

Hingham District Report



Boston University School of Education

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Table of Contents

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Survey Participants	4
Description of Surveys Administered.....	6
STUDENT RESULTS	8
What social and emotional problems are most common among students?	8
Do social and emotional problems differ by gender?	8
Do social and emotional problems differ across schools?	9
Who do students speak to when they are having a social or emotional problem?.....	12
What supports and services do students with different types of problems receive?.....	14
PARENT RESULTS.....	16
According to parents (across all grade levels), what social and emotional problems are most common among students?.....	16
Who do parents speak to about their child’s social and emotional wellbeing?	16
Are parents satisfied with social and emotional supports at school?.....	17

Introduction

This report describes findings from the Systems of Supports Survey completed by students in grades 4 to 12, teachers across all grade levels, and parents across all grade levels in Hingham Public Schools. This survey was administered by researchers at Boston University at the request of the School leadership team. The goal of this survey is to better understand the social and emotional strengths and challenges of students from the perspective of parents, teachers, and students themselves. Survey results are designed to provide schools and the district with information about the needs of students, types of support services provided, and any gaps in support services. These results will be used by the district to improve support services. All surveys were completed anonymously (without names or identifying information); therefore surveys do not identify individual students in need of supports. Results are designed to inform the planning and provision of school-wide support services and activities and to determine the professional development needs of teachers.

Students in grades 4 through 12 completed the survey during the school day using a web-based survey software program. All surveys were completed anonymously and students were told that they could skip or leave blank any questions that they preferred not to answer. Students who indicated that they were currently experiencing social or emotional problems were asked a series of follow-up questions about how those problems impacted them and strategies for responding to those problems. All students were directed to respond to a series of questions about school climate, social and emotional strengths and challenges, support services, and help-seeking.

Parents (including Caregivers) of children at all grade levels were invited to complete a complementary web-based survey, which included questions about their child's social and emotional well-being, support services accessed, and their satisfaction with support services in the school.

Teachers and other school staff at all grade levels were invited to complete a web-based survey, which asked them to indicate social and emotional problems they observed among their class of students. The teacher survey additionally asked teachers to indicate how they would support the students described in the scenarios. This survey was designed to provide information to inform professional development activities for staff. These results are not included in the current report, but are provided to the district for planning purposes.

Survey Participants

Description of Participants

- 2,523 students completed the survey
- 1,110 parents/caregivers completed the survey

Participants and Response Rate (%) by School

School*	Students (n=2,523)	Caregivers (n=1,110)
East	147 (84%)	122 (27%)
Foster	138 (88%)	123 (28%)
Plymouth River	146 (83%)	234 (50%)
South	143 (77%)	139 (26%)
Middle	933 (89%)	228 (22%)
High School	1,016 (81%)	264 (21%)

*Some students and parents did not indicate their school

Participants by Grade

Grade*	Students (n=2,523)	Caregivers (n=1,110)
K	-	78
1 st Grade	-	76
2 nd Grade	-	105
3 rd Grade	-	109
4 th Grade	296	118
5 th Grade	275	118
6 th Grade	284	87
7 th Grade	302	70
8 th Grade	323	71
9 th Grade	277	78
10 th Grade	247	59
11 th Grade	245	55
12 th Grade	244	69

*Some students and parents did not indicate grade level

Participants by Gender

Gender*	Students	Parents/Caregivers (child's gender)
Male	1,221	569
Female	1,248	536
Transgender	14	2
Other	31	3

*Some students, parents, and teachers did not indicate gender

Caregiver's relationship to child for whom they completed the survey

Note: Caregivers are henceforth called *parents*.

Relationship	#
Mother	968
Father	136
Step-mother	1
Grandmother	4
Other	2

Child's Race/Ethnicity According to Parent

(note: parents could select multiple race/ethnicity categories)

Race/Ethnicity	Parent Report
Asian/Asian-American	25
Black/African-American	14
American Indian or Alaska Native	2
Pacific Islander	3
White or Caucasian	1,035
Multi-Ethnic	29
Other	9
Not Applicable, Not Sure, or Decline to Answer	20

Description of Surveys Administered

Social and emotional well-being is conceptualized as a core component of student functioning and success at school. Students with social and emotional problems are at increased risk for struggling with the academic demands of school as well as having difficulty developing and maintaining positive relationships with peers and teachers. However, with effective supports, students with social and emotional problems can be quite successful and have very positive school experiences.

Studies of children and adolescents across the U.S. find that approximately 40% have experienced an emotional or behavioral problem within the past year and that these problems increase in adolescence.¹ The most common of these problems is anxiety. About 8% of children and adolescents experience severe emotional or behavioral problems that substantially interfere with their daily functioning.² Studies of the general U.S. population find that only about one-third of children and adolescents with an emotional or behavioral problem receive counseling supports or services.³

Ultimately, the goal for children is not only to reduce the likelihood that they will experience social and emotional problems, but also to build on their ability to positively connect with the world around them. The assessments included in the current survey were designed to evaluate both student challenges and student strengths.

