

Gunma (Japan)

This site note provides an overview of how social and emotional skills are distributed among different student groups and how they relate to students' health, well-being, educational outcomes and future aspirations in Gunma. It draws on data from the Survey on Social and Emotional Skills (SSES) 2023.

Gunma is a prefecture located in central Japan.

SSES 2023 measured the following skills among 15-year-old students in Gunma:

- Task performance skills (persistence, responsibility, self-control and achievement motivation)
- Emotional regulation skills (stress-resistance, emotional control and optimism)
- Engaging with others skills (assertiveness, sociability and energy)
- Open-mindedness skills (curiosity, creativity and tolerance)
- Collaboration skills (empathy and trust)

Results for Gunma (Japan) in this note are compared to the average across participating sites. This average includes:

- Sites that participated in SSES 2023 in all analyses: Bulgaria, Bogotá (Colombia), Chile, Delhi (India), Dubai (United Arab Emirates), Emilia-Romagna (Italy), Gunma (Japan), Helsinki (Finland), Jinan (China), Kudus (Indonesia), Mexico, Peru, Sobral (Brazil), Spain, Turin (Italy) and Ukraine
- The following cities that participated in SSES 2019, where possible: Daegu (Korea), Houston (United States), Istanbul (Türkiye), Manizales (Colombia), Ottawa (Canada), Sintra (Portugal) and Suzhou (China)

Data for achievement motivation between 2019 and 2023 are not comparable, therefore analyses for this skill only include SSES 2023 sites.

The OECD collaborated with Dr Tomoko Imai from Jiyugaoka Gakuen High School as the national project partner to implement the SSES in Gunma (Japan).

For further information, refer to 'Social and emotional skills for better lives: Findings from the OECD Survey on Social and Emotional Skills 2023' and the Survey on Social and Emotional Skills 2023 Technical Report (forthcoming).

How are students' social and emotional skills distributed across socio-demographic groups in Gunma?

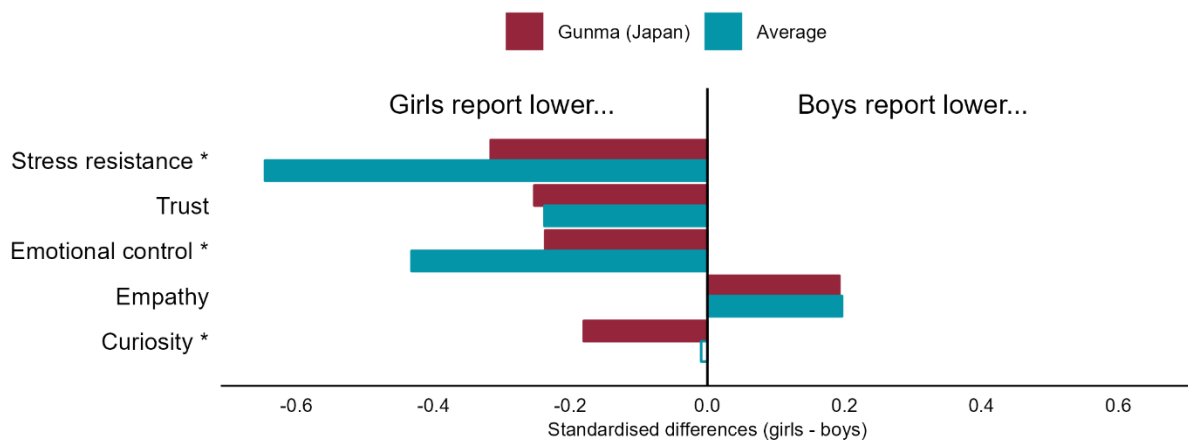
Differences in skills between boys and girls

- 15-year-old girls in Gunma reported lower levels of stress resistance, trust, emotional control, curiosity, energy, and creativity than 15-year-old boys, on average. In contrast, boys reported lower levels of empathy and tolerance than girls.

- Gunma showed different patterns and sizes of gender differences compared to other sites for six skills. 15-year-old girls in Gunma reported lower curiosity than boys, whereas there is no gender difference in this skill on average across sites. In Gunma, there were no significant gender differences for achievement motivation, optimism, sociability, assertiveness, and self-control, whereas boys report lower achievement motivation and girls report lower levels of the other skills on average across sites. For stress resistance, emotional control, energy, tolerance, gender differences were smaller in Gunma compared to the average across sites.

