



Hong Kong Student Health Survey (2012-2016)

Fact Sheet No.3: Mental Health, Safety, Intentional Injuries, and Sexual Behaviours

- The Hong Kong Student Health Survey (2012-2016) measured students' health behaviours such as oral health, dietary behaviours and overweight, physical activity, sedentary behaviours, tobacco use, life satisfaction, mental distress, intentional and unintentional injuries, and inappropriate social behaviours.
- Local primary schools and secondary schools in Hong Kong were invited to take part in a healthy school project on an annual basis. Among participating schools, students who were studying in Primary 4 (P4) and Secondary 3 (S3) were eligible to participate in the survey.
- This fact sheet presents selected survey results of consecutive five years from 2012/13 to 2016/17. It aims at reflecting students' mental health and wellbeing, and whom students would seek help from when they experienced mental distress and despair. It also presents students' use of protective devices when riding a bicycle, use of seat belts, and whether they followed the signals of pedestrian crossing lights, and adolescents' sexual behaviours. The percentages are weighted based on the figures provided by the Education Bureau regarding student enrolment by district, grade, gender and age in corresponding school year. It also indicates when there is a marked gender difference in prevalence.

Results	Respondents	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Average
Demography							
1. Number of respondents	P4 students	3,231	3,814	3,794	4,176	2,222	3,447
	S3 students	2,963	3,896	4,036	3,852	2,642	3,478
2. Mean age of respondents (years)	P4 students	9.8	9.7	9.8	9.8	10.0	9.8
	S3 students	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.1	15.3	15.1
3. Weighted percentage of students by gender	P4 boys	51.8%	51.6%	51.9%	51.7%	51.9%	51.8%
	P4 girls	48.2%	48.4%	48.1%	48.3%	48.1%	48.2%
	S3 male adolescents	52.0%	52.2%	51.9%	52.6%	51.9%	52.0%
	S3 female adolescents	48.0%	47.8%	48.1%	47.4%	48.1%	48.0%
Mental Health							
4. Weighted percentage of students who had 3 or more close friends.	P4(both sexes)	56.0%	58.6%	62.3%	64.0%	66.2%	61.4%
	S3(both sexes)	57.1%	58.2%	56.7%	56.1%	54.8%	56.6%
	P4 boys	52.6%	55.6%	60.2%	62.6%	63.8%	59.0%
	P4 girls	59.6%	61.8%	64.6%	65.5%	68.7%	64.0%
	S3 male adolescents	55.2%	57.8%	55.4%	56.6%	51.8%	55.4%
5. Weighted percentage of students who perceived themselves to have no close friends.	P4(both sexes)	13.2%	11.2%	10.9%	9.4%	7.8%	10.5%
	S3(both sexes)	9.9%	10.5%	9.9%	10.8%	10.6%	10.3%
	P4 boys	16.4%	14.3%	12.6%	11.6%	9.8%	12.9%
	P4 girls	10.4%	7.9%	9.0%	7.0%	5.6%	8.0%
	S3 male adolescents	13.9%	13.6%	12.7%	13.5%	13.4%	13.4%
6. Weighted mean score(\pm SD) on students' satisfaction with their family life *	P4(both sexes)	5.52 (\pm 1.58)	5.65 (\pm 1.47)	5.65 (\pm 1.49)	5.67 (\pm 1.48)	5.67 (\pm 1.53)	5.63
	S3(both sexes)	4.90 (\pm 1.47)	5.04 (\pm 1.37)	4.99 (\pm 1.39)	5.04 (\pm 1.36)	4.84 (\pm 1.51)	4.96
	P4 boys	5.51 (\pm 1.59)	5.58 (\pm 1.52)	5.59 (\pm 1.55)	5.64 (\pm 1.51)	5.58 (\pm 1.56)	5.58
	P4 girls	5.54 (\pm 1.57)	5.73 (\pm 1.40)	5.71 (\pm 1.43)	5.69 (\pm 1.44)	5.77 (\pm 1.48)	5.69
	7. Weighted mean score(\pm SD) on students' satisfaction with their friendships *	P4(both sexes)	5.46 (\pm 1.54)	5.65 (\pm 1.46)	5.69 (\pm 1.46)	5.72 (\pm 1.44)	5.73 (\pm 1.51)
S3(both sexes)		5.15 (\pm 1.31)	5.28 (\pm 1.22)	5.29 (\pm 1.20)	5.29 (\pm 1.20)	5.13 (\pm 1.39)	5.23

