

*the* 2015  
**Vermont Youth  
Risk Behavior Survey**  
Middle School



Produced in partnership with the  
Agency of Education

*the* 2015  
**Vermont Youth  
Risk Behavior Survey**

**The Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey  
is a collaborative project.**

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This report is available in other accessible formats.

## Survey Format in 2015

In 2015, we conducted two surveys:

- a **high school survey** of students in grades nine through twelve, and
- a **middle school survey** of students in grades six through eight.

**All results in the 2015 middle school survey report are for grades six through eight only.**

The middle school and high school surveys differed slightly. The shorter middle school survey included questions on fighting, bullying, suicidality, substance use, attitudes and perceptions about substance use, sexual behavior, body image, physical activity, and youth assets. The high school survey included questions on these topics as well as self-reported height and weight, driving behaviors, other drug use, sexual orientation, and nutrition.

Copies of both surveys can be found online at: <http://healthvermont.gov/research/yrbs.aspx>

The Vermont Department of Health would like to acknowledge the work and effort of all the schools, teachers and students who choose to participate in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey each year. Thank you.

## How to Use the YRBS

The YRBS can detect changes in risk behaviors over time and identify differences among ages, grades, and genders. With these data, we can focus prevention efforts and determine whether school policies and community programs are having the intended effect on student behaviors.

Think of the YRBS as a tool for starting discussions, for educating the community, for planning and evaluating programs, and for comparing Vermont students with other students nationwide.

- **Start the Conversation:** Use the YRBS to begin a conversation with teens about the personal choices they make or about the health of their community. Ask them if the results accurately reflect what they see happening around them. How do they explain the results? From their perspective, what is or is not working? How would they promote healthy behaviors?
- **Increase Awareness:** The YRBS provides an opportunity to break through “denial” and make community members aware of the risks that their young people face. It can also dispel myths and correct misinformation about the “average teenager.” The YRBS can accentuate the positive and celebrate the fact that many students are abstaining from behaviors that endanger their health and their ability to succeed.
- **Plan and Evaluate Programs:** The YRBS can serve as the basis of a community needs assessment. It can help identify strengths and weaknesses in communities, and can inform strategies to address those weaknesses.

**Remember to Look at the Positive Side:** In most cases, the majority of adolescents are NOT engaging in risky behaviors. Although most of the charts examine the prevalence of risk behaviors, please do not forget about the percentage of adolescents who are NOT engaging in these behaviors.

Note: “Getting to ‘Y’”, a program originally funded by the Agency of Education, provides a manual for student groups looking to analyze and leverage their own YRBS data – it can be found here: <http://www.upforlearning.com/index.php/yatst>

## About this Report: Methodology

**Format:** The results appear in data tables, pie charts, bar graphs, and line graphs with explanatory text. In most cases, we report data by gender and grade. The percentages in some charts may not total 100% due to rounding.

**Weighting:** The results in this report are weighted by gender, grade, and race/ethnicity in order to compensate for absenteeism and incomplete surveys, as well as the few schools that did not participate. The weighting allows the results to be fully representative of public school students in grades six through eight (middle school survey) and grades nine through twelve (high school survey). This permits us to draw inferences about the school-based student population in Vermont.

Beginning in 2013 there was a methodology change in the weighting procedure. From 1993 through 2011, reports included numbers based on a weighted sample of schools. In 2013, due to the high participation from Vermont schools, a switch was made to use all student responses in the statewide report, instead of a sample. This improved comparability to any county-level or supervisory union-level reports, as well as ensured that the estimates were more accurate. These results are generalizable to the Vermont high school and middle school populations.

**Statistical Comparisons:** We note significant differences in the explanatory text. For the 2015 results, we compared the 95 percent confidence intervals separately by grade, gender and year to determine if the percentages were statistically different. If the confidence intervals overlapped, the percentages were not different.

Be aware that due to the very large number of students who take the YRBS the confidence intervals in the statewide report are very small, leading to statistical differences between numbers that are practically not very different from each other. Therefore, we encourage you to examine the data and consider “**meaningful difference.**” In other words, does the disparity merit a targeted intervention, show a real change in health, or otherwise mean something important to the community (statistics aside).

## A Word of Caution

The YRBS represents the most complete and most recent information available about risk behaviors among Vermont students. However, the YRBS has some limitations that you should keep in mind when interpreting the results.

- **Data Quality:** We take numerous precautions to ensure the reliability and validity of the results. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) carefully designed and thoroughly tested the questionnaire. The anonymous survey encourages students to be honest and forthright. The CDC runs over 100 consistency checks on the data to exclude careless, invalid, or logically inconsistent answers. We statistically adjust, or weight, the results so that the responses accurately represent all Vermont public school students based on gender, grade, and race/ethnicity. These precautions can reduce some sources of error, but not all.
- **Who's Not Included:** Administrators make every effort to have all students complete the YRBS. However, students who are not at school the day of the survey are not included in the results. Additionally, students who are home schooled, attend independent schools that chose not to participate, or dropped out of school are not included.
- **Comparing Supervisory Unions/School Districts to Each Other and to the State:** Participating supervisory unions and school districts receive reports of their results comparing them directly to the state. It is natural to also want to know how individual supervisory unions or school districts compare to each other, but we urge caution in making such comparisons because the reasons for the differences may not be simple or easy to identify.
- **What, not Why:** The YRBS can indicate what students are doing. It can also suggest which groups of students are more likely to engage in these behaviors. However, the survey does not answer why they are doing it. We encourage students to analyze their own data and offer insight into the results.

## Personal Safety

Feeling safe – whether at school, in a car, or in a relationship – fosters positive adolescent development. The high school and middle school surveys included questions on fighting, bullying, seat belt use, safety at school, helmet use, and suicidality. The high school survey included additional questions on driving behaviors, dating violence, and self harm.