Figure 1. Largest gender differences in skills in Gunma

Standardised differences between the scores of 15-year-old girls and boys in Gunma compared to the average across sites.



Note: The five skills with the largest gender differences in Gunma are included, ordered from the largest to smallest difference. Standardised differences between boys and girls that are significant at a threshold of $p < 0.05$ are coloured, non-significant coefficients are outlined. Differences in Gunma that are significantly different to the average across sites are indicated by the asterisk against each skill.

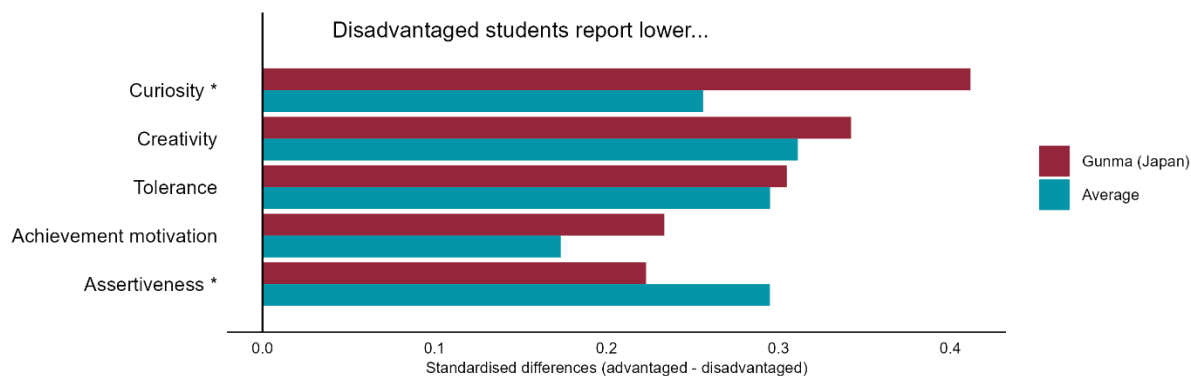
Source: OECD, SSSES 2023 Database Table B2.4

Differences in skills between advantaged and disadvantaged students

- Disadvantaged 15-year-old students in Gunma reported lower levels of all open-mindedness skills (curiosity, creativity, tolerance) as well as achievement motivation, assertiveness, energy, and sociability than advantaged 15-year-old students, on average. There were no significant differences by socio-economic background, however, in trust, empathy, most task performance skills (self-control, persistence, responsibility) and all emotional regulation skills (stress resistance, emotional control, and optimism).
- The difference in curiosity and achievement motivation between advantaged and disadvantaged 15-year-old students in Gunma were larger than on average across sites, whereas the difference in sociability and assertiveness were smaller than average. The gap in curiosity by socio-economic background was one of the largest across sites at age 15.

Figure 2. Largest differences between advantaged and disadvantaged students in skills in Gunma

Standardised differences between the scores of 15-year-old advantaged and disadvantaged students in Gunma compared to the average across sites



Note: The five skills with the largest socio-economic differences in Gunma are included, ordered from the largest to smallest difference. All standardised differences between advantaged and disadvantaged students are statistically significant with a threshold $p < 0.05$. Differences in Gunma that are significantly different to the average across sites are indicated by the asterisk against each skill.

Source: OECD, SSES 2023 Database Table B2.5

How are students' social and emotional skills linked to their educational outcomes and career prospects in Gunma?