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)⁴

Students and parents completed the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), a brief, well-validated measure of child social and emotional functioning (for more information, please see www.sdqinfo.org). The SDQ measures problems in 5 areas: Emotional Problems, Conduct Problems, Hyperactivity Problems, Peer Problems, and Prosocial Behavior. Scores on each of these scales above a cut-off indicate the likely presence of a social or emotional problem. Students completed the SDQ for themselves and parents completed the SDQ for their children.

The SDQ assesses the following social and emotional strengths and challenges:

- **Total problems** refer to students who indicated high scores on questions across multiple subcategories.
- Feelings of anxiety, depression, and anger; physiological manifestations of these feelings (**Emotional Symptoms**)
- Behaviors associated with acting out, lying, cheating, and stealing (**Conduct Problems**)
- Behaviors related to restlessness, attention, planning, and judgment (**Hyperactivity/Inattention**)

¹ Kessler, R. C., Avenevoli, S., Costello, E. J., Georgiades, K., Green, J. G., Gruber, M. J., ... & Sampson, N. A. (2012). Prevalence, persistence, and sociodemographic correlates of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication Adolescent Supplement. *Archives of general psychiatry*, 69(4), 372-380.

² Kessler, R. C., Avenevoli, S., Costello, J., Green, J. G., Gruber, M. J., McLaughlin, K. A., ... & Merikangas, K. R. (2012). Severity of 12-month DSM-IV disorders in the national comorbidity survey replication adolescent supplement. *Archives of general psychiatry*, 69(4), 381-389.

³ Merikangas, K. R., He, J. P., Burstein, M., Swendsen, J., Avenevoli, S., Case, B., ... & Olfson, M. (2011). Service utilization for lifetime mental disorders in US adolescents: Results of the National Comorbidity Survey-Adolescent Supplement (NCS-A). *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 50(1), 32-45.

⁴ Goodman, R. (1997) The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire: A Research Note. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 38(5), 581-586.

- Social isolation, bullying, relationships with peers and adults (**Peer Relationship Problems**)
- Trouble with empathy, sharing and helping behaviors (**Prosocial Behavior Problems**) – not included in current report

Student Experience Survey⁵

Students completed a brief measure indicating their perceptions of teachers' care and support for their personal development and well-being beyond the classroom.

Additional Measures

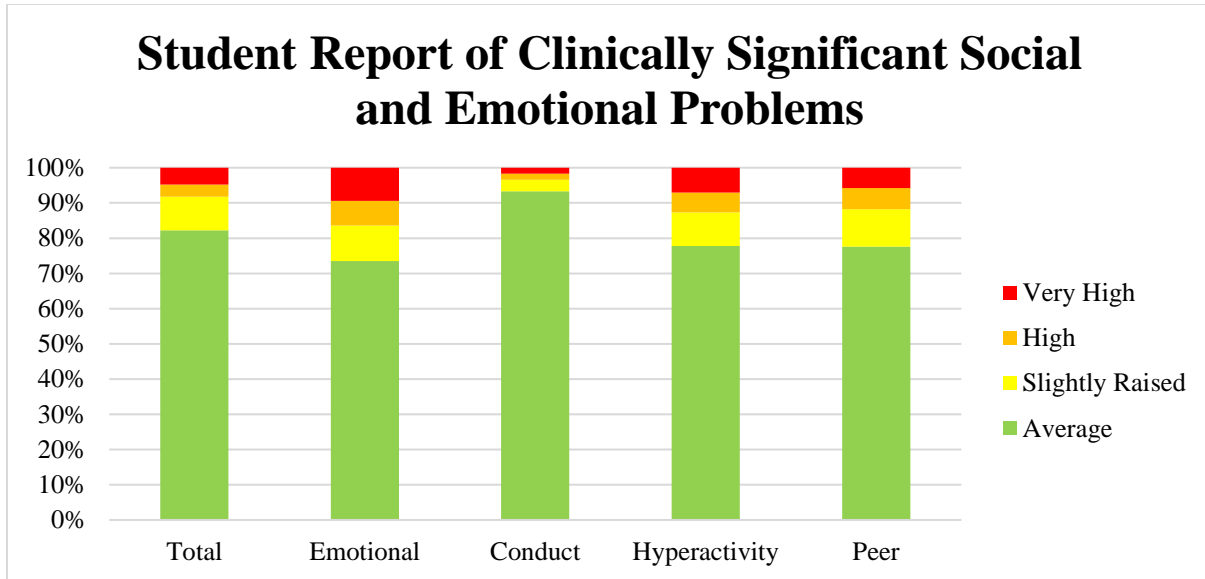
Students and parents completed additional measures of school functioning, use of supports and services, and help-seeking from adults and peers at school. These measures are described in more detail on the following pages.