- Physical fighting is a marker for problem behaviors<sup>1</sup> and is associated with serious injury.<sup>2,3</sup> Abuse by an intimate partner and forced sex are associated with negative psychosocial outcomes, poor mental health outcomes, and other risk behaviors among both males and females.<sup>4,5,6</sup>
- Both being a bully and being victimized by bullies have been increasingly recognized as health problems for children because of their association with a range of problems, including poor psychological adjustment,<sup>7,8</sup> poor academic achievement,<sup>8</sup> and violent behavior.<sup>9</sup>
- Motor vehicle crash injuries are the leading cause of death among youth ages 15 to 19 in the U.S.<sup>10</sup> Proper use of safety belts reduces the risk of fatal injury to front seat passengers by 45% and risk of moderate to critical injury by 50%.<sup>11</sup>
- Bicycle helmets are 85% to 88% effective at reducing the impact of head and brain injuries due to bicycle crashes.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2013, alcohol use was associated with nearly four in ten motor vehicle-related fatalities nationwide and in Vermont.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, research examining drugs other than alcohol indicates that marijuana is the most prevalent drug detected in impaired drivers, fatally injured drivers, and motor vehicle crash victims nationwide.<sup>14</sup>

## Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs

Early use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs is associated with a myriad of problems later in life. The high school and middle school surveys asked about tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, inhalant, and prescription drug use. The surveys also asked the age at which students first used alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana. The high school survey asked additional questions on other drug use, such as heroin, methamphetamines, and hallucinogens. Both surveys asked about availability of alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana, peer disapproval of use of these substances, perceived parental disapproval of use, and the risk of harm associated with use of these substances.

- Alcohol use is a major contributing factor in about half of all homicides and sexual assaults,<sup>15</sup> and about one-third of all motor vehicle crash fatalities.<sup>16</sup> Heavy drinking among youth has been linked to violence, academic and job problems, suicidal behavior, trouble with law enforcement authorities, risky sexual behavior, and use of cigarettes, marijuana, cocaine, and other illegal drugs.<sup>17,18</sup>
- Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death in the United States,<sup>19</sup> contributing to more than one of every five deaths.<sup>20</sup> Cigarette smoking increases the risk of heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, acute respiratory illness, stroke, and cancers of the lung, larynx, oral cavity, pharynx, pancreas, and cervix.<sup>19</sup>
- Marijuana use is associated with smoking-related respiratory damage, temporary short-term memory loss, decreased motivation, and psychological dependence.<sup>21</sup> Other reactions include feelings of distrust, anxiety, or depression.<sup>21</sup> In Vermont, more teens enter treatment with a primary diagnosis for marijuana dependence than all other illicit drugs combined.<sup>22</sup>
- Other drug use is related to suicide, early unwanted pregnancy, school failure, delinquency, and transmission of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV infection.<sup>23</sup>
- Multi-year results from the Monitoring the Future survey indicate that the prevalence of marijuana use among youth declines as the percentage of youth expressing disapproval of marijuana increases.<sup>24</sup> As perception of harm of using alcohol and other drugs decreases, there is a tendency for use to increase.<sup>24</sup> Increased use is also associated with the perception that substances are readily available, regardless of whether the perception is accurate.<sup>24</sup>



## Sexual Behavior and Orientation

Experimentation with sexual behaviors and orientation often starts during adolescence. The high school survey asked about age of first sexual intercourse, frequency, sexual partners, sexual orientation, alcohol and drug use related to sexual intercourse, contraceptive use, and HIV testing. The middle school survey did not ask any questions about sex.

- Early sexual activity and having multiple sexual partners are associated with an increased risk of unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) including HIV infection,<sup>25</sup> and negative effects on social and psychological development.<sup>26</sup> Alcohol and drug use may serve as predisposing factors for initiation of sexual activity.<sup>27</sup>
- Of the nearly 19 million new cases of STDs per year in the United States, almost half are among youth ages 15-24.<sup>28</sup> STDs may result in infertility and facilitation of HIV transmission and may have an adverse effect on pregnancy outcomes and maternal and child health.<sup>26</sup> Besides abstinence, condom use is currently the most effective means of preventing sexual transmission of HIV and other STDs.<sup>29</sup>
- Although many lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender adolescents lead happy and healthy lives, others face tremendous challenges to growing up physically and mentally healthy. Compared to heterosexual youth, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth are at higher risk for depression, tobacco, alcohol and other drug use, suicide, and unhealthy sexual behaviors.<sup>30</sup>

## Body Image

Negative feelings about weight and body image often develop in adolescence. The high school and middle school surveys included questions about weight perception and weight control. The high school survey asked for students' height and weight to calculate body mass index.

- There are more than three times as many overweight children and adolescents in the U.S. than there were in 1980.<sup>31</sup> Obesity in childhood and adolescence is associated with negative psychological and social consequences and adverse health outcomes, including type 2 diabetes, obstructive sleep apnea, hypertension, dyslipidemia, and metabolic syndrome.<sup>32</sup> Overweight and obesity acquired during childhood or adolescence may persist into adulthood.<sup>33</sup> Approximately 400,000 deaths a year in the United States are currently associated with overweight and obesity.<sup>20</sup>
- However, overemphasis on slenderness during adolescence may contribute to eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia.<sup>34,35</sup> Studies have shown high rates of body dissatisfaction and dieting among adolescent females, with many engaging in unhealthy weight control behaviors such as fasting and self-induced vomiting that can lead to abnormal physical and psychological development.<sup>36,37</sup>

## Nutrition and Physical Activity

Nutritious eating and physical activity are two cornerstones of healthy adolescent development. The high school and middle school surveys asked about breakfast consumption, physical activity, physical education classes, and television, computer, and video game use. The high school survey also asked about consumption of fruits, vegetables, soda, and sugar-sweetened beverages.

