

Hingham Middle School Report



Boston University School of Education

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Introduction

This report describes findings from the Systems of Supports Survey completed by students in grades 4 to 12, teachers, and parents in Hingham Public Schools. This survey was administered by researchers at Boston University at the request of the district 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. Students who did not indicate that they had current social or emotional problems were skipped-out of follow-up questions. All students were directed to respond to a series of questions about school climate, social and emotional strengths and challenges, and help-seeking.

Parents (including Caregivers) 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 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 support students. This survey was designed to provide information to inform professional development activities for teachers. These results are not included in the current report, but are provided to the district for planning purposes.

Executive Summary

Rates of Social and Emotional Problems in Hingham Middle School (page 8)

- Overall, **14.7%** of Middle School students reported having significant social/emotional problems in the last 6 months (**8.1%** had slightly raised scores, **2.7%** had high scores, and **3.9%** had very high scores)
- **21.8%** of Middle School students reported having emotional problems in the past 6 months (**8.5%** had slightly raised scores, **6.0%** had high scores, and **7.3%** had very high scores)
- **5.4%** of Middle School students reported having conduct problems in the past 6 months (**2.6%** had slightly raised scores, **1.5%** had high scores, and **1.3%** had very high scores)
- **20.2%** of Middle School students reported having problems with attention/hyperactivity in the past 6 months (**9.4%** had slightly raised scores, **4.4%** had high scores, and **6.4%** had very high scores)
- **19.9%** of Middle School students reported having peer problems in the past 6 months (**9.4%** had slightly raised scores, **5.0%** had high scores, and **5.5%** had very high scores)

Group Differences in Social and Emotional Problems (page 8,9)

Significant social and emotional problems are reported most frequently by:

- Females (**6.5%**)
- Students in grade 8 (**7.5%**)

Challenges for Students with Social and Emotional Problems (page 13)

Students with social and emotional problems indicated challenges in school:

- Students with significant social/emotional problems reported trouble with reading (**19.5%**), writing (**23.9%**), and math (**17.6%**)

Student Connections with Other at School (page 14)

Students report that when they are upset or having a hard time at school they talk to...

- Parent (**71.8%**)
- Friends (**56.5%**)
- A brother or sister (**34.0%**)
- Another family member (**32.3%**)
- Other adults in the community (**20.3%**)
- School Counselor (**13.0%**)
- Teachers (**10.6%**)

Student Use of Social and Emotional Support and Services (page 16)

Among students reporting significant social/emotional problems:

- **16.0%** of students said that actually talked to a counselor, doctor, or therapist about an emotional problem or problems with attention, social problems, or behavior
- **2.0%** of students said they are currently meeting with someone at school
- **6.8%** of students said that they are currently meeting with someone outside of school
- **28.1%** of students who reported very high social/emotional problems are receiving mental health services

Survey Participants

Description of Participants

- 933 students completed the survey (89.1% Response Rate)
- 228 parents/caregivers completed the survey (21.8% Response Rate)

Participants by Grade

Grade*	Students	Parents/Caregivers
6 th Grade	284	87
7 th Grade	302	70
8 th Grade	323	71

*One student did not indicate grade level, four parents indicated other grade levels

Participants by Child's Gender

Gender	Students	Parents/Caregivers
Male	463	111
Female	451	114
Transgender	3	1
Other	6	2

Parent's Relationship to Child

Relationship	Parents/Caregivers
Mother	194
Father	32
Grandmother	1
Other	1

Child's Race/Ethnicity According to Parent

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

Race/Ethnicity	Parent Report
Asian/Asian-American	6
Black/African-American	4
American Indian or Alaska Native	1
Pacific Islander	0
White or Caucasian	212
Multi-Ethnic	7
Other	2
Not Applicable, Not Sure, or Decline to Answer	4

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**)
- Social isolation, bullying, relationships with peers and adults (**Peer Relationship Problems**)
- Trouble with empathy, sharing and helping behaviors (**Prosocial Behavior Problems**)

Social Emotional Health Survey (SEHS)⁵

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.

⁵ Furlong, M.J., You, S., Renshaw, T.L., Smith, D.C., & O'Malley, M.D. (2014). Preliminary development and validation of the Social and Emotional Health Survey for secondary school students. *Social Indicators Research*, 117, 1011-1032.

Furlong, M.J., You, S., Renshaw, T.L., O'Malley, M.D., & Rebelez, J. (2013). Preliminary development of the Positive Experiences at School Scale for elementary children. *Child Indicators Research*, 6, 753-775.

The Social Emotional Health Survey (SEHS) assesses psychological well-being using measures of gratitude, optimism, zest, persistence, and prosocial behaviors. The SEHS has been validated as a predictor of subjective well-being, academic achievement, and emotional wellbeing among adolescents.

Student Experience Survey⁶

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

Cognitive Functioning

Cognitive functioning is defined as perceptions of cognitive abilities such as memory, attention, concentration, processing speed and organization skill (NINDS, 2015)⁷. In this study, cognitive function was tested with 8-items from the NIH toolbox. High scores indicate better self-reported cognitive functioning.

Authoritative School Climate Survey

Students completed the Authoritative School Climate Survey to indicate their perceptions of school structure and school warmth.

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.

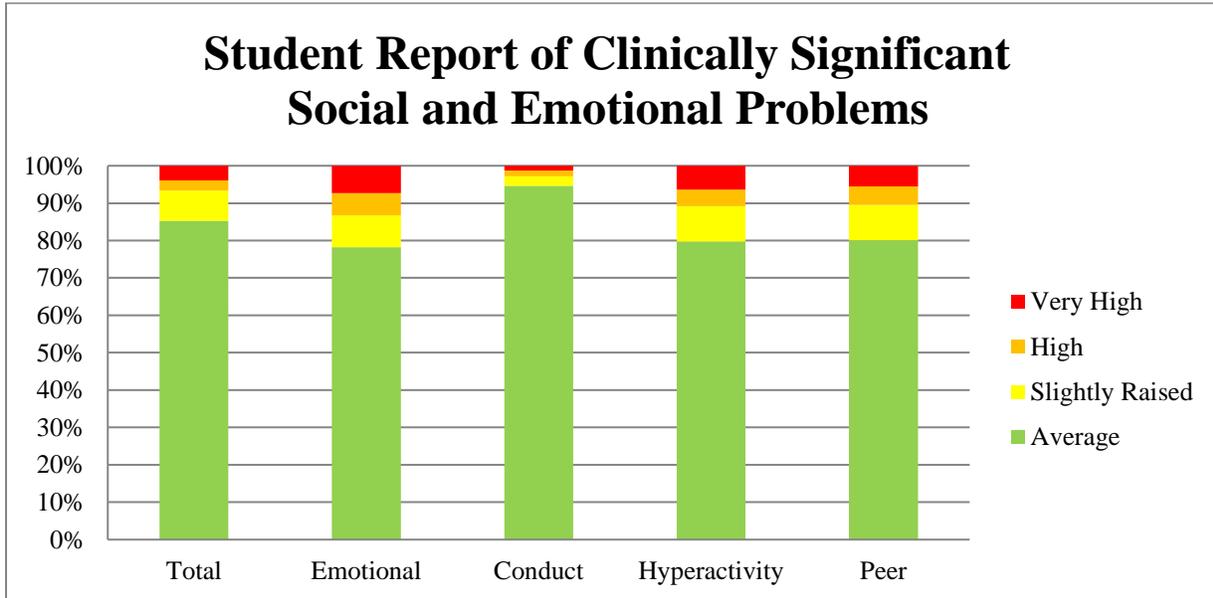
⁶ Gehlbach, H., Brinkworth, M. E., & Harris, A. (2011). Social motivation in the secondary classroom: Assessing teacher-student relationships from both perspectives. *Online Submission*.

