

Promoting Diversity and Respect in New Brunswick Schools



Report on Bullying 2014–2016
Education and Early Childhood Development

**Promoting Diversity and Respect in New Brunswick Schools
Annual Report on Bullying 2014-2016**

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Minister's message

This report, prescribed in the *Education Act*, provides an overview of available diversity and respect programming in the anglophone and francophone sectors and presents five years of statistics available through the Grade 12 Exit Survey.

As part of our government's commitment to making New Brunswick the best place to raise a family, we promised a positive learning environment for our students by reducing bullying. We understand that a safe and welcoming environment is crucial for achievement, and we want our students to get the education they deserve and the skills they need to support our province's economic growth and social progress.

Bullying prevention and intervention initiatives are part of a multi-faceted approach to promote safe and welcoming environments for all students at public schools in New Brunswick. The goal of these initiatives is to help schools and districts create a sense of belonging for all students, regardless of their personal identity and background, to ensure we address the root causes of bullying in our schools.

It is important to teach all children and youth about the value of diversity, the harmful effects of bullying, and the importance of respect for others in our society. This report helps the department determine focus areas for diversity and respect programs to ensure the targets for a positive learning environment are met.

Honourable Brian Kenny
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development



Introduction

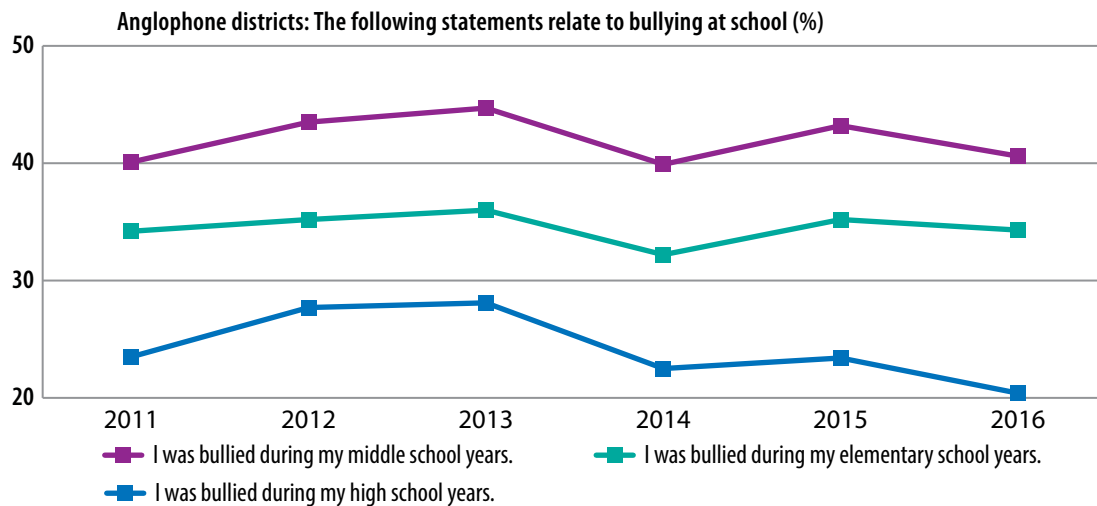
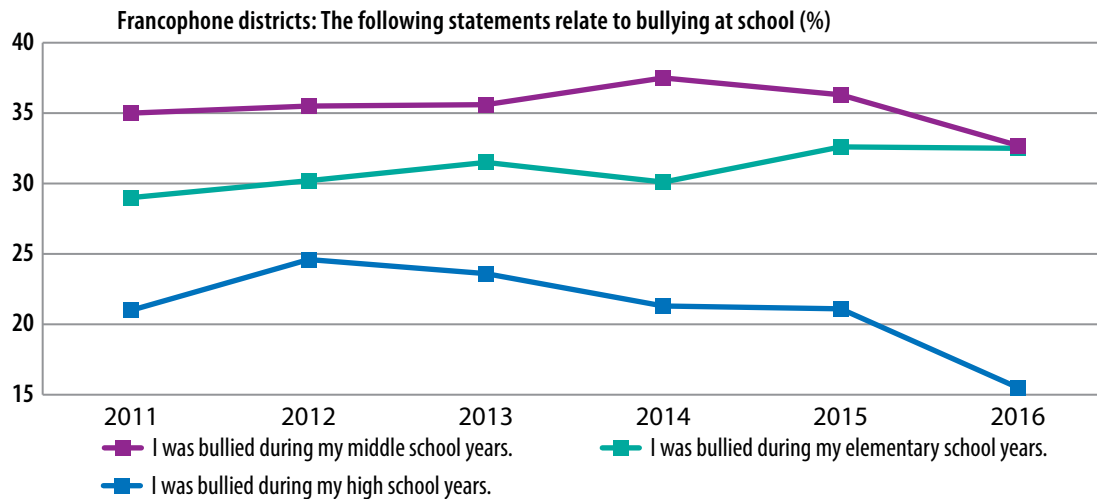
Students, parents and educators define bullying as a learned behaviour intended to cause or should be known to cause fear, intimidation, humiliation or other harm to an individual or a group of individuals. There is a power imbalance, real or perceived, between the persons involved that affects the relationships within the positive learning environment of the school. It has a high likelihood of being repeated or has occurred multiple times. Bullying can take many forms, including physical, verbal and non-verbal, social or electronic (cyber). It also includes assisting or encouraging the behaviour in any way.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is committed to ensuring that all public schools have programs and measures in place to help promote positive learning and working environments. Section 56.2 of the *Education Act* states that "The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development shall lay an annual report on bullying in the New Brunswick public education system before the Legislative Assembly during the course of the regular session of the Legislature that follows the year for which the report is made."