Levels of absence and tardiness and students' ambitions for the future

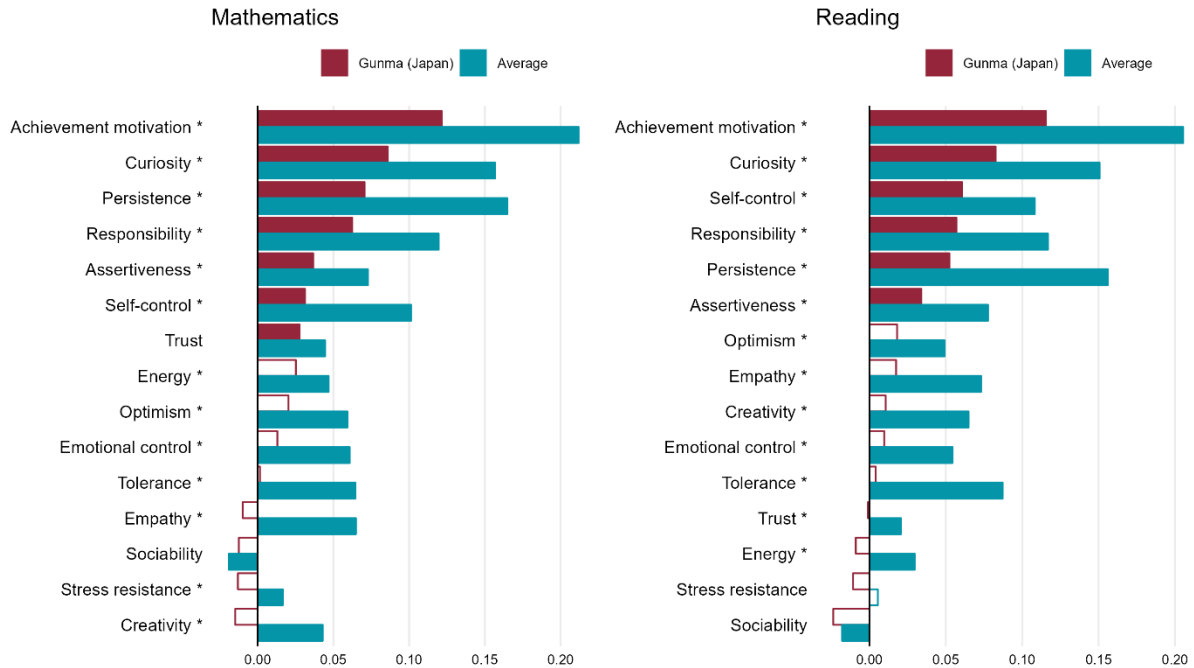
- In Gunma, 7% of 15-year-olds had arrived late for school at least once in the two weeks prior to the SSES assessment, well below the average across sites (48%). Skipping school was also less common in Gunma, with 3% of students having skipped classes and 1% having skipped at least one day of school in the prior two weeks, well below the respective averages of 29% and 31%.
- In Gunma, 84% of 15-year-olds expect to complete tertiary education, similar to the average across sites (84%), while 61% expect to have a managerial or professional job when they are 30, above the average across sites (57%).

Relationships between social and emotional skills and academic outcomes

- In Gunma, 15-year-olds with higher task performance skills (achievement motivation, persistence, responsibility, self-control), curiosity and assertiveness received higher grades in mathematics, reading and arts. Creativity was related to higher grades in arts, but not other subjects. There was no relationship between tolerance, stress resistance, sociability, energy and optimism and grades in any subject. Compared to other sites, the relationship between skills and grades is smaller in Gunma than the average.

Figure 3. Relationships between students' social and emotional skills and grades in Gunma compared to the average across sites

Standardised regression coefficients of individual skills on maths and reading grades among 15-year-olds in Gunma compared to the average across sites



Note: Significant coefficients at a threshold of $p < 0.05$ are coloured, non-significant coefficients are outlined. Coefficients in Gunma that are significantly different to the average across sites are indicated by the asterisk against each skill.