⁷ National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). *User Manual for the Quality of Life in Neurological Disorders (Neuro-QoL) Measures, Version 2.0, March 2015*. Retrieved from: http://www.healthmeasures.net/images/neuro_qol/Neuro-QOL_User_Manual_v2_24Mar2015.pdf

STUDENT RESULTS

What social and emotional problems are most common among students?

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

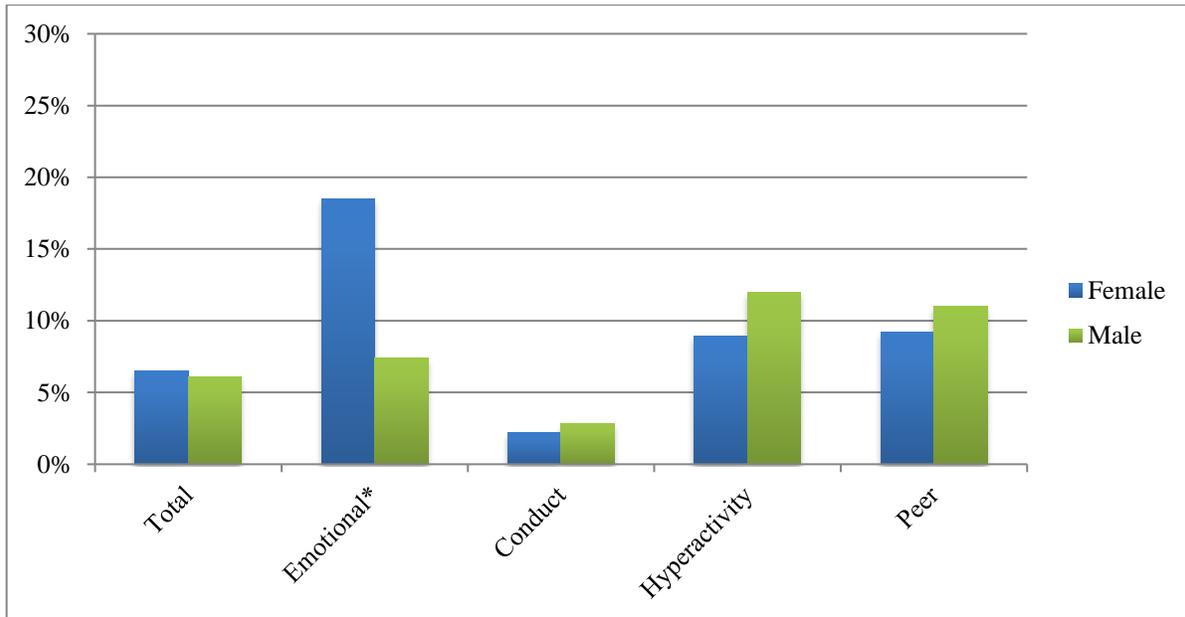


Do social and emotional problems differ across grades and gender?

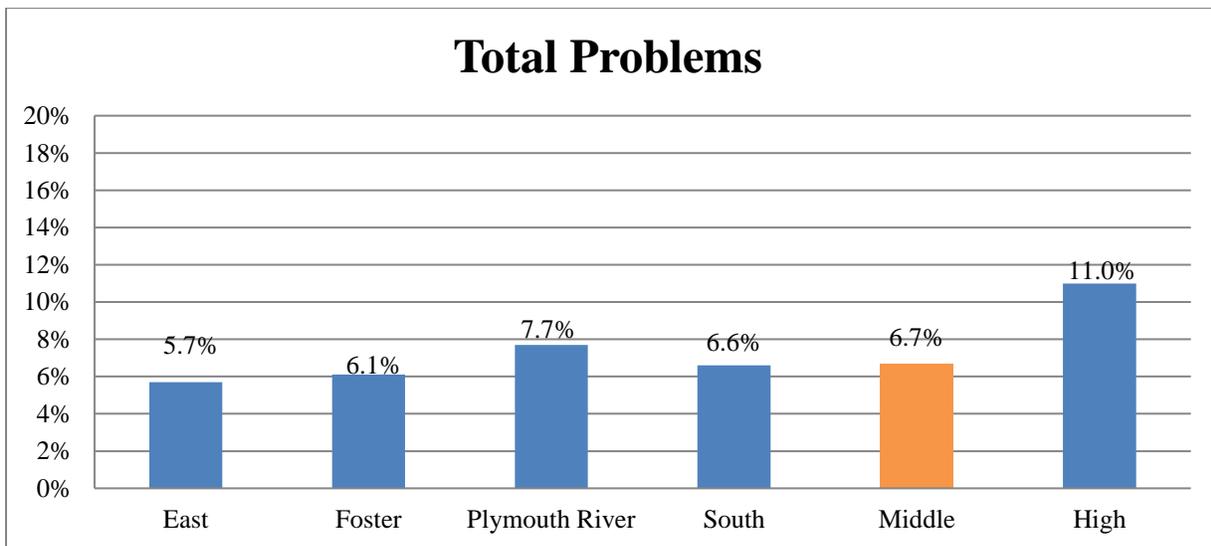
Social and emotional problems reported by students show differences by grade. Emotional and hyperactivity problems increase from 6th to 8th grade.

	6 th (n=282)	7 th (n=300)	8 th (n=317)
SDQ Total	5.5%	7.1%	7.5%
SDQ Emotional	12.8%	12.0%	14.5%
SDQ Conduct	2.1%	4.0%	2.5%
SDQ Hyperactivity	9.3%	10.7%	12.1%
SDQ Peer	10.7%	11.0%	9.2%

A greater percent of males than females reported social and emotional problems across all domains, with the exception of emotional problems. Females report significantly higher rates of emotional problems than males.

