significant are noted.

Any percentage that is marked with an asterisk (\*) should be interpreted with caution, as it has a higher than expected standard error, but is still within the releasable range.



## LIMITATIONS

When reading this report, it is important to remember that although it is considered representative of youth aged 12–19 who were attending mainstream schools in East Kootenay, it does not capture the health picture of all young people in this age range. For example, those who were in alternative schools, independent schools, were home-schooled, were dealing with challenges which kept them out of school, or were absent on the day the survey was administered were not included.

Also, the survey was only administered on paper and in English, which excluded some youth with certain disabilities, and literacy or comprehension challenges.

Finally, the percentage of students in East Kootenay who identified as non-binary was small (2%). Therefore, although non-binary youth were considered in all gendered analyses, it was often not possible to report the findings due to the risk of deductive disclosure or the possibility that the percentage estimate was unreliable.

## GLOSSARY

For readability, the following terms are used in this report:

- **Binge drinking** refers to males who consume four or more alcoholic drinks within a couple of hours and females who consume three or more.
- **Extreme sports** include activities such as back-country skiing and BMX.
- **Ideas listened to** refers to youth who reported that their ideas were listened to 'quite a bit' or 'a lot' in the activities that they were involved in.
- **Informal sports** are sports without a coach such as skateboarding and hiking.
- **Meaningful activities** are activities which youth indicated were 'quite a bit' or 'very meaningful' to them.
- **Non-binary** reflects youth who did not identify as either male or female, and those who were not sure of their gender identity.
- **Organized sports** are sports with a coach such as school teams and swimming lessons.
- **Phone** refers to a cell phone, smartphone, or other portable electronic communication device.
- **Sexting** refers to sending sexually explicit photographs or messages using a phone. It was also referred to on the survey as 'sending nudes.'
- **Student or youth** are used interchangeably to refer to survey participants aged 12–19.

# YOUNG PEOPLE IN EAST KOOTENAY

## BACKGROUND

In East Kootenay, the most commonly reported family background was European (63%). This percentage remained above the provincial rate (46%), but was lower locally than 5 and 10 years ago (71% in 2013, and a similar percentage in 2008).

Local youth were more likely than those across the province to identify as Indigenous (19% vs. 10%) and to report not knowing their family background (20% vs. 10%). East Kootenay youth were less likely than those across BC to identify as East Asian (4% vs. 18%), Southeast Asian (2% vs. 8%), South Asian (1% vs. 11%), and West Asian.

Locally, the percentage of students reporting East Asian heritage doubled from a decade ago (2% in 2008 vs. 4% in 2018).

| Family background of youth in East Kootenay |     |
|---|-----|
| European                                    | 63% |
| Indigenous                                  | 19% |
| Latin/Central/South American                | 4%  |
| East Asian                                  | 4%  |
| Southeast Asian                             | 2%  |
| Australian/Pacific Islander                 | 2%  |
| African                                     | 2%  |
| South Asian                                 | 1%  |
| West Asian                                  | NR  |
| Don't know                                  | 20% |
| Other                                       | 3%  |

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

Note: The majority of youth who chose 'Other' indicated they were Canadian.

NR: Not releasable due to risk of deductive disclosure.

## BIRTHPLACE & LANGUAGE

The percentage of local students born in Canada continued to decline (from 96% in 2008 to 92% in 2013 to 88% in 2018). Among youth who were born abroad, 18% had been in Canada between two and five years, and 46% had been here less than two years, which was higher than the provincial rate (25%).

Similar to youth across the province, 5% of local students were international students, and 1% had arrived as refugees.

A third (33%) of youth in East Kootenay spoke a language other than English at home, with 7% doing so most of the time (an increase from 3% in 2008). These rates were lower than were seen provincially, where over half (53%) spoke another language at home, and just under a quarter (23%) did so most of the time.

## INDIGENOUS YOUTH

Among youth who identified as Indigenous, 42% were First Nations, 51% Métis, and the remainder identified as another Indigenous background (including Inuit). These percentages were similar to five years earlier, as were the percentages who had ever lived on a First Nations reserve (10%) and currently lived on reserve (5%).

Also similar to five years earlier, 13% of Indigenous youth spoke an Indigenous language, and 6% identified as Two Spirit.

Almost a quarter (23%) of Indigenous students reported that at least one member of their family had been in residential school, including grandparents (12%), parents, and/or other family members (12%). Also, 46% did not know if their relatives had been in residential school.

## GENDER IDENTITY & SEXUAL ORIENTATION

*"I think I'm androgynous."*

**Grade 10 student**

For the first time, the BC AHS asked youth about the sex assigned on their birth certificate and also about their current gender identity. In total, 51% of participants in East Kootenay were male on their birth certificate and 49% were female.

For nearly all youth (97%), their current gender identity corresponded with what was assigned on their birth certificate, whereas 3% were transgender (e.g., their birth certificate listed female and they currently identified as male) or non-binary.

Reflecting the picture across the province and in previous years locally, most students identified as straight, with males the most likely to identify this way. Females were twice as likely as males to identify as bisexual (8% vs. 4%).

| Sexual orientation of East Kootenay youth |     |
|---|-----|
| Straight                                  | 82% |
| Mostly straight                           | 5%  |
| Bisexual                                  | 6%  |
| Gay or lesbian                            | 1%  |
| Not sure yet                              | 4%  |
| Something other than those listed above   | 1%  |

Note: Percentages do not equal 100% due to rounding.

Note: Among East Kootenay youth who identified a sexual orientation other than the options listed on the survey, the most common was pansexual.

## GOVERNMENT CARE

Students were asked if they had experienced different types of government care (through the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development or a delegated agency) or alternatives to care. In total, 3% had been in a foster home, 2% on a Kith and Kin agreement, and 1% in another type of government care such as in a custody centre or group home. The percentage who had been on a Youth Agreement was too small to report.

## LIVING SITUATION

*"I got kicked out this morning and want to run away."*

**Grade 10 student**

As in previous years, most youth lived with at least one parent (96%). In comparison to five years earlier, youth were more likely to live with their mother or stepmother (87% vs. 82%), father or stepfather (78% vs. 72%), and siblings or stepsiblings (64% vs. 52%).

| Who East Kootenay lived with most of the time |     |
|---|-----|
| Mother/stepmother                             | 87% |
| Father/stepfather                             | 78% |
| Siblings/stepsiblings                         | 64% |
| Live with both parents at different times     | 10% |
| Grandparent(s)                                | 6%  |
| Other related adults                          | 3%  |
| Other unrelated adults                        | 2%  |
| Other children or youth                       | 2%  |
| Two mothers or two fathers                    | 1%  |
| Own child or own children                     | NR  |
| Live alone                                    | NR  |
| Foster parent(s)                              | NR  |

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

Youth were asked if they had caretaking responsibilities on a typical school day. Most (69%) reported looking after a pet or other animal, while 19% cared for a relative (e.g., a relative with a disability or younger sibling), and 1% cared for their own child or children. Females were more likely than males to be caring for an animal (76% vs. 62%) or a relative (24% vs. 15%).

Similar to five years earlier, most students (93%) often or always felt safe inside their home (including 78% who always felt safe), while 3% never or rarely felt safe there.

In the past year, around a quarter (24%) of students had moved from one home to another, including 6% who had moved three or more times. Also, 9% had run away from home, and 8% had been kicked out.

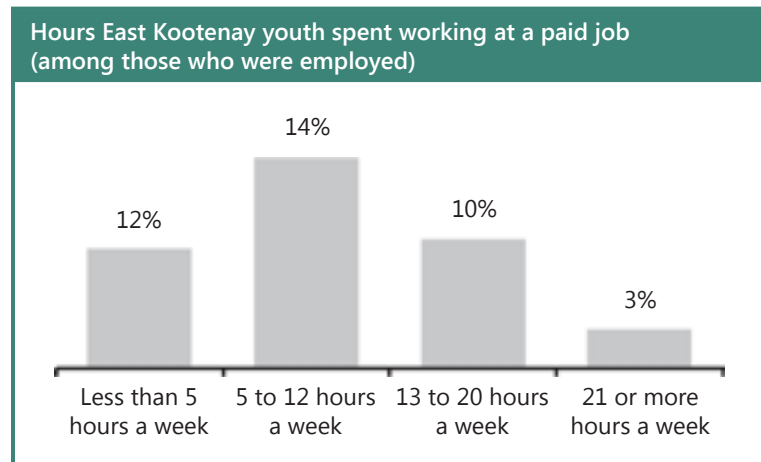


## EMPLOYMENT

As in previous years, local youth were more likely than their peers across BC to have worked at a paid job during the school year (39% vs. 33%).

## PHONE USE

On the day before taking the survey, 95% of students in East Kootenay who had a phone used it for entertainment purposes, such as listening to music; accessing social media; watching shows, movies, or YouTube; and playing games. Students also commonly reported using their phone to communicate with friends and with parents/guardians.



**East Kootenay student's phone use on their last school day (among those with a phone)**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Listening to music                                  | 89% |
| Communicating with friends they know in person      | 83% |
| Using social media                                  | 81% |
| Communicating with parent(s)/guardian(s)            | 78% |
| Watching shows, movies, YouTube, etc.               | 68% |
| Finding information (other than health information) | 59% |
| Playing games                                       | 54% |
| Doing homework                                      | 47% |
| Communicating with friends they only know online    | 25% |
| Finding health information                          | 18% |
| Watching porn                                       | 9%  |
| Sexting   | 7%  |
| Gambling  | 2%  |

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

# HEALTH PROFILE OF EAST KOOTENAY YOUTH

## PHYSICAL HEALTH

Results of the 2018 BC AHS showed that youth who reported eating healthily, getting plenty of exercise, and getting enough sleep (including going offline at bedtime) not only reported better physical health, but also reported better mental health than their peers.

Consistent with youth across the province, most students in East Kootenay rated their health as good or excellent. However, after increasing locally from 83% in 2008 to 87% in 2013, the percentage of students who rated their health as good or excellent decreased to 79% in 2018.

Reflecting the provincial picture, local students were less likely to rate their health as excellent than five years ago (37% in 2013 vs. 31%) and were more likely to rate it as poor (1% in 2013 vs. 3%) or fair (12% in 2013 vs. 18%). Similar to five years ago, males were more likely than females to rate their health as excellent.

## HEALTH CONDITIONS & DISABILITIES

In 2018, 32% of East Kootenay youth indicated having at least one health condition or disability, which was higher than the local rate in 2013 (28%), and the 2018 provincial rate (29%). Compared to five years ago, youth were more likely to report having a learning disability (6% vs. 4% in 2013) and physical disability.

*"My disability affects my daily life. Daily activities cause a lot of pain and there are few services available in my area to help me cope with this disability."*

**Grade 12 student**

*"I would like to connect more with people with the same disability."*

**Grade 11 student**

In addition, and reflecting the provincial picture, local youth were more likely to report having a mental health condition (19% in 2018 vs. 11% in 2013), with increases for both males (11% vs. 5% in 2013) and females (26% vs. 16%).

More than 4 in 10 students (42%) with a health condition or disability reported that it prevented them from doing things their peers could do.

| Health conditions among East Kootenay youth |     |
|---|-----|
| Mental health condition                     | 19% |
| Long-term/chronic medical condition         | 9%  |
| Learning disability                         | 6%  |
| Sensory disability                          | 3%  |
| Severe allergy requiring EpiPen             | 3%  |
| Physical disability                         | 2%  |
| Other                                       | 1%  |

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.



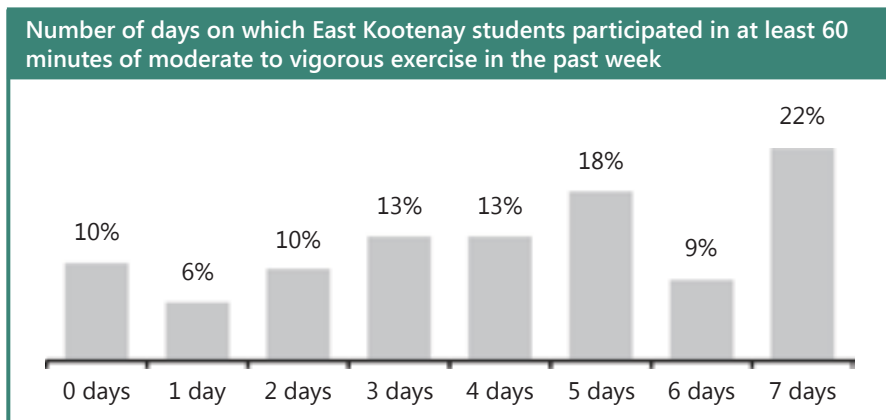
## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The Canadian Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines state that children and youth aged 5–17 should complete at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise every day.

Locally, 10% of youth did not take part in this level of physical activity on any day in the past week. However, East Kootenay youth aged 12–17 were more likely than their peers across the province to have met the physical activity recommendations in the week before taking the survey (23% vs. 18%).

As in previous years, males aged 12–17 were more likely than females to have exercised for 60 minutes every day in the past week (28% vs. 17%). The percentages of males and females who exercised daily were similar to five years ago.

The Guidelines recommend that individuals aged 18 or older take part in 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each week. Similar to the province and unchanged locally from five years ago, 64%\* of students aged 18 or older met this recommendation by participating in 60 minutes of exercise on at least three days in the past week (with comparable percentages for males and females).



Note: Percentages do not equal 100% due to rounding.

## SLEEP

*"I get a huge lack of sleep because I work late and wake up early to work out."*

Grade 12 student

Consistent with local results in 2013 and with the provincial picture in 2018, just over half of East Kootenay students (52%) slept eight or more hours on the night before completing the survey (including 24% who slept nine or more hours). Around 1 in 7 (14%) slept five hours or less.

Similar to youth across the province, older students were less likely than younger ones to have slept eight or more hours (e.g., 77% of youth aged 12 or younger vs. 37%\* of 18-year-olds).

Non-binary students were less likely than males and females to have slept eight or more hours, and were more likely to have slept four hours or less.

Students reported doing various activities after the time they were normally expected to go to sleep. These included chatting or texting (59%), homework (40%), gaming (27%), and online activities other than gaming (e.g., watching videos, or checking social media; 69%).

There were some gender differences in the activities students did after they were supposed to be asleep. For example, males and non-binary students were around three times more likely than females to be gaming, while males were the least likely to be doing homework.

Around 4 in 10 students (42%) reported going offline after their expected bedtime (e.g., turning off their phone, putting it in silent mode, or putting it in another room). Females were the most likely to go offline (48% females vs. around a third of males and non-binary youth).