* The Brief Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (BMSLSS) includes five questions representing each of the five specific domains (family, friends, self, school, and living environment) and one non-specific question on overall life satisfaction for verification. General life satisfaction is computed by adding up the responses across the five domains and then dividing by five (Huebner, 1994; Huebner, Seligson, Valois & Suldo, 2006). Each score ranges from 1 to 7. The higher the score, the more satisfied the respondent perceived towards the domain it represents.

Results	Respondents	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Average
8. Weighted mean score(\pm SD) on students' satisfaction with their school experiences *	P4(both sexes)	5.25 (\pm 1.59)	5.33 (\pm 1.56)	5.42 (\pm 1.54)	5.38 (\pm 1.56)	5.31 (\pm 1.63)	5.34
	S3(both sexes)	4.73 (\pm 1.37)	4.90 (\pm 1.35)	4.98 (\pm 1.32)	5.00 (\pm 1.29)	4.86 (\pm 1.43)	4.89
	P4 boys	5.16 (\pm 1.63)	5.19 (\pm 1.66)	5.31 (\pm 1.65)	5.23 (\pm 1.65)	5.11 (\pm 1.75)	5.20
	P4 girls	5.36 (\pm 1.53)	5.49 (\pm 1.44)	5.54 (\pm 1.41)	5.55 (\pm 1.44)	5.52 (\pm 1.45)	5.49
9. Weighted mean score(\pm SD) on students' satisfaction with themselves *	P4(both sexes)	5.29 (\pm 1.59)	5.71 (\pm 1.51)	5.73 (\pm 1.51)	5.72 (\pm 1.54)	5.70 (\pm 1.58)	5.63
	S3(both sexes)	4.64 (\pm 1.47)	4.89 (\pm 1.42)	4.79 (\pm 1.45)	4.85 (\pm 1.47)	4.61 (\pm 1.60)	4.76
	S3 male adolescents	4.68 (\pm 1.57)	4.99 (\pm 1.46)	4.92 (\pm 1.51)	5.00 (\pm 1.51)	4.70 (\pm 1.67)	4.86
	S3 female adolescents	4.60 (\pm 1.34)	4.78 (\pm 1.38)	4.66 (\pm 1.36)	4.68 (\pm 1.39)	4.51 (\pm 1.52)	4.65
10. Weighted mean score(\pm SD) on students' satisfaction with their living environment *	P4	5.68 (\pm 1.59)	5.86 (\pm 1.44)	5.89 (\pm 1.47)	5.94 (\pm 1.44)	5.90 (\pm 1.50)	5.85
	S3	5.03 (\pm 1.49)	5.29 (\pm 1.32)	5.31 (\pm 1.33)	5.36 (\pm 1.29)	5.10 (\pm 1.50)	5.22
11. Weighted mean score(\pm SD) on students' general life satisfaction *	P4	5.45 (\pm 1.16)	5.65 (\pm 1.09)	5.68 (\pm 1.11)	5.69 (\pm 1.10)	5.67 (\pm 1.21)	5.63
	S3	4.89 (\pm 1.12)	5.08 (\pm 1.02)	5.08 (\pm 1.03)	5.11 (\pm 1.01)	4.91 (\pm 1.22)	5.01
