

2017 Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Highlights from the Middle School and High School Statewide Report



in partnership with the
Agency of Education

2017

Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey is a nationwide survey that measures the prevalence of key behaviors, perceptions and protective factors that affect young people's health.

The Vermont YRBS is conducted every two years during the spring semester. In Vermont, the Department of Health works with the Agency of Education and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to conduct two surveys—a high school survey and a middle school survey. Participation is anonymous and voluntary.

2017 Participants

20,653

of 26,692 high school students (77%)

13,887

of 16,374 middle school students (85%)

191

of 194 eligible schools (98%)

School Eligibility

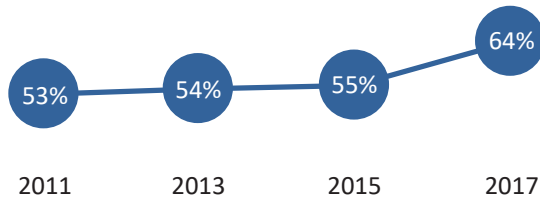
All middle and high schools serving students in grades six through 12, and all public, private, interstate and technical schools that serve as a public high school in a supervisory union are eligible to participate in the YRBS. Elementary and intermediate schools that end in sixth grade are not eligible.

Middle School Highlights

MIDDLE SCHOOL Protective Factors

Community Connectedness

In 2017, students were more likely to feel they matter to people in their community.



Family Connectedness

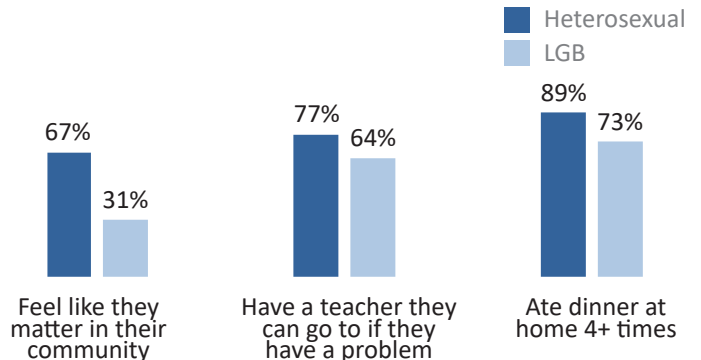
Two-thirds of students (66%) ate dinner with at least one parent every night during the past week. Nearly nine out of 10 students (88%) ate dinner with a parent at least four times in the past week.

School Connectedness

Three-quarters of middle school students (76%) have at least one teacher or adult in their school they could talk to if they had a problem.

Seven in 10 students (71%) agree or strongly agree that their school has clear rules and consequences for behavior.

Heterosexual students are significantly more likely than LGB students to feel connected to their school and family, and more than twice as likely to feel they matter in their community.



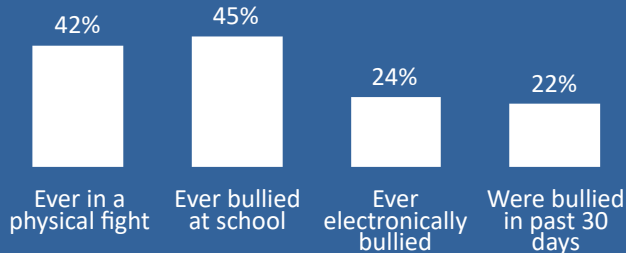
MIDDLE SCHOOL

Personal Safety

Physical Violence & Bullying

Since 2011, the percent of students who have ever been bullied or in a physical fight on school property has significantly decreased from 47% to 45% in 2017. Bullying during the past 30 days also decreased from 27% in 2011 to 22% in 2017.

In 2017, nearly half of students reported ever being bullied at school.



Students of color and LGB students are significantly more likely to be in a fight, be bullied, or skip school because they felt unsafe compared to white, non-Hispanic and heterosexual students.

Male students are significantly more likely to report being in a fight, female students are significantly more likely to be bullied.

Feeling Unsafe

During the previous 30 days, 8% of students skipped school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school.

LGB students are more than three times as likely as heterosexual students to skip school because they feel unsafe.