⁵ Gehlbach, H., Brinkworth, M. E., & Harris, A. (2011). Social motivation in the secondary classroom: Assessing teacher-student relationships from both perspectives. *Online Submission*.

STUDENT RESULTS

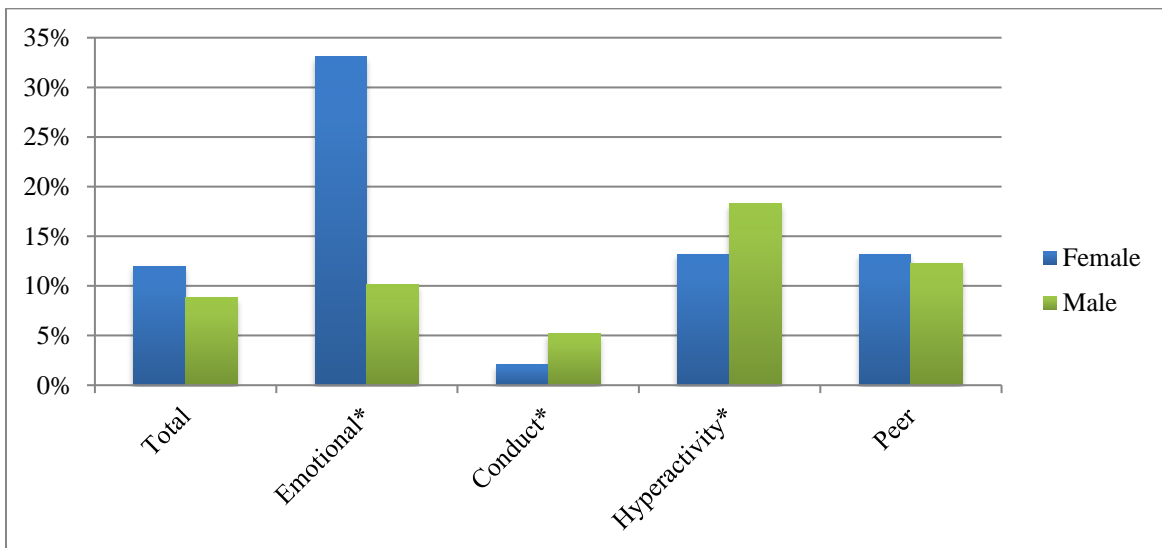
What social and emotional problems are most common among students?

The graph below shows the percent of students in all Hingham public schools whose scores were in the Average, Slightly Raised, High, and Very High categories for each social and emotional problem type. The most common social and emotional problems students reported were emotional problems.



Do social and emotional problems differ by gender?

District wide, a higher percent of males than females reported conduct and hyperactivity problems. Females reported significantly more emotional problems than males.

