



# Where is Cyberbullying happening?

The prevalence of cyberbullying among youth and young adults by location in Canada

## Introduction

Using data from the *2019 Canadian Health Survey of Children and Youth (CHSCY)* and the *2018 Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS)*, this product explores the **prevalence of cyberbullying** experiences among **youth (aged 12 to 17)** and **young adults (aged 18 to 29)** by Canadian geographic location.

Public Safety Canada is committed to creating barrier-free documents. To receive this document in an alternate format, please contact the [Research Division](#).

To access more Research Division products, visit the [Publications and Reports](#) page on Public Safety Canada's website.

Date modified: 2024-07-18

Aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Où la cyberintimidation se produit-elle? La prévalence de la cyberintimidation chez les jeunes et les jeunes adultes selon l'endroit au Canada

To obtain permission to reproduce Public Safety Canada materials for commercial purposes or to obtain additional information concerning copyright ownership and restrictions, please contact:

Public Safety Canada, Communications  
269 Laurier Ave West  
Ottawa ON K1A 0P8  
Canada

[communications@ps-sp.gc.ca](mailto:communications@ps-sp.gc.ca)

© His Majesty the King in Right of Canada, as represented by the Ministers of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, 2025.

Catalogue Number: PS18-84/2025E-PDF

ISBN: 978-0-660-71236-9

# Key terms

## Cyberbullying<sup>i</sup>

Any behaviour performed through electronic or digital media by people or groups that repeatedly communicates hostile or aggressive messages intended to inflict harm or discomfort to others.



## Prevalence

The percentage of people in a group who share a common experience (e.g., cyberbullying) in a specific time period.



## Indigenous

The term Indigenous is used to refer to all First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people. This was a self-selected identity survey question.



## North-South boundary

The northern category comprises the three territories as well as portions of Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. The southern category comprises provinces that are in whole or in part in the South and include portions of Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

Figure 1: Census of population, North and South, 2016<sup>ii</sup>



## Urban

Urban areas are those continuously built-up areas having a minimum population concentration of 1,000 persons and a population density of at least 400 persons per square kilometer.<sup>iii</sup>



## Rural

Rural areas have concentrations or densities below a concentration of 1,000 persons and a population density of at least 400 persons per square kilometer.<sup>iv</sup>

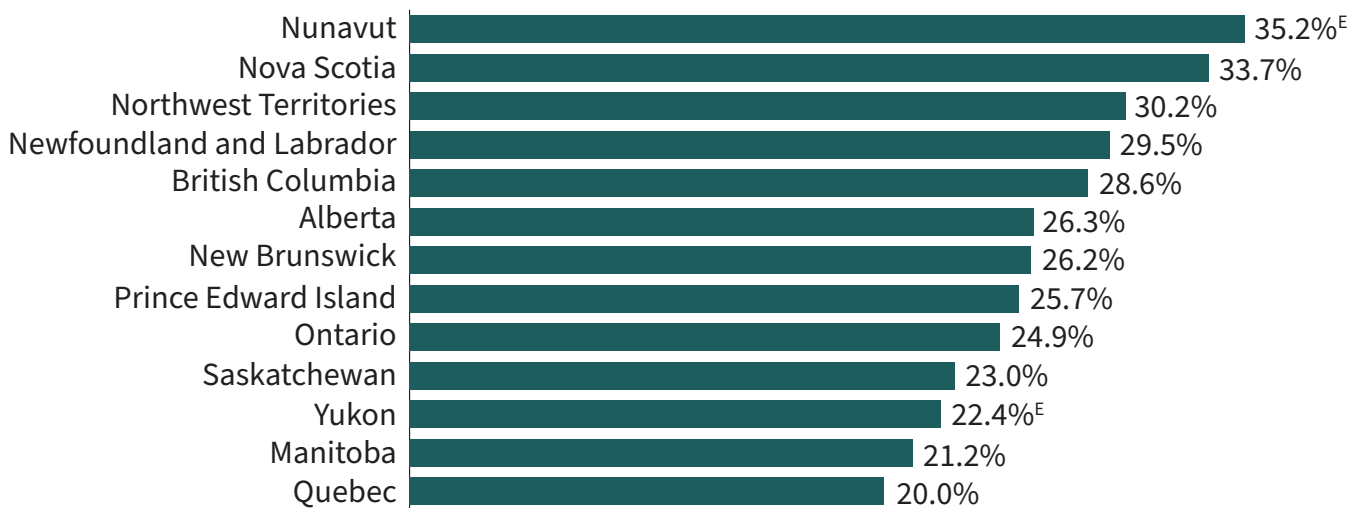


# Findings<sup>1</sup>

**Across all provinces and territories, at least 1 in 5 youth and young adults experienced cyberbullying.**

The prevalence of cyberbullying among **youth** was **highest** for those living in **Nunavut** and **Nova Scotia**.

