

## Parenting Consistency

### Introduction

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Information in this report is presented from the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS). RRFSS is an on-going telephone survey occurring in various public health units across Ontario. On a monthly basis, a random sample of adults in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark counties, aged 18 years and older, is interviewed regarding a variety of risk behaviours, knowledge, attitudes and awareness about health related topics of importance to public health. The survey was conducted by the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at York University, on behalf of the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit.

The focus of this report is on **Parenting Consistency**. The RRFSS module is designed to contribute to local knowledge regarding positive parenting capacity and interaction, particularly with children under 12 years. The data obtained can be scaled to compare the local picture to that of parents surveyed in the 1994 National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth. In this document the data are not scaled, but rather presented to directly reflect the responses to the questions as they are posed to the participants in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark.

This report includes data collected in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark from March to May 2004, November to December 2004, and January to December 2005. Only households with a child(ren) under the age of 12 are included. Where there is more than one child in this age category, the child with the most recent birthday is the focus, or "reference child". Only parents or other individuals who are completely or partially responsible for raising the child answer the questions. A total of 331 eligible people responded to this module during the reported timeframe.

Data from RRFSS modules are analyzed following standard RRFSS data analysis protocols. All results are weighted to adjust for household size. Estimates are presented with 95% Confidence Intervals (C.I.). A 95% Confidence Interval indicates that there is a 95% probability that the true value of the variable measure (proportion) is contained within the interval. When the data is presented in a table, a \* indicates that the estimate must be treated with caution due to sampling variability and a \*\* indicates the estimate is suppressed due to small cell size/high sampling variability.

### Data Results

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The sample was almost evenly split between people with children 6 years or less (41.8%) and children 7-12 years (52.2%). The exact distribution is as follows: 14.2% under 2, 13.6% 2 or 3, 19.9% 4-6, 31.7% 7-9 and 20.5% 10 or 11.

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**Questions 1 through 5:** These questions asked parents how often they engage in the following 5 positive parenting behaviours:

- Praising the child
- Talking or playing with each other
- Laughing together
- Doing something special together
- Playing sports, games, hobbies

As seen in the table below, three-quarters of parents report laughing together with their child “many times each day”, two-thirds of parents report praising their child “many times each day” and slightly more than half of parents report talking or playing with their child “many times each day”. Parents report doing something special and playing games, sports or hobbies with their child less frequently.

*Reported Frequency of Engagement in Positive Parenting Behaviours*

Positive Parenting Behaviour	Many times each day		One or two times each day		A few times a week		About once a week or less/never/DK	
	%	95% C.I.	%	95% C.I.	%	95% C.I.	%	95% C.I.
How often do you praise your child, by saying something like...?	67.1	62.0-72.2	26.7	21.9-31.5	6.2*	3.6-8.8	#	#
How often do you and your child talk or play together?	58.4	53.0-63.8	33.9	28.7-39.1	7.7*	4.8-10.6	#	#
How often do you and your child laugh together?	76.7	72.1-81.3	19.9	15.5-24.3	3.4*	1.4-5.4	#	#
How often do you do something special with your child that he/she enjoys?	27.6	22.7-32.5	27.3	22.4-32.2	27.6	22.7-32.5	17.4	13.3-21.5
How often do you play games, sports, hobbies with your child?	23.0	18.4-27.6	28.9	23.9-33.9	31.7	26.6-36.8	16.5	12.4-20.6

Note: “#” included with those who responded “a few times a week”, as these were too few to report separately

The data were also examined for potential differences according to gender (table on the next page). The results were similar for males and females, as illustrated in the table below. There were some differences in selected behaviors, with females being more likely than males to respond “many times a day” to certain questions. However, in these cases the males were higher than the females in the next response level, still reporting interaction at a daily level.

*Reported Frequency of Engagement in Positive Parenting Behaviours, by gender*

<b>Positive Parenting Behaviour</b>	<b>Frequency Reported for most common responses</b>	<b>% Males n=143</b>	<b>95 % C.I.</b>	<b>% Females n=179</b>	<b>95% C.I.</b>
How often do you praise [child] by Something like “good for you”...	Many times each day	59.4	51.4-67.4	73.2	66.7-79.7
	One or two times a day	30.8	23.2-38.4	23.5	17.3-29.7
How often do you and [child] talk or play with each other, focusing attention on each other for five minutes or more, just for fun?	Many times each day	55.2	47.0-63.4	60.9	53.7-68.0
	One or two times a day	35.0	27.2-42.8	33.0	26.1-39.9
How often do you and [child] laugh together?	Many times each day	69.2	61.6-76.8	82.7	77.2-88.2
	One or two times a day	25.9	18.7-33.1	15.1*	9.9-20.3
How often do you do something special with [child] that he/she enjoys?	Many times each day	28.7	21.3-36.1	26.8	20.3-33.3
	One or two times a day	27.3	20.0-34.6	27.4	20.9-33.9
	A few times a week	23.1	16.2-30.0	31.1	24.3-37.9
	About once a week or less	16.8*	10.7-22.9	12.8*	7.9-17.7
Play games [child less than 2] or play sports, hobbies or games with [child 2 years or older}	Many times each day	25.9	18.7-33.1	20.7	14.8-26.6
	One or two times a day	30.8	23.2-38.4	27.4	20.9-33.9
	A few times a week	27.3	20.0-34.6	35.2	28.2-42.2,
	About once a week or less	14.0*	8.3-19.7	15.1*	9.9-20.3