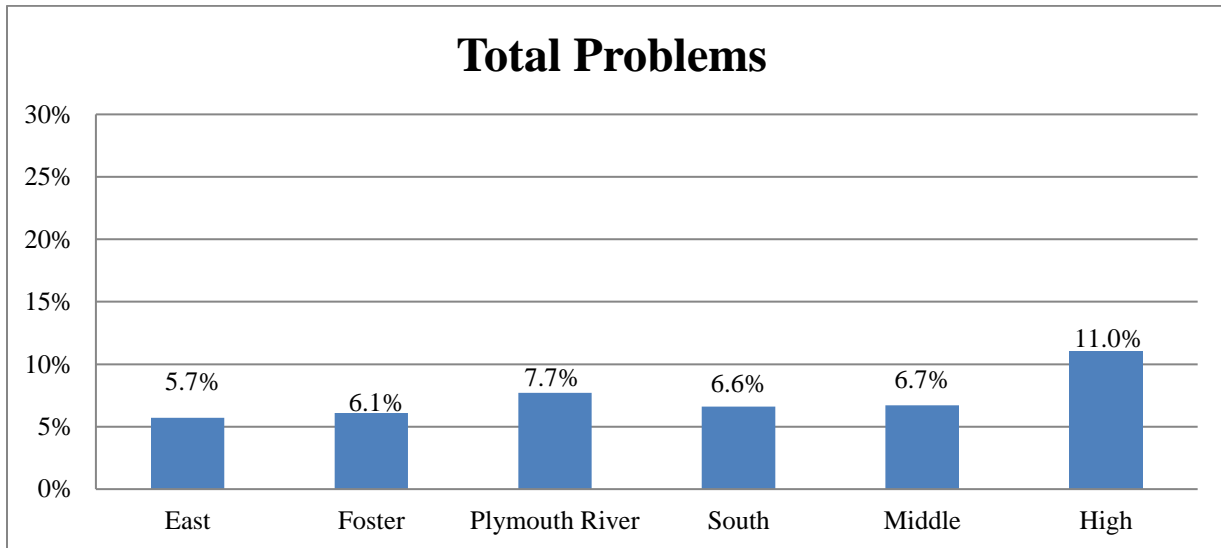


*Indicates a significant difference between females and males

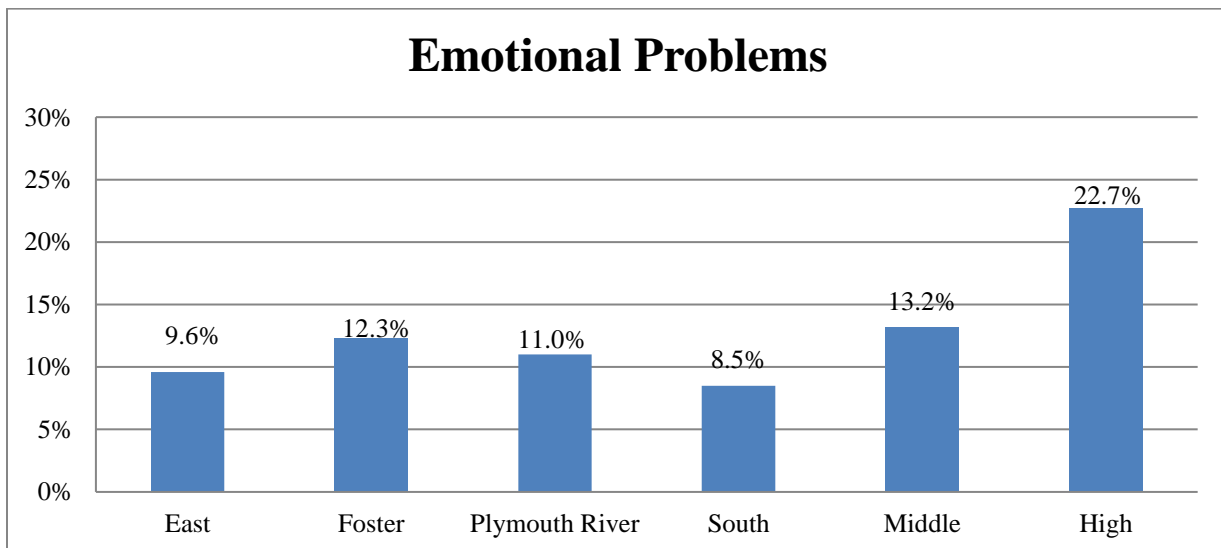
Do social and emotional problems differ across schools?

The following graphs show the percent of students in each Hingham public school with High or Very High SDQ scores in each problem domain.

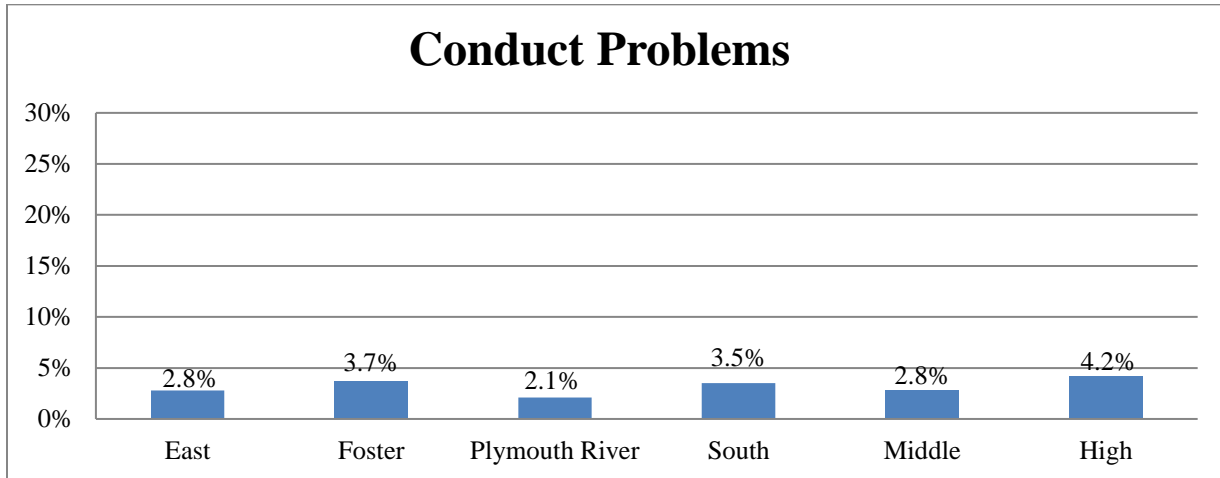
Total problems refer to students who indicated high scores on questions across multiple subcategories.