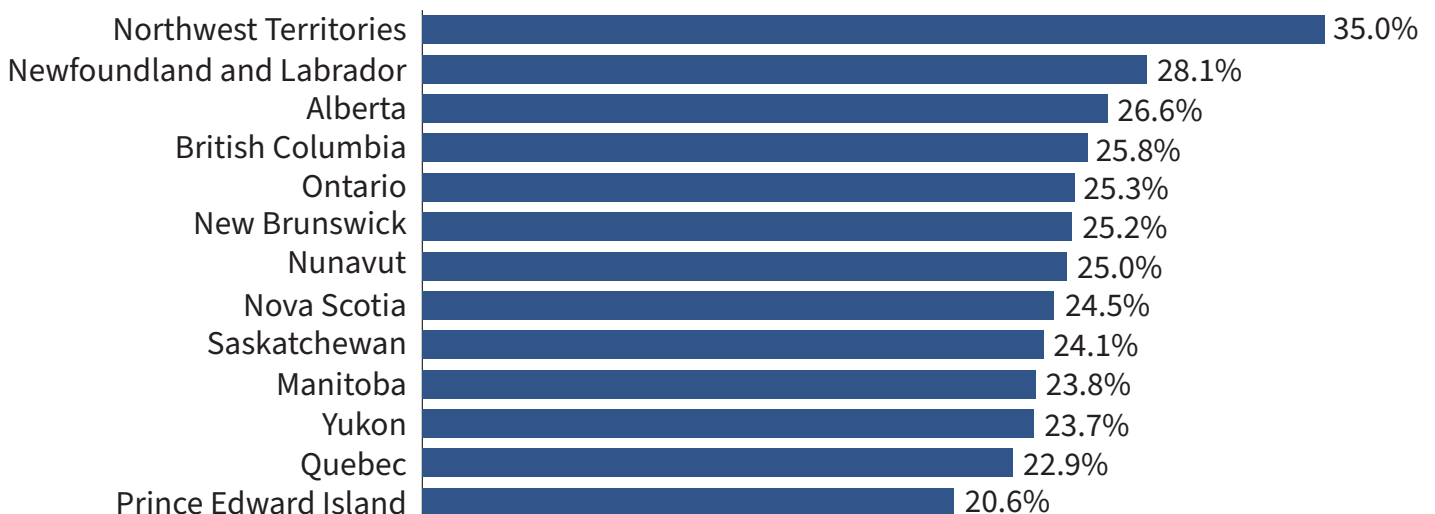
Figure 2: Prevalence of cyberbullying among youth aged 12 to 17, by province and territory of residence, 2019<sup>v</sup>



<sup>E</sup> Use with caution due to low response rates. Not enough respondents answered these specific questions to confidently assert that the data point is representative of the Canadian population.<sup>vi</sup>

**The prevalence of cyberbullying among young adults was highest for those living in the Northwest Territories.**

Figure 3: Prevalence of cyberbullying among young adults aged 18 to 29, by province and territory of residence, 2018<sup>vii</sup>



<sup>1</sup> The data described below are descriptive, meaning that no statistical tests were conducted. All interpretations are based on the percentages listed. [Back to the text.](#)

Indigenous youth and young adults in the northern category had a higher prevalence of cyberbullying than their non-Indigenous counterparts.

Figure 4: Prevalence of cyberbullying among youth aged 12 to 17, by Indigenous identity, Northern/Southern Category, 2019<sup>viii</sup>