MIDDLE SCHOOL Mental Health

Feeling Sad and Hopeless

One in five students (19%) felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two or more weeks during the past year that they stopped doing some usual activities.

Suicidal Thoughts, Plans & Attempts

The percent of students who have ever seriously thought about killing themselves, made a suicide plan or attempted suicide have not significantly changed since 2015.

19%

Felt so sad or hopeless in the past year that they stopped doing some usual activities

18%

Ever thought about suicide

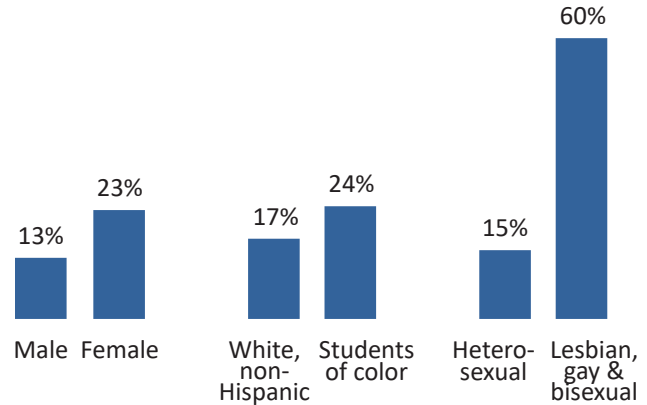
12%

Ever made a suicide plan

6%

Ever attempted suicide

Female students, students of color, and LGB students are significantly more likely to have serious thoughts of suicide.



MIDDLE SCHOOL Physical Activity

Physical Activity

In the past week, 34% of students were physically active every day for at least 60 minutes.

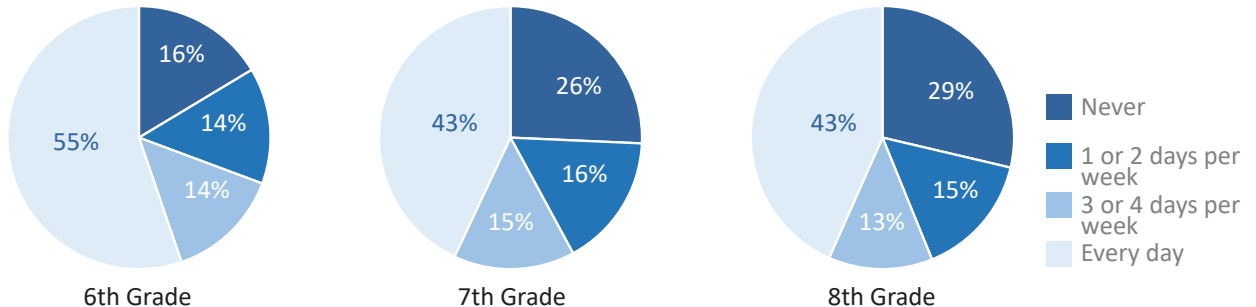
Female (26%) and LGB (18%) students are significantly less likely to engage in physical activity every day.

Being Physically Active On the Way To and During School

When weather permits, one in 10 middle school students (10%) walk or ride their bike to school every day; about a quarter (23%) do so at least once a week.

Three out of four students (75%) had at least one physical activity break at school, such as recess or short breaks during class. Less than half (46%) have physical activity breaks every day.

Sixth grade students are more likely than older students to have physical activity breaks every day during class.



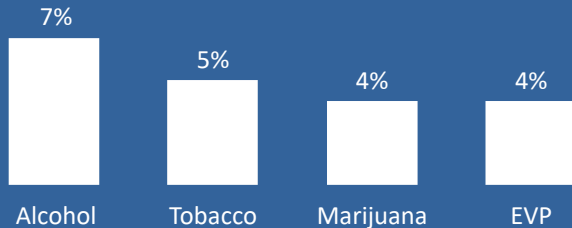
MIDDLE SCHOOL Substance Use

Alcohol, Marijuana and Tobacco Use

Use of alcohol, marijuana and any tobacco product, including cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco and electronic vapor products (EVPs) in the past 30 days remained stable between 2015 and 2017.