On the day they completed the survey, half (50%) of local students woke up feeling like they got enough rest. Students who reported going offline and who did not engage in any activity after their expected bedtime were more likely to wake up feeling rested (60% vs. 48% who did not go offline).



## ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

In East Kootenay, 27% of youth reported that they had not needed health care in the past year, which was above the provincial rate of 22%. However, the percentage of youth who had needed health care but had not been able to access it (3%) was comparable to the rest of the province.

Similar to the provincial rate, most students who had accessed health care had visited a family doctor. Students in East Kootenay were less likely to have visited a walk-in clinic than youth across the province (15% vs. 35%), but were more likely to have visited an emergency room (21% vs. 16%) or a nurse (13% vs. 9%).

When asked specifically about accessing medical care when they were physically sick or hurt in the past year, 59% reported they did not need this type of medical help, 33% got the help they needed, and 8% did not get the help they needed (6% of males and 10% of females).

The percentage of students who did not get the medical care they needed was similar to 2013, but half the rate of a decade ago (8% vs. 16% in 2008).

| Where East Kootenay youth got health care in the past year |     |
|--|-----|
| Family doctor  | 64% |
| Emergency room (ER)  | 21% |
| Walk-in clinic   | 15% |
| Nurse  | 13% |
| Counsellor/psychologist                                    | 12% |
| Youth clinic   | 3%  |
| School wellness centre                                     | 2%  |
| Traditional healer   | 1%  |

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

## DENTAL VISITS

Most youth (86%) had been to the dentist in the past 12 months, while 9% had visited the dentist between a year and two years ago, 3% had visited more than two years ago, and 2% had never been to the dentist. The percentage who had never been to the dentist was similar to five years ago.

Almost 1 in 10 students (9%) who had been to the dentist reported that their last visit had been for pain.

## NUTRITION

Provincially, there was a slight decrease from 2013 in the percentage of youth who ate fruit or vegetables on the day before taking the BC AHS. However, the local rate has remained consistent over the past decade (92%).

Reflecting the pattern in 2013, local youth were more likely than those across the province to have eaten food grown or caught by them or their family (21% vs. 16%), and to have consumed energy drinks (11% vs. 7%).

Compared to five years ago, there was an increase in the percentage of local youth who ate fast food on the day before taking the survey (42% vs. 36%). However, this was below the provincial rate (42% vs. 47%), as was the percentage who ate food from their culture or background (23% vs. 41%).

| What East Kootenay students ate or drank yesterday       |               |                     |
|--|---------------|---------------------|
|  | Once or twice | Three or more times |
| Water  | 22%           | 76%                 |
| Fruit  | 58%           | 26%                 |
| Vegetables or green salad                                | 59%           | 20%                 |
| Sweets (cookies, cake, candy, chocolate, etc.)           | 65%           | 12%                 |
| Fast food (pizza, hot dogs, burgers, chips, fries, etc.) | 37%           | 5%                  |
| Pop  | 34%           | 4%                  |
| Traditional food from their background                   | 17%           | 6%                  |
| Food grown/caught by them or their family                | 16%           | 5%                  |
| Energy drinks  | 9%            | 2%                  |

## MEALS

Provincially, there was a decline in the percentage of youth who ate breakfast on school days. However, this was not the case locally where just over half (51%) always ate breakfast and 19% never ate breakfast on school days.

When asked about all the places they ate breakfast on school days, local youth most commonly ate at home, while 8% got their breakfast on the way to school and 5% ate at school. Local youth were more likely than their peers across the province to eat breakfast at home and were less likely to eat at school (vs. 8% provincially).

Consistent with provincial results, 62% of local youth always ate lunch on school days and 86% always ate dinner, whilst 6% never ate lunch and 1% never ate dinner. Less than 4 in 10 (37%) always ate three meals a day on school days.

As in previous years, males were more likely than females to always eat breakfast on school days (57% vs. 44%). They were also the most likely to eat lunch and dinner.

## EATING BEHAVIOURS

*"I've recently begun to seek out help for overcoming an eating disorder and would really like to see more easily acceptable anonymous places to get information on recovery."*

**Grade 12 student**

Overall, 13% of local youth had vomited on purpose after eating in the past year, including 2% who did so two or three times a month and 2% who vomited at least once a week.

Reflecting the provincial trend, there was an increase in males who reported vomiting on purpose after eating in the past year (from 4% in 2013 to 11% in 2018). The rate for females was comparable to five years earlier (15%).



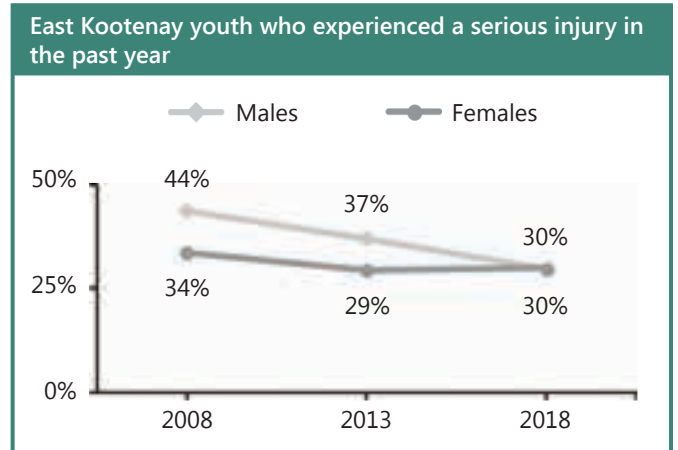
# INJURIES & INJURY PREVENTION

## INJURIES

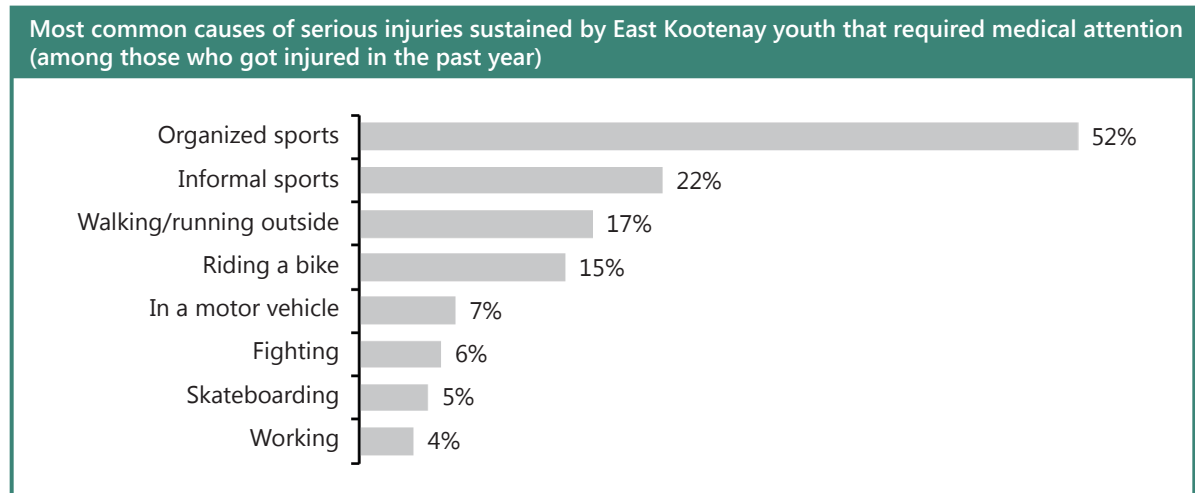
In the past year, local youth were more likely than their peers across the province to have sustained an injury serious enough to require medical attention (30% vs. 26%), with 8% experiencing two serious injuries and 4% experiencing three or more.

Reflecting the provincial pattern, the percentage of males who were seriously injured declined over the past decade but remained comparable for females. This decrease for males meant there was no longer a gender difference in serious injury rates in 2018.

Consistent with the provincial results and with previous local results, East Kootenay youth were most likely to have been seriously injured when they were playing or training for organized sports.



Note: The differences across survey years were not statistically significant for females.



Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

## CONCUSSIONS

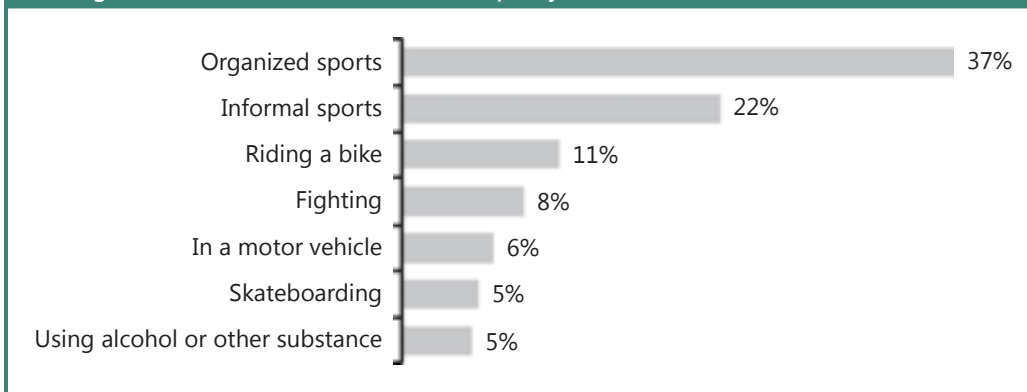
Youth in East Kootenay were more likely than their peers across the province to have suffered a concussion in the past year (17% vs. 13%), including 4% who experienced two or more concussions.

Youth who experienced a concussion typically reported multiple symptoms including headaches (74%); dizziness or balance problems (65%); blurred vision (52%); feeling dazed, confused, or experiencing memory loss (48%); ringing in their ears (48%); and loss of consciousness (23%).

Consistent with youth across the province, 52% of local youth who experienced a concussion in the past year received medical treatment for their injury.

As was the case with serious injuries and consistent with provincial results, the most common activity local youth were doing when they suffered a concussion was playing or training for organized sports.

Most common activities East Kootenay youth were doing when they suffered a concussion (among those who had a concussion in the past year)



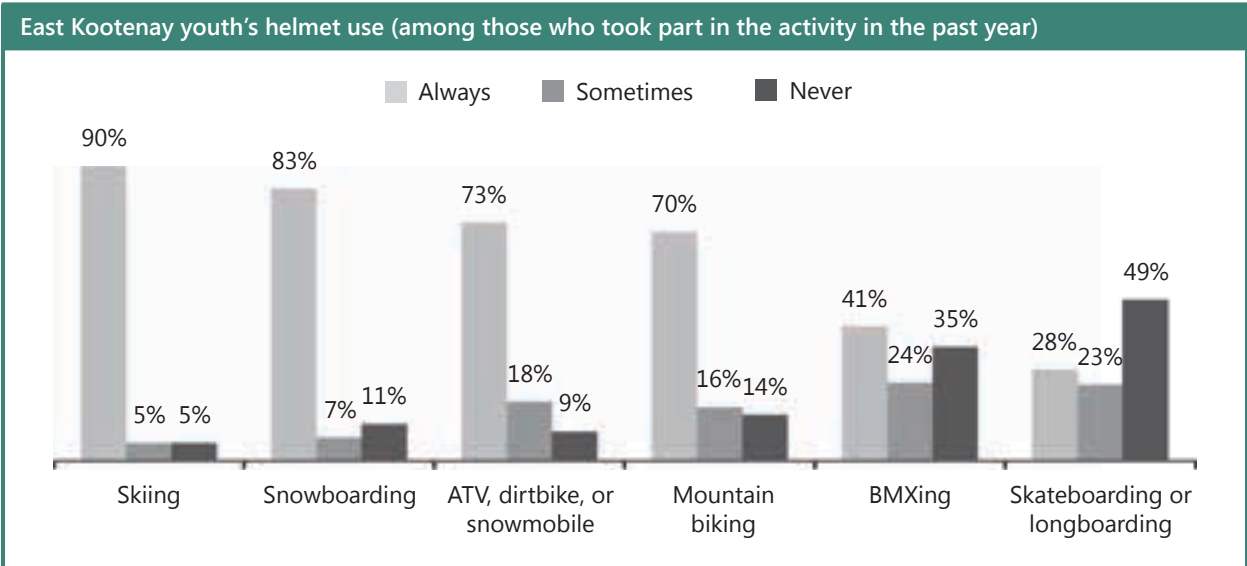
Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

## INJURY PREVENTION

Between 2013 and 2018, there was a provincial decline in the percentage of students who always wore a seatbelt when travelling in a vehicle. This was not the case locally, as the percentage who always wore a seatbelt (66%) remained similar to 2013 and higher than in 2008 (61%). However, local students remained less likely than their peers across BC to always wear a seatbelt (66% vs. 73%). As in 2013, there were no gender differences in seatbelt use.

Youth were asked if they wore a helmet when doing a range of activities that could put them at risk of a serious head injury. Between 2008 and 2013, there was an increase locally and provincially in wearing a helmet when cycling. However, provincially, helmet use continued to increase, whereas local rates remained similar to 2013 but above those of a decade earlier (42% in 2018 vs. 22% in 2008).

Helmet use in other activities was similar to rates across the province, except local youth were more likely to wear a helmet when skiing (90% vs. 82%) and riding an ATV, dirt bike, or snowmobile (73% vs. 66%).



Note: For skiing, snowboarding, and mountain biking, the differences between ‘sometimes’ and ‘never’ were not statistically significant.

Note: For BMXing, the difference between ‘always’ and ‘never’ was not statistically significant.

Note: For skateboarding or longboarding, the difference between ‘always’ and ‘sometimes’ was not statistically significant.

Note: Percentages for snowboarding do not equal 100% due to rounding.



## MENTAL HEALTH

*"There should be more awareness around mental health in the schools. It is never talked about."*

Grade 10 student

Overall, 73% of East Kootenay students rated their mental health as good or excellent. This represented a decrease from 82% in 2013 and mirrored the trend seen across BC. As in 2013, males were more likely than females to rate their mental health positively.

## HAPPINESS

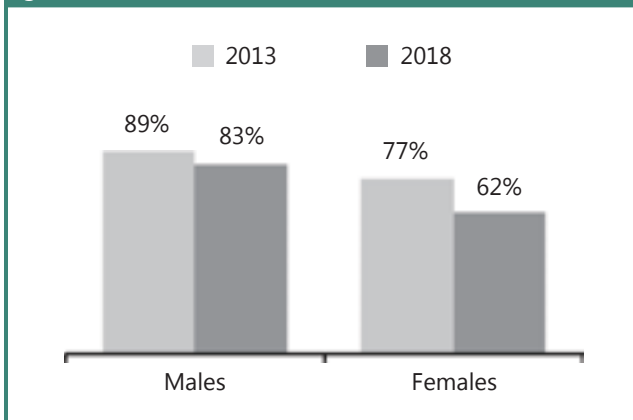
*"My family makes me depressed, but when I leave them I get happy again."*

Grade 7 student

Comparable to the province as whole, 67% of students felt happy most or all of the time in the past month, 20% felt happy some of the time, and 13% rarely or never did.

