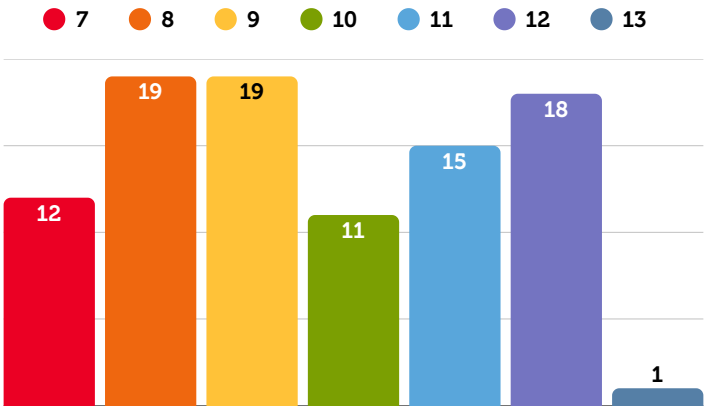
# 2026 YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCE FAIR

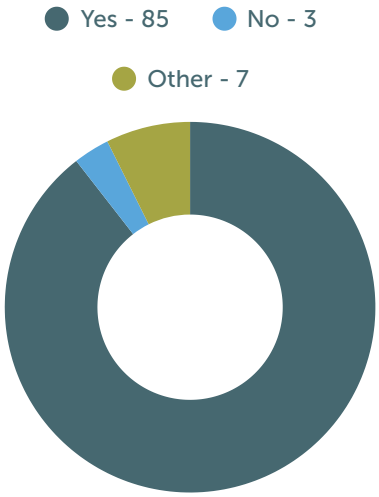
## Student Feedback Survey Results

All students at PECI were invited to attend the 2nd Annual Youth Mental Health Resource Fair. A total of 95 students completed feedback forms following the event. Overall, feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with students reporting increased awareness of available supports, enjoying the interactive activities, and identifying ongoing barriers to accessing mental health and substance use services.

**Q: What grade are you in?**




**Q: Did this event help you learn about where to find mental health support in PEC?**




## Q: What's the biggest challenge youth face in PEC right now?

| Theme | Mentions | Total % |
|---|---|---|
| Mental Health (anxiety, stress, depression, overthinking, PTSD, general mental health concerns) | 13 | 13.7% |
| Social Connection & Belonging (making friends, loneliness, lack of connection, fitting in) | 9 | 9.5% |
| Bullying / Peer Relationships (bullying, cyberbullying, criticism, feeling misunderstood) | 8 | 8.4% |
| Transportation / Access | 5 | 5.3% |
| Not Knowing Where to Go / Finding Support | 5 | 5.3% |
| Cost / Poverty / Affordability | 4 | 4.2% |
| School / Academic Stress | 8 | 8.4% |
| Activities / Opportunities (nothing to do, lack of events, lack of opportunities) | 5 | 5.3% |
| Difficulty Talking to Adults / Being Understood | 4 | 4.2% |
| Substance Use / Addiction | 2 | 2.1% |
| Other / No response provided | 32 | 33.7% |

Mental health concerns emerged as the most commonly identified challenge facing youth in Prince Edward County. Students frequently referenced anxiety, stress, depression, overthinking, PTSD, and other mental health struggles. Social connection and belonging was another prominent theme, with many students highlighting difficulties making friends, feelings of loneliness, and challenges finding people they connect with. Bullying and peer relationships also continued to be a significant concern, with students describing both in-person bullying and negative online experiences.

Compared with last year, responses were more diverse and spread across a wider range of issues. While several common themes emerged, more than one-fifth of responses fell into an "Other" category that included concerns such as language barriers, road conditions, sports tryouts, winter activities, and other individualized challenges. In addition, approximately 13% of respondents indicated they were unsure of the biggest challenge facing youth or did not identify a particular challenge. This suggests that youth in Prince Edward County are experiencing a broad range of concerns rather than one dominant issue affecting all students.

# 2026 YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCE FAIR

## Student Feedback Survey Results

### Q: What makes it hard for youth to access mental health or substance use support in PEC?

| Choice | # of Responses |
|---|---|
| Not knowing where to go | 59 |
| Feeling judged or stigmatized | 38 |
| Hard to talk to adults | 36 |
| Transportation / distance | 28 |
| Privacy / confidentiality worries | 27 |
| Cost | 17 |
| Long wait times | 15 |
| Other | 0 |

Students were asked to select from a list of potential barriers that may make it difficult for youth to access mental health and substance use supports. The most commonly selected response was "Not knowing where to go" followed by "Feeling judged or stigmatized", "Hard to talk to adults", "Transportation / distance", and "Privacy / confidentiality worries". Cost and long wait times were also identified as barriers, though less frequently. These results suggest that youth see awareness of available services, comfort seeking help, and access to trusted adults as some of the biggest challenges to obtaining support.

Compared to the results from the 2025 Youth Feedback Survey, the overall pattern was very similar. In both years, "Not knowing where to go" was the most frequently selected barrier, followed by concerns about stigma, talking to adults, privacy, transportation, cost, and wait times. Although the total number of selections was lower in 2026 because fewer students completed the survey, the ranking of barriers remained largely unchanged. This consistency suggests that youth perceptions of the barriers to accessing support have remained stable over the past two years and reinforces the importance of continuing efforts to improve awareness of available resources and reduce stigma around seeking help.

### Q: Do you have any feedback about this event? What did you like the most? What should we include or improve for future events?

#### What Students Liked Most:

Feedback about the event was overwhelmingly positive. Students most frequently highlighted the interactive activities, including games, prizes, the photo booth, passport activities, and sensory items. Food, candy, and giveaways were very popular, and many students appreciated the opportunity to learn about local mental health and wellness supports in a hands-on environment and highlighted the friendly atmosphere created by booth staff and volunteers.

#### Suggestions for Improvement:

Most students said they would not change anything about the event. Suggestions focused on adding more games and interactive activities, additional food and drinks, and more sensory items. A few students expressed interest in seeing more information and resources related to substance use and addiction, including vaping education. Overall, feedback focused on expanding features that students already enjoyed rather than changing the overall event format.

#### Compared to 2025:

The feedback was very similar to that received in 2025. In both years, students identified interactive activities, prizes, food, and the welcoming atmosphere as event highlights. Suggestions for improvement also remained consistent, focusing on additional activities and opportunities for hands-on engagement.

One notable difference was that students provided more specific feedback in 2026, offering targeted suggestions about activities, resources, and event features. As many students had attended the fair previously, they likely had clearer expectations and a better sense of how the event could continue to grow and improve.