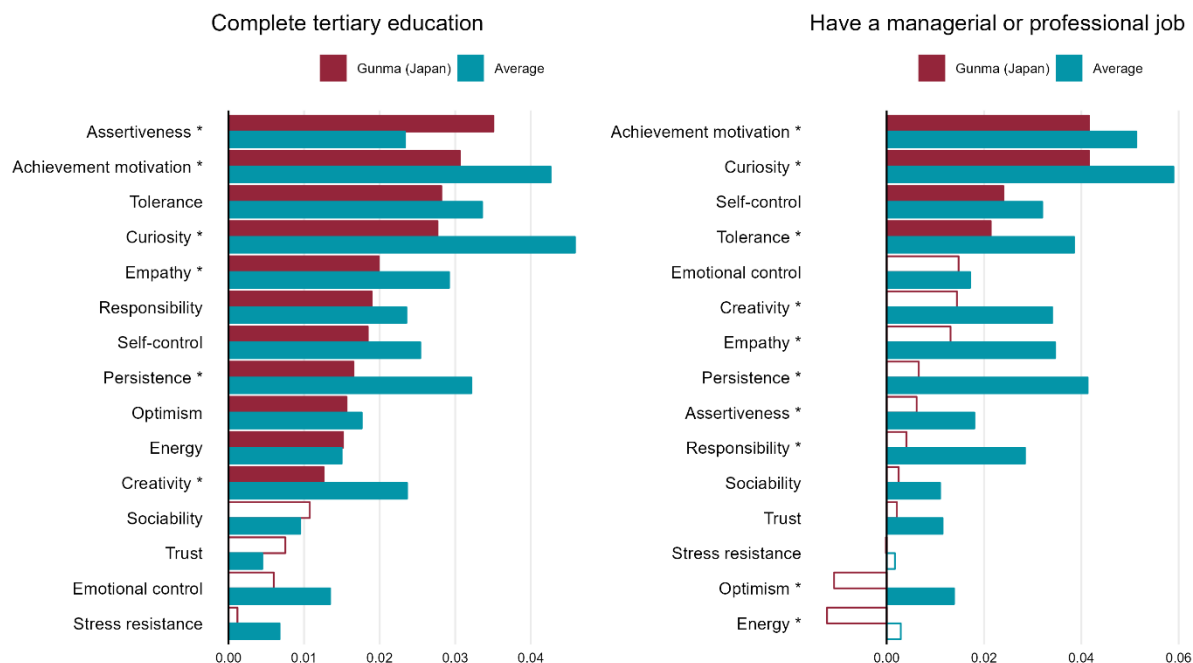
Source: OECD, SSES 2023 Database Tables B4.1 and B4.4

Relationships between social and emotional skills and students' ambitions for the future

- In Gunma, 15-year-old students with higher levels of achievement motivation, tolerance, curiosity, self-control are more likely to expect both to complete tertiary education and hold a managerial or professional job at age 30. In addition, higher levels of assertiveness, empathy, responsibility, persistence, optimism, energy, and creativity are associated with expectations to complete tertiary education.
- Compared to other sites, the relationship between assertiveness and expectations to complete tertiary education in Gunma are larger than average. The relationship is smaller for achievement motivation, curiosity, empathy, persistence, and creativity. For holding a managerial job at 30, the relationship to achievement motivation, curiosity and tolerance is smaller than average.

Figure 4. Relationships between students' social and emotional skills and their future aspirations in Gunma compared to the average across sites

Standardised regression coefficients of individual skills on students' expectations to complete tertiary education and have a managerial or professional job in the future among 15-year-olds in Gunma compared to the average across sites



Note: Significant coefficients at a threshold of $p < 0.05$ are coloured, non-significant coefficients are outlined. Coefficients in Gunma that are significantly different to the average across sites are indicated by the asterisk against each skill.

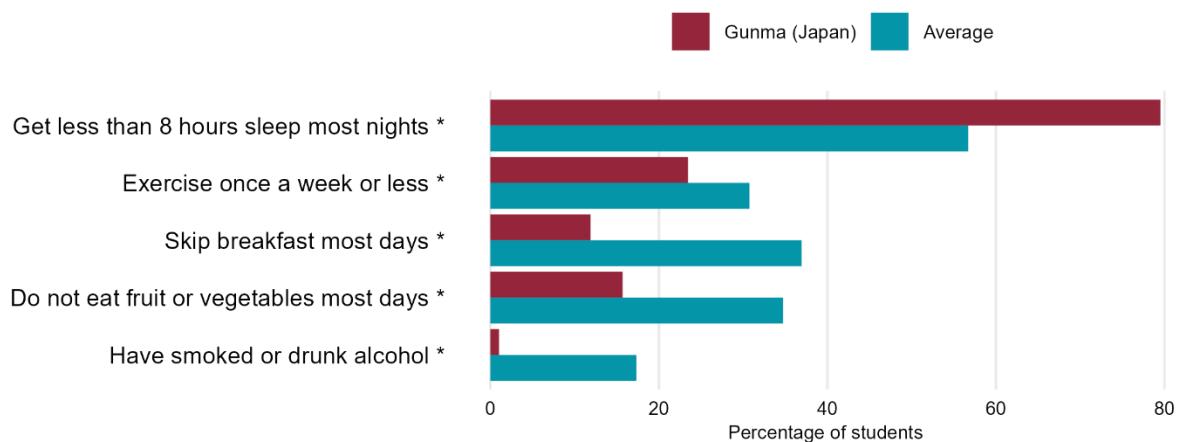
Source: OECD, SSES 2023 Database Tables B4.19 and B4.30

How are students' social and emotional skills linked to their health and well-being outcomes in Gunma?