As was the case in 2013, males were more likely than females to feel happy most or all of the time (76% vs. 57%). Also, females in 2018 were more likely than those in 2013 to rarely or never feel happy (16% vs. 11%).

East Kootenay youth who rated their mental health as good/excellent



## STRESS & DESPAIR

Most youth in East Kootenay (82%) experienced some level of stress in the month prior to taking the survey, including 11% who felt so stressed that they could not function properly. As in previous years, females were more likely than males to experience this level of extreme stress (14% vs. 7%). Rates of extreme stress were comparable to five years ago for males and females.

For the first time, the BC AHS asked students how well they managed their stress. Among those who experienced stress, 32% felt they managed it well and 22% managed it very well. However, 28% managed their stress only fairly well and 19% managed it poorly.

Over half of students (53%) felt at least a little sad, discouraged, or hopeless in the past month to the point that they wondered if anything was worthwhile. This was an increase from 47% in 2008 but similar to 2013. Also similar to five years ago, 8% of youth (5% of males vs. 11% of females) reported feeling such extreme despair that they were not able to function.

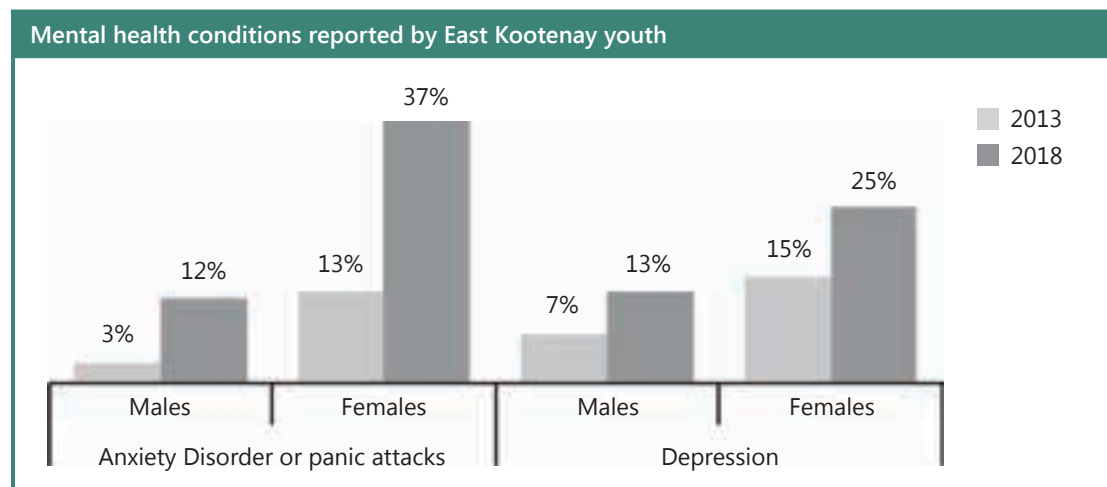
## MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

*"Sometimes I work myself into a panic. I overwork myself on the smallest things, and it's begun to effect my mental health."*

**Grade 11 student**

There were increases in youth reporting specific mental health conditions. A quarter (25%) had Anxiety Disorder/panic attacks (vs. 9% in 2013), 19% had Depression (vs. 12%), 12% had Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD; vs. 7%), and 4% had Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The percentage who reported having Asperger's or Autism Spectrum Disorder (2%) was similar to 2013.

Females were more likely than males to report having Anxiety Disorder/panic attacks, Depression, and PTSD (5% vs. 2%), while males were more likely to have ADHD (14% vs. 8%). Among non-binary students, 55%\* reported having Depression and 41%\* reported Anxiety Disorder/panic attacks.



## SELF-HARM & SUICIDALITY

*"I have hurt myself in the past but I have received a lot of help from friends and family that have got me up and going again."*

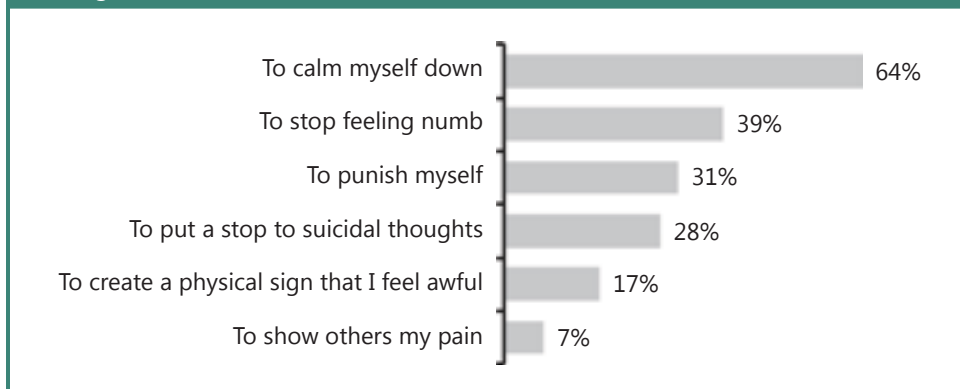
Grade 7 student

In the past year, around 1 in 5 youth (21%) had cut or injured themselves on purpose without the intent of killing themselves. Males were the least likely to have done so (e.g., 13% vs. 28% of females), and a little under half (47%\*) of non-binary youth had self-harmed in the past year. The most common reason youth gave for the last time they had self-harmed was to calm themselves down.

A fifth (20%) of local youth had seriously considered suicide in the past year, which was an increase for females (from 19% in 2013 to 26% in 2018), but was comparable to five years ago for males (14% in 2018).

Locally, 8% of youth had attempted suicide in the past year (vs. 5% provincially). As with suicide ideation, females were more likely than males to have attempted suicide (11% vs. 5%). The percentages of male and female youth who had attempted suicide were comparable to previous years.

East Kootenay youth's most commonly reported reasons for self-harming the last time (among those who self-harmed)



Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

## MISSED OUT ON NEEDED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Around one in five (19%) East Kootenay students indicated they had needed mental health services in the past year but had not accessed them. This rate was comparable to the province as a whole, and represented a local increase from 11% in 2013.

Among students who did not access needed mental health services, the reasons they had not sought help were similar to youth across the province and to local youth five years ago.

| Reasons East Kootenay youth did not access mental health services (among those who felt they needed services in the past year) |     |
|--|-----|
| Thought or hoped the problem would go away   | 58% |
| Didn't want parents to know  | 55% |
| Afraid of what I would be told   | 45% |
| Afraid someone I know might see me   | 42% |
| Didn't know where to go  | 36% |
| Too busy to go   | 35% |
| Had prior negative experience  | 19% |
| Didn't think I could afford it   | 16% |
| Parent/guardian would not take me  | 10% |
| Had no transportation  | 7%  |
| On a waiting list  | 6%  |
| Couldn't go when it was open   | NR  |
| The service was unavailable in my community  | NR  |

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

NR: Not releasable due to the risk of deductive disclosure.

# SEXUAL HEALTH

## ORAL SEX

Locally, 30% of youth had engaged in oral sex, which was similar to five years ago and lower than in 2008 (35%). As was the case in 2013, local students were more likely to have had oral sex than their peers across the province (22% provincially).

Among East Kootenay students who ever had oral sex, 20% used a condom or other barrier/protection the last time they had oral sex (similar to the rate in 2013).

## INTERCOURSE

Across BC, students were more likely to have engaged in oral sex than sexual intercourse. However, that was not the case locally, where rates of engaging in these sexual behaviours were similar.

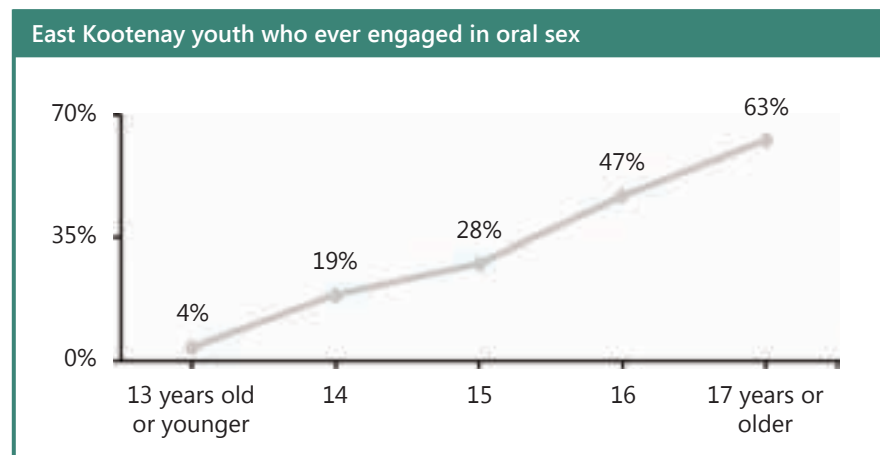
In 2018, 28% of East Kootenay youth had ever had sex other than oral sex or masturbation, which was similar to the percentage 5 years ago and

lower than 10 years ago (32%). Local youth were more likely to have had intercourse compared to BC students overall (28% vs. 20%).

As with oral sex, the most common age for first doing so was 15 years old, and most of those who had intercourse were 15 or older (62%). This rate has remained stable over the past decade.

About half of local youth (48%) who ever had intercourse had one sexual partner in the past year, 23% had two partners, 21% had three or more partners, and 8% did not have intercourse in the past year.

Comparable to students across the province and to local results over the past decade, 68% of local youth who engaged in intercourse used a condom or other barrier/protection the last time they had sex. As in 2013, males who had intercourse were more likely than females to use protection (75% vs. 61%).



When asked specifically about what efforts they made to prevent pregnancy the last time they had sex, condoms remained the most common method. Also, 6% used withdrawal as their only contraceptive method (compared to 10% provincially).

One percent of youth had ever been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant.

Reflecting the provincial picture, 1% of youth had been told by a doctor or nurse that they had an STI.

## HPV VACCINE

The HPV vaccines protect against infection from certain types of cancers. Less than a third (31%) of youth in this region reported they had been vaccinated (19% of youth who were assigned male on their birth certificate and 43% of females). Fifty-four percent of youth (60% of males vs. 47% of females) did not know whether they had received the vaccine.

## REFUSAL SKILLS

For the first time the BC AHS asked questions about student's refusal skills in response to unwanted sexual behaviour. Most youth felt they were able to say 'no' if they were asked to engage in a sexual activity which they did not want to do.

### Most common methods East Kootenay youth used to prevent pregnancy the last time they had intercourse (among those who ever had intercourse)

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Condoms  | 62% |
| Birth control pills, birth control patch, Nuva Ring, or other method prescribed by doctor or nurse | 52% |
| Withdrawal   | 42% |
| Emergency contraception  | 6%  |

Note: The percentage who used Depo Provera, IUD, were not sure what method they used, and used no method were not releasable due to the risk of deductive disclosure.

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

## USED PHONE TO SEXT OR WATCH PORNOGRAPHY

Seven percent of East Kootenay students with a phone used it on their most recent school day to engage in sexting (a decrease from 15% in 2013), and 9% used their device to watch pornography (asked for the first time on the 2018 survey).

Older youth were more likely than younger ones to report using their phone to watch pornography on their last school day (e.g., 11% of youth aged 16 to 18 vs. 4% of youth aged 13 or younger).

### East Kootenay youth who felt they could say no if asked to ...

|  | Could say no | Couldn't say no | Not sure |
|--|--------------|-----------------|----------|
| Have sex with a new partner when they didn't want to       | 90%          | 3%              | 7%       |
| Have sex with a long-term partner when they didn't want to | 86%          | 4%              | 10%      |
| Send nudes/sext  | 91%          | 3%              | 6%       |

## SUBSTANCE USE

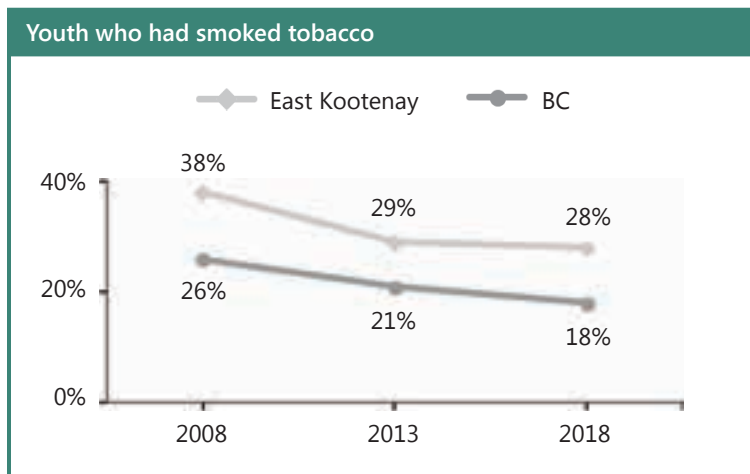
### SMOKING, VAPING, & TOBACCO USE

Over a quarter (28%) of male and female students in East Kootenay had smoked tobacco (e.g., cigarettes, cigars, or cigarillos), as had 50%\* of non-binary students.

Over the past decade, there was a decline in smoking tobacco provincially, but the decline seen locally between 2008 and 2013 did not continue. East Kootenay youth remained more likely than their peers across BC to have tried smoking.

Locally, 35% of those who tried smoking waited until they were at least 15 years old to first do so, and almost a quarter (24%) first smoked before their 13<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Among those who had ever smoked tobacco, 53% smoked in the past month, including 11% who smoked daily. These rates were comparable to local rates over the past decade.