The use of EVPs during the past 30 days increased significantly from 3% in 2015 to 4% in 2017.

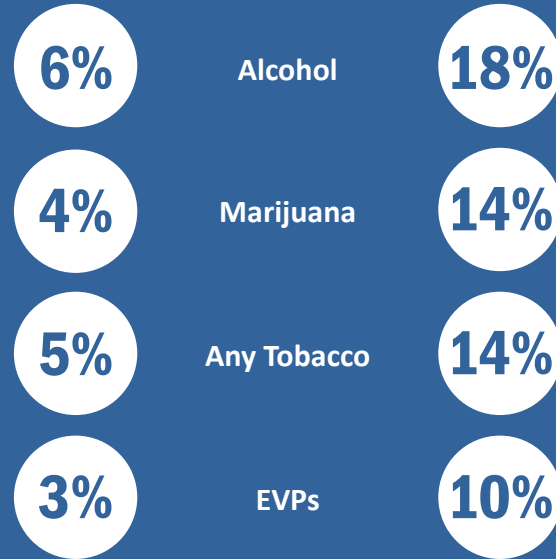
Overall, less than one in 10 middle school students used alcohol, marijuana, EVP or tobacco products during the past 30 days.



LGB students more than three times more likely than heterosexual students to use alcohol, marijuana, tobacco or EVPs during the past 30 days.

Heterosexual Students

LGB Students



High School Highlights

HIGH SCHOOL Protective Factors

Family Connectedness

Nearly four out of five students (77%) ate dinner at home with a parent at least four times during the previous week.

School Connectedness

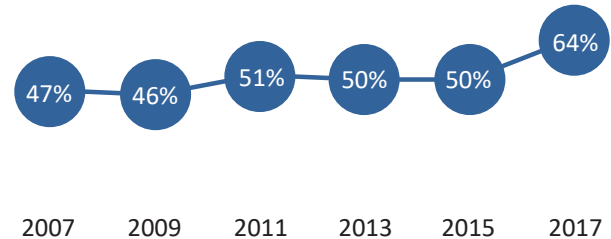
Four out of five students (80%) have at least one teacher or adult in their school they could talk to if they have a problem.

Constructive Use of Time

During a typical school week, 24% of students spend 10 or more hours participating in extracurricular activities such as sports, band, drama or other clubs. One-third (33%) are not involved in any extracurricular activities.

Community Connectedness

The percent of students who feel they matter in their community has significantly increased during the past decade.



Students of color and LGBT students are significantly less likely to feel that they matter in their community.

64%

All
Students

55%

Students
of Color

39%

LGBT
Students

HIGH SCHOOL Mental Health

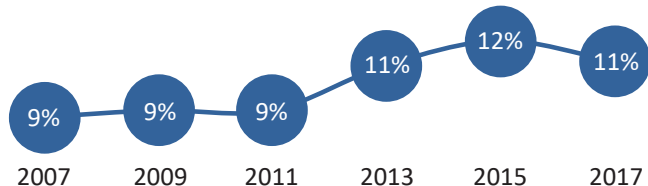
Feeling Sad or Hopeless

The percent of students who stopped doing usual activities during the past year because they felt so sad or hopeless has significantly increased over the past decade, from 21% in 2007 to 25% in 2017.

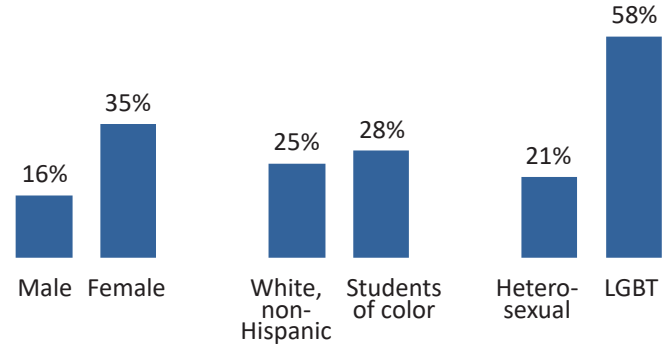
Suicide Plans and Attempts

During the past year, just over one in 10 students (11%) made a suicide plan; 5% attempted suicide.