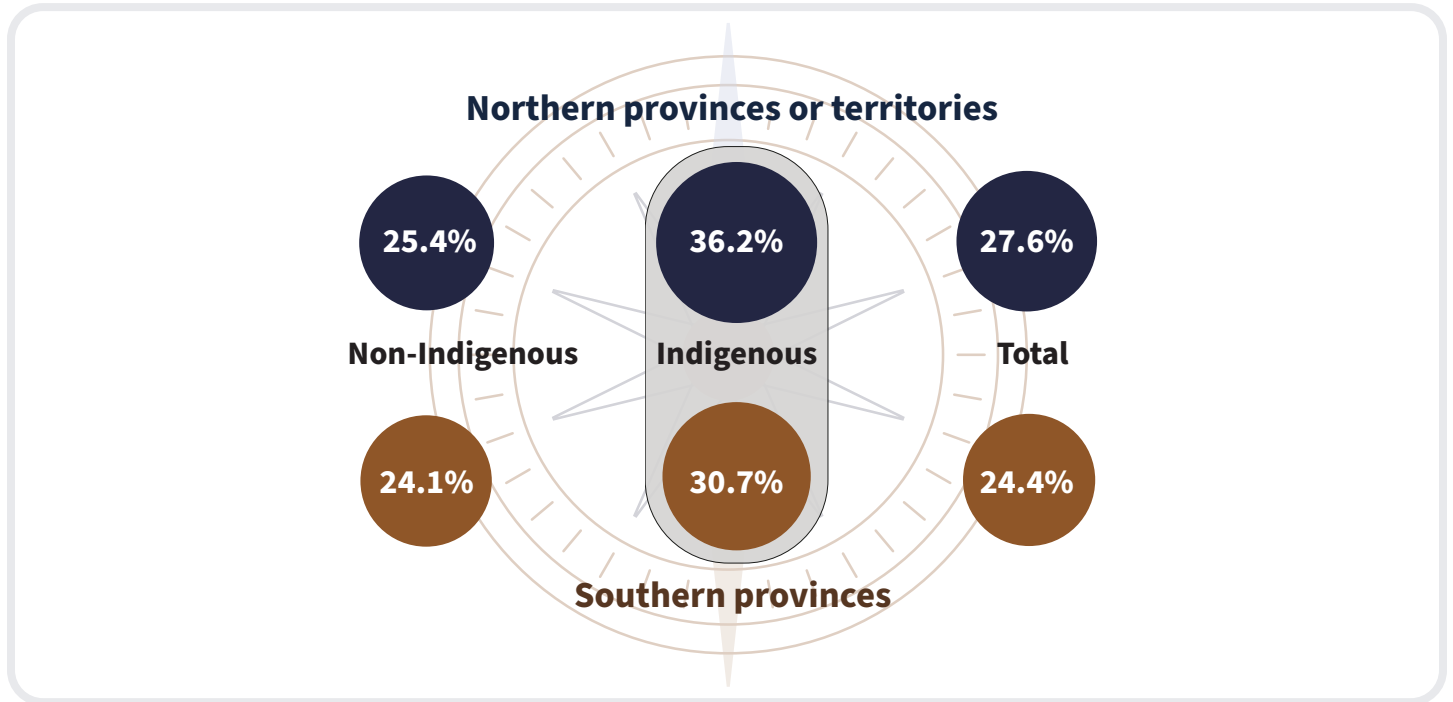
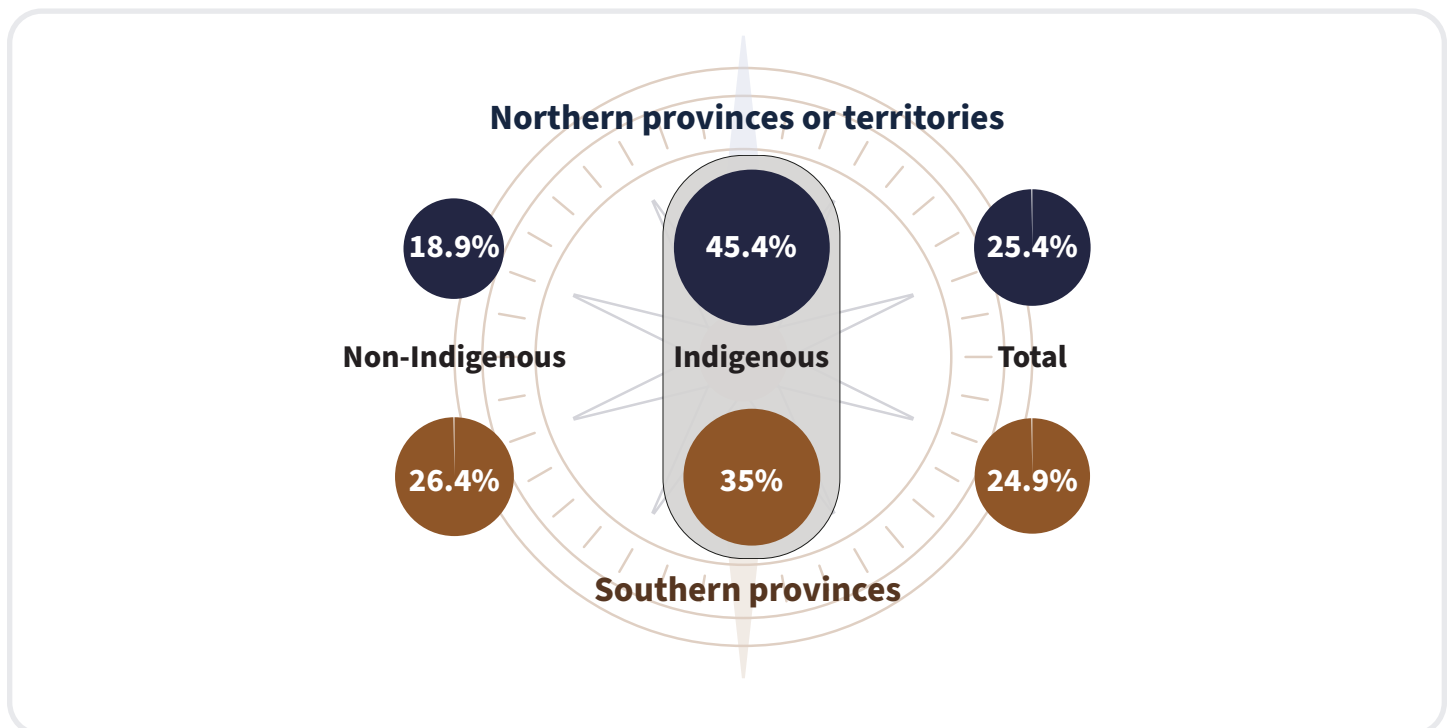