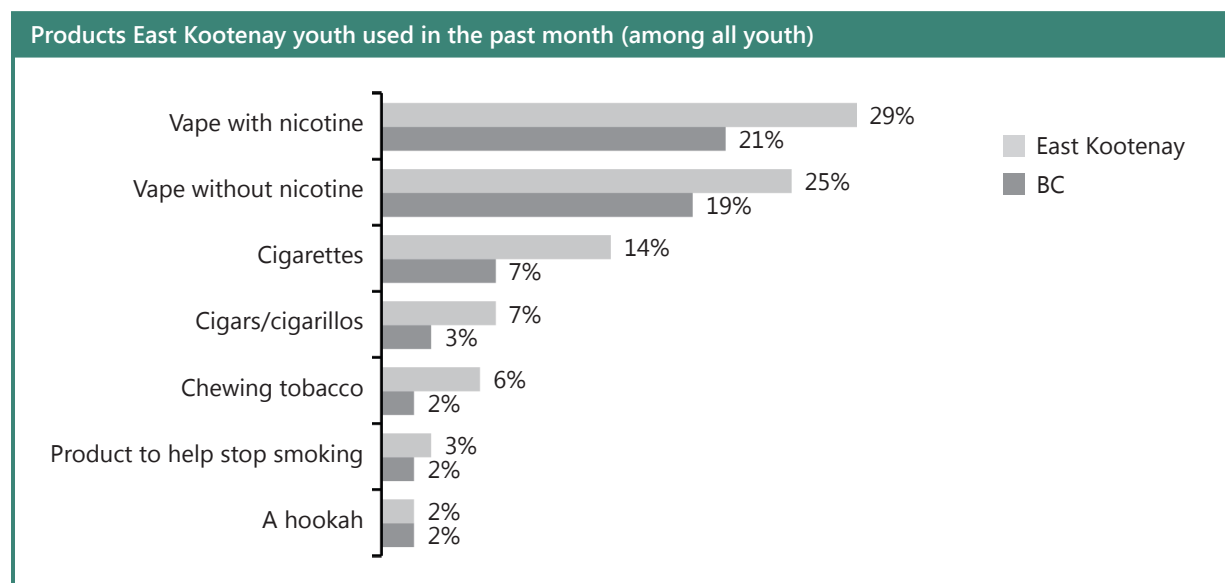


Note: The difference between 2013 and 2018 in East Kootenay was not statistically significant.

Reflecting the provincial pattern, the most common smoking products used by students in the past month were a vape pen or stick with or without nicotine. Compared to the province, local youth were more likely to vape, smoke cigarettes and cigars/cigarillos, and use chewing tobacco.

There were some gender differences in the products youth used, with local males more likely than females to have used chewing tobacco (9% vs. 3%) and a product to help them stop smoking (4% vs. 2%).

Among students who reported they had smoked tobacco, 68% vaped with nicotine and 49% vaped without nicotine in the past month, which were comparable to provincial rates. Youth who had never smoked tobacco were also vaping, as 13% vaped with nicotine and 15% vaped without nicotine in the past month.



Note: The difference for 'Product to help stop smoking' was not statistically significant.





## ALCOHOL

*"How do you know if you're an alcoholic, when one of your parents are?"*

Grade 10 student

After a decline between 2008 and 2013, the percentage of youth in East Kootenay who had ever tried alcohol remained stable (57% in 2018). This was higher than the provincial rate (44%). As in 2013, males and females in East Kootenay were equally likely to have tried alcohol.

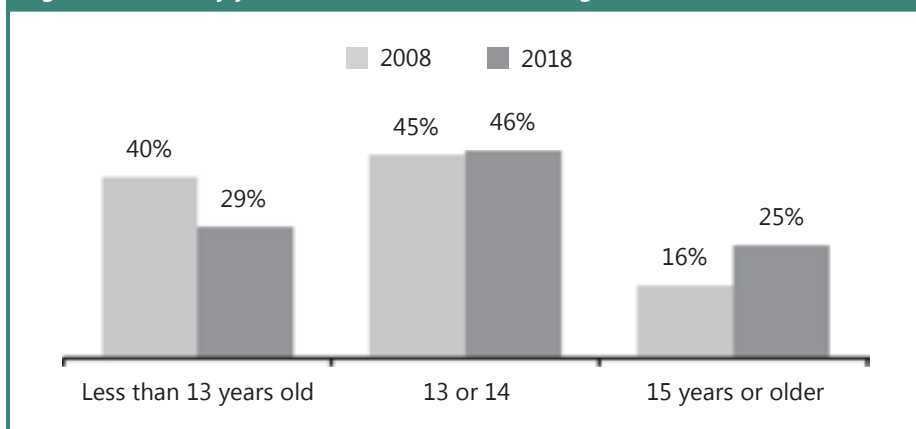
The most common ages for youth to have their first drink of alcohol were 13 or 14. Among those who had tried alcohol, 25% waited until they were 15 or older to first drink. This was consistent with local results in 2013, and lower than the 37% provincially who waited until they were at least 15 to drink alcohol.

Among youth who had tried alcohol, 71% drank alcohol in the past month, including 6% who drank on at least 10 days that month.

Among students who had tried alcohol, East Kootenay youth were more likely than their peers across the province to have drunk alcohol on the Saturday before completing the survey (44% vs. 35%). Local students most commonly drank liquor (34%, among those who had tried alcohol) and coolers (31% vs. 24% in 2013), and fewer drank beer (23%) and wine (3%).

Males were more likely than females to drink beer (32% vs. 13%), while females were more likely to drink coolers (42% vs. 19% of males). Local youth were less likely than those in the province as a whole to drink wine (3% vs. 6%), and more likely to drink liquor (34% vs. 28%) and coolers (31% vs. 22%).

Age East Kootenay youth first drank alcohol (among those who had tried alcohol)



Note: The difference for '13 or 14' was not statistically significant.

Note: Percentages for 2013 were similar to those for 2018 in all age categories.

Among youth who drank last Saturday, 60% mixed at least two different types of alcohol (e.g., drank liquor and coolers), including 19% who mixed three or four types.

Canadian Low Risk Drinking Guidelines suggest not exceeding two drinks on any one occasion. Among local youth who had tried alcohol, 39% had more than two drinks at least once in the week before they took the survey, and 9% did so on at least three days that week.

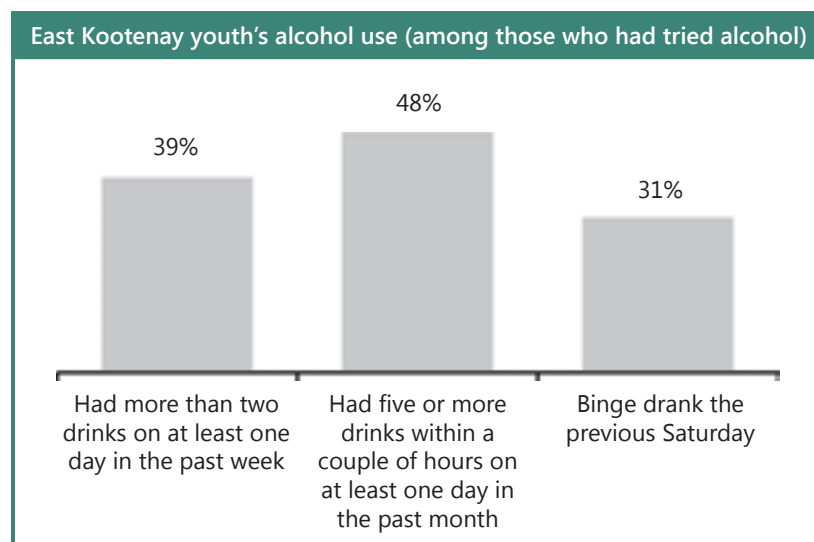
Also, 48% consumed five or more drinks within a couple of hours at least once in the past month (with no gender differences), and 9% did so on six or more days (among those who had tried alcohol). The percentage of youth who engaged in this type of heavy drinking returned to 2008 levels after dropping to 42% in 2013.

Binge drinking refers to males who consume four or more alcoholic drinks within a couple of hours and females who consume three or more. Among students who drank on the Saturday before taking the survey, 70% engaged in binge drinking, which was a decrease from 79% in 2013.

For the first time, the BC AHS asked youth where they got their alcohol the last time they drank. Youth in East Kootenay most commonly got their alcohol from an adult.

| Where East Kootenay youth got alcohol from the last time (among those who had tried alcohol) |     |
|--|-----|
| Adult gave it to me  | 42% |
| Gave someone money to buy it for me  | 30% |
| At a party   | 28% |
| Took it without permission   | 11% |
| Youth gave it to me  | 10% |
| Bought it  | 9%  |
| Exchanged something for it   | NR  |
| Made it  | NR  |

NR: Not releasable due to the risk of deductive disclosure.



Note: Binge drinking refers to males who consume four or more alcoholic drinks within a couple of hours and to females who consume three or more.

## MARIJUANA

*"I use marijuana quite a bit (usually every day). I don't know how it will affect me in the future. When I first began using it, I noticed I slept much better and I was much more focused in school. That's why I use it."*

**Grade 11 student**

The 2018 BC AHS was completed a month before marijuana was legalized for adults in Canada. A third (33%) of youth in East Kootenay had tried marijuana (with no gender differences), which was above the provincial rate (25%). Locally, the percentage who had tried marijuana was similar to five years ago, and lower than in 2008 (40%).

The most common ages for local youth to first try marijuana were 13 to 15 years old. They were less likely than a decade ago to first use marijuana before the age of 13 (17% vs. 23%).

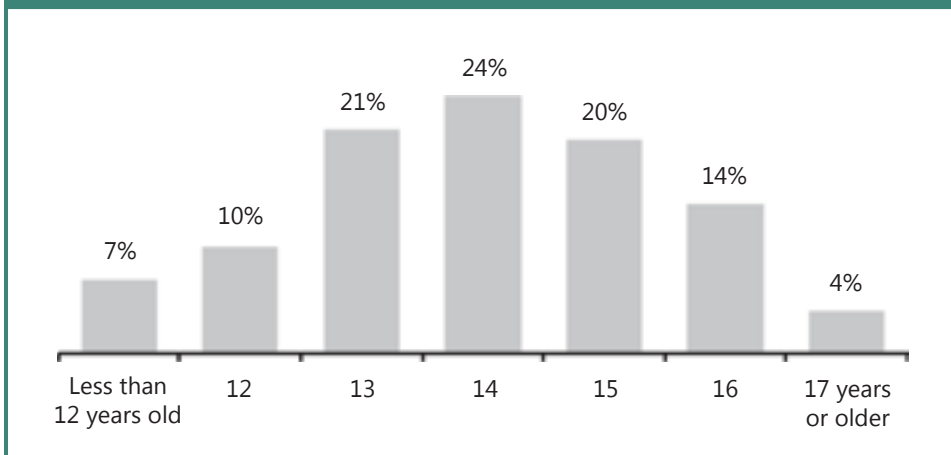
Among youth who had tried marijuana, 55% had used it in the month preceding the survey, which was comparable to 5 and 10 years earlier. Also comparable to previous years, 23% of those who had used marijuana used it on six or more days in the month before taking the survey, including 14% who used it on 20 or more days.

Nearly a third (31%) of East Kootenay youth who had tried marijuana had used it on the Saturday before taking the survey. Also, 7% of local youth had used both alcohol and marijuana that day, which was a decrease from 10% in 2013.

The last time they used marijuana, most students (92%) had smoked it, 9% ate it in a cooked recipe, and 6% took it another way such as through a bong.

One percent of local youth had been prescribed medical marijuana.

Age East Kootenay youth first used marijuana (among those who had tried marijuana)



## USE OF SUBSTANCES OTHER THAN ALCOHOL & MARIJUANA

Twenty-three percent of local youth had used at least one substance other than alcohol or marijuana (compared to 16% provincially). Youth in East Kootenay most commonly reported the misuse of prescription medications and mushrooms (also referred to on the survey as shrooms and magic mushrooms).

Compared to 2013, there were no changes locally in the rates of using substances other than alcohol or marijuana. However, the use of some substances was lower than in 2008, including prescription pills without a doctor's consent (12% vs. 17% in 2008), hallucinogens (5% vs. 8%), and inhalants (4% vs. 6%).

One percent of East Kootenay youth had injected an illegal drug.

| Ever used substances other than alcohol and marijuana |               |    |
|---|---------------|----|
|   | East Kootenay | BC |
| Prescription pills without a doctor's consent         | 12%           | 9% |
| Mushrooms   | 10%           | 5% |
| More of my own prescription than prescribed           | 7%            | 5% |
| Ecstasy/MDMA  | 6%            | 3% |
| Hallucinogens (excluding ecstasy/MDMA & ketamine)     | 5%            | 3% |
| Cocaine   | 5%            | 3% |
| Inhalants   | 4%            | 2% |
| Amphetamines (excluding ecstasy/MDMA & crystal meth)  | 2%            | 1% |
| Ketamine, GHB   | 1%            | 1% |
| Crystal meth  | 1%            | 1% |
| Heroin  | 1%            | 1% |
| Other substances                                      | NR            | 1% |

Note: The difference between East Kootenay and BC was not statistically significant for amphetamines, crystal meth, heroin, and other substances.

NR: Not releasable due to the risk of deductive disclosure.



## CONSEQUENCES OF USE

Reflecting the pattern in 2013, 55% of youth who used alcohol or other substances reported negative consequences of their use in the past year. The most common was being told they did something they couldn't remember.

Among youth who ever had sex, 21% used alcohol or other substances before having sex the last time, which was similar to 2013 and a decrease from 31% in 2008.