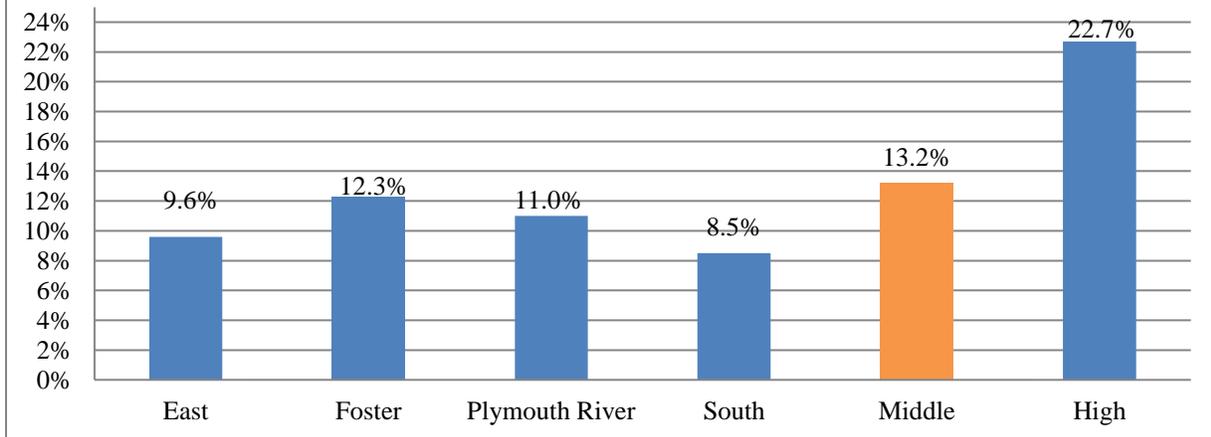


Do social and emotional problems differ across schools?



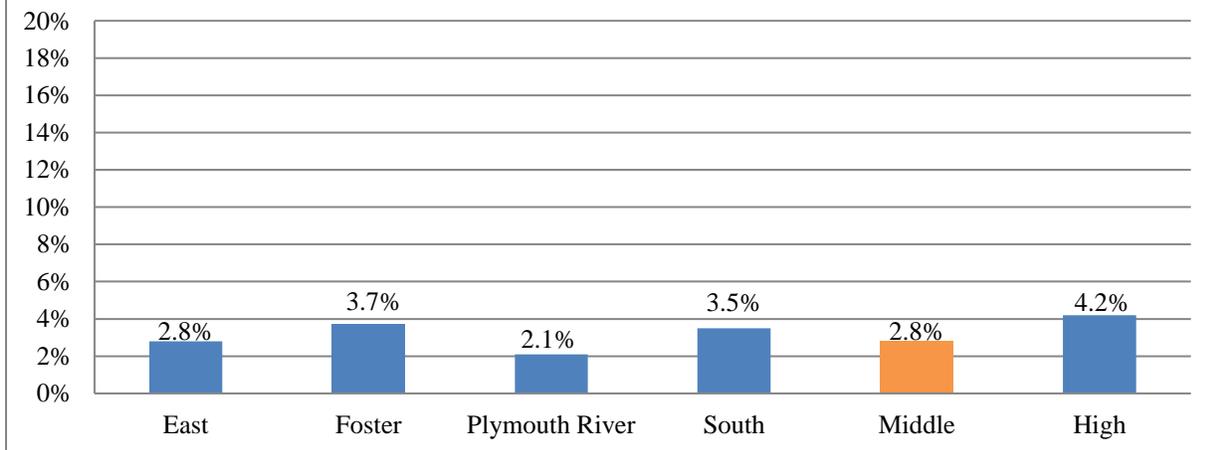
*6.7% represents 60 Middle school students with "high" or "very high" Total Problems

Emotional Problems



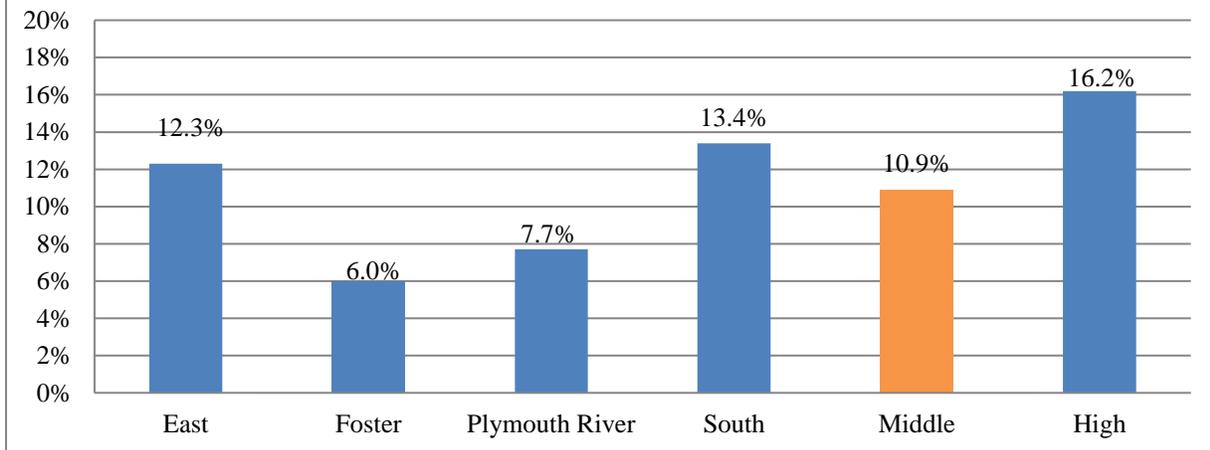
*13.2% represents 122 Middle school students with “high” or “very high” Emotional Problems

Conduct Problems



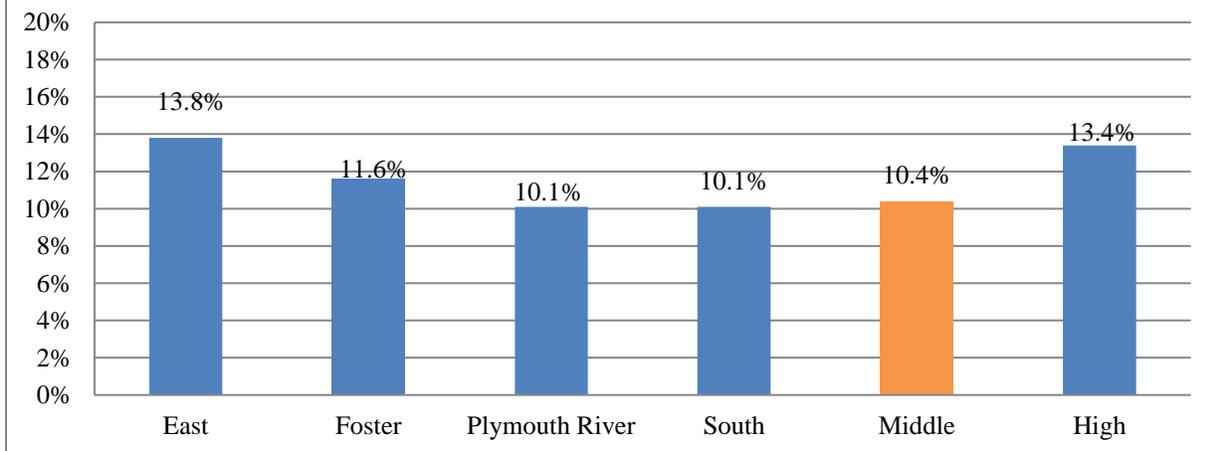
*2.8% represents 26 Middle school students with “high” or “very high” Conduct Problems