Psychological Distress, Intentional Injuries, and Seeking Help							
12. Weighted mean (\pm SD) of the K6 scale [@] for nonspecific psychological distress	P4(both sexes)	7.06 (\pm 4.97)	5.98 (\pm 4.92)	5.64 (\pm 4.87)	5.98 (\pm 4.94)	5.71 (\pm 4.92)	6.07
	S3(both sexes)	9.00 (\pm 4.64)	8.47 (\pm 4.82)	8.50 (\pm 4.80)	8.33 (\pm 4.69)	8.69 (\pm 4.97)	8.60
	P4 boys	7.12 (\pm 5.10)	6.07 (\pm 5.03)	5.91 (\pm 5.11)	6.15 (\pm 5.13)	5.76 (\pm 5.13)	6.20
	P4 girls	6.99 (\pm 4.84)	5.89 (\pm 4.79)	5.36 (\pm 4.56)	5.80 (\pm 4.72)	5.66 (\pm 4.69)	5.94
	S3 male adolescents	8.73 (\pm 4.82)	8.05 (\pm 4.91)	7.87 (\pm 4.88)	7.73 (\pm 4.69)	8.22 (\pm 5.18)	8.12
	S3 female adolescents	9.30 (\pm 4.43)	8.94 (\pm 4.69)	9.17 (\pm 4.63)	8.99 (\pm 4.60)	9.20 (\pm 4.69)	9.12
13. Weighted percentage of students who, during the 12 months before the survey, had felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities	P4(both sexes)	8.5%	6.0%	5.4%	6.0%	6.3%	6.4%
	S3(both sexes)	8.0%	7.2%	6.3%	8.0%	6.3%	7.2%
	P4 boys	8.5%	6.9%	6.7%	6.5%	6.9%	7.1%
	P4 girls	8.4%	5.1%	4.0%	5.5%	5.6%	5.7%
	S3 male adolescents	6.5%	6.0%	5.4%	6.7%	5.7%	6.1%
S3 female adolescents	9.5%	8.4%	7.3%	9.4%	7.0%	8.3%	
14. Weighted percentage of students who had intentionally injured themselves during the 12 months before the survey	P4(both sexes)	16.9%	11.6%	10.7%	11.4%	12.6%	12.6%
	S3(both sexes)	10.6%	7.6%	7.3%	9.2%	9.2%	8.8%
	P4 boys	19.8%	13.2%	12.6%	13.8%	14.7%	14.8%
	P4 girls	13.8%	10.0%	8.7%	8.9%	10.3%	10.3%
	S3 male adolescents	8.8%	6.3%	5.6%	7.7%	7.4%	7.2%
S3 female adolescents	12.5%	9.1%	9.1%	10.9%	11.1%	10.5%	
15. Weighted percentage of students who had seriously considered attempting suicide during the 12 months before the survey	P4(both sexes)	8.8%	7.2%	8.3%	8.2%	9.3%	8.4%
	S3(both sexes)	9.9%	9.9%	10.7%	13.1%	13.8%	11.5%
	S3 male adolescents	8.9%	7.9%	8.2%	10.1%	11.7%	9.4%
	S3 female adolescents	11.0%	12.1%	13.5%	16.4%	16.1%	13.8%
16. Weighted percentage of students who had attempted suicide during the 12 months before the survey.	P4(both sexes)	1.3%	2.5%	2.2%	2.1%	2.2%	2.1%
	S3(both sexes)	3.9%	2.1%	1.7%	2.1%	1.9%	2.3%

