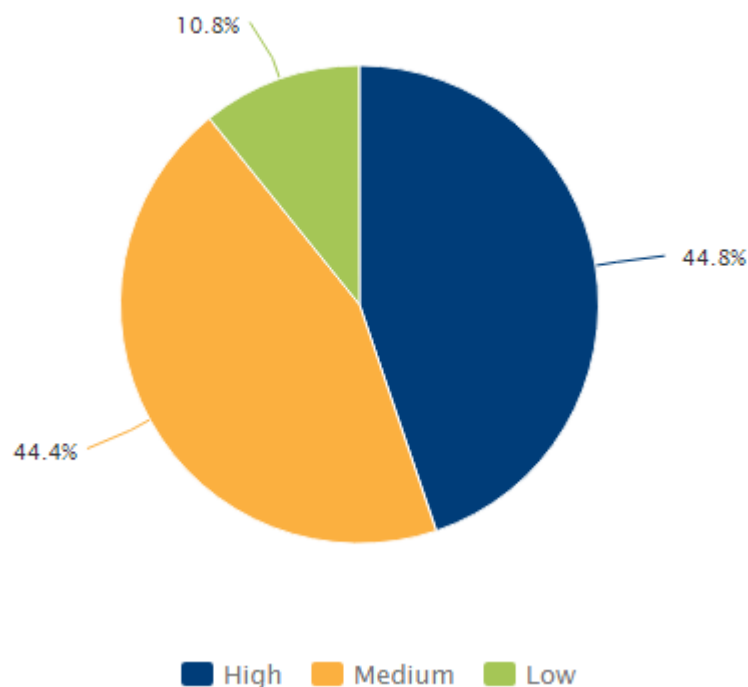


School Climate in California

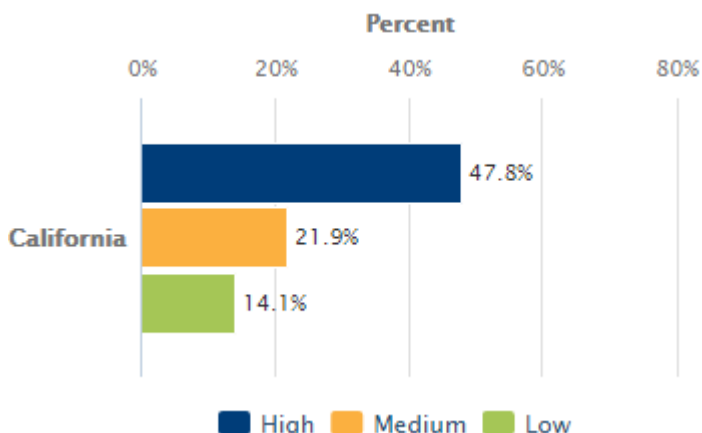
Level of School Connectedness among Ninth Graders: 2017-2019 California



Definition: Level of school connectedness among public school students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs (e.g., in 2017-2019, an estimated 51.2% of California 7th graders had high levels of school connectedness).

Data Source: WestEd, California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) and Biennial State CHKS. California Dept. of Education (Aug. 2020).

Students with High Academic Motivation, by Level of School Connectedness: 2017-2019



Definition: Level of academic motivation among public school students in grades 7, 9,

What It Is

On kidsdata.org, student-reported data on school climate include:

- Level of academic motivation: This scale is based on student responses to four questions about being interested in schoolwork and being motivated to do well, understand new things, and do better at school
- Level of school connectedness: This scale is based on student responses to five questions about feeling safe, close to people, and a part of school, being happy at school, and about teachers treating students fairly
- Level of total school supports: This scale is based on student responses to three questions about having caring relationships with adults at school, three questions about having high expectations from adults at school, and three questions about having opportunities for meaningful participation at school

These indicators come from the California Healthy Kids Survey and are available by grade level (7, 9, 11, and non-traditional), gender, parent education level, and sexual orientation.