Hyperactivity/Inattention



*10.9% represents 101 Middle school students with “high” or “very high” Hyperactivity Problems

Peer Problems

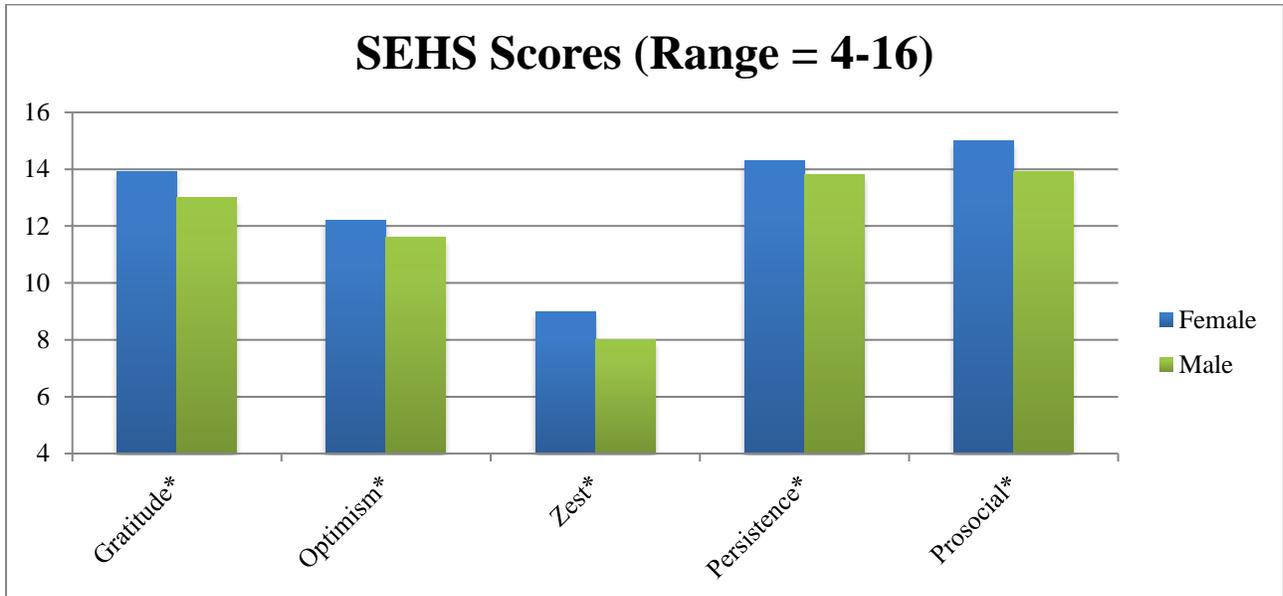


*10.6% represents 97 Middle school students with “high” or “very high” Peer Problems

14.0% of students reported that in the past 12 months they felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities. There were no significant differences in responses to this question by grade level or gender.

Do social and emotional strengths differ across grades and gender?

In general, students reported a high degree of persistence (e.g., I keep working until I get my schoolwork right), and prosocial skills (e.g., I listen when my teacher is talking). Females report significantly higher scores on all domains.



How do social and emotional problems impact students?

Students rated how they were doing in each of 3 areas of school functioning. The table below indicates the % of students with each type of social and emotional problem who rated themselves as “Fair” or “Poor” in each area of functioning. Overall, students at the school with social and emotional problems were less likely to indicate that they were doing well in each area of school functioning.

Student Report: Domain	Total Problems (N = 55)	Students with Emotional Problems (N = 117)	Students with Conduct Problems (N = 26)	Students with Hyperactivity Problems (N = 93)	Students with Peer Problems (N = 95)
Reading	19.5% *	34.1% *	11.6% *	25.6% *	23.3% *
Writing	23.9% *	26.3% *	10.5% *	28.4% *	23.7% *
Math	17.6% *	28.7% *	6.2% *	23.4% *	15.5% *

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

The table below indicates the % of students who said that they were late for school, missed a class, missed an entire day of school, or were disciplined because of a personal, emotional, or substance problem.

School Functioning	%
Late for School	25.1%
Missed Day of School	23.4%
Missed a Class	20.7%
Sent to Principal for Behavior Problem	10.7%
Received a Detention	7.0%
Received an Out-of-School Suspension	1.5%
Received an In-School Suspension	1.3%

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

All students were asked who they speak to about social or emotional problems at school. Students most often spoke with their friends, a teacher, and school counselor.