@ The K6 is a 6-item scale developed to provide a brief screening for nonspecific psychological distress in general population (Kessler et al., 2003; Kessler et al., 2010). The scale ranges from 0 to 24. The higher the score, the higher level of distress the respondent experienced.

Results	Respondents	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Average
17. Weighted percentage of students who had felt very sad and despair [#] but had not talked to or sought help from others	P4(both sexes)	20.7%	22.9%	21.2%	22.9%	22.5%	22.0%
	S3(both sexes)	25.5%	25.9%	27.4%	26.3%	26.5%	26.3%
	P4 boys	22.2%	23.6%	22.0%	23.6%	24.7%	23.2%
	P4 girls	19.2%	22.1%	20.4%	22.2%	20.2%	20.8%
	S3 male adolescents	25.4%	24.5%	28.0%	25.0%	25.7%	25.7%
	S3 female adolescents	25.6%	27.3%	26.7%	27.6%	27.3%	26.9%
18. Weighted percentage of students who had felt very sad and despair [#] and had sought help from their family members	P4(both sexes)	23.2%	17.6%	18.4%	17.8%	23.1%	20.0%
	S3(both sexes)	7.1%	9.1%	8.1%	7.8%	9.0%	8.2%
	P4 boys	19.3%	14.6%	16.5%	16.1%	19.1%	17.1%
	P4 girls	27.1%	20.8%	20.4%	19.6%	27.3%	23.0%
	S3 male adolescents	5.1%	5.7%	4.4%	5.0%	6.2%	5.3%
	S3 female adolescents	9.3%	12.8%	12.0%	11.0%	12.0%	11.4%
19. Weighted percentage of students who had felt very sad and despair [#] and had sought help from their schoolmates	P4(both sexes)	13.2%	10.4%	10.4%	9.0%	12.4%	11.1%
	S3(both sexes)	11.2%	10.1%	9.9%	8.7%	9.4%	9.9%
	P4 boys	9.7%	8.2%	9.1%	7.0%	10.6%	8.9%
	P4 girls	16.7%	12.8%	11.9%	11.0%	14.3%	13.3%
	S3 male adolescents	7.6%	7.0%	7.6%	7.1%	8.1%	7.5%
	S3 female adolescents	15.3%	13.5%	12.5%	10.5%	10.9%	12.5%
20. Weighted percentage of students who had felt very sad and despair [#] and had sought help from their friends	P4(both sexes)	16.9%	12.8%	13.6%	12.7%	18.0%	14.8%
	S3(both sexes)	23.2%	22.2%	21.9%	21.6%	21.7%	22.1%
	P4 boys	12.2%	9.5%	11.0%	10.1%	13.3%	11.2%
	P4 girls	21.7%	16.3%	16.3%	15.3%	22.6%	18.4%
	S3 male adolescents	12.6%	14.1%	12.5%	13.5%	14.5%	13.4%
	S3 female adolescents	34.5%	30.9%	31.9%	30.4%	29.2%	31.4%
21. Weighted percentage of students who had felt very sad and despair [#] and had sought help from their teachers	P4	5.1%	3.3%	4.2%	3.8%	5.6%	4.4%
	S3	2.0%	2.5%	2.2%	2.3%	3.0%	2.4%
Safety							
22. Weighted percentage of students who had often or always followed the signals of pedestrian crossing lights during the 7 days before the survey	P4(both sexes)	85.8%	87.3%	87.9%	89.1%	90.4%	88.1%
	S3(both sexes)	54.2%	58.4%	64.2%	65.6%	70.4%	62.6%
	P4 boys	83.2%	84.8%	85.9%	86.8%	88.5%	85.8%
	P4 girls	88.6%	90.0%	90.1%	91.6%	92.3%	90.5%
	S3 male adolescents	47.2%	52.3%	57.5%	59.8%	61.8%	55.7%
	S3 female adolescents	61.8%	64.9%	71.5%	72.0%	79.7%	70.0%
23. Weighted percentage of students who had never or seldom followed the signals of pedestrian crossing lights during the 7 days before the survey	P4(both sexes)	4.8%	4.7%	3.7%	3.6%	3.5%	4.1%
	S3(both sexes)	22.2%	15.4%	12.7%	12.2%	11.2%	14.7%
	P4 boys	6.0%	6.2%	4.4%	4.5%	4.7%	5.2%
	P4 girls	3.5%	3.2%	2.9%	2.6%	2.2%	2.9%
	S3 male adolescents	29.6%	20.6%	18.0%	15.9%	16.2%	20.1%
	S3 female adolescents	14.2%	9.8%	7.0%	8.1%	5.8%	9.0%
24. Weighted percentage of students who had ridden a bicycle during the 12 months before the survey	P4(both sexes)	56.1%	62.1%	63.3%	64.8%	66.3%	62.5%
	S3(both sexes)	52.7%	55.3%	55.7%	55.7%	47.1%	53.3%
	P4 boys	56.8%	63.5%	63.8%	65.6%	66.0%	63.1%
	P4 girls	55.3%	60.8%	62.7%	63.9%	66.6%	61.9%
	S3 male adolescents	57.4%	58.9%	57.8%	59.6%	50.0%	56.7%
	S3 female adolescents	47.7%	51.3%	53.4%	51.3%	44.0%	49.5%
25. Weighted percentage of students who had never or rarely wore a bicycle helmet or knee pads among those who had ridden a bicycle during the 12 months before the survey	P4(both sexes)	64.4%	59.2%	54.8%	54.3%	53.4%	57.2%
	S3(both sexes)	93.6%	90.3%	87.9%	89.4%	89.0%	90.0%
	P4 boys	66.7%	61.1%	57.0%	57.2%	57.6%	59.9%
	P4 girls	62.0%	57.2%	52.4%	51.1%	48.9%	54.3%
	S3 male adolescents	91.4%	88.5%	86.7%	87.9%	85.9%	88.1%
	S3 female adolescents	96.5%	92.5%	89.2%	91.3%	92.9%	92.5%