This report provides a statistical overview of bullying in schools for the past five years and outlines the efforts that are being undertaken by schools, districts and the department to encourage a culture of greater respect and diversity.

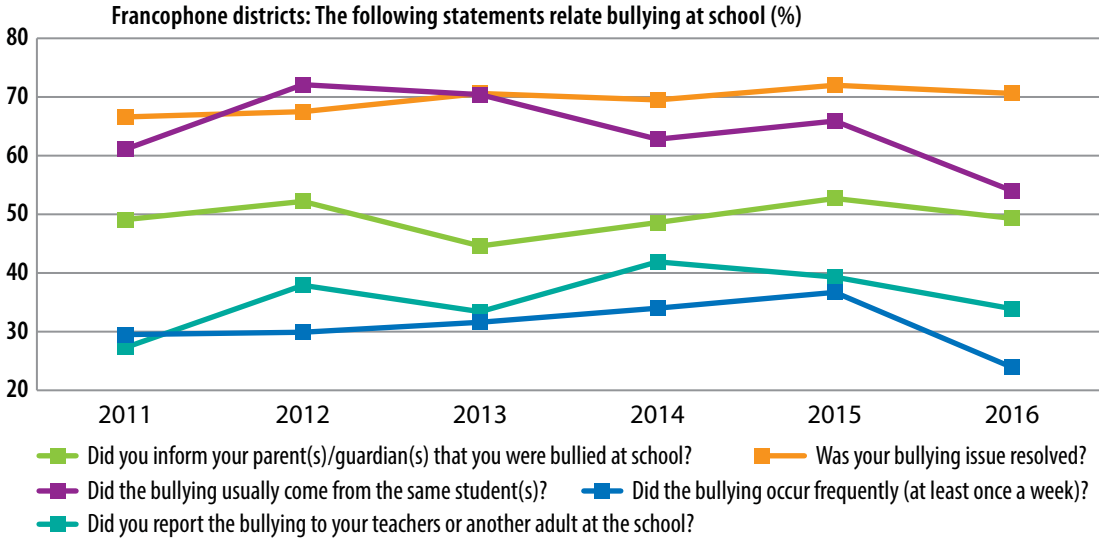
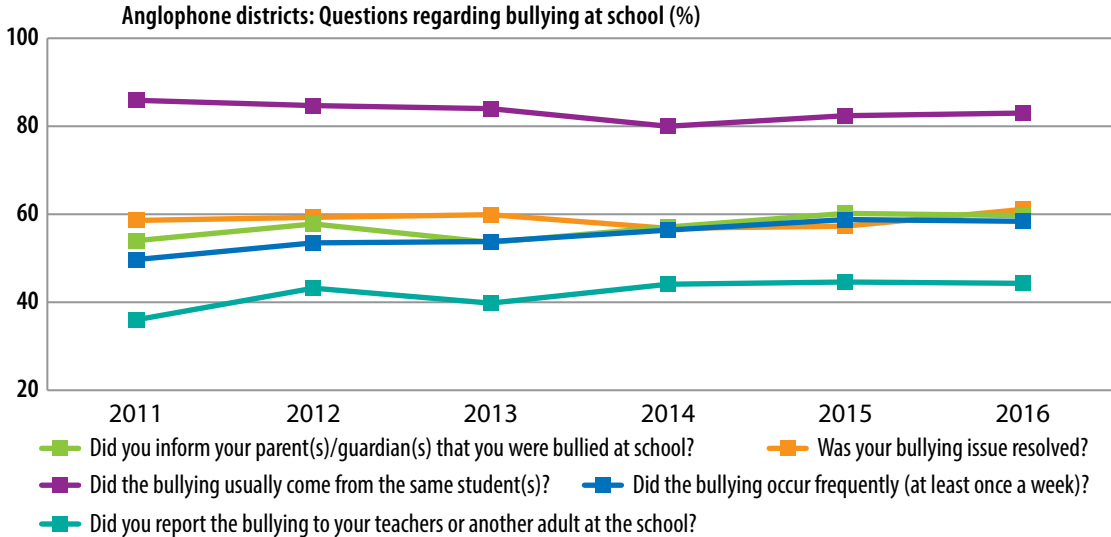
Trends during the last five years