Why This Topic Is Important

When school climate is positive—for example, when students feel safe and connected to school, and when they have caring relationships with adults and meaningful ways to participate—young people are more likely to succeed academically and engage in healthy behaviors. When schools support students' social, emotional, and physical needs, behavioral problems can be avoided and academic performance improves. Improving school climate also is a promising strategy to reduce academic disparities between lower and higher income students and students of different racial/ethnic backgrounds. California law now requires school districts to address school climate as part of the Local Control and Accountability Plans.

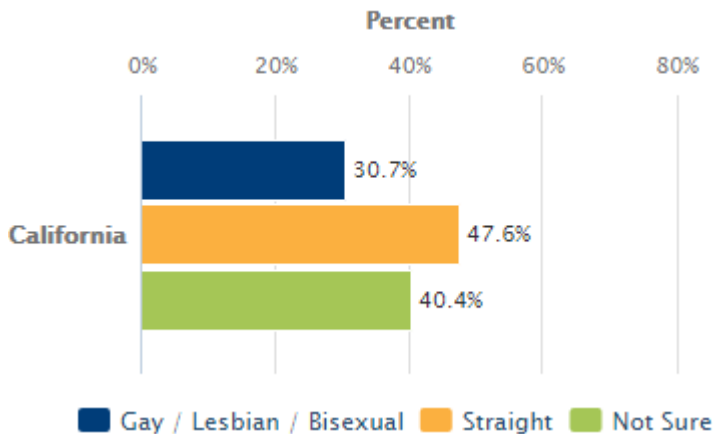
How Children Are Faring

In 2017-2019, an estimated 51% of California 7th graders, 45% of 9th graders, 40% of 11th graders, and 36% of non-traditional students had high levels of school connectedness—meaning they felt safe, close to people, and a part of school, were happy at

11, and non-traditional programs, by level of school connectedness (e.g., in 2017-2019, an estimated 14.1% of California students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs with low levels of school connectedness had high levels of academic motivation).

Data Source: WestEd, [California Healthy Kids Survey \(CHKS\)](#) and [Biennial State CHKS](#). California Dept. of Education (Aug. 2020).

Students with High Levels of School Connectedness, by Sexual Orientation: 2017-2019



Definition: Level of school connectedness among public school students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs, by sexual orientation (e.g., in 2017-2019, an estimated 30.7% of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs in California had high levels of school connectedness).

Data Source: WestEd, [California Healthy Kids Survey \(CHKS\)](#) and [Biennial State CHKS](#). California Dept. of Education (Aug. 2020).

Level of Total School Developmental Supports: 2017-2019

California	Percent		
Grade Level	High	Medium	Low
Grade 7	31.6%	53.7%	14.7%
Grade 9	24.8%	54.6%	20.6%
Grade 11	26.8%	53.9%	19.2%
Non-Traditional	20.6%	56.3%	23.2%

Definition: Level of total school developmental supports for public school students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs (e.g., in 2017-2019, an estimated 31.6% of California 7th graders had high levels of school supports).

Data Source: WestEd, [California Healthy Kids Survey \(CHKS\)](#) and [Biennial State CHKS](#). California Dept. of Education (Aug. 2020).

school, and believed teachers treated students fairly. Among racial/ethnic groups with data, estimates of high levels of school connectedness ranged from 37% (African American/black) to 52% (white). Statewide, the percentage of gay, lesbian and bisexual students with high levels of school connectedness was 31%, compared with 48% of straight students, and the share of those with *low* connectedness (19%) was nearly double that of their straight counterparts (10%).

Students with higher levels of school connectedness tend to have higher levels of academic motivation. In 2017-2019, among California students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs with high levels of school connectedness, 48% had high levels of academic motivation, compared with 14% of students with low connectedness. Younger children, girls, and students whose parents graduated college also tend to have higher levels of academic motivation in comparison with their peers.

Levels of school supports—which reflect student reports about the quality of their relationships with adults at school and their opportunities for meaningful participation—vary by race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status. For instance, 24% of Hispanic/Latino students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs statewide were estimated to have high levels of school supports in 2017-2019, compared with 34% of white students, while 21% of students whose parents did not finish high school had high levels of school supports, compared with 34% of students with a parent who completed a college degree.

View references for this text and additional research on this topic:

<https://kidsdata.org/topic/101/school-climate/summary>



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