YORK REGION HEALTH AND WELL-BEING REVIEW

2025 Bulletin: Mental Health and Well-Being

Understanding changes in mental health and well-being of York Region residents and communities is critical for effective planning, policy development and advocacy, especially when focusing on poverty reduction and housing stabilization.

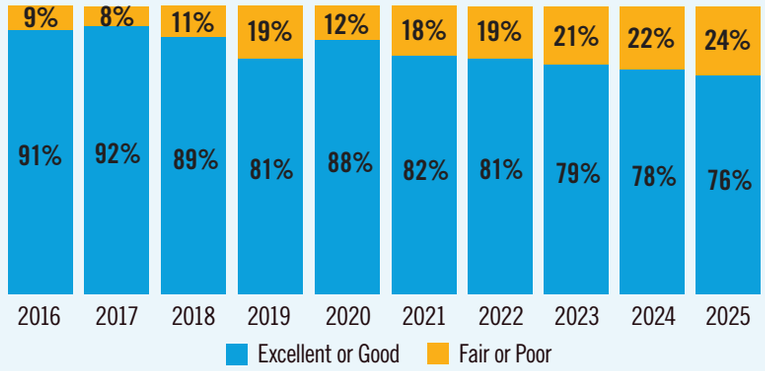
This Bulletin presents key data and trends highlighting challenges related to mental health and well-being. When residents face multiple challenges such as food insecurity, increasing housing instability, safety concerns and mental health challenges, their needs become more complex and a combination of supports may be needed.

June 2026

How are residents feeling about life in York Region?

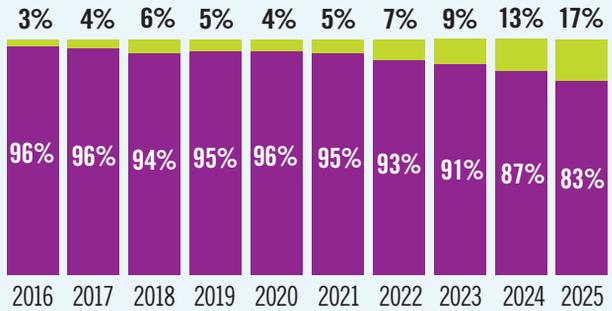
RESIDENTS WITH A FAIR OR POOR EXPERIENCE OF LIFE IN YORK REGION **INCREASED FROM 9% TO 24%** OVER THE LAST DECADE[1]

OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE IN YORK REGION 2016 TO 2025[2]



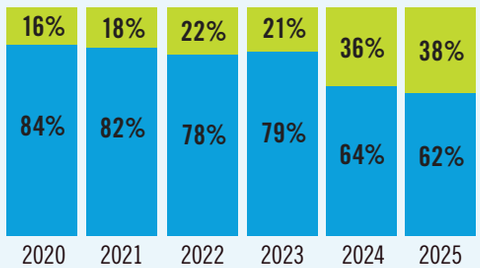
According to the York Region Community Survey, most residents continue to report a **positive overall quality of life in York Region,** with 76% of residents surveyed rating their quality of life as "excellent" or "good" in 2025.

YORK REGION IS A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE 2016 TO 2025[3]



In 2025, **83%** of surveyed residents describe York Region as a safe place to live. However, the **perception of safety is gradually declining.**

SENSE OF BELONGING IN THE COMMUNITY 2020 TO 2025[4]



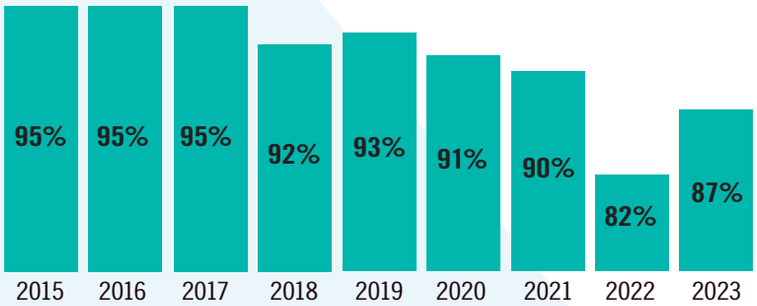
Between 2020 and 2025 **sense of community belonging among residents has decreased** from **84% to 62%.**

York Region

Mental Health and Well-Being Vulnerability

Is mental health getting better or worse?

YORK REGION RESIDENTS REPORTING "GOOD", "VERY GOOD" OR "EXCELLENT" MENTAL HEALTH
2015 TO 2023[5]



Most residents continue to report **"good" to "excellent" mental health,** however, the proportion has **decreased from 95%** in 2015 to **87%** in 2023.