Students' health behaviours

- 15-year-old students in Gunma reported some of the highest frequencies of eating breakfast, eating fruits and vegetables, and never smoking or drinking alcohol. In fact, 78% of 15-year-olds report eating breakfast and 63% report eating fruits and vegetables every day, while 99% report never smoking or drinking. However, 80% of 15-year-olds report sleeping less than 8 hours most or every night. This is the highest rate among sites.
- Students with healthier behaviours in Gunma tended to report higher levels of all social and emotional skills, especially optimism, energy, and persistence. However, the relationship between health behaviours and skills in Gunma were smaller than average for most skills, including all task performance, emotional regulation and open-mindedness skills.

Figure 5. Percentage of 15-year-old students engaging in unhealthy behaviours in Gunma compared to the average across sites



Note: Frequencies of each behaviour that are significantly different to the average across sites are indicated by an asterisk against the behaviour.
Source: OECD, SSES 2023 Database Table B3.3

Gender differences in health and well-being outcomes

- On average across sites, girls report poorer levels of all health and well-being outcomes (life satisfaction, current psychological well-being, test and class anxiety, health behaviours, relationship satisfaction and body image) than boys. In Gunma, girls also report poorer levels of all these outcomes.
- Gender differences in Gunma are smaller than the average across sites for all health and well-being outcomes except relationship satisfaction, where the difference between boys and girls is similar to average.

Relationships between social and emotional skills and students' health and well-being outcomes

- In Gunma, 15-year-old students with higher levels of all skills, especially optimism followed by energy, stress resistance, trust, and sociability, reported better health and well-being outcomes (health behaviours, life satisfaction, current psychological well-being, relationship satisfaction, body image and test and class anxiety).
- Compared to other sites, the relationship between the skills of trust and tolerance and life satisfaction, psychological wellbeing, relationship satisfaction and body image were stronger in Gunma compared to the average across sites. Additionally, all engaging with others skills were more strongly related to greater psychological wellbeing in Gunma compared to the average across sites. In contrast, the relationship between self-control and responsibility and life satisfaction, psychological wellbeing, relationship satisfaction and body image was smaller than the average.

Key features of SSES 2023

What is the Survey on Social and Emotional Skills?

The Survey on Social and Emotional Skills (SSES) is an international survey designed by the OECD's Centre for Educational Research and Innovation to improve understanding of social and emotional skills

among 10- and 15-year-old students. The Survey aims to understand how levels of these skills differ among students with different characteristics; how these skills matter for important student outcomes; and how students' school and home environments influence skill development.

Which social and emotional skills are covered in the Survey?

The 15 skills measured in the Survey were selected to provide a comprehensive coverage of those that are relevant for children's and adolescents' success and well-being. Further information on why and how these skills were selected can be found in the SSES assessment framework (Kankaraš and Suarez-Alvarez, 2019^[1]).

How were these skills measured?

All students complete a questionnaire where they indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with a series of statements. Examples of statements include: 'I keep working on a task until it is finished', 'I stay calm even in tense situations' and 'I am able to defend my interests when they are challenged'.

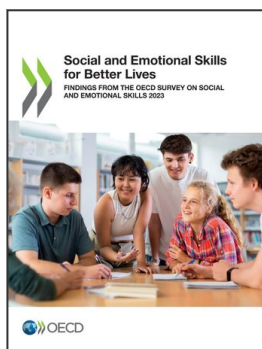
Who participated in the Survey?

All sites in SSES 2023 surveyed 15-year-olds and surveying 10-year-olds was optional. Students in sixteen sites – six countries and ten sub-national entities – participated in SSES 2023. Data from seven sites who participated in the first round of SSES in 2019, but not in 2023, are also included in analyses in this report wherever possible to expand the coverage of the international average.

Some 18,000 10-year-old and 52,000 15-year-old students took the SSES assessment in 2023, representing about 630,000 10-year-olds and 3 million 15-year-olds in the schools of the 16 participating sites. In Gunma 3,500 15-year-old students completed the assessment, representing about 14,800 15-year-old students.

References

- Kankaraš, M. and J. Suarez-Alvarez (2019), "Assessment framework of the OECD Study on Social and Emotional Skills", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 207, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/5007adef-en>. [1]



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