In the past year, 8% of students felt that they needed help or were told that they needed help for their substance use. In total, 5% needed help for their alcohol use, 4% for their marijuana use, and 3% for their use of other substances. Also, when asked about health conditions, 6% of youth indicated having an alcohol or drug addiction (compared to 3% provincially).

| Consequences of substance use experienced by East Kootenay youth in the past year (among those who used alcohol or other substances during that time) |     |
|---|-----|
| Was told I did something I couldn't remember  | 40% |
| Passed out  | 29% |
| Got injured   | 19% |
| Argued with family members  | 17% |
| Lost friends or broke up with a girlfriend, boyfriend, or significant other   | 12% |
| School work or grades changed   | 10% |
| Got into a physical fight   | 8%  |
| Got into trouble with the police  | 7%  |
| Had sex when I didn't want to   | 7%  |
| Damaged property  | 6%  |
| Overdosed   | 3%  |
| Had to get medical treatment  | 3%  |
| Used alcohol or drugs but none of these happened  | 45% |

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

## DRIVING AFTER SUBSTANCE USE

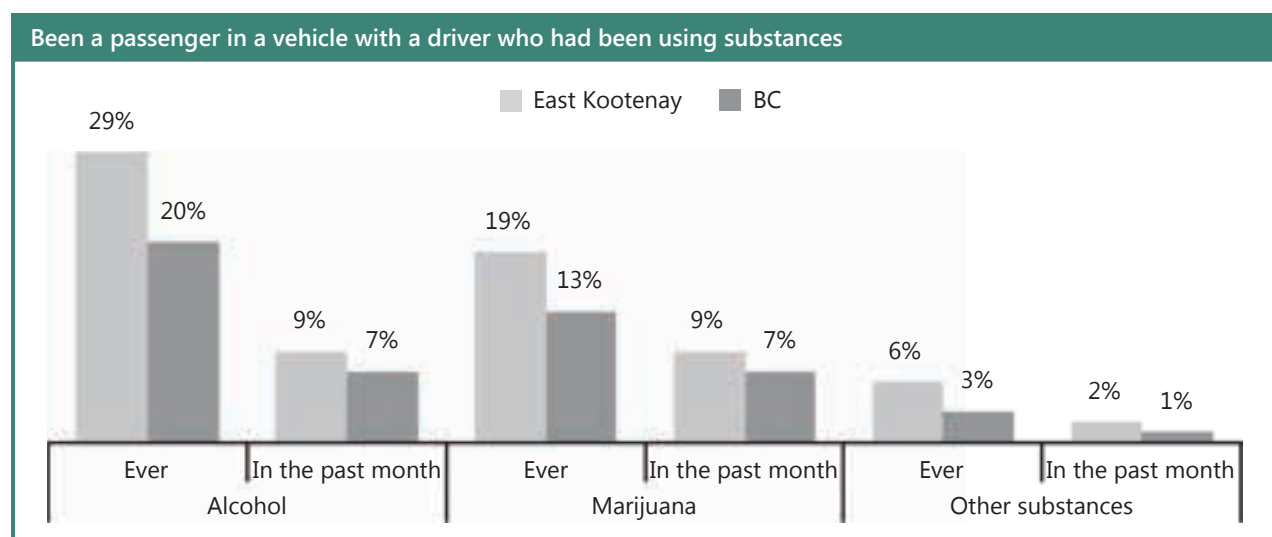
Among youth who had ever tried alcohol, 8% reported driving a vehicle after they had been drinking, which was comparable to the rate five years ago and below the rate a decade ago (14%). Similar to 2013, 3% of youth who had drunk alcohol drove after drinking in the past month (7% in 2008).

Sixteen percent of local youth who had tried marijuana drove after using it, which was also comparable to 2013 and lower than 2008 (23%). The percentage who drove after using marijuana in the past month decreased from 11% in 2013 to 6% (among those who had tried marijuana).

Also, 8% of youth who used substances other than alcohol or marijuana had ever driven after using such substances. (The percentage of youth who engaged in this behaviour in the past month was too small to report.)

Rates of driving after alcohol, marijuana, and other substance use were comparable to the provincial rates.

While youth in East Kootenay were more likely to drive after using marijuana than after drinking alcohol, they were more likely to be a passenger of a driver who had been using alcohol. However, they were less likely than in 2013 to have ridden with a driver who had been using alcohol (29% vs. 34%). Rates of riding with a driver who had been using marijuana remained stable.



Note: The difference between East Kootenay and BC for being a passenger of a driver who had been using 'Other substances' in the past month was not statistically significant.

## REASONS FOR USING

The reasons youth used substances were similar to 2013, with wanting to have fun still the most common reason.

There were some gender differences in the reasons youth used substances. For example, females were more likely than males to have used substances because they were stressed (27% vs. 16%) and because they felt down or sad (27% vs. 15%).

| Reasons East Kootenay youth used substances the last time (among those who ever used alcohol or other substances) |     |
|---|-----|
| I wanted to have fun  | 70% |
| My friends were doing it  | 30% |
| I wanted to try it/experiment   | 27% |
| Because of stress   | 22% |
| I felt down or sad  | 21% |
| I felt like there was nothing else to do  | 11% |
| To manage physical pain   | 6%  |
| Because of an addiction   | 5%  |
| I thought it would help me focus  | 3%  |
| I was pressured into doing it   | 3%  |
| I didn't mean to do it  | NR  |
| To change the effects of some other drug  | NR  |
| Other   | 9%  |

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

Note: Among youth who wrote 'Other' they most commonly cited a special occasion.

NR: Not releasable due to risk of deductive disclosure.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

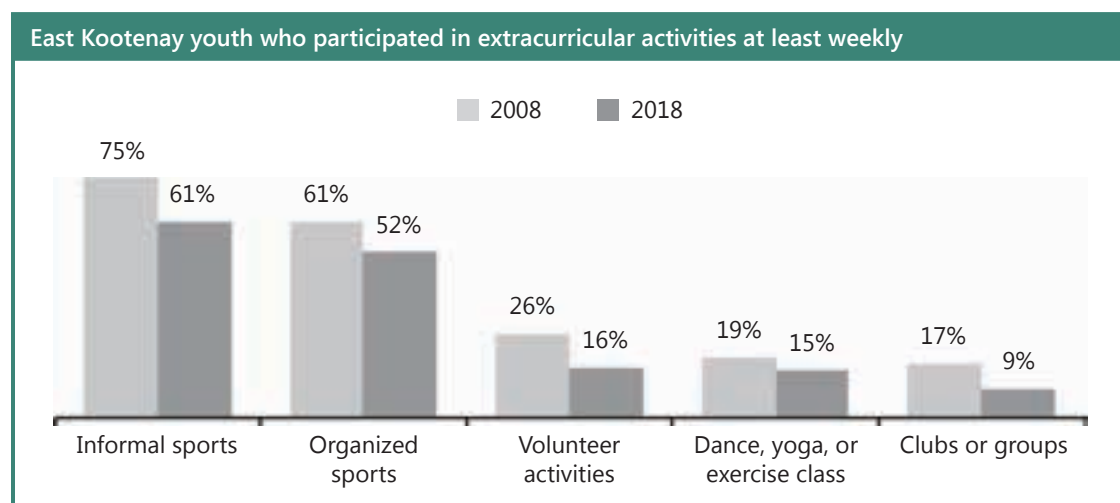
BC AHS results show that participation in extracurricular activities can have many benefits, including an increased likelihood that youth will have access to a supportive adult outside their family and will feel connected to their community. Engaging in regular physical activity (such as weekly organized or informal sports) is also linked to better mental health and better sleep patterns.

In the past year, 92% of youth in East Kootenay participated in at least one extracurricular activity (such as extreme sports, music classes, yoga, or volunteering), including 85% who did so on a weekly basis. Among youth who engaged in weekly extracurricular activities, 75% took part in at least two or more different types of activities, including 15% who participated in four or more weekly activities.

The most common weekly extracurricular activity local youth engaged in was informal sports (sports without a coach such as biking,

skateboarding, hiking). Participation rates were similar to 2013 for most extracurricular activities, including extreme sports (24%), and cultural or traditional activities (4%). However, there was a decrease in weekly participation in art, drama, singing or music lessons/groups (from 30% to 25%); and in dance, yoga, and exercise classes among females (from 31% to 22%).

Compared to a decade ago, local youth were less likely to have taken part in a range of activities on a weekly basis.



Note: Extreme sports and cultural/traditional activities were not asked about in the 2008 BC AHS.



East Kootenay youth have typically been more likely to participate in extreme sports than their peers across the province and this was also the case in 2018: as 24% engaged in extreme sports on a weekly basis compared to 9% across BC. Local youth were also more likely to participate weekly in informal sports (61% vs. 52% across BC). They were less likely to engage in weekly cultural or traditional activities (4% vs. 7%).

As in 2013, males were more likely than females to participate weekly in informal sports (66% vs. 56%) and extreme sports (35% vs. 13%). Females were more likely to participate in dance, yoga, or exercise classes (22% vs. 8%); art, drama, singing, or music groups or lessons (31% vs. 19%); and volunteering (19% vs. 13%).

The BC AHS asked youth about any barriers they may have experienced to taking part in extracurricular activities in the past year. Reflecting the provincial results, and local results from 2013, the most common barrier youth experienced was being too busy (45%). Other barriers included the activity not being available in their community (19%), being too anxious or depressed to take part (16%), not being able to afford it (13%), and having no transportation to get there or get home (12%).

There was an increase in the percentage of local youth who reported that they did not participate in extracurricular activities because they were worried about being bullied (from 6% in 2013 to 9% in 2018).

Compared to their peers across the province, East Kootenay youth were more likely to report not participating in extracurricular activities because an activity was not available in their community (19% vs. 13%) and because they were worried about being bullied (9% vs. 7%).

| East Kootenay youth's participation in extracurricular activities in the past year |       |                       |                     |                        |
|--|-------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
|  | Never | Less than once a week | 1 to 3 times a week | 4 or more times a week |
| Informal sports  | 21%   | 18%                   | 38%                 | 23%                    |
| Organized sports   | 41%   | 7%                    | 30%                 | 22%                    |
| Volunteered without pay  | 61%   | 23%                   | 13%                 | 3%                     |
| Extreme sports   | 62%   | 14%                   | 14%                 | 10%                    |
| Art/drama/singing/music (group or lessons)   | 66%   | 9%                    | 18%                 | 7%                     |
| Dance/yoga/exercise classes  | 76%   | 10%                   | 10%                 | 5%                     |
| Cultural/traditional activities  | 82%   | 14%                   | 3%                  | 1%                     |
| Clubs/groups   | 86%   | 5%                    | 7%                  | 1%                     |

Note: Percentages for each activity may not equal 100% due to rounding.

## GAMBLING

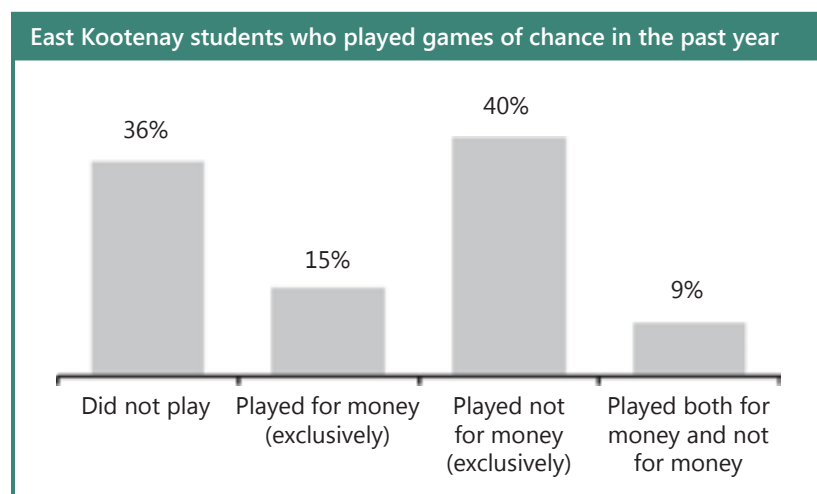
In BC, it is against the law for young people under the age of 19 to enter a gambling facility or participate in online or in-person gambling for money.

The BC AHS asked students if they had played a number of games of chance in the past year (e.g., online gaming, cards/dice, sports betting, lottery tickets/scratch cards), and, if so, whether they had played these games for money. Similar to youth across the province, 65% of East Kootenay students had played at least one of these games, including 24% who had played for money.

There were some gender differences in gambling behaviour. For example, local females were less likely than their male peers to have engaged in gambling activities either for money or not for money (52% vs. 76% for males). They were also specifically less likely to engage in sports betting and online gaming.

Among students who gambled for money in the past year, the most common ways they gambled were through buying lottery tickets/scratch cards (43%), playing cards/dice in person (40%) and engaging in sports betting in person (36%). They also gambled online through gaming (25%), playing cards/dice (8%), and sporting betting (7%). East Kootenay youth were less likely to engage in online gaming for money than youth across BC (25% vs. 37%).

Reflecting the provincial pattern, 18% of local youth who had gambled for money did so on at least a weekly basis over the past 12 months. Online gaming was the most popular weekly activity (11%), followed by playing cards/dice in person (6%).



# RISKS TO HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

This section considers some of the adverse experiences which can have lasting negative effects on young people’s health and well-being.

## POVERTY & DEPRIVATION

*“I live in a run down house and am in the lower class but I am content with my life.”*  
**Grade 11 student**

### GOING TO BED HUNGRY

In East Kootenay, 11% of youth went to bed hungry at least sometimes because there was not enough money for food at home. The percentage who never went to bed hungry because there was not enough money for food (89%) was similar to that seen provincially, but represented a local decrease from 92% in 2013 and a return to the 2008 rate.

### DEPRIVATION

Going to bed hungry because there is not enough money for food at home is a measure of extreme poverty, and the BC AHS has previously struggled to get a reliable measure of other experiences of poverty and deprivation.

With the help of over 800 young people across BC, a Youth Deprivation Index was developed for the 2018 survey. The Index highlights the 10 items BC youth felt were most important for them to have to feel like they belonged, and which if they did not have, could make them feel like they were missing out on things their peers had. The 2018 BC AHS asked youth if they had the 10 items, and whether they wished they had them if they did not.

Most youth had all the items on the list. For example, 97% of East Kootenay youth had a quiet place to sleep, while 2% did not have this but wished they had it, and 1% did not have it and did not mind or were not sure if they minded.

Reflecting the provincial pattern, the most common item that youth reported wanting but not having was money to spend on themselves.

| East Kootenay youth who felt deprived of...                   |     |
|---|-----|
| Money to spend on themselves                                  | 10% |
| Smartphone  | 6%  |
| Space of their own to hang out in                             | 5%  |
| Money for school supplies, trips & extracurricular activities | 4%  |
| Lunch for school/money to buy lunch                           | 3%  |
| Access to transportation                                      | 3%  |
| Equipment/clothes for extracurricular activities              | 3%  |
| A quiet place to sleep  | 2%  |
| Access to the Internet  | 1%  |
| Clothes to fit in   | 1%  |

When the items were considered individually, there was a link between feeling deprived and potentially negative outcomes. For example, 88% of youth who did not have but wished for a quiet place to sleep had slept for less than 8 hours on the night before completing the survey, compared to 47% of those who had somewhere quiet to sleep. Also, youth who wished for but did not have the money to buy school supplies, go on school trips, or join in extracurricular activities were less likely to think they would go on to post-secondary (55%\* vs. 81%).