The following statistical information was collected from exit surveys completed by students scheduled to graduate. The statistics cover the school years 2011-2012 to 2015-2016.



When students in the anglophone districts and francophone districts were asked if they had been bullied, we observed a slight decrease in 2015-2016. Students reported that bullying commonly occurred during the middle school years (grades 6 to 8) and the lowest reports of bullying happened during the high school years (grades 9 to 12).

Students were asked a series of questions related to frequency, reporting and resolving of bullying issues. In the anglophone and francophone sectors, the results show that most students are bullied by the same individual and that most issues are resolved.



Other statistics

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is in the final phase of implementing a new student information system. This system includes data standards under Policy 703, *Positive Learning and Working Environments*, and it allows schools and districts to record incidents of behaviours not tolerated and incidents of serious misconduct. The student information system is a common tool for schools and districts to record and report data, and it will create common and aligned reports across all seven districts.

In this system, bullying is subdivided into the following four categories:

Cyber bullying, physical bullying, social bullying and verbal bullying

Each category has the same descriptors:

- harassment or bullying – general;
- harassment or bullying on the basis of disability;
- harassment or bullying on the basis of race, colour or national origin;
- harassment or bullying on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation.

The implementation of the new system will be complete by the end of the 2016-2017 school year. This standardized tool will facilitate collecting province-wide statistics on bullying that should help improve and target programs and activities.

Programs and activities that promote diversity and respect

This section outlines activities and programs in schools and districts that support diversity and respect with the aim to reduce bullying. The following events enhance awareness for students and school personnel and provide an opportunity to further promote diversity and respect:

- Diversity and Respect Week;
- International Day of the Rights of the Child;
- Anti-Bullying Day (or Blue Day);
- Ring a Bell Campaign to Promote Children's Mental Health;
- Pink Shirt Day, Anti-Bullying Campaign;
- International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia.

Students learn how to connect with others in respectful, positive and healthy ways. When schools emphasize respect, diversity and bullying prevention, students can have a better chance to learn positive relationships, social responsibility and citizenship. When students are mindfully taught to recognize and manage emotions, to make decisions effectively and to behave ethically and responsibly, they are better equipped to engage in healthy relationships.

Beyond the Hurt: Preventing Bullying and Harassment – Canadian Red Cross

The Canadian Red Cross' *Beyond the Hurt* program is designed to help schools with bullying and harassment prevention. Following are highlights for 2015-2016:

- 63 prevention educators recertified;
- 851 youth facilitators trained or retained from previous years;
- 587 *Beyond the Hurt* presentations facilitated;
- 9,019 students reached through *Beyond the Hurt* activities;
- active committees in high schools.

Rights respecting schools – UNICEF

The Rights Respecting Schools initiative uses the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* as a basis for building an inclusive and respectful school culture that encourages student engagement. This initiative is provided in collaboration with the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate.