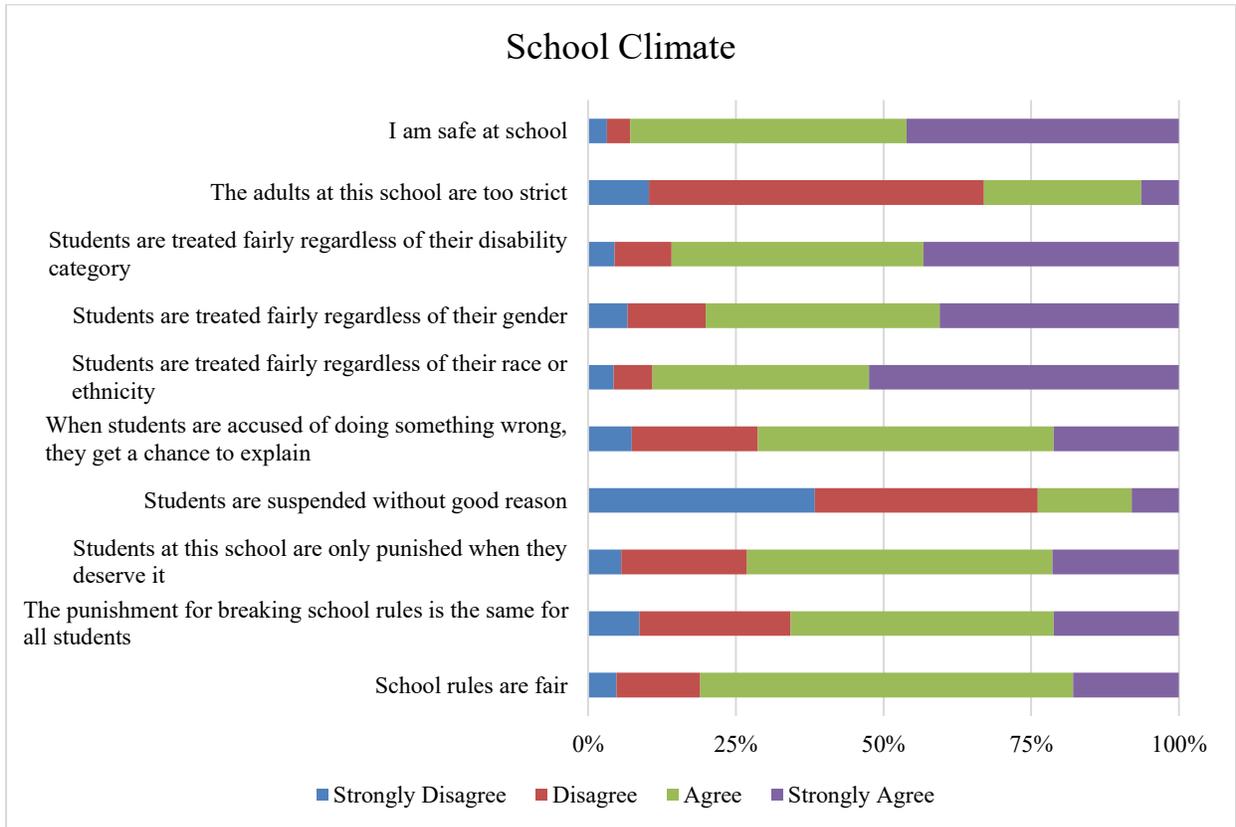
Source of help	% of Students Who Talk to Person (N = 933)	% rating talking to that person helpful (N = Number of students who found it helpful)
Parent	71.8%	79.8% (n=531)
Friend(s) at school	56.5%	69.0% (n=360)
A brother or sister	34.0%	60.6% (n=189)
Another family member	32.3%	64.2% (n=190)
Other adults in the community	20.3%	55.1% (n=102)
School Counselor	13.0%	65.8% (n=52)
Teacher at school	10.6%	62.1% (n=59)
A boyfriend or girlfriend	9.1%	57.1% (n=32)
A coach at school	8.6%	68.4% (n=54)
School nurse	7.2%	40.0% (n=26)
Assistant Principal	4.2%	63.2% (n=24)
Principal	3.6%	71.9% (n=23)
Club Advisor	2.4%	33.3% (n=7)

Among students who did not speak to anyone, **83.3%** said it was because they didn't have a personal or emotional problem, **8.7%** said they had a problem but did not want to talk to anyone about it. **55.5%** of students said that there is at least one teacher or other adult in the school they can talk to if they have a problem, **11.0%** said there was no adult they could talk to, and **33.5%** said that they were unsure.

Outside of school, **66.9%** said that they could talk to a parent or other adult family member about things that are important to them, **1.5%** said that they could talk to a non-family adult (e.g., religious leader, neighbor), **22.0%** said that they could talk to both family and non-family adults, **3.9%** said that they did not have an adult to talk to, and **5.7%** said that they were unsure.

How do students describe the climate at their school?

Students completed the Authoritative School Climate Scale to measure their perceptions of school climate.



What supports and services do students with social and emotional problems receive?

80.3% of students agreed that if someone their age felt sad, scared, or stressed, talking to an adult could help them feel better

16.8% 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.

16.0% of students said that they actually talked to a counselor, doctor, or therapist about an emotional problem or problems with attention, social problems, or behavior

2.0% of students said they are currently meeting with someone at school

6.8% of students said that they are currently meeting with someone outside of school

Received counseling in or out of school	Average SDQ score (N=777)	Slightly elevated SDQ score (N=68)	High SDQ score (N=21)	Very High SDQ score (N=32)
Total SDQ Problems	6.6%	22.1%	19.0%	28.1%

Are students using substances?

Students were asked about the frequency of their use of a series of substances.

Substance	6 th	7 th	8 th	Male	Female
Smoked cigarette in past 30 days	0.8%	0.4%	2.9%	1.0%	1.0%
Ever used an e-cigarette or “vaped”	4.9%	3.0%	13.9%	7.9%	5.7%
Had at least 1 drink of alcohol in life	9.0%	6.1%	14.2%	11.6%	6.9%
In the past 30 days rode in car with someone drinking alcohol	12.3%	18.3%	16.8%	13.6%	16.4%
In lifetime, took prescription pain killer to treat medical issue	24.7%	19.0%	21.8%	20.7%	22.6%
In lifetime, prescribed other meds to treat medical issue	23.8%	24.5%	25.4%	25.5%	23.2%
In lifetime, taken someone else’s prescription medicine	2.8%	1.9%	4.0%	3.3%	2.4%

What other life experiences might impact students?

Bullying and Fighting:

82.7% said that they were never bullied, **12.5%** said that they were bullied 1-3 times, **2.4%** said that they were bullied 4-6 times, **0.4%** said that they were bullied 7-9 times, **1.9%** said that they were bullied 10 or more times.

9.3% said that they were harassed or bullied online (Facebook, email, Twitter, Snapchat, etc) or with a cell phone (text messaging, photos, etc).

84.2% said that they were never in a physical fight in the past year, **11.2%** said that they were in a physical fight 1-3 times, **4.5%** said that they were in a physical fight 4 or more times.

Internet and social media use:

Student said that they used the following social media platforms on a regular basis

Social Media Platform	%
YouTube	74.5%
Instagram	65.3%
Snapchat	54.8%
Google+	23.0%
Pintrest	16.6%
Twitter	8.0%
WhatsApp	4.7%
Facebook	3.5%
Reddit	2.4%
Flickr	1.9%

Students also said that they use: Amino, Discord, Google Hangouts, House Party, TBH, Tumblr, iMessage, Music.ly, Netflix, Email, Texting, VSCO

10.5% said that they have received a text of a sexual nature (pictures or words) and **2.2%** said that they have sent a text of a sexual nature to someone else.

77.7% said that their parents gave them permission to use social media, **2.6%** said that they have an account but their parents don't know.

Of those who said that they have a social media account, **58.0%** said their parents were supervising their account.

Excluding time doing homework, **45.2%** said that they spend an average of an two hours or more a day watching TV shows and **42.6%** spend two hours or more a day on the computer or phone (including texting, playing games, or using apps).