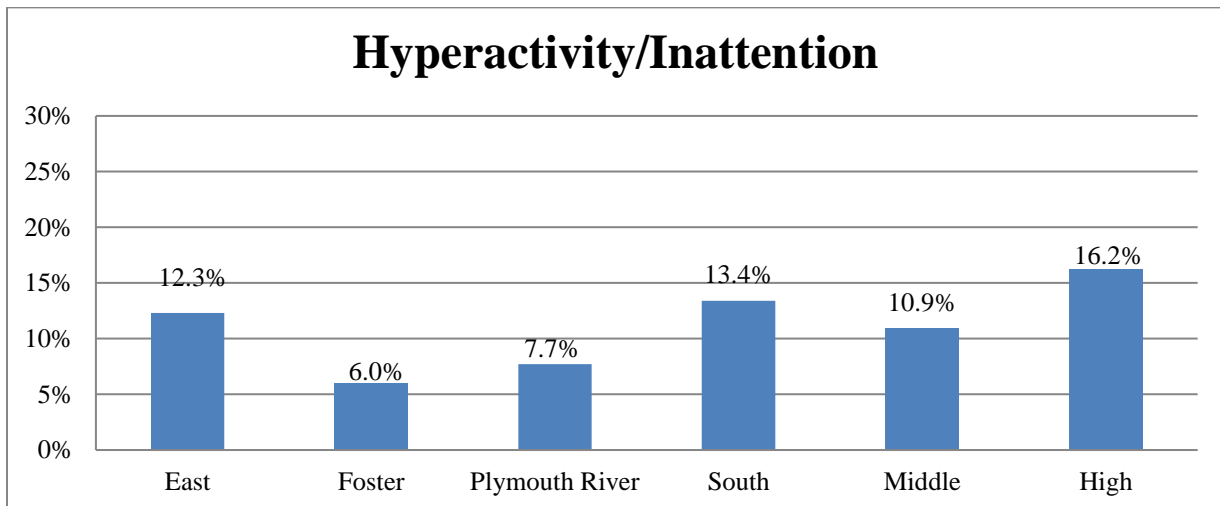
Emotional Symptoms refer to feelings of anxiety, depression, and anger; physiological manifestations of these feelings.



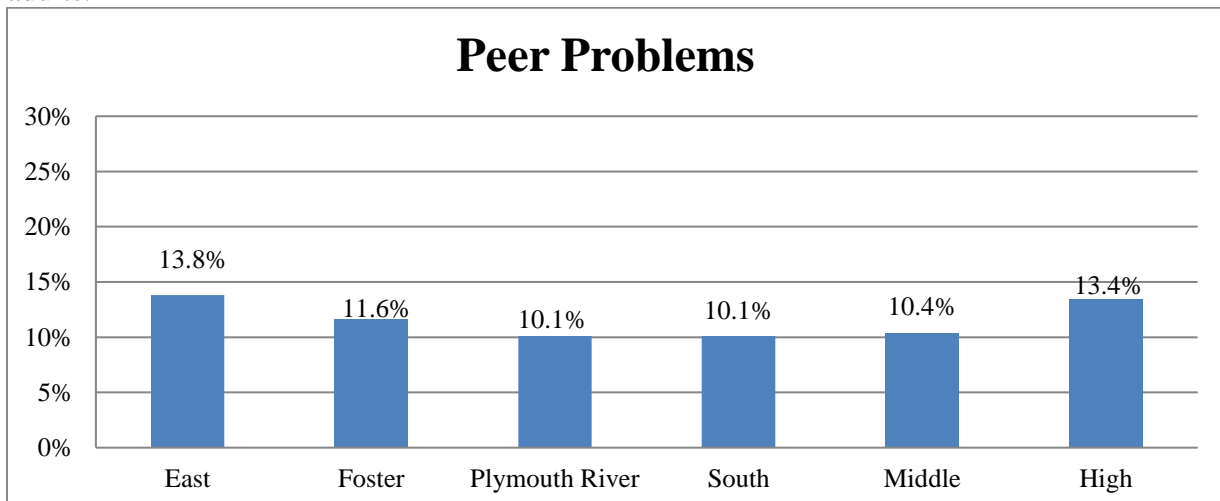
Conduct Problems refer to behaviors associated with acting out, lying, cheating, and stealing.



Hyperactivity/Inattention refers to behaviors related to restlessness, attention, planning, and judgment.



Peer Problems refer to problems with social isolation, bullying, relationships with peers and adults.



How do social and emotional problems impact students?

Students rated how they were doing in each of several areas of school functioning. The table below indicates the % of students with high social and emotional problem scores who rated themselves as “Fair” or “Poor” in reading, writing, and math. Overall, students with social and emotional problems were less likely to indicate that they were doing well in each area of school functioning.

Student Report: Domain All Students	Average SDQ Score Across District (N=2,157)	High or Very High SDQ Score Across District (N = 194)
Reading	5.6%	19.6%*
Writing	8.2%	24.1%*
Math	13.9%	34.0%*

The next table shows the percent of students with high social and emotional problem scores who rated themselves as “Fair” or “Poor” in reading, writing, and math, by school.

