

National College Health Assessment: Seneca's participation

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Last Spring (2019), Seneca participated in the National College Health Assessment (NCHA) survey for the first time. We sent out an invitation to participate to 5,000 and received 1,096 responses from full-time students across all our campuses.

Most respondents were under 24 years old and single; 62% were female and 39% were male. Almost half (47%) of the students live at home and 56% are working up to 30hrs/week. Key areas such as physical health and nutrition, substance use, disability and injury prevention, mental health, sexual health and relationships, and academic impacts were all explored throughout the 400+ question survey. Here is a summary of the results.

Students at Seneca told us that they believed their physical health was good to very good; however, 10% of students are not eating any fruits or vegetables each day. Only half of our students (50%) are doing at least 30-60 min of vigorous physical activity a week. Surprisingly, almost 85% of Seneca students told us that having a good night's sleep has been either a little to a very big problem for them within the last seven days. Many students reported that they struggle with being overwhelmed, hopeless, and lonely at times. While 75% of students stated they feel that Seneca supports student mental health, only 42% stated that they knew about the resources available for mental health support. Overall, students reported that they use minimal substances or alcohol but there is a perception that the use is much higher across campus. Seneca students reported that the following has the greatest impact on their academics: stress, performance anxiety, sleep difficulties, mental health, work, cold/flu, internet/gaming use, and finances.

These survey results provide an important repository of information about our students and their health and well-being. It will help to inform our Student Services as well as ensure that we are providing the information and support that students want and need. Should you have any questions about the NCHA survey or students supports on campus for physical or mental health, please contact [Laura Boyko](#), Director, Counselling and Accessibility Services.

View the [March 2020 issue of the Academic Newsletter](#).

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