YORK REGION RESIDENTS SELF-REPORTED LIFE EXPERIENCE AS "A BIT STRESSFUL" AND "EXTREMELY STRESSFUL" 2023[6]

Adult 18+	23%
Youth 12-17	23%
Male youth 12-17	17%
Female youth 12-17	30%

Mental health challenges rarely exist on their own; they are often **linked to physical health, social circumstances, trauma and economic instability.**

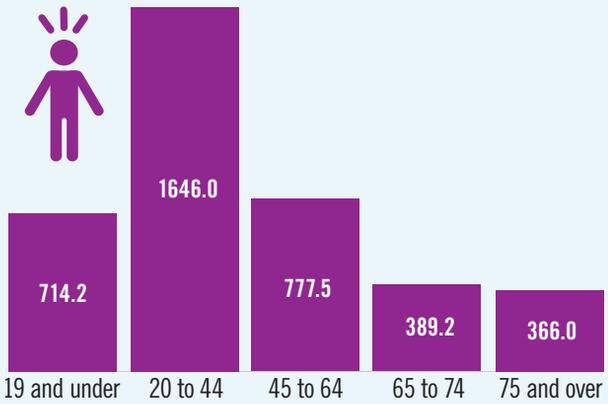
23% of adults over 18 and youth 12 to 17 reported a **"stressful" life experience** in 2023.

ALCOHOL, CANNABIS, E-CIGARETTES AND PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS USE BY SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS, YORK REGION 2023 TO 2025[7]

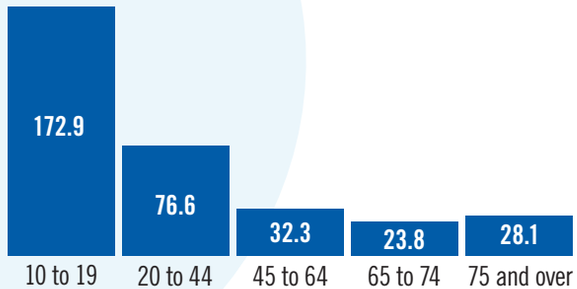
	2023	2025
Used cannabis in the last 12 months	14.6%	11.0%
Vaped in the last 12 months	12.4%	9.7%
Used alcohol in the last 12 months	34.6%	39.4%
Used prescription opioids non-medically in the last 12 months	19.1%	16.5%

Who uses emergency mental health care?

MENTAL HEALTH-RELATED EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS PER 100,000 POPULATION BY AGE GROUP 2023[8]



INTENTIONAL SELF-HARM EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISIT RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION BY AGE GROUP 2023[9]



Stigma is still a major barrier to getting help with mental health concerns. Preventative interventions can mitigate emergencies.

In 2023, adults of working age were most likely to visit the emergency department due to mental health concerns compared to other age groups, and seniors over 65 were least likely. Youth ages 10 to 19 were most likely to be admitted to emergency department for intentional self-harm compared to other age groups.

YORK REGION PARAMEDIC SERVICES RESPONDED TO:

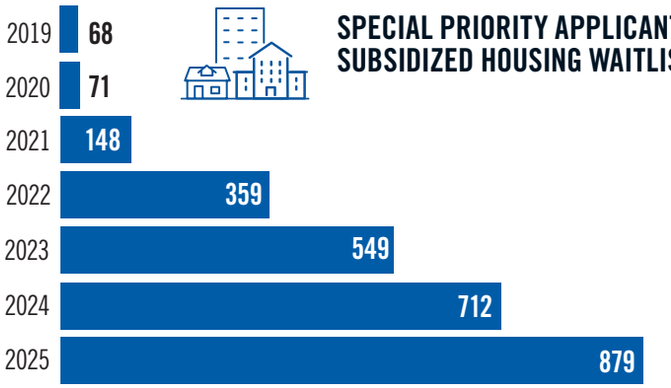
just over **100** **suspected opioid overdose** occurrences in 2025

decreased by **17%** since 2024[10]

Opioid-related deaths are a significant concern. Increased naloxone availability, awareness and training help prevent fatal poisonings.

Who is at risk?

High stress, trauma and lower feelings of safety and belonging may lead to complex mental health and well-being challenges, resulting in crisis-driven service use, difficulty achieving long-term stability and greater involvement from multiple agencies.



SPECIAL PRIORITY APPLICANTS ON THE SUBSIDIZED HOUSING WAITLIST 2019 TO 2025[11]

The Region is mandated to provide **priority status** on the **subsidized housing waitlist** to **survivors of domestic abuse** and **victims of human trafficking.**

Between 2019 and 2025, **Special Priority applications increased 1,193%**.

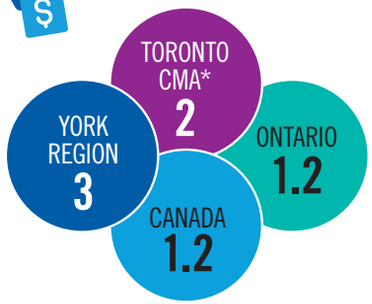
How are youth being affected?