Student Report: Domain All Students	High or Very High Total SDQ Scores					
	East (N=8)	Foster (N =8)	Plymouth River (N =10)	South (N =9)	Middle (N =55)	High (N = 107)
Reading	62.5%*	25.0%*	11.1%	42.9%*	19.5%*	17.8%*
Writing	62.5%*	12.5%	10.0%	22.2%	23.9%*	20.8%
Math	37.5%	28.6%	20.0%	33.3%	17.6%*	33.6%*

* Statistically significant difference from students without an elevated score on each problem scale

Who do students speak to when they are having a social or emotional problem?

All students were asked who they spoke to about social or emotional problems this school year. Students most often spoke with their friends, a boyfriend or girlfriend, or a family member.

Source of help	% of Students Who Talk to Person Across District (N = 2,532)	% rating talking to that person helpful
A Parent	71.1%	75.0%
A Friend or Friends	61.8%	67.9%
A Brother or Sister	35.7%	62.5%
Another Family Member	31.5%	63.6%
Guidance Counselor	21.7%	61.2%
A Boyfriend or Girlfriend	19.7%	72.6%
Other Adults in Community (Mentor, clergy etc.,)	19.6%	57.6%
A Teacher or Teachers	16.6%	61.8%
School Counselor	14.3%	62.0%
A Coach	10.2%	58.5%
The School Nurse	7.1%	52.3%
The Principal or Assistant Principal	4.4%	67.8%
Club Advisor	2.5%	47.5%
School Psychologist	2.1%	52.6%

The next table shows the percent of students in each school who said that they spoke to each source of help about a social or emotional problem this school year.

Source of help	East (N=147)	Foster (N =138)	Plymouth River (N =146)	South (N =143)	Middle (N =933)	High (N =1,022)
A Parent	74.7%	64.5%	65.8%	63.6%	71.8%	72.7%
A Friend or Friends	42.9%	30.7%	32.9%	43.4%	56.5%	80.5%
A Brother or Sister	21.4%	17.5%	25.0%	24.6%	34.0%	44.8%
Another Family Member	33.8%	23.7%	27.8%	39.2%	32.3%	31.0%
Guidance Counselor	--	--	--	--	--	21.7%
A Boyfriend or Girlfriend	--	--	--	--	9.1%	26.2%
Other Adults in Community (Mentor, clergy etc.,)	--	--	--	--	20.3%	19.1%
A Teacher or Teachers	26.9%	23.0%	25.2%	28.7%	10.6%	16.8%
School Counselor	15.1%	16.9%	13.3%	17.6%	13.0%	3.4%
A Coach	10.2%	6.6%	8.3%	11.3%	8.6%	12.2%
School Nurse	16.4%	9.6%	13.9%	16.3%	7.2%	3.3%
The Principal/Assistant	4.8%	2.9%	9.7%	9.9%	4.2%	3.1%
Club Advisor	4.1%	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	2.4%	2.7%

District wide, **59.9%** of students said that there is at least one teacher or other adult in the school they could talk to if they had a problem, **10.7%** said there was no adult they could talk to, and **29.5%** said that they were unsure.

Help at school	East (N=147)	Foster (N =138)	Plymouth River (N =146)	South (N =143)	Middle (N =933)	High (N =1,022)
At least 1 teacher or other adult to talk to if having a problem	55.5%	66.7%	55.2%	60.8%	55.5%	64.2%
No adult they can talk to	10.3%	8.7%	9.8%	7.7%	11.0%	11.3%
Unsure	34.2%	24.6%	35.0%	31.5%	33.5%	24.6%

District wide, outside of school, **63.1%** said that they could talk to a parent or other adult family member about things that are important to them, **2.4%** said that they could talk to a non-family adult (e.g., religious leader, neighbor), **23.4%** said that they could talk to both family and non-family adults, **4.2%** said that they did not have an adult to talk to, and **6.9%** said that they were unsure. Below are the results for each school.

Help outside of school	East (N=147)	Foster (N =138)	Plymouth River (N =146)	South (N =143)	Middle (N =933)	High (N = 1,022)
Could talk to parent or other adult family member about things important to them	72.4%	75.9%	79.2%	72.3%	66.9%	53.1%
Could talk to a non-family adult	0.7%	1.5%	1.4%	2.1%	1.5%	3.8%
Could talk to both family and non-family adults	14.5%	12.4%	8.3%	11.3%	22.0%	31.1%
Do not have an adult to talk to	3.4%	3.6%	2.8%	3.5%	3.9%	5.0%
Unsure	9.0%	6.6%	8.3%	10.6%	5.7%	7.0%

What supports and services do students with different types of problems receive?

District wide, **81.0%** of students agreed that if someone their age felt sad, scared, or stressed, talking to an adult could help them feel better.

District wide, **27.8%** of students said that in the past year they wanted to talk to a counselor, doctor, or therapist about an emotional problem or problems with attention, social problems, or behavior.