- Fruits and vegetables are good sources of complex carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, and other substances that are important for good health. Dietary patterns with higher intakes of fruits and vegetables are associated with a variety of health benefits, including a decreased risk for some types of cancer.<sup>39-43</sup>
- In recent years, soft drink consumption has significantly increased among children and adolescents. Consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks, including soft drinks, appears to be associated with an increased risk for being overweight in children.<sup>44-45</sup>
- Regular physical activity builds and maintains healthy bones and muscles, controls weight, builds lean muscle, reduces fat, reduces feelings of depression and anxiety. It also decreases the risk of dying prematurely, dying of heart disease, and developing diabetes, colon cancer, and high blood pressure.<sup>46</sup> The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that young people ages 6–17 participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.<sup>46</sup>
- By 12th grade, more than half of female students in the U.S. do not participate in vigorous physical activity regularly. School physical education classes can increase adolescent participation in physical activity and help adolescents develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to engage in lifelong physical activity.<sup>47-50</sup>
- Television viewing is the principal sedentary leisure time behavior in the U.S. Studies have shown that television viewing in young people is related to obesity<sup>51</sup> and violent or aggressive behavior.<sup>52-54</sup> Using the computer for fun and playing video games have become increasingly common sedentary leisure time activities among young people as well.

## Measures of Youth Assets

Adolescent achievement requires sources of positive influence. The high school and middle school surveys asked about school and community connectivity as well as parental conversations about school. The high school survey asked additional questions about volunteerism and grades earned in school.

- Above-average school performance is one of many developmental assets, or factors promoting positive development. Studies have shown that students who get higher grades in school are less likely to use cigarettes, alcohol, or marijuana, and are more likely to postpone sexual intercourse.<sup>55</sup>
- One of the strongest predictors of students' success in school is the extent to which their parents stay involved with their schoolwork.<sup>56</sup> A national study of adolescent health found that youth who reported a "connectedness" to their parents/family and school were the least likely to engage in risky behaviors.<sup>57</sup> Parental expectations regarding school achievement were also associated with lower levels of risk behaviors.<sup>57</sup>
- Research shows that involvement in constructive, supervised extracurricular activities is associated with reduced likelihood of involvement in risky behaviors such as school failure, drug use, and delinquency.<sup>58</sup> In addition, evidence is emerging that students who participate in such activities are also more likely to engage in other "thriving" behaviors.<sup>59</sup>
- Youth are not simply objects of adult efforts to modify their behaviors. Rather, if given the opportunities, they can make significant contributions to their families, schools, and communities. Adolescents, especially, need to exercise decision-making power in as many settings as is practical, so that they can develop into competent adults. Schools are a natural setting for youth to share in decisions that affect their lives.

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## 2015 Vermont Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey

- In February and March 2015, students at 121 of the 123 middle school schools in Vermont took the 2015 Vermont Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Any school that included grades six through eight, including public/independent, independent, interstate, and technical schools, could participate in the high school survey. Students completed a self-administered 70-item questionnaire. Survey procedures protected the privacy of students by allowing for anonymous and voluntary participation.
- This report presents the results from all public middle schools. In total, 13,648 students from 121 middle schools are included in the report. The school response rate was 98%, the student response rate was 83%, and the overall response rate was 82% (98% X 83% = 83%).
- The results in this report are weighted by gender, grade, and race/ethnicity to compensate for absenteeism and incomplete surveys, as well as the few schools that chose not to participate.
- **All results in the 2015 middle school survey report are for grades six through eight only. The middle school survey was new in 2011.**

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## 2015 Vermont Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey

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## Sample Demographics

	Grade			Gender		All*
	6	7	8	Females	Males	
<b>Number of students</b>	2,899	5,337	5,326	6,713	6,839	13,648

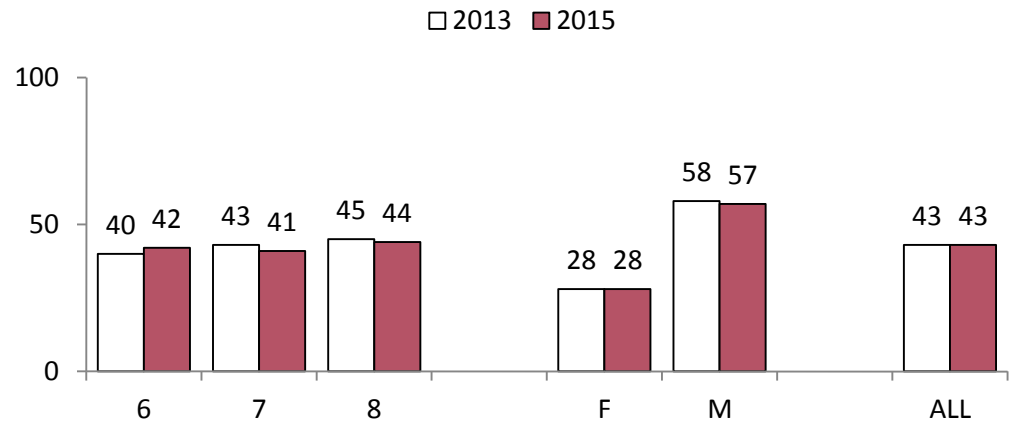
\*NOTE: Some students did not indicate their grades or genders. Therefore, totals by grade and by gender do not equal the overall total.

<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>	
White non-Hispanic	81%
Racial or Ethnic Minority	19%
<b>Age</b>	
11 or younger	12%
12	30%
13	38%
14 or older	21%

## Physical Fighting

- **Overall, 4 in 10 students (43%) reported that they have ever been in a physical fight.**
- There were no differences by grade.
- Males were significantly more likely to have been in a physical fight than females.