Figure 5: Prevalence of cyberbullying among young adults aged 18 to 29, by Indigenous identity, Northern/Southern Category, 2018<sup>x</sup>



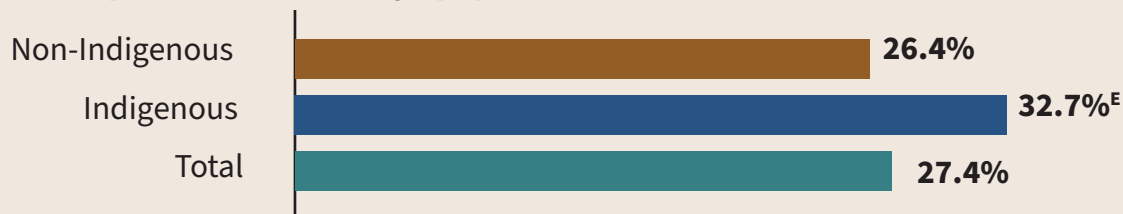
**Indigenous youth, no matter where they lived, had a higher prevalence of cyberbullying compared to non-Indigenous youth.**

Among all youth, the **prevalence of cyberbullying** was **highest** for **Indigenous youth** living in the **rural northern category**.

Among only **non-Indigenous youth**, the **prevalence of cyberbullying** was **highest** for those living in the **urban northern category**.

Figure 6: Prevalence of cyberbullying among youth aged 12 to 17, by Indigenous identity, Northern/Southern Category and Size of Population, 2019<sup>x</sup>

**Northern province or territory / population centre**



**Southern provinces / population centre**



**Northern province or territory / rural**



**Southern provinces / rural**



<sup>E</sup> Use with caution.

# Conclusion

The prevalence of cyberbullying among youth and young adults in Canada varied when comparing by the location or Indigenous identity of those being cybervictimised. More research on the nature of cyberbullying experiences across Canada is needed to better understand the relationship between location and experiences of cyberbullying for youth and young adults.

## References

- <sup>i</sup> The 2019 Canadian Health Survey of Children and Youth explored issues that have an impact on the physical and mental health of children and youth. Survey content included questions on harmful Internet posts; threats or insults through email, instant messaging, text messaging or online games; and the purposeful exclusion from an online community.
- The 2018 Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces explored Canadians' experiences about personal experiences at home and in the workplace, in public spaces and online. Survey content included questions about inappropriate behaviours experienced online while using a cell phone or smartphone, the most serious incident experienced online while using one of these devices, the perpetrators of these incidents, and the ensuing consequences. [Back to the text.](#)
- <sup>ii</sup> [Statistics Canada. \(July 4 2019\). Map 1 Delineating northern and southern Canada. Back to the text.](#)
- <sup>iii</sup> Statistics Canada (2019). [Urban and rural areas - 'Urban' versus 'rural' variant.](#) And, Statistics Canada (2019). [Delineating northern and southern Canada. Back to the text.](#)
- <sup>iv</sup> Statistics Canada (2019). [Urban and rural areas - 'Urban' versus 'rural' variant.](#) And, Statistics Canada (2019). [Delineating northern and southern Canada. Back to the text.](#)
- <sup>v</sup> Statistics Canada, Canadian Health Survey of Children and Youth, 2019. [Back to the text.](#)
- <sup>vi</sup> According to [Statistics Canada](#), increasingly the superscripted capital E is the result of low response rates. Generally, a data point followed by a superscripted capital E accurately reflects the responses given by the Canadians who answered that particular question. However, not enough Canadians answered that particular question to confidently assert that the data point reflects the population as a whole. [Back to the text.](#)
- <sup>vii</sup> Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces, 2018. [Back to the text](#)
- <sup>viii</sup> Statistics Canada, Canadian Health Survey of Children and Youth, 2019. [Back to the text.](#)
- <sup>ix</sup> Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces, 2018. [Back to the text](#)
- <sup>x</sup> Statistics Canada, Canadian Health Survey of Children and Youth, 2019. [Back to the text.](#)