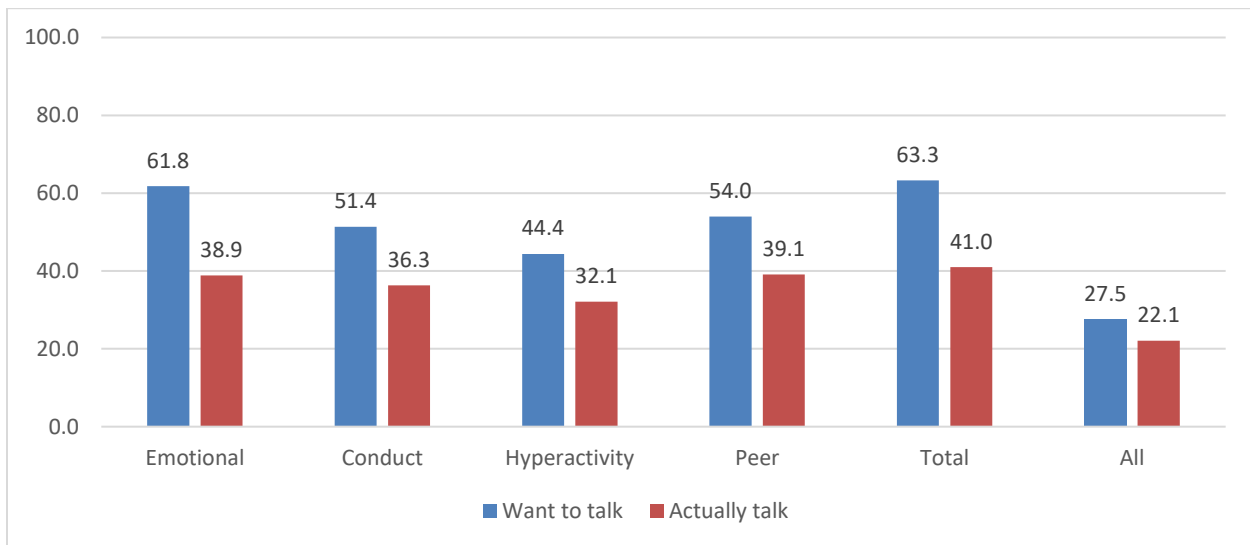
District wide, **22.2%** of students said that in the past year they actually talked to a counselor, doctor, or therapist about an emotional problem or problems with attention, social problems, or behavior.

District wide, **3.2%** of students said they are currently meeting with someone at school. **9.2%** of students said that they are currently meeting with someone outside of school.

Below are results by school.

Access to Counseling	East (N=147)	Foster (N =138)	Plymouth River (N =146)	South (N =143)	Middle (N =933)	High (N =1,022)
If someone my age felt sad, scared, or stressed, talking to an adult could help them feel better	86.1%	93.4%	86.2%	81.0%	80.3%	78.5%
<u>Wanted</u> to talk to a mental health provider in past year	19.8%	12.7%	22.7%	20.6%	16.8%	41.4%
<u>Actually</u> talked to mental health provider in past year	19.5%	20.0%	18.6%	26.3%	16.0%	28.3%
Currently meeting with someone at school	4.4%	4.7%	4.5%	5.4%	2.0%	3.5%
Currently meeting with someone outside of school	7.3%	7.9%	6.0%	5.4%	6.8%	12.6%

The chart below shows the percent of students in the district who wanted to talk to someone and the percent who actually did by problem type:



The chart below shows the percent of students with average and elevated SDQ scores who reported they receive mental health services either at school or outside of school:

Type of Problem	Average SDQ score	Slightly elevated SDQ score	High SDQ score	Very High SDQ score
Emotional Problems	8.4%	19.8%	22.0%	28.6%
Conduct Problems	11.3%	22.5%	26.2%	38.5%
Hyperactivity Problems	10.2%	14.7%	20.0%	27.7%
Peer Problems	9.1%	18.5%	29.9%	26.4%
Total Problems	9.0%	21.7%	30.4%	40.9%