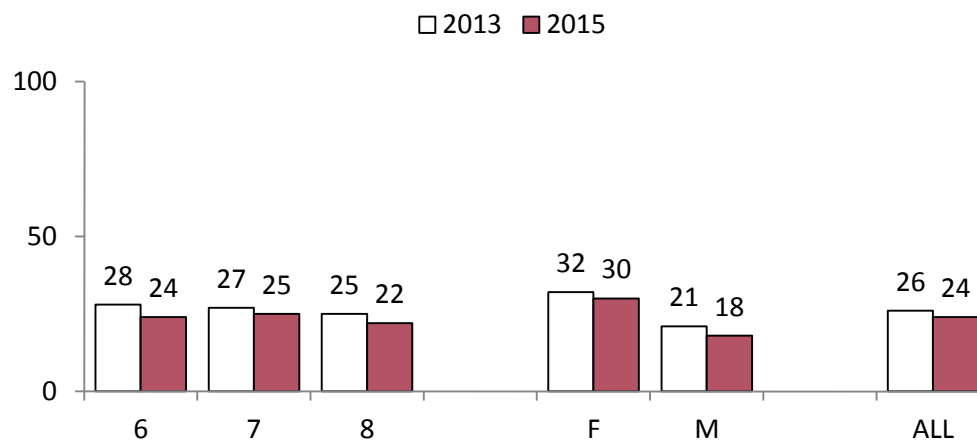
Percent of students who have ever been in a physical fight



## Bullying

- **Overall, 1 in 4 (24%) students were bullied at least once in the past 30 days.**
- There were no differences by grade.
- Females were significantly more likely than males to have been bullied.
- There was a significant decrease in bullying from 2013 to 2015.

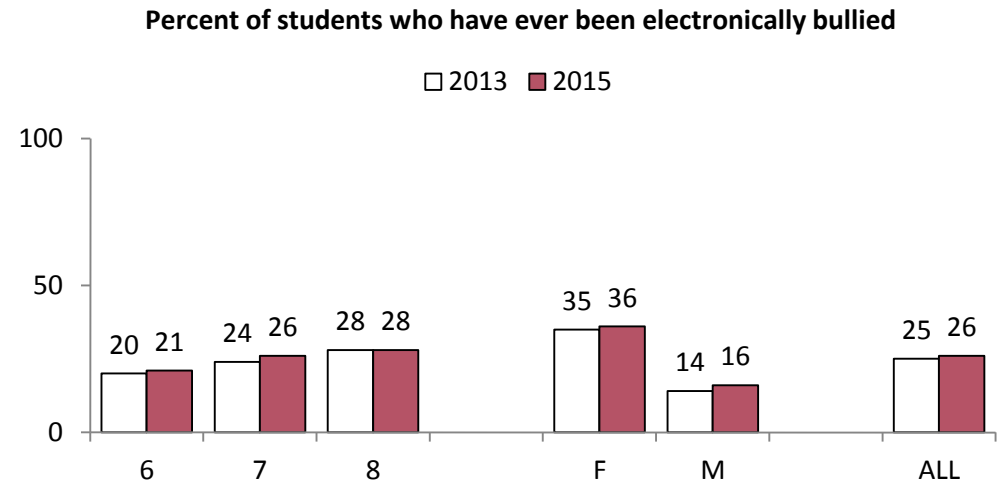
Percent of students who were bullied at least once in the past 30 days



For the purposes of the Vermont YRBS, bullying was described as occurring when, on many occasions, a student or group of students say or do unpleasant things to another student to make fun of, tease, embarrass, or scare him/her, or purposefully exclude him/her. Bullying can occur before, during, or after the school day; on school property; on a school bus; or at a school-sponsored activity. It is not bullying when two students of about the same strength and power argue or fight or when teasing is done in a friendly way. Electronic bullying occurs through e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, Web sites, or texting.

## Electronic Bullying

- **Overall, 1 in 4 students (26%) reported that they had ever been electronically bullied.**
- Students in seventh and eighth grade were significantly more likely than sixth graders to report ever being electronically bullied.
- Females were significantly more likely than males to report electronic bullying.
- Electronic bullying did not significantly change from 2013 to 2015.



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## Bullied Someone

- **Overall, 10% of students reported bullying someone at least once in the past 30 days.**
- Students in eighth grade were significantly more likely than sixth graders to bully someone.
- Bullying someone else did not differ by gender.
- There was a significant decrease in students reporting being a bully since 2011 and 2013.

Percent of students who bullied someone at least once in the past 30 days



For the purposes of the Vermont YRBS, bullying was described as occurring when, on many occasions, a student or group of students say or do unpleasant things to another student to make fun of, tease, embarrass, or scare him/her, or purposefully exclude him/her. Bullying can occur before, during, or after the school day; on school property; on a school bus; or at a school-sponsored activity. It is not bullying when two students of about the same strength and power argue or fight or when teasing is done in a friendly way. Electronic bullying occurs through e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, Web sites, or texting.

## Safety at School

- **Nearly half (46%) of students reported that they had ever been bullied on school property.**
- Seventh graders were more likely than eighth graders to be bullied on school property.
- Females were significantly more likely than males to report being bullied on school property bullying.
- Being bullied on school property did not change significantly from 2013 to 2015.
- **In the past 30 days, 7% of students did not go to school because they felt they would be unsafe at school or on their way to or from school.**
- There were no differences by grade.
- Females were more likely than males to report missing school.