[#] The time frame of the question was set for during the 12 months before the survey. Respondents could choose more than one option among 9 types of people who might offer help to them.

Results	Respondents	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Average
26. Weighted percentage of students who had got into a vehicle with seat belts fitted and available [^] during the 7 days before the survey	P4(both sexes)	80.4%	82.9%	84.1%	85.9%	88.6%	84.4%
	S3(both sexes)	76.8%	76.5%	76.3%	78.2%	80.4%	77.6%
	P4 boys	79.6%	82.5%	83.8%	85.6%	88.4%	84.0%
	P4 girls	81.2%	83.3%	84.4%	86.3%	88.9%	84.8%
	S3 male adolescents	74.5%	77.5%	76.5%	79.0%	77.6%	77.0%
	S3 female adolescents	79.4%	75.5%	76.1%	77.4%	83.5%	78.4%
27. Among those students who had been in a vehicle with seat belts, the weighted percentage of students who had seldom or never wore a seat belt during the 7 days before the survey	P4(both sexes)	26.8%	24.8%	25.2%	21.8%	21.7%	24.1%
	S3(both sexes)	53.6%	50.3%	46.2%	48.2%	47.6%	49.2%
	P4 boys	28.9%	26.8%	27.5%	23.9%	24.8%	26.4%
	P4 girls	24.6%	22.7%	22.7%	19.5%	18.2%	21.5%
Sexual Behaviours							
28. Weighted percentage of adolescents who ever had sexual intercourse	S3(both sexes)	4.4%	2.6%	1.3%	1.7%	2.4%	2.5%
	S3 male adolescents	5.0%	3.1%	1.5%	1.7%	3.3%	2.9%
	S3 female adolescents	3.7%	2.2%	1.2%	1.8%	1.3%	2.0%
29. Weighted percentage of adolescents who didn't know what sexual intercourse is	S3(both sexes)	5.7%	4.8%	3.4%	4.6%	3.7%	4.4%
	S3 male adolescents	8.6%	7.4%	4.5%	7.3%	5.4%	6.6%
	S3 female adolescents	2.7%	2.1%	2.2%	1.6%	1.8%	2.1%

[^] Besides private cars, other examples of vehicles with seat belts fitted and available are taxi, mini-buses and certain seats in buses.

We hope that public health practitioners and school teachers will find useful information from the results of this survey. We also aim to inspire you and assist you in your important work in delivering quality health education and health promotion for young people. Other fact sheets of the Hong Kong Student Health Survey (2012-2016) include:

- Background of the Hong Kong Student Health Survey (2012-2016)
- Fact Sheet No.1: Dietary Behaviours and Oral Health
- Fact Sheet No.2: Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviours, Sleeping Habits, and Weight Control
- Fact Sheet No.4: Inappropriate Social Behaviours and Substance Abuse

This fact sheet is prepared by Centre for Health Education and Health Promotion, Jockey Club School of Public Health and Primary Care, Faculty of Medicine, The Chinese University of Hong Kong in August, 2018. For additional information, please visit the Centre's website (<https://www.chep.cuhk.edu.hk>) or send an email to chep@cuhk.edu.hk. Centre's address: 4/F, Lek Yuen Health Centre, 9 Lek Yuen Street, Sha Tin, New Territories, Hong Kong.

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