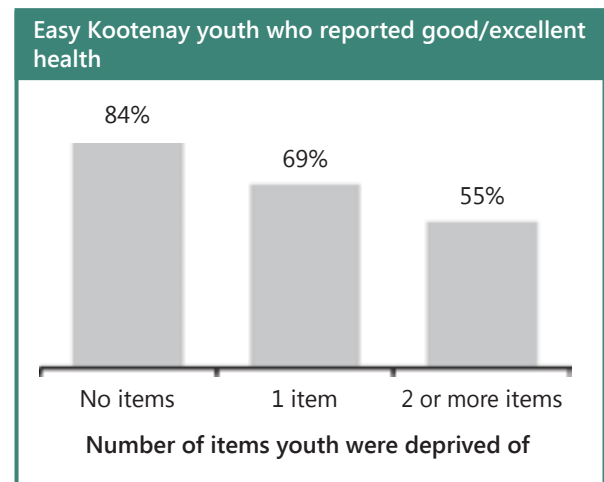
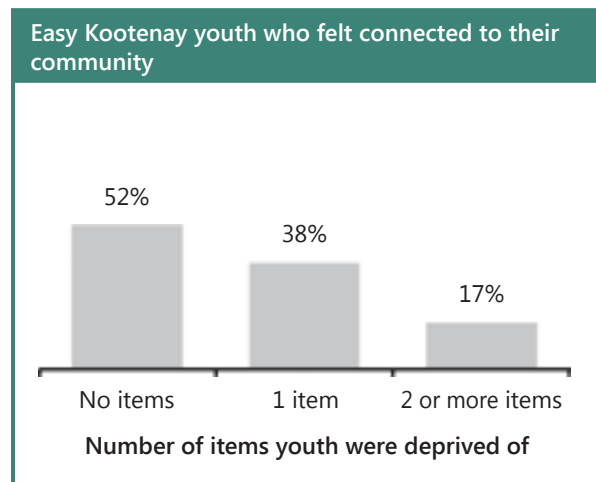
In East Kootenay, 24% of youth reported they lacked but wished they had at least one of the items in the Index, including 5% who lacked two items, 2% who lacked three items, and 1% who lacked four or more items.

The more items youth reported not having but wishing they had, the more likely they were to go to bed hungry because there was not enough money for food at home. For example, 6% of

those who had all items on the list went to bed hungry at least sometimes because there was not enough money for food at home, compared to 18% of those who felt deprived of one item and 49%\* of those who were deprived of three or more of the items.

The more items youth were deprived of, the less likely they were to feel like a part of their school or their community. For example, 34% of those who were deprived of two or more items reported feeling like a part of their school, compared to 62% of those who were not deprived of any items on the list.

The more items youth felt deprived of, the poorer their mental health and general health and well-being. For example, over three quarters (78%) of local youth who had all the items on the Index reported that their mental health was good or excellent, compared to a quarter (25%\*) of those who were deprived of three or more items on the list.



## LOSS & BEREAVEMENT

*"I have not been a victim to depression/suicidal thoughts in the last 12 months but I've seen the impact those things had on my brothers/how it still affects them, and I think growing up with such negative things going on has really shaped me into who I am."*

Grade 9 student

Most students reported that at least one person close to them had died. Causes of death included old age (51%), illness (50%), accident (19%), suicide (14%), violence (2%), fentanyl overdose (2%), and an overdose other than fentanyl (4%).

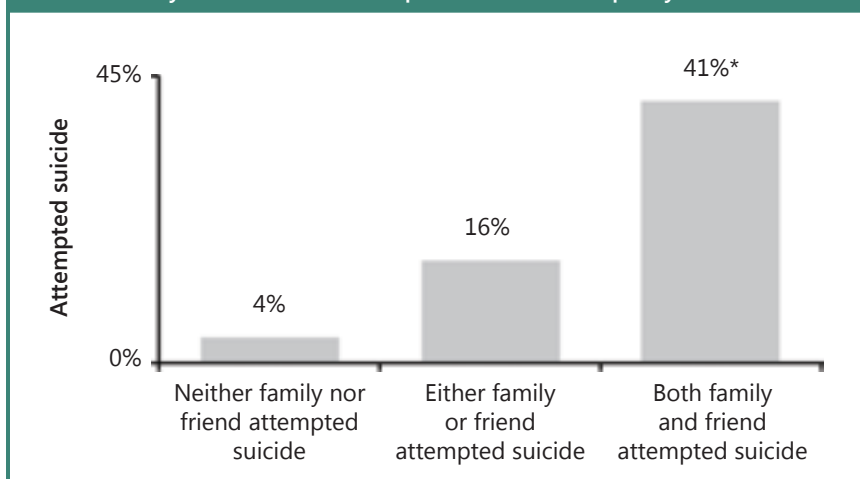
Students locally were more likely than their peers across BC to have been bereaved. For example, they were more likely to have lost someone close to them in an accident (19% vs. 13%), and as a result of suicide (14% vs. 9%).

The BC AHS also asked participants if they had a family member or close friend who had attempted or died by suicide, and if this experience had happened within the past year. Locally, 23% had a family member who had ever attempted or died by suicide (vs. 16% provincially), and 8% had this happen within the past year (vs. 5% provincially). Also, 38% had a close friend who had attempted or died by suicide (vs. 29% provincially), and 22% had experienced this within the past year (vs. 17% provincially).

Overall, one in four (25%) local students had a family member or close friend who had attempted or died by suicide within the past year (compared to 1 in 5 provincially).

Students who had a close friend or family member who had attempted or died by suicide were more likely to have attempted suicide than those who had not had one of these experiences, and those who had both a friend and family member attempt suicide were the most likely to have made a suicide attempt.

East Kootenay students who attempted suicide in the past year



\* Percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was higher than expected but is still within the releasable range.

## VIOLENCE & DISCRIMINATION

### DATING VIOLENCE

In 2018, 55% of local youth had been in a romantic relationship in the past year. Among these students, 8% had been the victim of physical violence within their dating relationship (with no gender differences). Rates of dating violence were unchanged over the past decade.

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

In the past year, 45% of students had been verbally sexually harassed, with males the least likely to have had this experience (32% of males vs. over half of females and non-binary youth).

The percentage of local males who had experienced verbal sexual harassment in the past year was similar to that of males across BC and remained stable over time. However, there was an increase locally in the percentage of females who had been verbally sexually harassed, from 51% in 2013 to 58% in 2018 (a rate higher than the 50% seen across BC).

In the past year, one in four local students (25%) had been physically sexually harassed. The percentage among males increased from five years ago (from 9% in 2013 to 13% in 2018), whereas the percentage among females was similar over time (37% in 2018).

### PHYSICAL & SEXUAL ABUSE

Reflecting the provincial picture, 15% of local students had been physically abused or mistreated, with males less likely than females to have had this experience. While the rate for females remained consistent with that in 2013 (18% in 2018), the percentage rose for males (from 8% to 12%).

Students were asked if they had ever been sexually abused and about other forms of sexual abuse that they may not have recognized as abuse, including being forced into sexual activity against their will and being the younger of an illegal age pairing at first sex.

When all forms of sexual abuse were considered, 14% had been sexually abused (compared to 11% across BC), with no improvements for males or females over the past five years. Females remained around four times more likely than males to have been sexually abused (22% vs. 6%).



## DISCRIMINATION

Provincially, there was an increase in the percentage of students who reported being discriminated against in the past year on the grounds of race, ethnicity or skin colour; sexual orientation; and physical appearance. This was not the case locally, although there was an increase in the percentage who had been discriminated against because of their or their family's income (7% in 2013 vs. 10%). Overall, 38% of students had experienced at least one form of discrimination in the past year.

## BULLYING

*"I would like to learn more about bullying and how to prevent it."*

Grade 7 student

Overall, 54% of East Kootenay youth reported that they had been bullied at school or on the way to or from school in the past year, which was similar to the percentage five years ago and to the experiences of youth across the province. Specifically, 42% of local students had been deliberately socially excluded, 40% had been teased to the point where they felt bad or extremely uncomfortable, and 11% had been physically attacked.

Also reflective of the provincial picture, 10% of students reported they had bullied someone else.

### East Kootenay youth's perceived reasons for being discriminated against in the past year

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Physical appearance  | 23% |
| Weight   | 17% |
| Income or family income  | 10% |
| Gender/sex   | 9%  |
| Race, ethnicity, or skin colour                                  | 7%  |
| Sexual orientation (e.g., being or thought to be gay or lesbian) | 6%  |
| A disability   | 4%  |

## WEAPON CARRYING

In the past 30 days, 7% of local students had carried a weapon to school, including 2% who always carried one. Students who had been the victim of bullying were more likely to carry a weapon. For example, 20% of youth who had been physically attacked in the past year carried a weapon, compared to 5% who had not been attacked.

## INTERNET SAFETY

Between 2008 and 2013, there was a decrease in the percentage of local students who had met someone online who made them feel unsafe (from 16% to 14%). However, in 2018 the rate increased to 22%. This reflected an increase for both males (9% in 2013 vs. 13%) and females (19% vs. 30%).

Similar to five years ago, 17% of students had been cyberbullied in the past year, and 7% had cyberbullied someone else. Females remained more likely than males to have been cyberbullied (23% vs. 10%), and less likely to have cyberbullied someone else (5% vs. 9%). The percentage of females who had cyberbullied someone in the past year decreased from 8%.

# SUPPORTING HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

## FAMILY

BC AHS results show that family relationships are one of the most important protective factors in the lives of youth. For example, youth who report feeling connected to family, have supportive adults they can turn to within their family, and have parents or caregivers who know what they are doing in their free time and online report better overall health and better mental health than their peers without such positive family relationships.

Youth with positive family relationships are also less likely to engage in health risk behaviours (such as risky substance use or risky sexual behaviours), and are more likely to have the skills to refuse negative peer pressure or unwanted sexual activity.

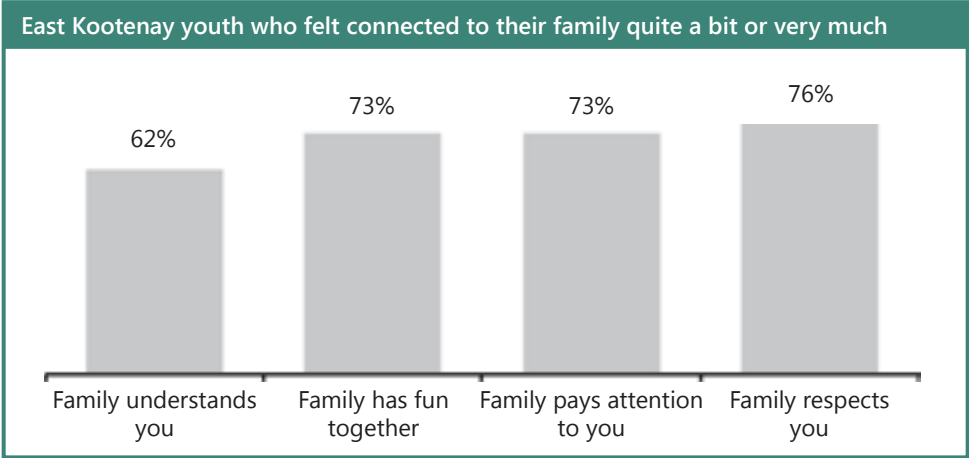
Generally, East Kootenay youth felt connected to their family, but they were more likely to feel respected by their families than understood by them. Similar to the local results in 2013, males were the most likely to feel that their family understood them and paid attention to them.

Also, 73% (71% of males vs. 75% of females) had turned to a family member for help in the past year (an increase from 68% in 2013), and the majority of these students (94%) found the support helpful.

### SUPPORTIVE FAMILY

Most local youth (72%) felt they had an adult inside their family they could talk to if they had a serious problem. As in previous years, males were the most likely to report having a supportive adult inside their family.

Provincially, there was an increase from 2013 in males and females seeking help from a family member. However, locally this increase was only seen for males (from 63% in 2013 to 71%).

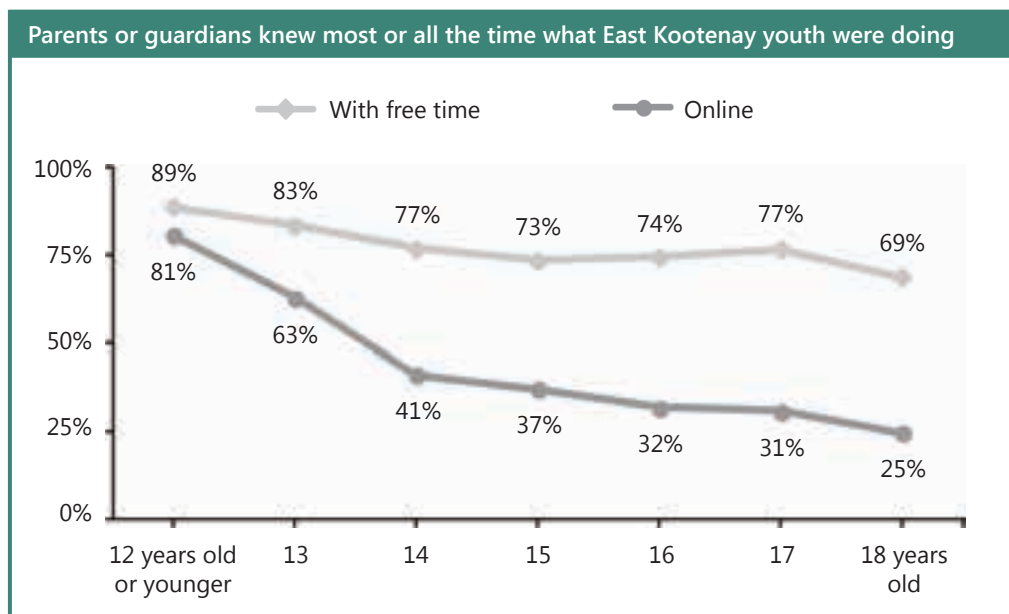




## MONITORING

Most students had parents who monitored their free time and their time online. However, 10% had parents who rarely or never knew what they were doing in their free time, and 37% reported their parents rarely or never monitored their time online.

When asked how much time they had to do the things they wanted with their family, most local students (74%) felt they had the right amount of time, and 19% felt they did not have enough time.



Note: Differences between ages were not statistically significant at every point.

# SCHOOL

School connectedness is consistently one of the strongest protective factors for BC youth. It is associated with positive academic and health-related outcomes, including positive mental health and reduced likelihood of risky substance use and risky sexual behaviour.