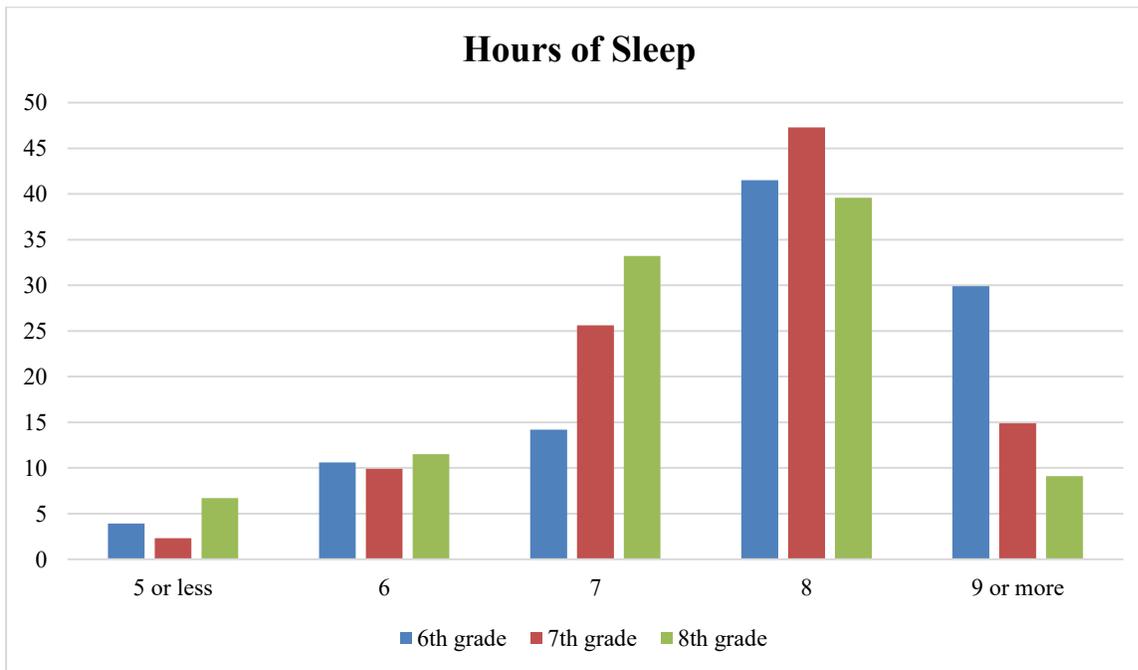
Weight and Exercise:

28.2% of students said that they are trying to lose weight, **12.7%** said that they are trying to gain weight, **17.4%** said that they are trying to stay the same weight, and **41.7%** said that they are not trying to do anything about their weight.

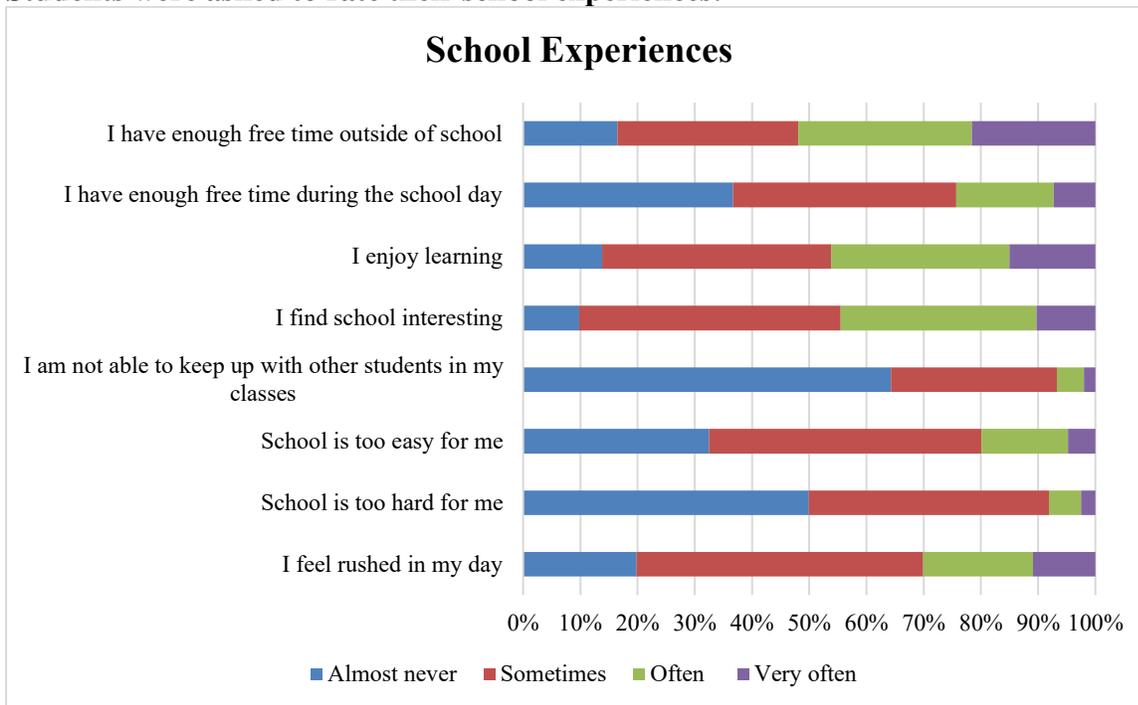
52.6% of students said that in the past month they exercised to lose weight, **7.5%** restricted food intake or calories to lose weight, **15.7%** both exercised and restricted food intake/calories.