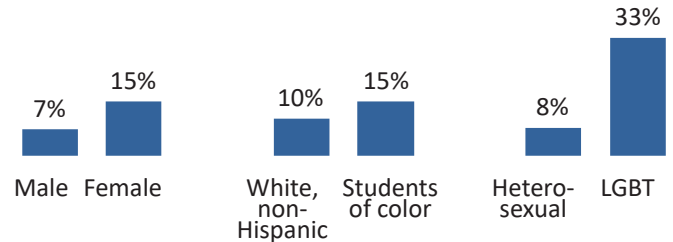
The percent of students who made a suicide plan during the past year significantly increased over the past decade.



Female students, students of color, and LGBT students are significantly more likely to feel sad and hopeless.



They are also significantly more likely to have made a suicide plan.



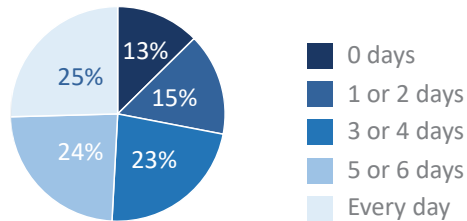
HIGH SCHOOL

Physical Activity & Nutrition

Physical Activity

Only a quarter of high school students met physical activity guidelines, participating in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day during the past week.

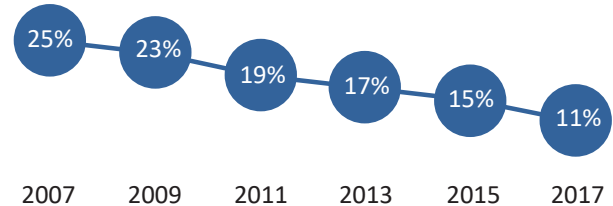
One in seven students did not participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on any day in the past week.



Soda Consumption

During the past week, one-third of students (37%) did not drink any soda.

Over the past decade, consuming at least one soda per day during the previous week has significantly decreased.



Food Insecurity

During the past month, one student in 10 went hungry at least some of the time because there was not enough food at home.

HIGH SCHOOL Sexual Health

Sexual Activity

The percent of students who have ever had sexual intercourse, or who had it in the past three months, has not changed in the past decade. Since 2011, the percent of students having oral sex has decreased.

42%

have ever had oral sex.

40%

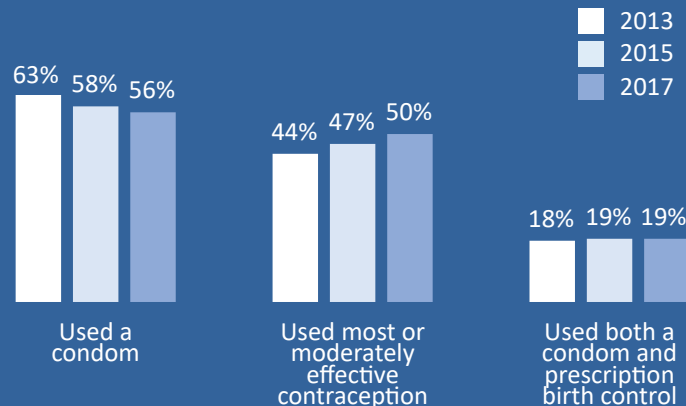
have ever had sexual intercourse.

31%

had sexual intercourse during the previous three months.

Birth Control & Condom Use Among Sexually Active Students

Since 2013, condom use has decreased while the use of effective forms of birth control has significantly increased.



Use of most effective forms of birth control such as IUDs or implants has more than quadrupled, from 3% in 2013 to 13% in 2017.

HIGH SCHOOL Personal Safety

Intimate Partner & Dating Violence

During the past year, 66% of high school students dated or went out with someone. Of those who dated in the past year:

1 in 10 experienced sexual violence, such as being forced to do sexual things like kissing, touching or being forced to have sexual intercourse.