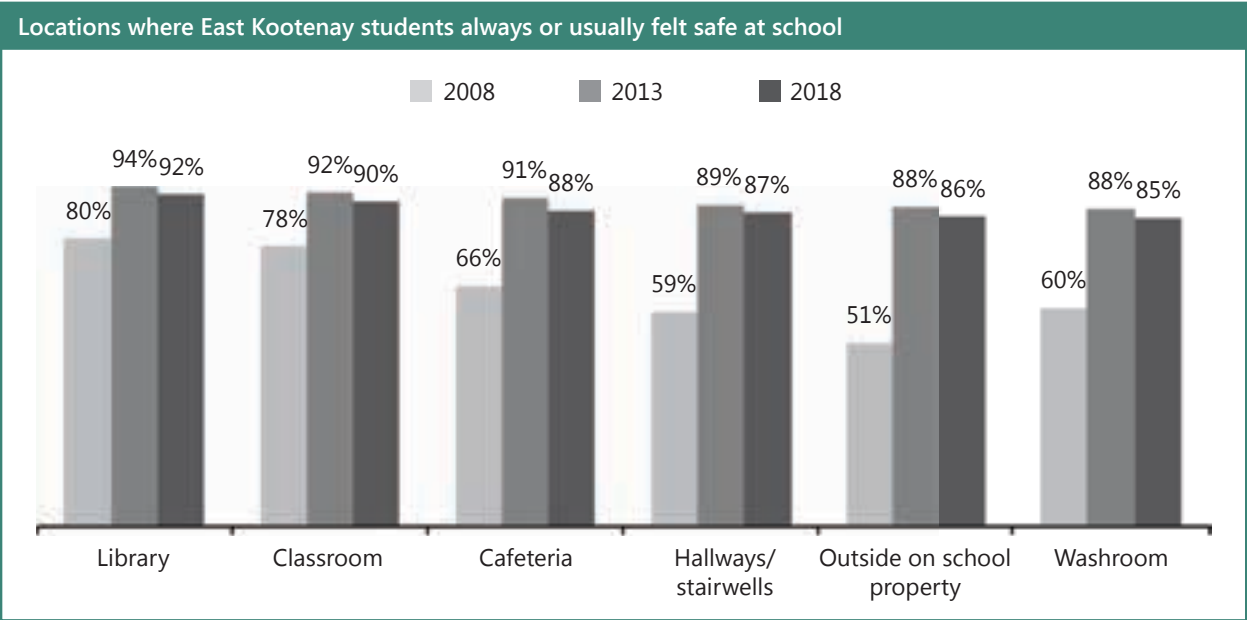
Most students in East Kootenay felt that school staff expected them to do well (78%), they were treated fairly by school staff (70%), their teachers cared about them (64%), they were part of their school (58%), and that school staff other than teachers cared about them (58%). In addition, 53% felt they were happy to be at school.

Overall, 68% of East Kootenay students felt safe at school (vs. 73% across BC). Locally, the rate was lower than five years earlier (74% in 2013) and comparable to a decade ago. Males were the most likely to feel safe at school and non-binary youth were the least likely to feel safe.

## SAFETY

*"I don't feel safe at school."*  
Grade 9 student

Consistent with provincial findings and previous survey years, when asked about specific areas of the school they felt safe in, local students felt safest in the library and classroom. Non-binary youth were less likely than males and females to feel safe in every area of their school. Males were more likely than females to feel safe in changing rooms (88% vs. 81%), hallways (91% vs. 84%), outside on school grounds (90% vs. 83%), and getting to/from school (92% vs. 88%).



Note: For library, hallways/stairwells, outside on school property, and washroom the differences between 2013 and 2018 were not statistically significant.

Compared to 2013 when the questions were first asked, there was a decrease in students who reported feeling safe in the changing rooms from 87% to 83% (88% of males vs. 81% of females and 35%\* of non-binary youth), whereas the percentage who felt safe getting to/from school was comparable (89%).

## EDUCATION PLANS

Similar to five years ago and to youth across BC, most East Kootenay students (85%) planned to finish Grade 12. However, local students were less likely to expect to go on to post-secondary than was seen provincially (80% vs. 83%). While there was a provincial decrease from 2013 in students who planned to finish Grade 12 and pursue post-secondary education, local rates were comparable over the past five years.

## SCHOOL ABSENCES

In the past month, local students most commonly missed school to attend an appointment and due to illness. They were more likely than their peers across BC to miss school because of an appointment (44% vs. 36%), illness (42% vs. 39%), family responsibilities (18% vs. 14%), mental health (18% vs. 15%), and bullying (6% vs. 4%).

There were some gender differences in the reasons youth missed classes. For example, females were more likely than males to have missed school to attend an appointment (51% vs. 37%), due to mental health challenges (24% vs. 11%), because of other school responsibilities (23% vs. 17%), and bullying (8% vs. 4%).

## COMMUTE TO SCHOOL

East Kootenay students most commonly got to school by car (47%), followed by an active means such as walking, biking, or skateboarding (30%). Also, 23% took the school bus or public transit to school.

Most (91%) had a commute that was less than 30 minutes, including around two thirds (68%) whose commute was less than 15 minutes. One percent commuted for an hour or more to get to school.

| Reasons East Kootenay students missed classes in the past month |     |
|---|-----|
| Appointments  | 44% |
| Illness   | 42% |
| Skipping class  | 28% |
| Slept in  | 23% |
| Other school responsibilities                                   | 20% |
| Mental health (e.g., anxiety, depression)                       | 18% |
| Family responsibilities   | 18% |
| Bullying  | 6%  |
| No transportation   | 5%  |
| Work  | 4%  |

Note: Youth could choose more than one response.

## COMMUNITY

Youth who feel connected to their community are more likely to feel safe in their neighbourhood, to have post-secondary aspirations, and to feel hopeful for the future; and they are less likely to engage in binge drinking and other health risk behaviours. They are also less likely to miss out on mental health services when they need them.

Having an adult in their community to turn to for support can be particularly helpful for youth without such an adult in their family.

Students in East Kootenay were more likely than their peers across BC to feel quite or very connected to their community (47% vs. 42%), and were also more likely than local youth five years ago to feel this way (42% in 2013). However, the local increase was driven by males (40% in 2013 vs. 47% in 2018), as rates among females were comparable to five years earlier (47% in 2018).

The majority of East Kootenay youth often or always felt safe in their neighbourhood in the daytime (92%) and at night (77%). Similar to the findings in 2013, local youth were more likely than their peers across the province to often or always feel safe in their neighbourhood at night (77% vs. 65% provincially).

Among local youth who used public transit, 26% always felt safe when doing so and 7% never felt safe. The percentage who always felt safe was higher than the provincial rate (20%) and similar to local results five years ago. Males were more likely than females and non-binary youth to feel safe on transit.

Most East Kootenay youth (75%) felt there was an adult in their neighbourhood or community (outside their family or school) who really cared about them. This reflected a local increase from 69% in 2013, and was above the provincial rate of 65%. Females were more likely than males to report having a supportive adult in their neighbourhood or community (78% vs. 72%).

## RELATIONSHIP TO THE LAND/NATURE

For the first time, the BC AHS asked about feeling connected to the land or nature. A little over half (54%) of East Kootenay students reported often or always feeling this way, which was above the provincial rate of 44%. Fourteen percent hardly ever or never felt connected, which was lower than the provincial rate of 18%.



Note: The difference between males and females was not statistically significant for 'In the daytime'.

\* Percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was higher than expected but still within the releasable range.

# SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

## SUPPORTIVE ADULTS

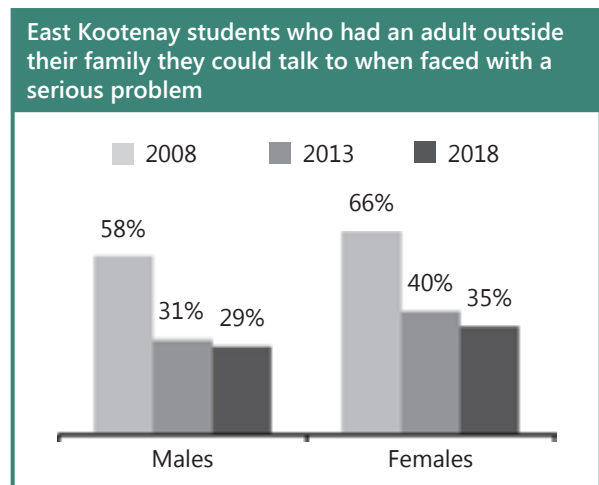
Youth who have a supportive adult in their life are more likely to feel comfortable refusing to do something they do not want to do, such as engaging in unwanted sexual activity or sexting, and are less likely to miss out on needed mental health care. They are also more likely to feel happy if they have an adult who cares about them.

Youth who have an adult who helps them with tasks report better outcomes. For example, if they have an adult to help them with post-secondary applications, they are more likely to plan to go to college, university, or trade school.

In East Kootenay, 32% of youth reported having an adult outside their family whom they could talk to if they had a serious problem. Local females were more likely than females across the province to have a supportive adult in their life (35% vs. 30% across BC), and were also more likely to have such an adult to talk to than local males (35% vs. 29%).

There was a decrease between 2008 and 2013 in the percentage of youth who had an adult outside their family they could talk to if they had a serious problem. However, rates in 2018 were similar to those in 2013.

Most youth in East Kootenay had an adult who helped them to make and get to appointments, prepare for post-secondary, get a job, and with homework. Local students were more likely than their peers across BC to have an adult who helped them find employment (75% vs. 69%) and with homework (68% vs. 63%).



Note: The differences between 2013 and 2018 were not statistically significant for males or females.

**East Kootenay students who had an adult who helped them with...**

|                              | Yes | No  | Don't need this |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----------------|
| Getting to appointments      | 90% | 4%  | 6%              |
| Making appointments          | 88% | 5%  | 7%              |
| Preparing for post-secondary | 78% | 13% | 10%             |
| Getting a job                | 75% | 13% | 12%             |
| Homework                     | 68% | 15% | 17%             |

Note: Percentages for each task may not equal 100% due to rounding.

## ASKING ADULTS FOR HELP

Outside of family members and friends, students in East Kootenay most commonly approached a teacher for help. The majority found this experience helpful.

Local students were less likely than youth across BC to ask a school counsellor for help (26% vs. 31% across BC); but were more likely to ask a sports coach (32% vs. 27%), a friend's parent (26% vs. 21%), an Aboriginal Education Worker (13% vs. 6%), or a mental health counsellor (14% vs. 11%).

As in 2013, local Indigenous students were more likely than Indigenous students across the province to approach an Aboriginal Education Worker for help (36% vs. 22%), and most found the worker helpful.

*"I need more people to talk to."*

Grade 7 student

| Adults whom East Kootenay students approached for help and found helpful in the past year |                |  |
|---|----------------|--|
|   | Asked for help | Found helpful (among those who asked for help) |
| Teacher   | 54%            | 94%  |
| Doctor  | 35%            | 91%  |
| Sports coach  | 32%            | 95%  |
| Friend's parent   | 26%            | 90%  |
| School staff (other than teacher, counsellor, or Aboriginal Education Worker)             | 26%            | 88%  |
| School counsellor   | 26%            | 79%  |
| Nurse   | 19%            | 92%  |
| Mental health counsellor  | 14%            | 83%  |
| Aboriginal Education Worker <sup>†</sup>  | 13%            | 83%  |
| Youth worker  | 11%            | 88%  |
| Social worker   | 8%             | 73%  |
| Online community/online support group   | 6%             | 72%  |
| Spiritual leader  | 6%             | 75%  |
| Telephone helpline  | 5%             | 62%  |
| Indigenous Elder <sup>†</sup>   | 5%             | 71%  |

<sup>†</sup> Among Indigenous students, 36% had approached an Aboriginal Education Worker for help and 91% found this experience helpful, while 13% had approached an Elder and 83% found this experience helpful.

## FRIENDS

The BC AHS results show that having three or more in-person friends is associated with a number of positive experiences, including positive mental health and a reduced likelihood of being bullied.

The survey results also show that if students have friends who disapprove of them engaging in certain health risk behaviours, they are less likely to engage in those behaviours.

Most students in East Kootenay (97%) had at least one close friend in their school or neighbourhood, and 81% of local students had three or more close friends.

Males were more likely than females to have three or more close friends (84% vs. 79%). Also, 70%\* of non-binary youth had three or more close friends.

Just over a third (35%) of local youth had at least one close friend who they knew online but had never met in person, including 17% (20% of males vs. 13% of females) who had three or more such friends. Also, 10% had dated someone they met online but had never met in person in the past year, including 3% who had two or more such partners.

## CONNECTING WITH FRIENDS

When asked how much time they had to do the things they wanted with friends, 68% felt like they had the right amount of time, while 27% did not have enough time, and 6% had too much time. Females were more likely than males to feel they had insufficient time with their friends (33% vs. 20%), as were older youth in comparison to younger ones (e.g., 34% of 18-year-olds did not have enough time with their friends vs. 16% of those aged 12 or younger).

## ASKING FRIENDS FOR HELP

In the past year, 75% of students in East Kootenay asked a friend they knew in person for help. Among these students, 94% found their friend to be helpful. Also, 21% asked a friend they knew only online for help, and 79% of them found this helpful. Females were more likely than males to have sought help from a friend they knew in person (80% vs. 71%).

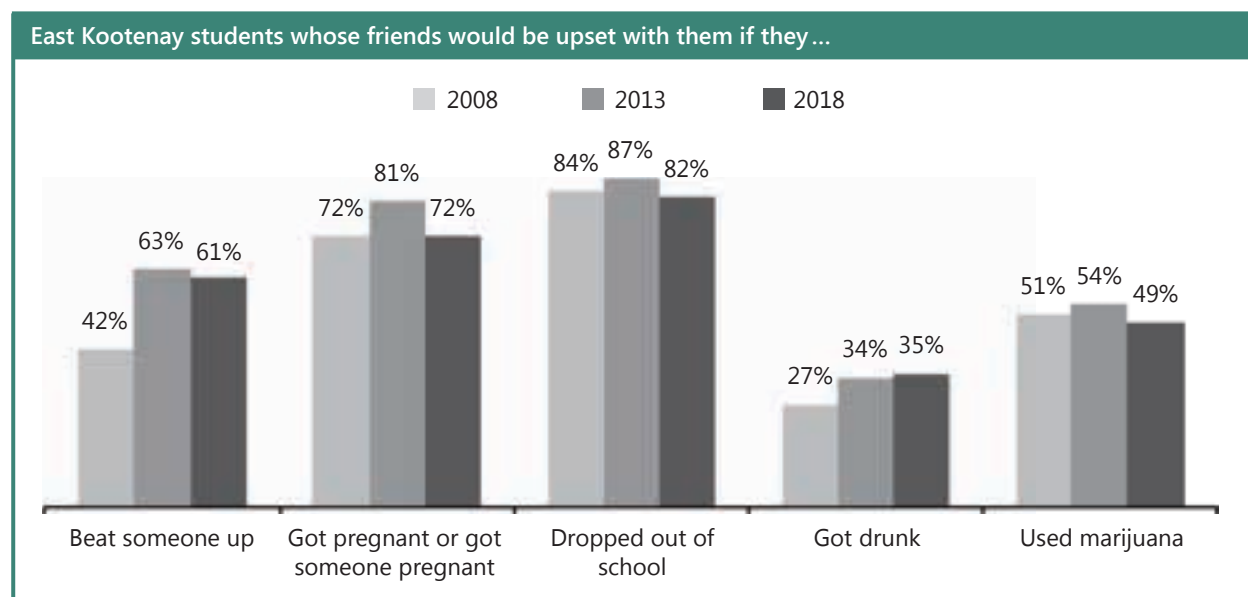
In the past year, 80% of students had a friend who had asked them for help, and the vast majority of these youth (97%) had felt able to help.