Percent of students who :	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Were ever bullied at school	47	46	46	48	45	53	40
Did not go to school during the past 30 days because they felt unsafe	7	7	8	7	7	9	6



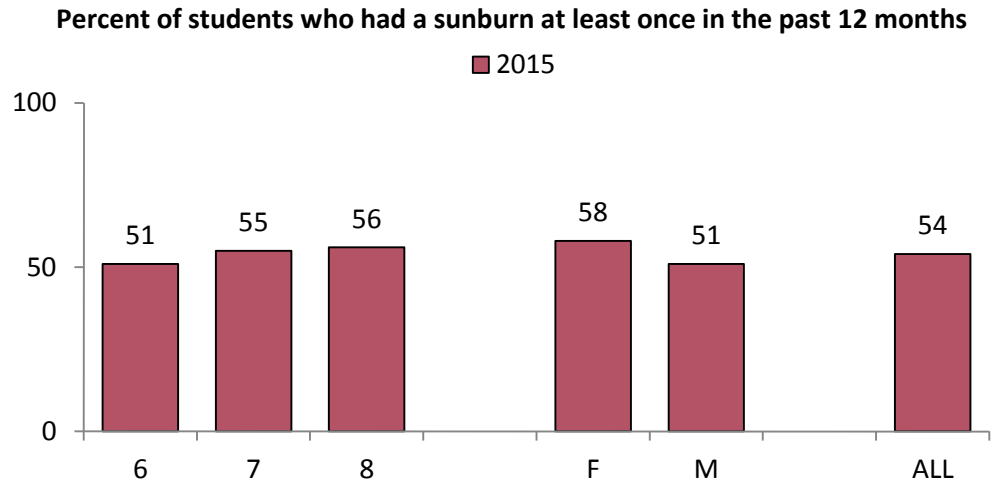
## Suicide

- **Overall, 1 in 5 students were so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities.**
- Eighth graders were more likely than younger students to feel sad or hopeless.
- Females were more likely than males to report feeling sad or hopeless.
- Feeling sad or hopeless increased significantly between 2013 and 2015.
- **Overall, 18% of students reported that they ever seriously thought about committing suicide, 12% made a suicide plan, and 6% made a suicide attempt.**
- Eighth graders are significantly more likely than younger students to seriously think about suicide and to have attempted suicide. Making a suicide plan increased significantly with each grade.
- Females were significantly more likely than males to report that they ever seriously thought about suicide, made a suicide plan, or tried to commit suicide.
- The percent of students who have ever made a plan or attempted suicide significantly increased from 2013 to 2015.

Percent of students who:	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities, in the past 12 months	18	20	17	19	22	27	13
Seriously thought about suicide, ever	17	18	14	16	22	23	12
Made a suicide plan, ever	11	12	9	11	15	16	8
Attempted suicide, ever	5	6	5	5	8	8	3

## Sun exposure

- **More than half (54%) of all students had a sunburn during the last 12 months.**
- Sixth graders were less likely to report a sunburn than older students.
- Female students were significantly more likely than male students to report having a sunburn during the previous 12 months.



NOTE: This question was new in 2015.

## Bicycle Helmet Use

- Overall, 9 out of 10 students (91%) reported that they ride a bicycle.
- **Of those students, 27% always wore a helmet while 34% rarely or never wore a helmet.**
- Rarely or never wearing a bicycle helmet increased significantly with each grade.
- Male students were significantly more likely than females to rarely or never wear a helmet.
- Since 2011, never or rarely wearing a helmet has not changed significantly.

Percent of bicycle riders who wore a helmet:	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Always	27	27	36	27	22	28	27
Most of the time	23	23	24	25	21	24	23
Sometimes	15	16	15	16	15	17	14
Rarely or Never	35	34	26	31	41	31	36

## Helmet Use while Rollerblading or Skateboarding

- Overall, 40% of students reported that they rollerblade or ride a skateboard.
- **Of those students, 28% always wore a helmet while 14% rarely and 29% never wore a helmet.**
- As students got older, they were significantly less likely to always wear a helmet while rollerblading or skateboarding. There were no differences by gender.
- Students who never or rarely wear a helmet when rollerblading or skateboarding increased significantly from 2013 to 2015.

Percent of students who rollerblade or skateboard who wear a helmet:	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Always	30	28	38	28	21	27	29
Most of the time	18	17	20	16	15	16	18
Sometimes	12	12	11	13	12	13	12
Rarely or Never	39	43	31	42	52	45	41

## Seat belt Use

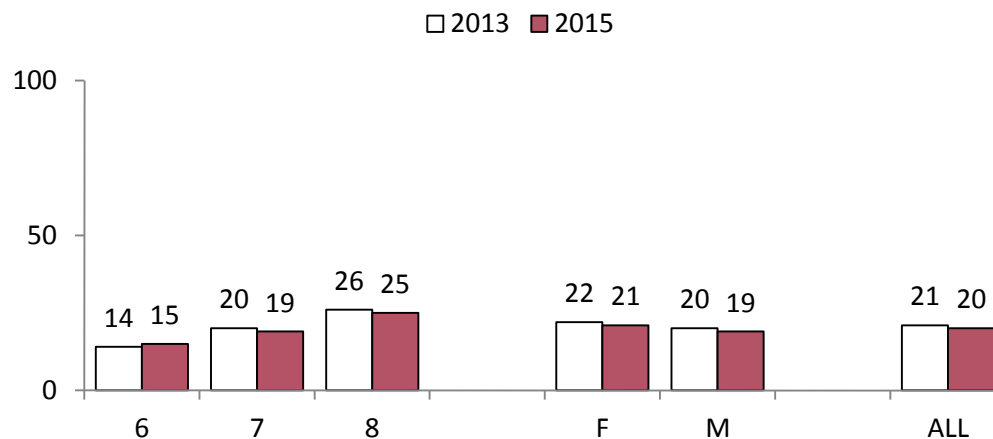
- **Overall, 76% of students reported always wearing a seat belt when riding in a car; 3% rarely or never wear a seat belt.**
- Eighth grade students were significantly more likely to never or rarely wear a seat belt compared to sixth graders.
- Male students were significantly more likely than female students to rarely or never wear a seat belt.

