SNAPSHOT - FEBRUARY 2019

# ‘ABOUT YOU’. VICTORIAN STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLBEING SURVEY 2018

The ‘About You’ survey has been conducted every two years by the Department of Education and Training since 2014 and explores the health and wellbeing of students from Years 5, 8 and 11. Topics covered by the survey include physical health and health risk behaviours, psychological/ emotional wellbeing, and school and family relationships.

In 2018, almost 13,000 students from Years 5, 8 and 11 from 290 Victorian schools were included in this anonymous voluntary survey (in which parental consent was obtained). This snapshot summarises the key findings.

# Health conditions

In 2018, around nine in ten students rated their health as good, very good or excellent.

20% had a special health care need. Females were significantly more likely to report a special health care need (24%) than males (13%).

12% had asthma. Students from language backgrounds other than English (7%) were almost half as likely to report asthma as students from English speaking backgrounds (13%).

# Physical activity

Participating in physical activity and sport has many benefits for young people. These include benefits for self-esteem, positive social interactions, and a reduction in the symptoms of depression. Physical activity also protects against overweight, obesity and other health issues.

Around one in four students engaged in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

Around two in three students used electronic media for entertainment for more than two hours each day.

# Risky health behaviours

Between 2016 and 2018, the proportion of secondary school students engaging in risky health behaviours declined.

Had smoked – 10% in 2016 to 8% in 2018.

Had drank alcohol – 55% in 2016 to 52% in 2018.

Had tried illicit drugs – 12% in 2016 to 10% in 2018.

# Emotional wellbeing and relationships

## Psychological resilience

Psychological resilience refers to an adaptive and healthy state of social and emotional functioning. Young people who are psychologically resilient are more likely to respond constructively to challenges and difficulties they face in their lives.

Around two in three students showed a high level of psychological resilience.

## Quality of life

Around three in four students were satisfied with their lives.

## Psychological distress

Psychological distress was measured using an index of depressive symptoms based on the International Youth Development Study, short version moods and feelings scale.

Around one in five students showed high levels of depressive symptoms.

# Social experiences

Students who report feeling connected to their peers - 93%

Students who reported experiencing cyberbullying - 33%

Students who reported having a trusted adult in their lives - 69%

# Find out more

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