## FRIENDS WITH PROSOCIAL ATTITUDES

Youth generally had friends who would be upset with them for engaging in potentially risky behaviours, such as getting drunk, using marijuana, and dropping out of school. However, reflecting the local picture in 2013, they were less likely than their peers across BC to have friends who would be upset with them if they got drunk (35% vs. 45%) or used marijuana (49% vs. 55%).

Females were more likely than males to indicate their friends would be upset with them if they beat someone up (71% vs. 50%) or used marijuana (53% vs. 45%). They were also the most likely to have friends who would be upset if they dropped out of school.

Reflecting the provincial trend, local students were less likely than five years earlier to have friends who would be upset with them if they were involved in a pregnancy, dropped out of school, or used marijuana.



Note: The differences between 2013 and 2018 were not statistically significant for 'beat someone up' and 'got drunk'.





# YOUNG PEOPLE'S STRENGTHS & RESILIENCY

## QUALITY OF LIFE & WELL-BEING

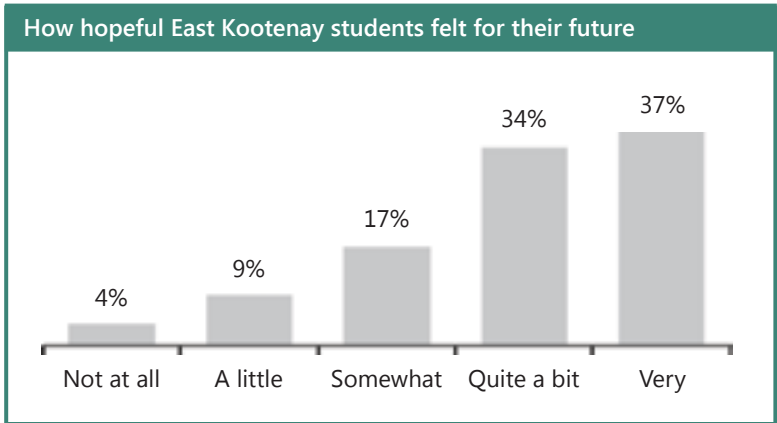
Youth generally felt positively about their quality of life. For example, most indicated they had a good life and had what they wanted in life. Males were the most likely to rate their quality of life positively, while non-binary youth were generally the least likely to do so.

## HOPEFULNESS

Most East Kootenay students (71%) felt quite a bit or very hopeful for their future. Consistent with the provincial findings, local males were the most likely to feel this way (74% vs. 68% of females and 42%\* of non-binary youth).

Youth who felt hopeful were more likely than their peers to report positive mental health, including feeling happy, as well as lower rates of extreme stress and despair.

| Quality of life and well-being of East Kootenay youth |                          |                               |                                |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|   | Agree/<br>strongly agree | Neither agree<br>nor disagree | Disagree/<br>strongly disagree |
| I have a good life                                    | 79%                      | 14%                           | 7%                             |
| My life is going well                                 | 74%                      | 16%                           | 10%                            |
| I have what I want in life                            | 63%                      | 22%                           | 15%                            |
| My life is going just right                           | 59%                      | 25%                           | 16%                            |
| I wish I had a different life                         | 17%                      | 19%                           | 64%                            |



Note: Percentages do not equal 100% due to rounding.

## PERSEVERANCE

For the first time, the BC AHS included a question about how often students pushed themselves to achieve their goals when things went wrong. Four percent of East Kootenay students indicated that things had never gone wrong for them. Among those who had experienced challenges or setbacks, 47% always pushed themselves to achieve their goals in these situations (with males the most likely), while a similar percentage sometimes pushed themselves, and 7% never pushed themselves.

The more often East Kootenay students persevered when faced with obstacles, the more likely they were to experience positive mental health and to have plans to pursue post-secondary education, and the less likely they were to experience extreme stress.

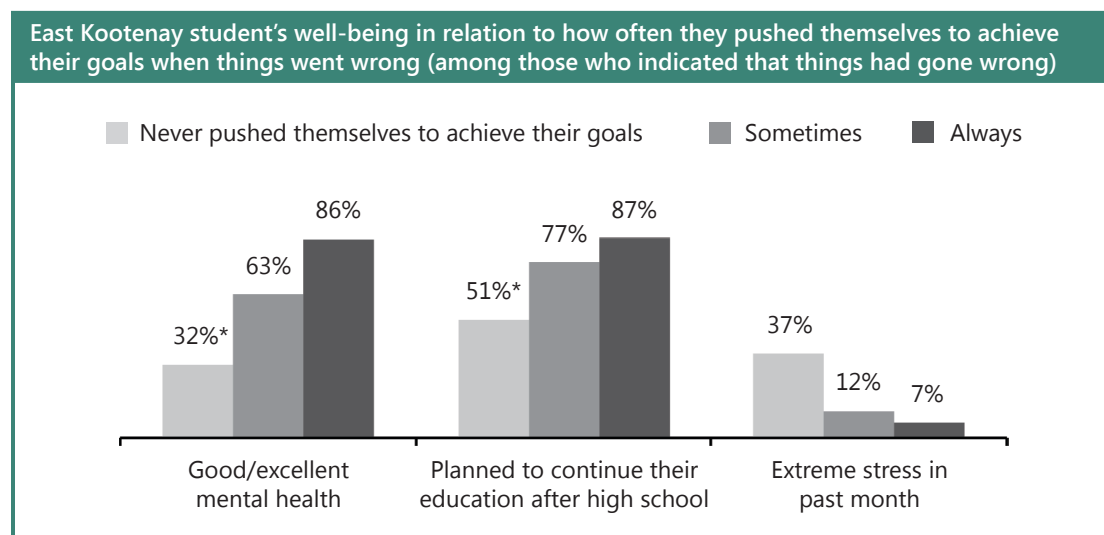
## FEELING SKILLED & CONFIDENT

*“Personally, I have a very positive self-image and strive to always better myself by feeding my body good food and being physically active.”*

Grade 12 student

Most East Kootenay youth (81%) were able to name something they were really good at (such as sports, school work, art, or music). This was similar to the percentage five years ago but lower than a decade ago (87%). Local males were the most likely to be able to identify something they were really good at (84% vs. 79% of females and 52%\* of non-binary youth).

The majority of local youth (60%) usually felt good about themselves, with males the most likely to feel this way. Students who felt good about themselves were more likely to feel hopeful for their future (88% vs. 32% of those who did not feel good about themselves).



\* Percentage should be interpreted with caution as the standard error was higher than expected but still within the releasable range.

## UNSTRUCTURED TIME

Two thirds (66%) of local youth felt they had the right amount of time to do what they wanted on their own, whereas 22% felt they did not have enough time, and the remainder felt they had too much time. Students who felt they had the right amount of time to spend on their own were more likely to report positive mental health and well-being. For example, they were more likely to feel happy in the past month and to feel their life was going well, and were less likely to experience extreme stress.

Sixty-one percent of East Kootenay youth felt they had the right amount of time to do what they wanted in nature, whereas 35% felt they did not have enough time in nature. Those who felt they had the right amount of time to spend in nature were more likely to feel connected to the land/nature (56% vs. 49% of those who felt they did not have enough time to spend in nature).

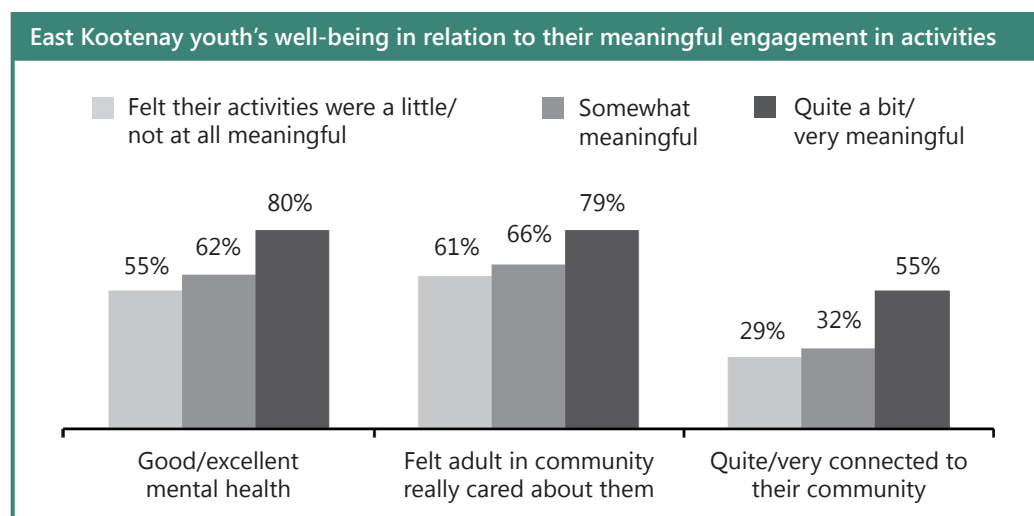
## SPIRITUALITY

Eleven percent of East Kootenay students reported that spirituality was very important in their life, while 20% indicated it was somewhat important, 15% a little important, 41% felt it was not important, and 12% were unsure.

## MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

More than two thirds (69%) of local students felt the activities they were involved in were quite or very meaningful to them, and 43% felt their ideas were listened to and acted upon in their activities (similar to previous survey years).

East Kootenay youth who experienced meaningful engagement in their activities were more likely to report positive mental health, to feel an adult in their community cared about them, and to feel connected to their community.



Note: For all associations the differences between 'a little/not at all meaningful' and 'somewhat meaningful' were not statistically significant.

# TOPICS EAST KOOTENAY YOUTH WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT

The final question on the 2018 BC Adolescent Health Survey was an open-ended question which asked youth if there were any topics which affected their health that they wanted to learn more about.

In East Kootenay, 3% of students who completed the survey provided a comment and identified at least one health related topic that they would like to receive training about or see included in their school's curriculum.

As was the case across BC, the two most common topics East Kootenay students wanted to learn more about were mental health and sexual health. Local students were also particularly interested in learning about healthy relationships and substance use.

Around 4 out of 10 students who provided a suggestion identified mental health as a topic that they wanted to learn more about. Specifically, students wanted to learn more about specific conditions and how they are managed, and where and how to access help.

*"I want to learn about anxiety, FASD, depression, ADHD."*

**Grade 8 student**

*"I would like to know how to help those around me if they are having a hard time with something like mental health."*

**Grade 10 student**

*"[I want to learn about] dealing with other youth's issues."*

**Grade 11 student**



Sexual health and healthy relationships were also commonly requested topics, including requests for more sex education and training about consent, how to support peers in unhealthy relationships, and how to maintain healthy intimate relationships.

*"We should learn more about consent & sex."*  
Grade 12 student

*"I want more information on dating."*  
Grade 7 student

Youth identified wanting more information on the consequences of using substances, as well as to increase their knowledge about the effects and possible harms of specific substances.

*"[I want to learn] more things about vaping because is a very big topic nowadays."*  
Grade 9 student

Other topics students wanted to learn more about included physical health, addressing bullying and discrimination, accessing services, gender identity and sexual orientation, and how to recognize and report abuse.

*"To learn better eating habits."*  
Grade 7 student

*"[I want to learn more about] bullying, cutting, [and] eating disorders."*  
Grade 8 student

*"[I want to learn more about] emotional abuse and its mental health effects on victims and abusers. Not just physical."*  
Grade 12 student

# McCREARY RESOURCES

## BC AHS PROVINCIAL & REGIONAL RESULTS



This report provides an overview of the BC Adolescent Health Survey results for youth in East Kootenay Health Service Delivery Area.

Provincial results and results for BC's other Health Service Delivery Areas are available at [www.mcs.bc.ca](http://www.mcs.bc.ca).

## ADDITIONAL PUBLICATIONS



A range of special topic reports and posters are being published using data from the 2018 BC AHS. These include an in-depth report about the health of Métis youth who completed the survey, a poster considering BC

AHS results in the context of Canada's commitment to implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a youth-led investigation of substance use among BC youth, a vaping poster created by youth, and an in-depth report about marijuana use among BC youth.

## PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS



McCreary staff are available to present BC AHS findings for East Kootenay, and to conduct workshops which explore how local stakeholders can utilize the

results. For more information contact [mccreary@mcs.bc.ca](mailto:mccreary@mcs.bc.ca).

## ENGAGING YOUTH IN THE BC AHS RESULTS



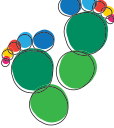
McCreary's Youth Advisory and Action Council (YAC) have created a youth-friendly poster of the key findings of the 2018 BC AHS provincial report. Additional youth-friendly posters will be available on a range of topics, including substance use and mental health. The YAC have also created a workshop to share the results of the survey with their peers. To book a workshop contact [mccreary@mcs.bc.ca](mailto:mccreary@mcs.bc.ca).

## YOUTH ACTION GRANTS



The YAC distributed over \$87,000 in Youth Action Grants (YAGs) to youth (aged 12–19) in school districts that participated in the 2013 BC AHS (including East Kootenay). The granting program for the 2018 BC AHS is now accepting applications from youth aged 12 to 19 who are wanting to improve youth health in their school or community in one of the areas highlighted in the BC AHS. The YAC are also available to offer grant-writing workshops to young people who may be thinking of applying for a YAG. To book a workshop contact [mccreary@mcs.bc.ca](mailto:mccreary@mcs.bc.ca).

## BC AHS NEXT STEPS



McCreary is committed to returning the results of the 2018 BC AHS to young people in East Kootenay. An interactive 'Next Steps' workshop is available to engage young people in a dialogue about the results and youth health in their community. Youth who participate in the workshops can receive funding and support to conduct youth health projects in their school or community. For more details or to book a workshop contact [mccreary@mcs.bc.ca](mailto:mccreary@mcs.bc.ca).

A Next Steps curriculum toolkit is also available on our website for anyone wanting to conduct their own Next Steps.





**McCreary  
Centre Society**