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Cyberbullying has risen sharply in New York City public schools since the pandemic shuttered buildings and [forced young people onto their devices](#), according to a new citywide survey of students.

About 42% of students say their classmates regularly harass or intimidate each other online, the results showed — [compared to 35% in 2019](#). Just a quarter of students reported no cyberbullying at their schools.

“I’ve been doing this work for a very long time, and unfortunately, I’ve seen the direct effects of cellphone use for young people,” Mark Rampersant, the top education official for school safety, said in a [pre-recorded video on the imminent phone policy](#) late Monday.

“I’ve seen young people becoming distracted. I’ve seen cellphones used as a tool for cyberbullying, and most of all, the thing that troubles me the most is watching young people’s mental health be affected by the overall use of cellphones.”

The survey results come as New York City’s school system gets ready to [implement the state’s cellphone ban](#), a response to what public officials see as the growing dangers associated with cell phone use among youngsters.

In the survey, girls were more likely to report cyberbullying than boys, as were middle school students compared to high school kids.

The survey results show a marginal improvement since the 2023-24 school year, when 43% of students reported bullying on phones and social media. In the year that followed, many schools [set in motion plans to restrict phone-use](#) at the urging of the former schools chancellor, David Banks.

About 350 schools were already enforcing such policies at the start of last school year, education officials said at the time. By the final day of classes, 800 or so principals — half of the school system — had placed limits on the devices in some way.

It remains to be seen whether banning phones systemwide, as championed by Gov. Hochul and passed by the state Legislature, will continue that positive trend, though [some national research gives cause for optimism](#).

The new state law also prohibits students from using their phones during lunch and other free periods, when bullying may be more common, whereas many schools that banned devices in the past only did so during class time.

The 2025 NYC School Survey was administered from Feb. 10 through April 11. More than 355,000 students participated, as well as 440,000 families and 62,000 teachers. The data is used by principals to improve their programs, and by the city to help measure school quality.

Overall, a growing majority of students, 68%, agreed with the statement that [most of their peers treat each other with respect](#) — an increase of 9 percentage points since 2019. More than 8 in 10 students reported feeling safe in the hallways, bathrooms, locker rooms and cafeterias.

And when it comes to interactions between schools and their parents, 96% of the city's public school families said they were satisfied with the education their children had received last year.

They ranked more afterschool programs and sports teams, smaller class sizes, and more hands-on learning as areas for improvement.

“Your voices help shape the future of our schools, and we are endlessly grateful for your feedback and partnership,” NYC Public Schools wrote on [X](#) to announce the results Tuesday.

The new restrictions on cellphones and other internet-enabled devices go into effect on the first day of school, Sept. 4.