Sleep

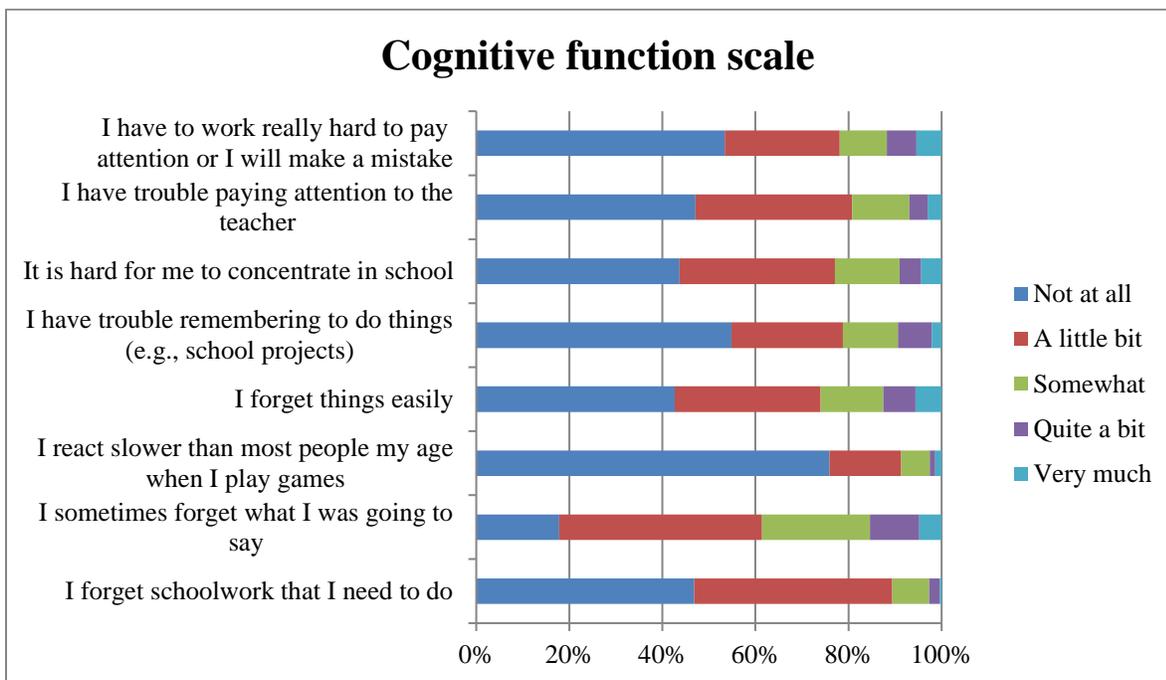
Students were asked how many hours of sleep they get in a typical school night.



Students were asked to rate their school experiences:



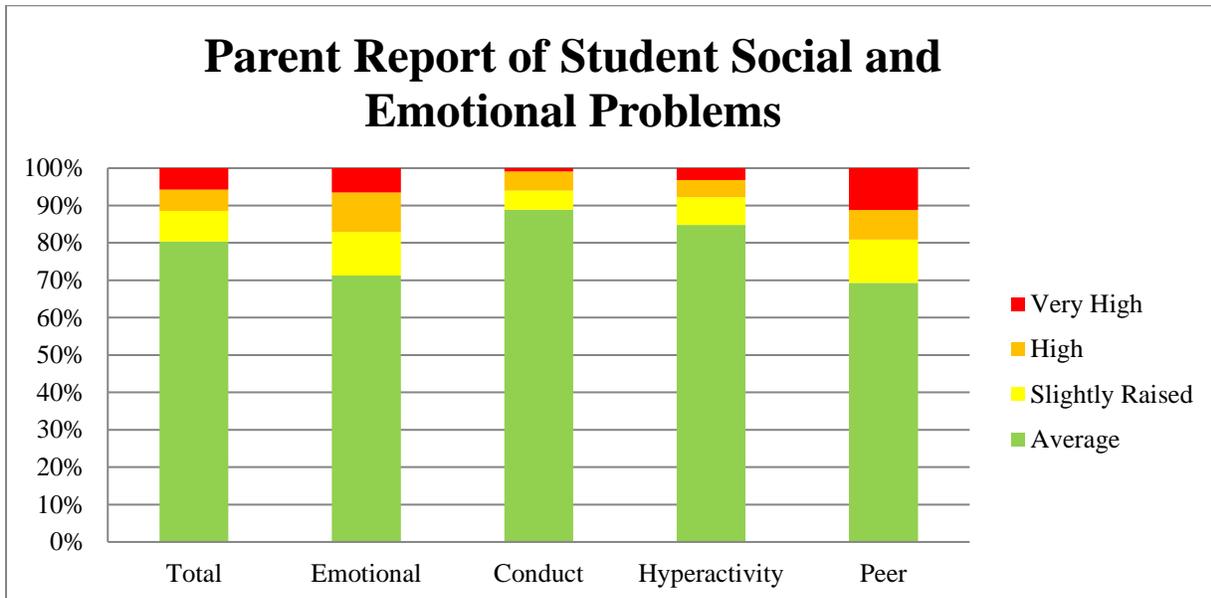
Students reported their perceptions of their own cognitive functioning:



PARENT RESULTS

According to parents, 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.



Parents were asked if their child has ever had each of the following social, emotional, behavioral, and learning problems (parents could select all that apply)

Parent Report: Problem Type	% Yes, but not currently a problem	% Yes, and this is currently a problem
Anxiety Disorder	8.8%	16.1%
Depression	6.5%	4.7%
Panic Attacks	5.5%	4.1%
Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder	5.1%	15.9%
Thoughts of suicide or wanting to die	4.1%	1.4%
School Phobia	3.2%	3.2%
Significant Acting Out/ Behavioral Problems	2.8%	3.2%
Self-harm (cutting, hitting, burning)	1.4%	0.5%
Learning Disability	1.0%	11.8%
Developmental disorders (Autism/PDD)	0.9%	4.7%
Eating Disorder/ Significant Problems with Eating	0.5%	3.7%
Manic Depression/ Mania/ Bipolar Depression	0%	0%
Substance use or significant problems with smoking, alcohol, or drugs	0%	0%

How do parents report social and emotional problems impact students?

Parents rated how their child was doing in each of 15 areas of school functioning. The table below indicates the % of students with high total social and emotional problem whose parents rated themselves as “Fair” or “Poor” in each area of functioning. Overall, parents who indicated their children had social and emotional problems indicated their children were doing worse in all areas of school functioning.

Parent Report: Domain	Fair or Poor Functioning (N=24)
Relationships with Peers	82.6% *
Making Friends	75.0% *
Enthusiasm and energy in approaching work	70.8% *
Paying Attention	69.6% *
Optimism (having a positive outlook)	66.7% *
Persistence (trying hard when things are challenging)	62.5% *
Taking Tests or Quizzes	58.3% *
Gratitude or Thankfulness	54.2% *
Sitting Still During Class	52.4% *
Speaking up in Class	42.9% *
Writing	41.7% *
Finishing Work on Time	37.5% *
Relationships with Teachers	27.3% *
Reading	25.0% *
Math	25.0% *

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

The table below indicates the % of students whose parents said that they were late for school, missed an entire day of school, or were sent to the principal’s office because of a behavior problem. Overall, parents of students with social and emotional problems were more likely to indicate their child missing school or being sent to the principal’s office.

School Functioning	Total Problems (N =24)
Missed a Class	50.0%
Missed Day of School	41.7%
Sent to Principal	33.4%
Late for School	33.1%
Receive Detention	12.5%
Receive In-School Suspension	4.3%
Receive Out-of-School Suspension	0%

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

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

Source of help	% of Parents Who Talk to Person (N = 228)
Teacher or teachers	36.3%
Guidance Counselor	35.8%
Adjustment Counselor	19.0%
Principal or Assistant Principal	14.3%
Special Education Teacher or Case Manager	12.9%
School nurse	12.4%
School Psychologist	12.0%
School Social Worker	3.9%
Club Advisor	2.0%

What supports and services do parents report that students with social and emotional problems receive?

