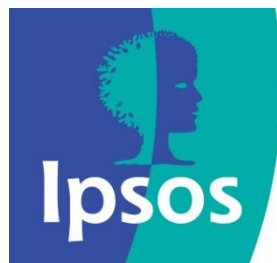


One Quarter (24%) of High School Students Unsure of whether they'll Pursue Post-Secondary Education

Two Thirds (63%) of High School Students 'Worried' About Pressure to Do Well so they Can Get Into College or University

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One Quarter (24%) of High School Students Unsure of whether they'll Pursue Post-Secondary Education

Two Thirds (63%) of High School Students 'Worried' About Pressure to Do Well so they Can Get Into College or University

Toronto, ON – One quarter (24%) of high school students in Canada are unsure of whether they'll go to college or university after they graduate from high school, while 73% will pursue higher education and 3% know already that they won't, according to a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted for Big Brothers Big Sister Canada and CIBC.

Moreover, among those who won't pursue a post-secondary education or are not sure, one in ten (11%) will take some time off to weigh their options, while three in ten (27%) will attempt to find work and 62% haven't made a decision yet. Of those continuing, 42% want to go to university, 39% college, and two in ten (19%) don't know yet. Of those who don't know yet, 55% say not knowing causes them stress, and two thirds (64%) wish they had an adult in their life to advise on career options and how to prepare by selecting the right programs.

Many high school students are feeling the pressure to compete, among other pressures. When thinking about going back to school in September, two thirds (63%) are worried about the pressure to do well so that they can get into college/university, while others are worried about balancing part-time work, family, and extra-curricular activities with schoolwork (48%), having the funds to go to college/university (45%), not being accepted for who they are (34%) or being bullied (22%). Four in ten (44%) students 'agree' (10% strongly/34%

somewhat) that they feel highly pressured to excel at high school and wish everyone would just back off.

But high school students are also looking forward to many aspects of going back to school, chief among them is seeing their friends (95%). Most are also looking forward to learning new things (84%), getting one step closer to achieving their career goals (81%), participating in school activities (71%), and not being as bored as they were in the summer (55%).

All in all, 93% of students are 'confident' (41% very/52% somewhat) that they will achieve academic success at high school, while just 7% are not very confident in this matter. Most (90%) say that having a clear idea of what they want to do is 'important' (37% very/53% somewhat) in motivating them to achieve academic success. Further, nearly three quarters (72%) of students have a mentor – predominantly a family member (68%), teacher (12%), councillor (5%) or volunteer mentor (2%) – and most (95%) of those that do say that having a mentor is 'important' (35% very/60% somewhat) for influencing them to be successful at high school. Nine in ten (88%) 'agree' (32% strongly/56% somewhat) that high school students with mentors who value and encourage academic success are more likely to excel than those with no mentor'.

Similarly, 58% say that peer pressure and influence of friends is important (11% very/47% somewhat) to achieving academic success, and two thirds (66%) of students say that academic success is valued by their circle of friends. In fact, 62% say that their friends are influential in how hard they work at school. Among a list of people who could motivate and encourage students to succeed at school, personal motivations (46%) top the list, followed by family members (42%), friends (6%), mentors (5%) or some other person (1%).

A majority (55%) of students who plan to study after high school have a clear idea of what they want to do after completing postsecondary education, while 45% do not. Among those who do know, fully half (50%) say that someone else in their life – such as a family member, friend or mentor – encouraged them to select their chosen field. Sciences (39%) are the most popular field, followed by the arts (13%), trades (12%), business (9%), and music (3%), while 24% will study in some other field. The average student expects that postsecondary education will cost them roughly \$7,765 a year, and four in ten (42%) anticipate needing a student loan, while 22% do not, and 36% don't know yet. Nine in ten (91%) 'agree' (48% strongly/43% somewhat) that 'governments should do more to help graduates pay off their student loans'.

Bullying

One half (49%) of students 'agree' (17% strongly/33% somewhat) that 'bullying is a problem at their high school', and nearly a quarter (22%) of students are 'worried' (7% very/15% somewhat) about being bullied themselves. In response, seven in ten (70%) 'agree' (29% strongly/42% somewhat) that teachers, principals and vice-principals need to do more to curb bullying at their high school.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid survey for BBBSC and CIBC in which a sample of 803 high school students Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online from July 22 to 26, 2013. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within +/- 3.9 percentage points had all Canadian high school students been surveyed. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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