YOUTH AGES 12 TO 17 EXPERIENCED AT LEAST ONE FORM OF BULLYING IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS 2023[13]

YOUTH 12-17 YEARS, YOUTH REPORTED	
Experienced at least one form of bullying in the past 12 months	59.9%
Experienced at least one form of cyberbullying in the past 12 months	24.8%

Bullying can have lasting effects on mental health. In 2023, nearly **60% of youth ages 12 to 17** reported experiencing at least one form of **bullying** in the past 12 months.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING RATE PER 100,000 PEOPLE 2024[14]



*CMA: Census Metropolitan Area

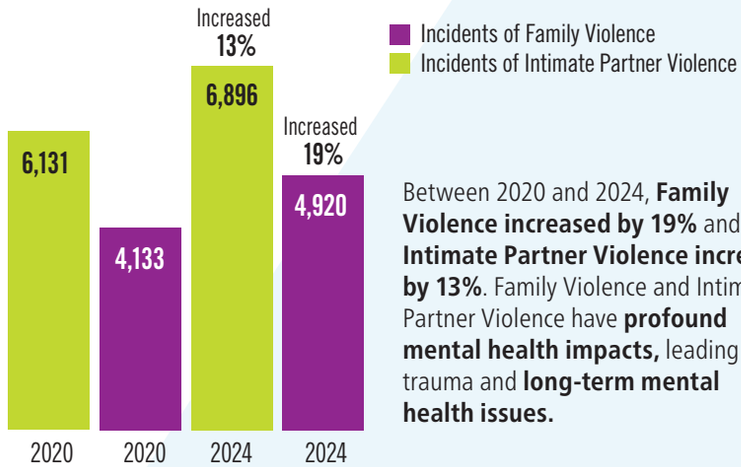
THE AVERAGE AGE OF RECRUITMENT INTO SEX TRAFFICKING IS

13 YEARS OLD[15]

Incidents of **human trafficking** in York Region **increased by 153% between 2014 and 2024.**

What forms of harm are residents experiencing?

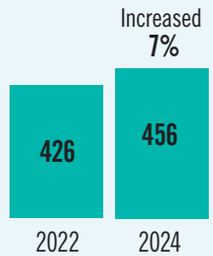
FAMILY VIOLENCE AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE REPORTED TO YORK REGIONAL POLICE 2020 TO 2024[12]



Between 2020 and 2024, **Family Violence increased by 19%** and **Intimate Partner Violence increased by 13%**. Family Violence and Intimate Partner Violence have **profound mental health impacts,** leading to trauma and **long-term mental health issues.**

HATE INCIDENTS REPORTED TO YORK REGIONAL POLICE 2022 TO 2024[16]

Some residents continue to experience hate in York Region. In 2024, **54% of hate incidents were motivated by race or ethnicity and 39%** were motivated by religious affiliation.



Turn Insights Into Action

Demand for health and human services is increasing in York Region.

The 2025 York Region Health and Well-Being Review highlighted increasing challenges related to mental health and well-being, safety and belonging. Investing in upstream preventive interventions and supporting residents when they are most vulnerable with integrated and wraparound supports reduces impact on emergency services.

Regional Council investments and advocacy are making a difference but more support is needed.

The Region is one player in the human services system, working with partners to respond to the evolving needs of residents. However, local investments alone cannot meet increasing service demand. Additional support and sustained funding from senior levels of government are critical to ensure programs and services can continue to support residents.

DATA SOURCES

1. Regional Municipality of York. (2025). Spring community opinion survey (n = 1,544).
2. Regional Municipality of York. (2025). Spring community opinion survey (n = 1,544).
3. Regional Municipality of York. (2025). Spring community opinion survey (n = 1,544).
4. Regional Municipality of York. (2025). Spring community opinion survey (n = 1,544).
5. Statistics Canada. (2023) Canadian Community Health Survey, Ontario Share File, [data set]. Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.
6. Statistics Canada. (2023). Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS); Canadian Health Survey on Children and Youth (CHSCY) [Unpublished Dataset].
7. York Region Public Health. (2023). Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey 2023 to 2025.
8. York Region Public Health. (2025). Mental health and substance use dashboard.
9. York Region Public Health. (2025). Mental health and substance use dashboard.
10. York Region, Community and Health Services Department, Paramedic and Seniors Services Branch. (2025). [Program Data].
11. York Region, Community and Health Services Department, Housing and Homelessness Services Branch. (2025). [Program Data].
12. York Regional Police. (2024). Annual statistics report 2024.
13. Statistics Canada. (2023). Canadian Health Survey on Children and Youth (CHSCY): Cross-sectional file. Government of Canada.
14. Statistics Canada. (2024). Table 35-10-0180-01: Police-reported crime statistics.
15. Government of Ontario. (2020). Ontario's anti-human trafficking strategy 2020 TO 2025.
16. York Regional Police. (2024). Annual statistics report 2024.

Access the full **York Region Health and Well-Being Review** and related resources
york.ca/HealthAndWellBeingReview

Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.
Please email **CHSDataAndPolicy@york.ca** or call **1-877-464-9675.**

YORK REGION

1-877-464-9675 | york.ca

26-SPB4-049

York Region