Percent of students who wear a seat belt while riding in a car:	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Always	75	76	82	77	73	78	75
Most of the time	18	17	14	17	19	16	18
Sometimes	5	4	3	3	5	4	4
Rarely or never	3	3	2	3	4	2	3

## Riding in a Car with a Drinking Driver

- **Overall, 1 in 5 students (20%) reported that they had ridden in a car with someone who had been drinking.**
- As students got older, they were significantly more likely to ride in a car with a driver who had been drinking.
- Female students were significantly more likely than males to ride a car with someone who had been drinking.
- Riding in a car with someone who had been drinking did not change significantly from 2013 to 2015.

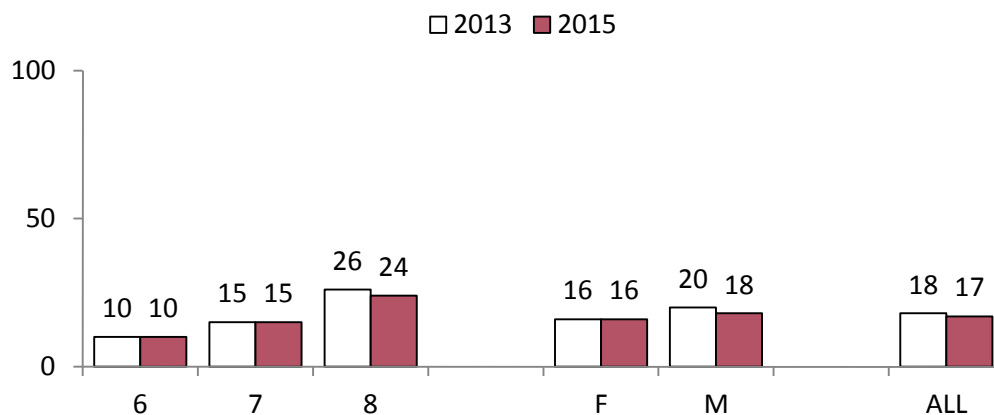
Percent of students who ever rode in a car driven by someone who had been drinking



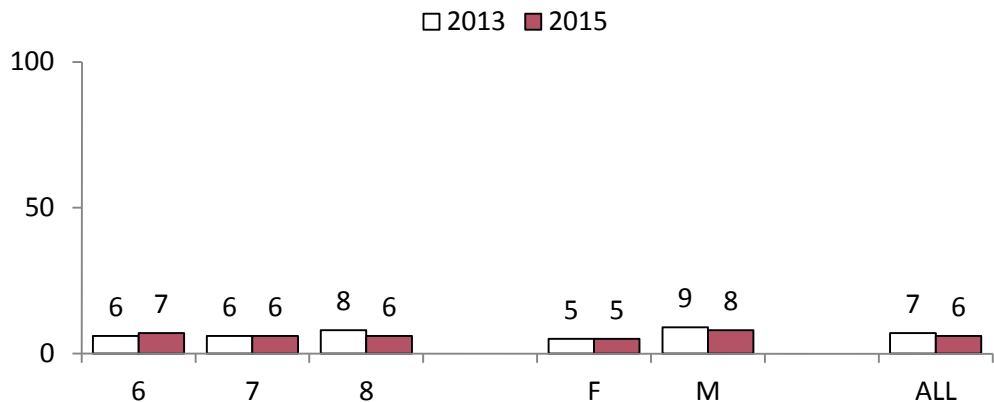
## Lifetime Alcohol Use

- **Nearly 1 in 5 students (17%) reported ever drinking alcohol, other than a few sips.**
- Alcohol use during ones lifetime significantly increased as grade level increased. Males were also more likely than females to have had any alcohol.
- **Overall, 6% of students drank alcohol before age eleven.**
- Drinking alcohol before age 11 did not significantly differ by grade.
- Male students were significantly more likely than female students to try more than a few sips of alcohol before they were 11 years old.
- Lifetime alcohol use and alcohol use before the age of 11 did not change significantly from 2013 to 2015.

Percent of students who ever drank alcohol other than a few sips



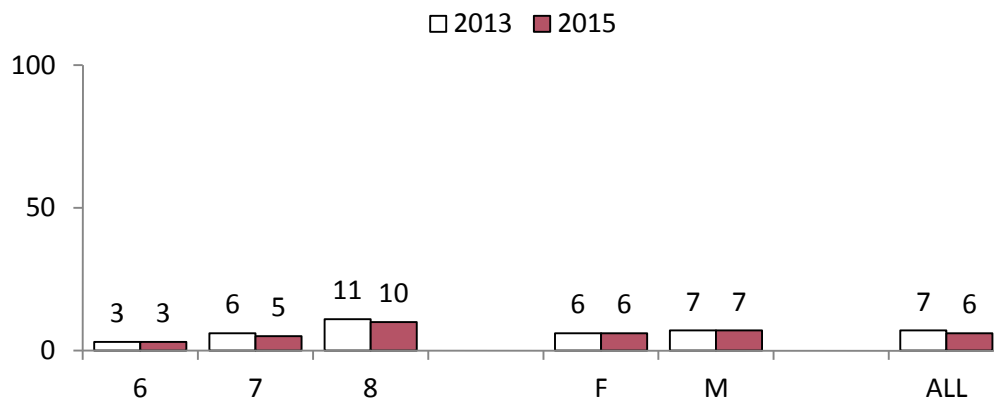
Percent of students who ever drank alcohol before the age of 11