For more information:

- UNICEF Canada – Rights Respecting Schools:
www.unicef.ca/en/our-work/article/rights-respecting-schools

Respect in Schools – respect group

This online program is designed to provide educators and support personnel with the tools they need to understand and respond effectively to incidents of bullying, abuse, harassment and neglect.

For more information:

- Respect in School:
<http://respectinschool.com/>.

Internet child exploitation – Memorandum of Understanding with public safety (cyberbullying)

The Internet creates opportunities for child predators to access our most vulnerable resource, our children. This phenomenon is known as Internet Child Exploitation (ICE). In March 2014, the provincial government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (CCCP) to facilitate safe and responsible use of technology. Under this agreement, the department has provided resources that will allow educators to meet curricular outcomes related to cyber safety education.

Anglophone districts	Francophone districts
<p>Highlights of the initiative “Internet Child Exploitation” – an agreement with the Department of Justice and Public Safety for school years 2014-2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional learning was provided to school and district based staff.• New curriculum documents were created, piloted and implemented:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal wellness (grades 3-5);• Personal development and career planning (grades 6-8);• Personal development and career planning (Grade 10).• To support the delivery of these curricula, the department has partnered with CCCP to provide “The Kids in the Know” program.	<p>Highlights of the initiative “Internet Child Exploitation – an agreement with the Department of Justice and Public Safety for the school years 2014-2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seven district employees received training;• New educational resources were delivered in schools :<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kids in the know (grades 4-6);• What’s the deal (grades 7-8);• Addressing the online risks facing youths (grades 7-8);• It is a big deal (grades 9-10) ;• Online risks facing youths (grades 7-8).

Sexual and gender diversity

For the 2014-2016 school years, 65 per cent of high schools in the anglophone districts and 72 per cent of high schools in the francophone districts had gay-straight alliances.

In 2014, the department and Égale Canada, worked with schools, districts and community-based partners to create the New Brunswick LGBTQ inclusive education resource. This resource helps to guide school staff as they develop and maintain safe and welcoming learning environments.

For more information:

- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development – New Brunswick LGBTQ Inclusive Education Resource: www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/education/k12/content/lgbtq.html

Each year, the anglophone sector partners with Pride in Education (PIE) to provide a provincial gay-straight alliance student conference. In 2015, more than 220 students and 30 educators from across New Brunswick took part in this annual event.

The Équinoxe Annual Conference is an event held by the Fédération des Jeunes Francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick (FJFNB). The annual conference brings together several francophone high school students. In 2015, the FJFNB organized a two-and-one-half day workshops on sexual and gender diversity and facilitated the first francophone gathering of LGBTQ youth and their allies.

Anglophone sector

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

This approach identifies common behavioural expectations valued by the school community. These expectations are taught to create an atmosphere in which students know what is expected of them. Introducing, modelling and reinforcing positive social behaviour is an important component of a student's educational experience. The approach establishes a climate in which appropriate behaviour is the norm.

In October 2015, the anglophone sector released a resource entitled *Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS): A Resource Guide for School-Based Teams*. Districts were invited to use the document during the 2015-2016 academic year. Feedback and necessary revisions were completed in the spring of 2016.

Promoting mental health

Anglophone districts in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association are participating in the Mental Health 101 information sessions and the Changing Minds Education program. Both programs were offered to school and district staff. These programs offer insight and information on a variety of mental health illnesses and how they affect individuals.

Francophone sector

Bullying prevention

In 2014, francophone districts facilitated a retreat on bullying for principals and vice-principals at the elementary and high schools level.

Positive mental health

In the 2015-2016 school year, the department, in cooperation with districts and the WM Wellness company, is supporting schools in a three-year project to increase the psychological well-being and resilience of the school community. The first year focused on wellness, the second year will focus on resilience and the final third year will focus on positive leadership.

Mental health first aid for adults who interact with at risk youth

A course offered by the Mental Health Commission of Canada helps to better understand mental health problems among young people and offers adults basic intervention and strategies.

In 2016, the department, in cooperation with the Mental Health Commission of Canada, offered a 12-hour instructional training course to 10 school staff and volunteers. The course provides an overview of mental health problems among young people and offers basic intervention strategies.

Conflict resolution

In 2014, seven francophone district employees received Third Party Neutral certification from the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution. This training provides principles, processes and techniques to help mediate and reconcile group conflicts.