Parents were asked to indicate their perceptions of their child’s need and access to support services.

Need and Support Services	Average /Slightly Elevated SDQ score (N=182)	High/Very High SDQ score (N=24)
Was there a time in the past year when you felt like your child might need help because of problems with emotions or behaviors?	42.9%	95.8%*
Was there a time in the past year when someone encouraged you to seek help for your child because of problems with emotions or behaviors?	12.6%	50.0%*
Has your child <u>ever</u> received psychological counseling for an emotional, behavioral, or substance problem?	21.7%	83.3%*
Has your child <u>ever</u> received medication for an emotional, behavioral, or substance problem?	7.3%	70.8%*
Is your child currently receiving psychological counseling for an emotional, behavioral, or substance problem?	41.0%	40.9%
Is your child currently receiving medication for an emotional, behavioral, or substance problem?	33.3%	72.7%*

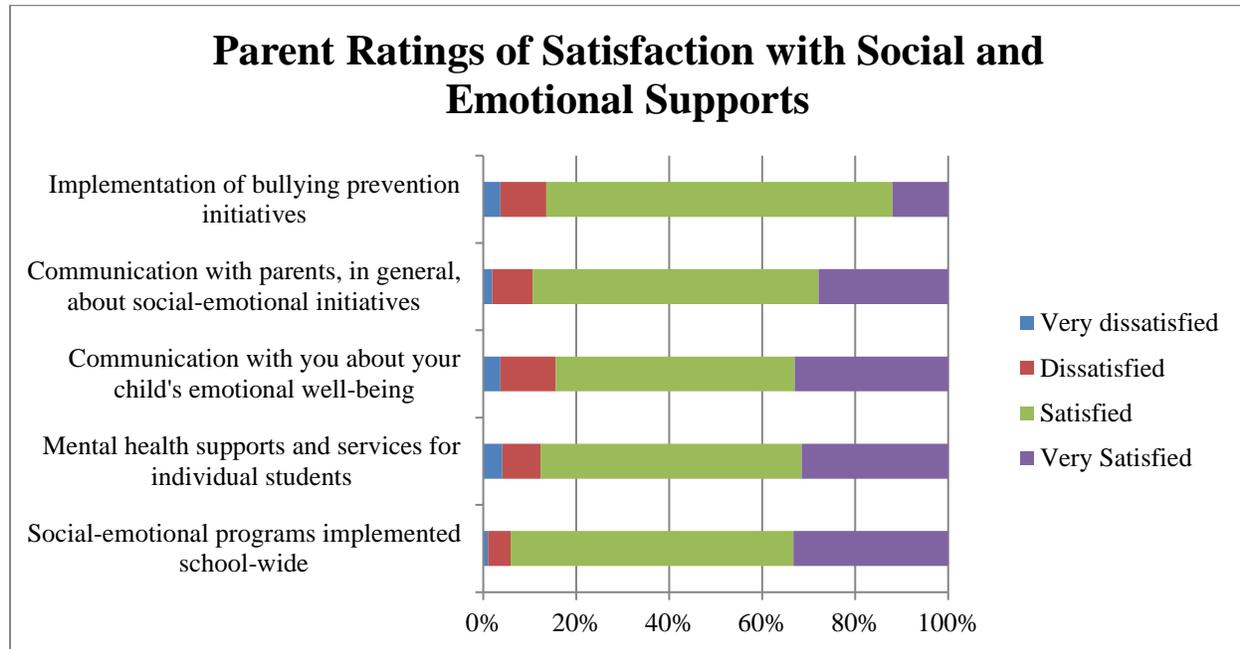
4 parents reported their child currently receives counseling services in school, 5 reported that their child receives counseling from a pediatrician, 26 reported their child current receives counseling services from a mental health provider in the community.

Parents were asked if their child receives services or support at school because of an emotional or behavioral problem.

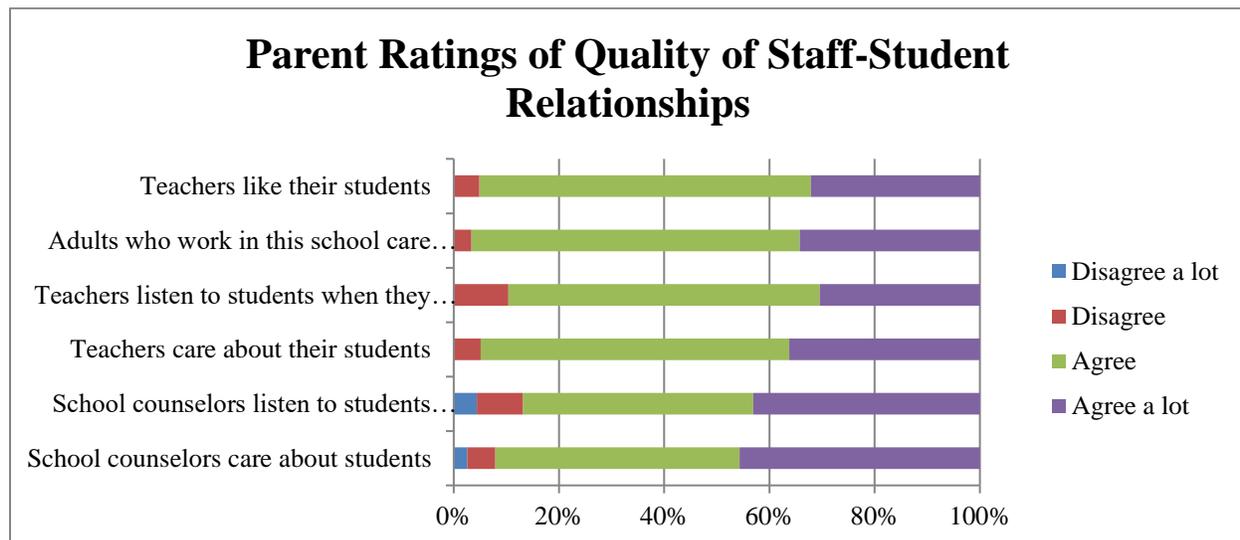
Services at School	% (N)
No	82.3% (N=167)
Yes, through an IEP	8.4% (N=17)
Yes, through a 504 Plan	8.4% (N=17)
Yes, but not through an IEP or 504 Plan	1.0% (N=2)
I don’t know	0

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 school-wide social-emotional program implementation.



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.



What other life experiences might impact students?

Parents were asked if their child was bullied in the past year at school:

19.3% said that their child had been bullied. Another 17.5% reported that they were unsure

This report was prepared by:

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