

Mental Health in Wellington, Dufferin and Guelph

In any given year, 1 in every 5 Canadians is affected by mental illness. This represents an economic burden of over 50 billion dollars each year. This report provides up-to-date and relevant information about mental health in Wellington, Dufferin and Guelph. Some key findings include:

Mental Health and Well-Being

- **WDG residents report high levels of mental health and life satisfaction**
91% said they experienced favourable mental health, 92% experienced life satisfaction
- **Among youth, younger students and males tend to experience better mental health**
Males and grade 7 students were more likely to experience positive mental health and have high self-esteem than females and grade 10 students
- **Social relationships are important to promoting mental health**
Family support and peer connections were strongly linked to positive mental health in youth

Mental Health Concerns, Mental Illness and Self-Harm

- **Stress is a concern for both adults and youth**
23% of people reported high life stress, 26% reported high work stress. 44% of youth said that they had too many problems. Women were more likely to report stress
- **WDG and Ontario have similar rates of mood and anxiety disorders**
9% of WDG and Ontario residents have a mood disorder. 7% of WDG residents and 8% of Ontarians have an anxiety disorder
- **Emergency room data suggests many youth are distressed**
ER visits for mental health concerns among 10-19 year olds doubled from 2009 to 2014

The Relationship between Physical and Mental Health

- **Mental health and physical health are strongly linked**
Residents who rated their physical health as good, very good or excellent were much more likely to experience favourable mental health
- **Healthy habits were associated with better mental health among youth**
Physical activity and eating habits were significantly associated with mental health outcomes
- **There is a strong link between substance use and mental health**
Smoking, heavy drinking and drug use were all strongly associated with poorer mental health outcomes

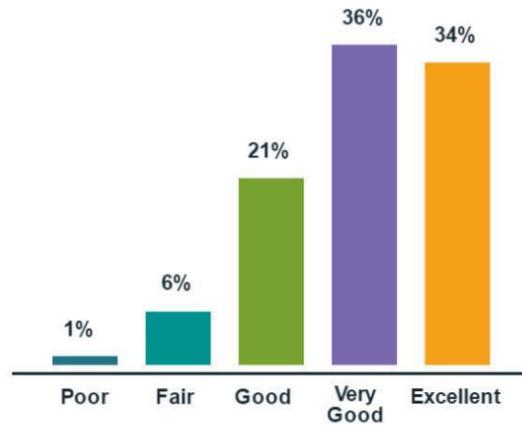
Social Determinants of Mental Health

- **Employment is strongly associated with mental health**
Ontarians who were employed were significantly more likely to report positive mental health than Ontario residents who were not employed
- **Income level can also have a considerable impact on mental health**
Lower-income residents of WDG were significantly less likely to experience favourable mental health than those with higher incomes

Mental Health in WDG

THERE IS NO HEALTH WITHOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Mental Health and Well-Being



57% of Grade 7 and 10 students did not meet criteria for positive mental health



Female students were **less** likely to:

- Experience positive mental health
- Have high self-esteem

And **more** likely to:

- Feel they had too many problems
- Be at risk for depression

Most people in WDG rated their mental health favourably

Mental Health Concerns

1 in 5 people said their lives were quite a bit or extremely stressful



44% of students felt they had too many problems

1 in 10 people had a mood disorder



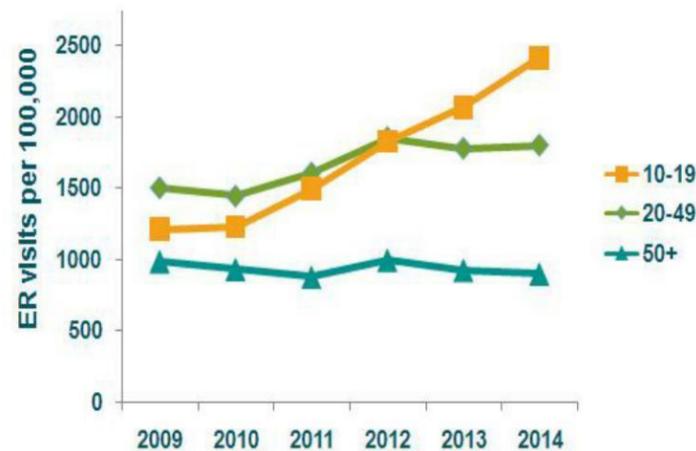
1 in 14 people had an anxiety disorder



Emergency Room Visits

Mental health related emergency room visits have doubled among **10 to 19** year olds since 2009

Self-harm emergency room visits have increased in this age group by **75%** since 2011



Things that Influence Mental Health

Social Well-Being

64% of students experienced high family support

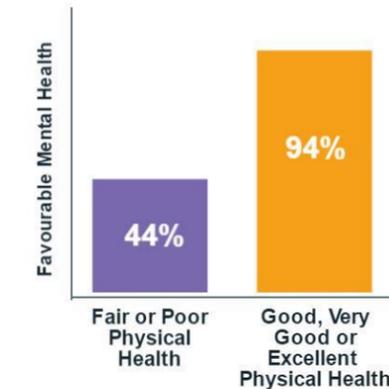
3 of 4 people in WDG felt a sense of belonging to their local community



19 to 24 year olds were less likely to feel connected to their community than any other age group

Youth whose families were not supportive were **7 times** less likely to report positive mental health and **4 times** more likely to be at risk for depression

Physical Health



People who reported fair or poor physical health were less likely to experience favourable mental health



Smoking, drinking and drug use were all associated with poorer mental health outcomes in students



Physical activity and eating fruit and vegetables were associated with positive mental health in students

Socioeconomic Status

People who were employed were more likely to report favourable mental health.



Those with lower annual incomes were less likely to report favourable mental health.



Conclusions

The purpose of this report is to provide both individuals and organizations in WDG with up-to-date and relevant information about mental health in the region. This report also stresses the importance of several factors that are significantly associated with mental health in the hope that it will spark discussions on how to best promote optimal mental health among all WDG residents.

1. **Many WDG residents experience favourable mental health.** The rates of many mental health indicators for WDG were similar to those found for Ontario overall. Positive social relationships and feelings of connectedness were associated with better mental health, especially among youth.
2. **Mental health concerns tend to be associated with gender.** Women reported more stress and higher rates of mood and anxiety disorders. They also accessed mental health services more frequently than men. However, men were more likely to commit suicide.
3. **Adolescence may be a time of increased vulnerability.** Grade 10 students had considerably higher rates of mental health concerns than grade 7s, including risk of depression, thoughts of self-harm and thoughts of suicide. Grade 10 students were also less likely to experience positive mental health or high self-esteem. The dramatic increase in ER visits for mental health concerns and self-harm among 10-19 year olds is cause for concern. Adolescent females may be particularly at risk.
4. **Mental health was strongly related to physical, behavioural and social conditions.** Physical health was significantly associated with mental health. Behaviors that promote or threaten physical health appear to be strongly related to mental health among youth. Social and economic circumstances also play a significant role in mental health, especially income and employment.

To access the full Mental Health Status Report please visit WDG Public Health's website at:

www.wdgpUBLICHEALTH.ca/?q=statsreports