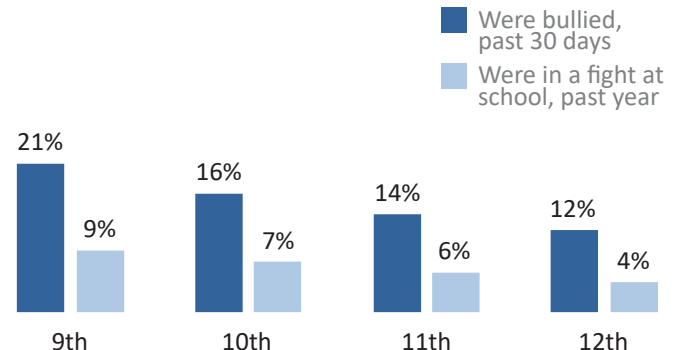
1 in 15 experienced physical violence such as being hit, slammed into something or injured with an object or weapon.

Bullying, Physical Fighting & Safety at School

In the past year, 18% of students were in a physical fight; less than one in 10 (7%) were in a physical fight on school property.

Nearly one in six students (16%) were bullied during the past 30 days.

Unlike other risk behaviors, physical fighting and bullying decreases with each grade level.



HIGH SCHOOL Substance Use

Over the past decade there has been a 50% decrease in the percentage of students who currently smoke cigarettes. Current cigarette smoking (9%) has dropped below the Healthy Vermonters 2020 goal of 10%.



Electronic Vapor Product Use

One-third of students (34%) have ever used an EVP; 12% used an EVP in the past 30 days.

Since 2015, the percent of students who have ever tried an EVP significantly increased. However, use of EVPs during the past 30 days significantly decreased during the same period.

Alcohol Use

Three in five students (58%) have ever had alcohol. One-third (33%) drank alcohol in the past 30 days.

Over the past decade, the percent of students who currently drank alcohol significantly decreased. However, alcohol use in the past 30 days significantly increased since 2015.

Marijuana Use

Nearly four in 10 students (37%) have ever tried marijuana, while one-quarter (24%) have used it in the past 30 days.

Over the past decade, marijuana use has remained stable. However, marijuana use in the past 30 days significantly increased between 2015 and 2017.

Other Drug Use

During their lifetime, 10% of students have ever misused prescription pain medicine or stimulants.

Less than one in ten students have ever tried inhalants (6%), cocaine (4%), methamphetamines (2%) and heroin (2%).

HIGH SCHOOL Substance Use

Perceived Risk of Harm

Overall, very few students believe there is no risk of harm to themselves by using marijuana, alcohol and tobacco regularly.

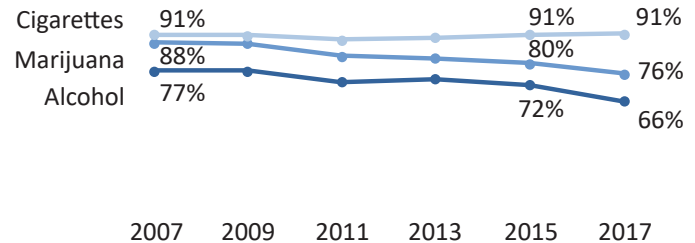
21% believe here is no risk in **smoking marijuana regularly.**

6% believe here is no risk in **binge drinking every weekend.**

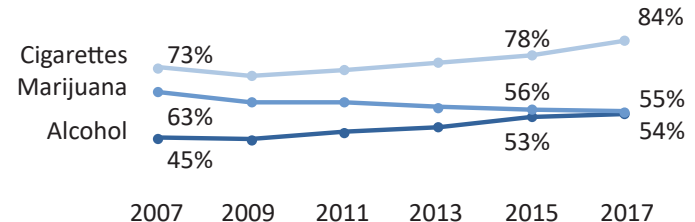
5% believe here is no risk in **smoking a pack of cigarettes everyday.**

Perceptions of Use

Students who believe parents would think it is wrong or very wrong for them to use alcohol or marijuana has decreased.



Students who believe it is wrong or very wrong for someone their age to use marijuana has decreased significantly.



NOTES





Vermont Department of Health
www.healthvermont.gov/YRBS
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