



SCHOOL RULES

Everyone plays a part in keeping school a welcoming and positive community. When students understand the school rules and trust those rules are applied fairly, they're able to concentrate on learning and building positive relationships.

In the Ontario Health and Peer Relations Study, we found that when students agree or strongly agree with the statements in Table 1, they're more likely to feel they matter at school. They're also bullied less and feel less lonely, as illustrated by the diagram in Image 1.

Key Ingredients for a Healthy School Climate

- Structure: Clear rules that everyone understands and respects
- Support: Feeling like the rules apply equally to everyone

Image 1: Effects of school climate

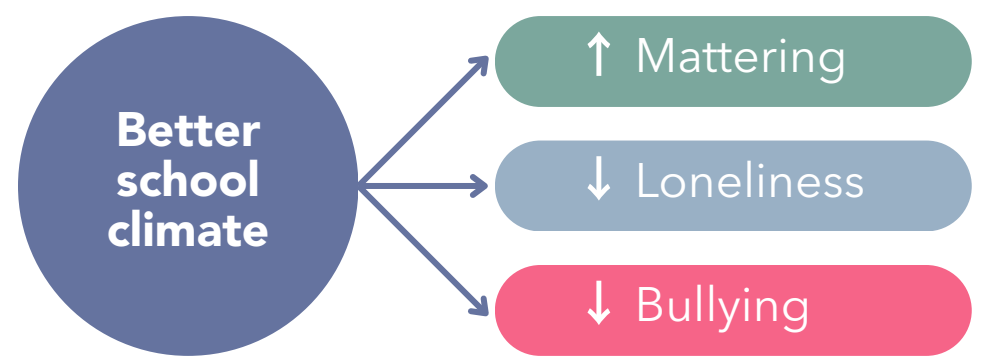


Table 1: Percentage of students who agree or strongly agree with each statement

At my school...	Elementary Grades 4-8	Secondary Grades 9-12
...rules are made clear to students.	69%	67%
...students are told what will happen if the school rules are broken.	70%	67%
...all students must follow the same rules.	78%	77%

“Years of research show that positive school climates support student and staff wellbeing. When school rules are consistent and clear, students feel safe and valued.”

Jess Whitley, Ph.D., Full Professor, uOttawa
and University Research Chair in Inclusion, Mental Health and School Attendance

How You Can Support

- ✓ Work with students to discuss what they want and need. When students feel they have a voice in setting guidelines, they're more motivated to follow them.
- ✓ Transparency is kindness: Ensure everyone understands how to meet your school or classroom expectations.
- ✓ When possible, help students understand the "why" behind a rule. This prosocial practice promotes student engagement and often has a positive impact on behaviour and well-being.