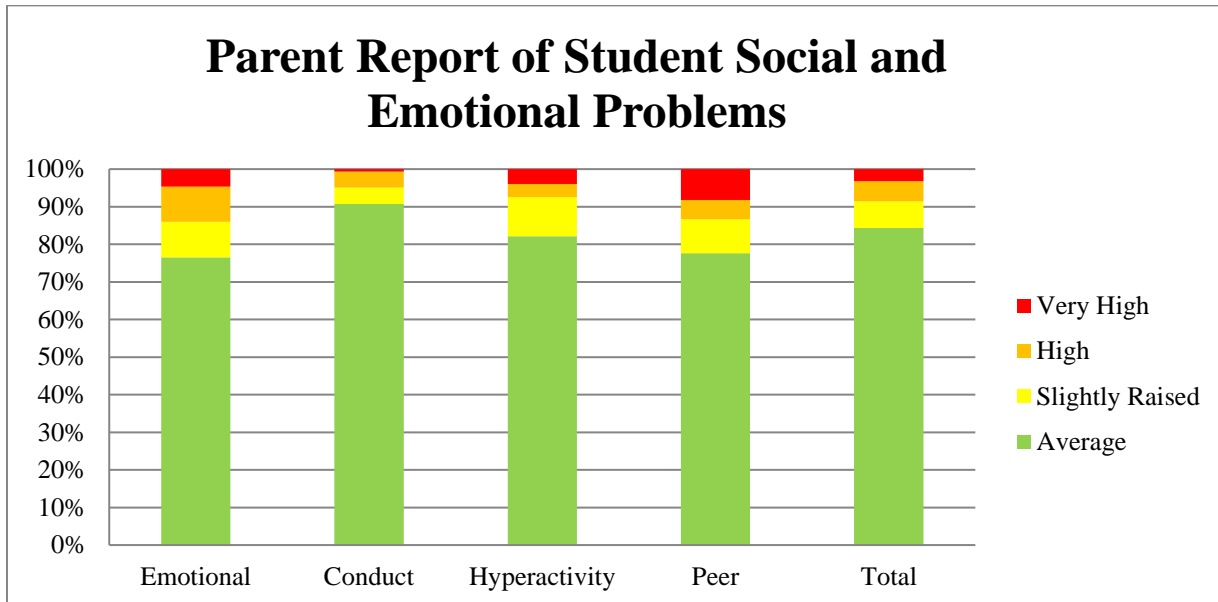
This table shows the percent of students with High or Very High Total SDQ scores who currently receive mental health services either at school or outside of school.

Access to Counseling	East	Foster	Plymouth River	South	Middle	High
Average SDQ Score	8.8%	7.8%	5.9%	7.5%	6.6%	12.1%
Slightly Elevated SDQ Score	15.4%	30.0%	25.0%	11.1%	22.1%	21.9%
High SDQ Score	25.0%	100.0%	16.7%	66.7%	19.0%	34.1%
Very High SDQ Score	66.7%	66.7%	66.7%	40.0%	28.1%	41.5%

PARENT RESULTS

According to parents (across all grade levels), what social and emotional problems are most common among students?

The most common social and emotional problems parents reported among their students were peer problems and emotional problems.



Who do parents speak to about their child’s social and emotional wellbeing?

Parents were asked if they had talked to each of several people at school about their student’s social and emotional wellbeing at school.

Source of help	East (N=115)	Foster (N =123)	Plymouth River (N =213)	South (N =132)	Middle (N =228)	High (N =264)
Guidance Counselor	19.6%	8.4%	8.0%	17.7%	35.8%	37.6%
Teacher or teachers	82.6%	76.1%	67.6%	63.6%	36.3%	26.2%
Adjustment Counselor	28.9%	25.2%	23.0%	25.4%	19.0%	12.6%
Principal or Assistant Principal	9.8%	22.2%	10.0%	24.6%	14.3%	10.7%
Special Education Teacher or Case Manager	23.2%	20.4%	11.9%	14.0%	12.9%	10.5%
School Psychologist	20.7%	17.6%	17.5%	20.6%	12.0%	8.7%
School nurse	19.5%	9.3%	8.7%	15.5%	12.4%	7.5%
School Social Worker	8.0%	9.2%	6.2%	5.5%	3.9%	2.6%
Club Advisor	1.8%	1.0%	0.5%	0.8%	2.0%	1.3%

Are parents satisfied with social and emotional supports at school?

Parents indicated their satisfaction with a range of social and emotional supports provided by the school. The majority of parents were satisfied, with the highest level of satisfaction for implementation of bullying prevention initiatives, communication about social-emotional initiatives, and school-wide social-emotional program implementation.

% Satisfied or Very Satisfied with supports	East (N=115)	Foster (N =123)	Plymouth River (N =213)	South (N = 132)	Middle (N =228)	High (N =264)
Implementation of bullying prevention initiatives	74.7%	88.7%	75.4%	80.3%	88.7%	68.0%
Communication with parents, in general, about social-emotional initiatives	75.2%	89.4%	76.8%	76.4%	89.4%	65.3%
Communication with you about your child's emotional well-being	64.3%	84.4%	75.6%	74.2%	84.4%	53.2%
Mental health supports and services for individual students	61.9%	87.7%	82.0%	77.2%	87.7%	58.1%
Social-emotional programs implemented school-wide	74.5%	94.1%	84.1%	83.0%	94.1%	65.7%

Parents were asked about their perceptions of their child's relationship with staff at school. Parents indicated a high degree of care and dedication by school staff.

% Agree or Agree A lot	East (N=115)	Foster (N =123)	Plymouth River (N =213)	South (N =132)	Middle (N =228)	High (N =264)
Teachers care about their students	96.4%	100.0%	98.1%	98.5%	81.5%	92.8%
Teachers listen to students when they have problems	90.3%	99.1%	96.4%	96.7%	88.0%	82.2%
Adults who work in this school care about students	89.5%	99.0%	98.0%	98.5%	95.1%	94.9%
Teachers like their students	96.2%	100.0%	98.0%	96.9%	95.1%	94.3%

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