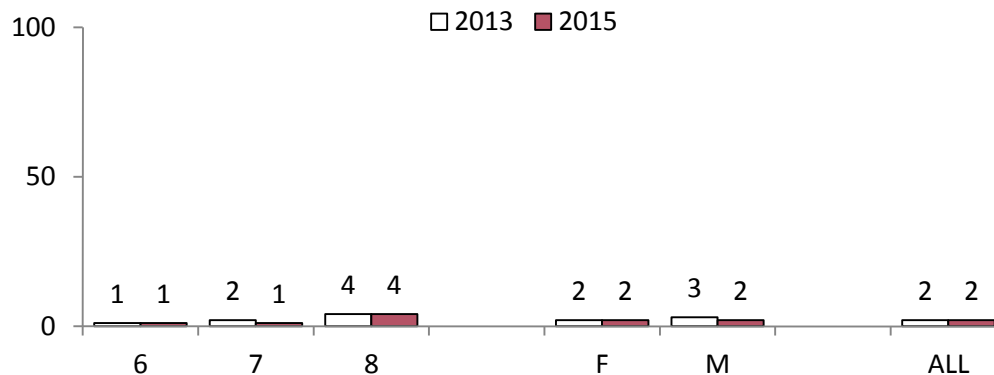
## Current Alcohol Use

- **Overall, 6% of students consumed at least one drink during the previous 30 days; 2% reported binge drinking, or having five or more drinks of alcohol in a row, and within a couple of hours, during this time.**
- Drinking in the past thirty days increased significantly with each grade.
- Eighth graders were significantly more likely than sixth and seventh graders to report binge drinking during the last 30 days.
- There were no significant differences by gender for either measure.
- Drinking alcohol and binge drinking did not change since 2013.

Percent of students who drank alcohol during the past 30 days



Percent of students who drank 5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row, within a couple of hours, during the past 30 days

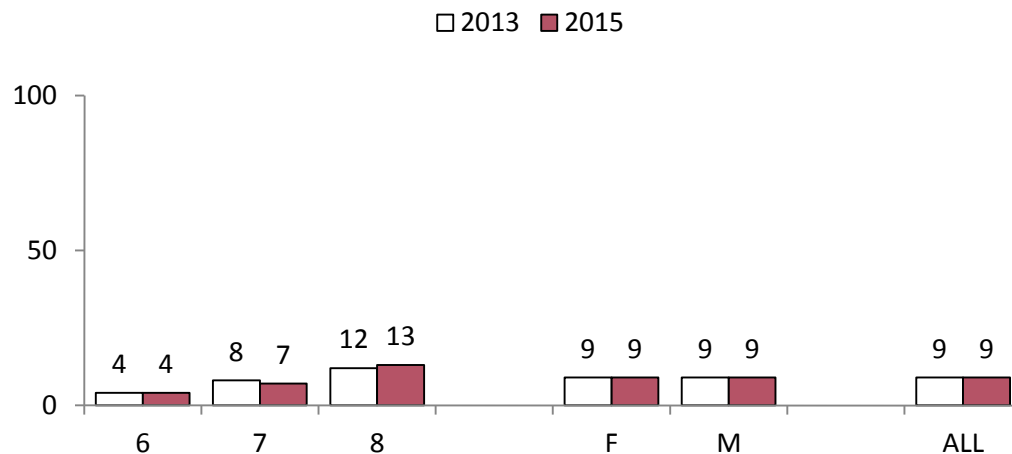




## Lifetime Cigarette Use

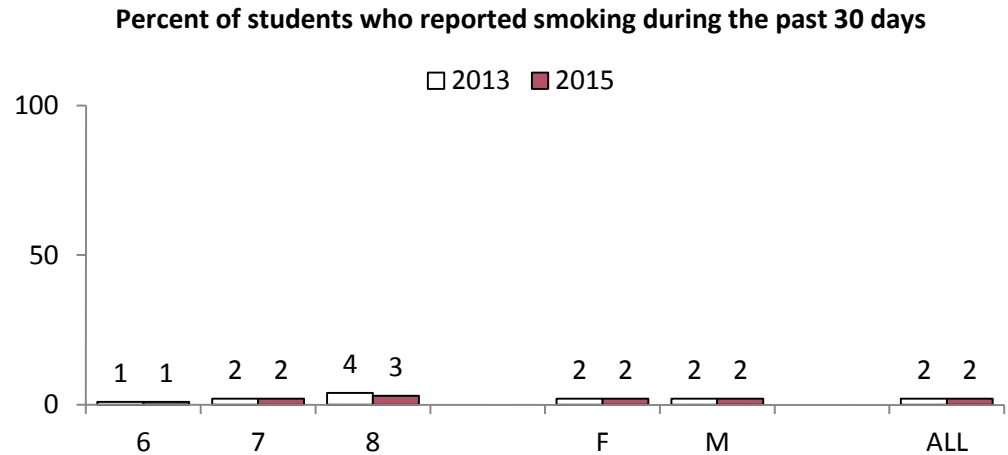
- **Overall, 9% of students reported ever trying cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs, and 5% have smoked a whole cigarette.**
- **By age 11, 2% of students reported having smoked a whole cigarette at least once.**
- Ever trying a cigarette, even one or two puffs, increased significantly with each grade. There were no differences by gender.

Percent of students who have ever tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs



## Current Cigarette Use

- **Overall, 2% of students reported smoking in the past 30 days.**
- Current cigarette use significantly increased as grade level increased.
- There were no differences by gender for smoking during the past 30 days.



## Cigarette Use Among Current Smokers

- **Among students who smoked during the last 30 days, 45% smoked on 1 or 2 days, and 28% smoked on at least 10 days. Less than 1% smoked daily.**
- **On the days current smokers smoked, nearly two-thirds (64%) smoked one or only a portion of a cigarette, 26% smoked 2 to 10 cigarettes, and 10% smoked more than half a pack or at least 11 cigarettes on days smoked.**
- There were no differences by grade or gender for the frequency and number of cigarettes smoked during the past 30 days.
- Since 2013 the frequency and quantity of cigarettes smoked among current users has not significantly changed.

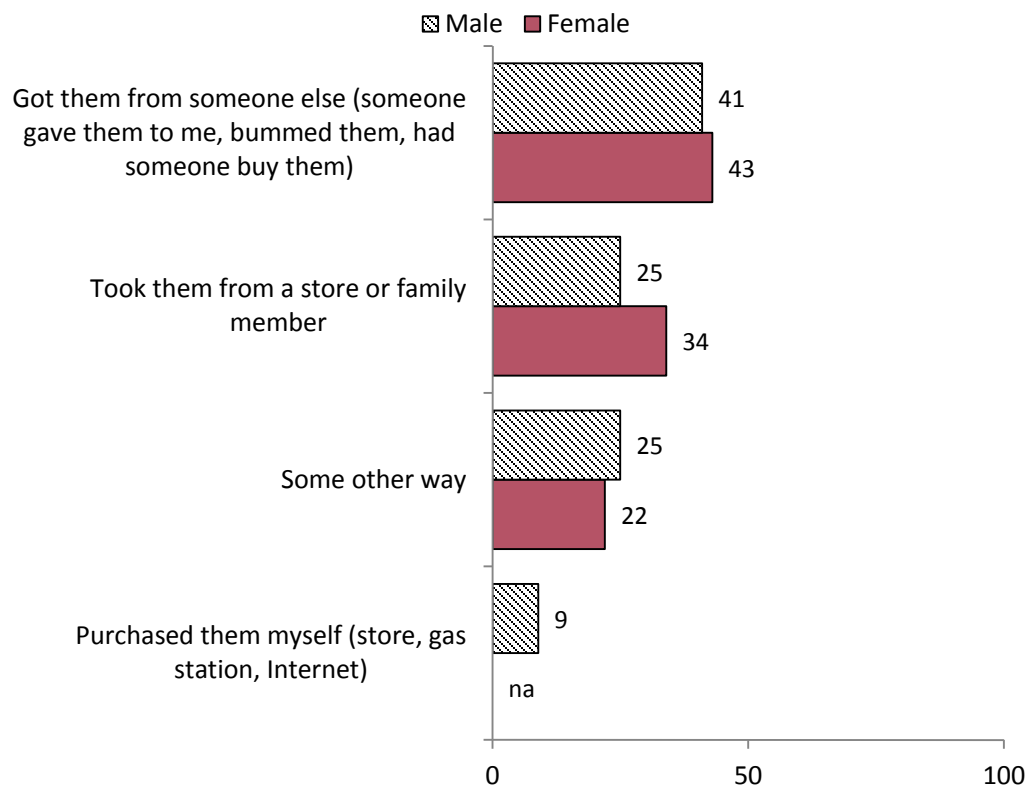
Percent of current smokers who:	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Smoked on 1 or 2 days	45	45	41	56	43	48	41
Smoked on 10 or more days.	30	28	33	15	15	22	35
Smoked 1 or part one per day on days smoked	60	64	67	77	59	66	61
Smoked 2 to 10 cigarettes per day on days smoked	31	26	24	20	39	28	25
Smoked more than 10 cigarettes per day on days smoked	8	10	-	-	12	6	15

Note: there were fewer than five 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders who smoked more than 10 cigarettes per day.

## Source of Cigarettes Among Current Smokers

- **Of students who smoked in the past 30 days, 42% got cigarettes from someone else by giving someone money to buy cigarettes, bumming them from someone or having a person over 18 give it to them, 30% took them from a store or family member, 5% purchased them from a store, gas station, or on the Internet and 24% got them in some other way.**
- There were no statistical differences in cigarette source by gender.

Usual source of cigarettes in the past 30 days among smokers

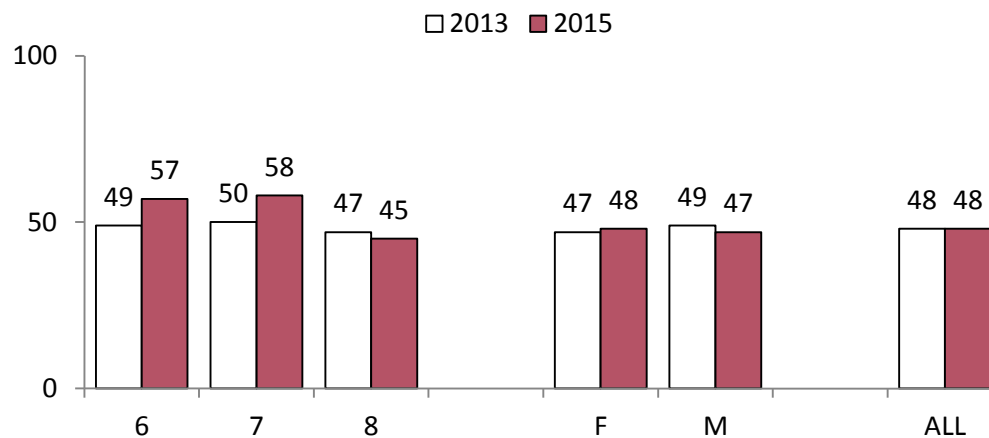


Note: there were fewer than five female respondents who reported purchasing their own cigarettes.

## Attempts to Quit Among Current Smokers

- **Of students who smoked in the past 30 days, 48% have attempted to quit during the past 12 months.**
- There were no differences by grade or gender in the percent of current smokers who have attempted to quit.

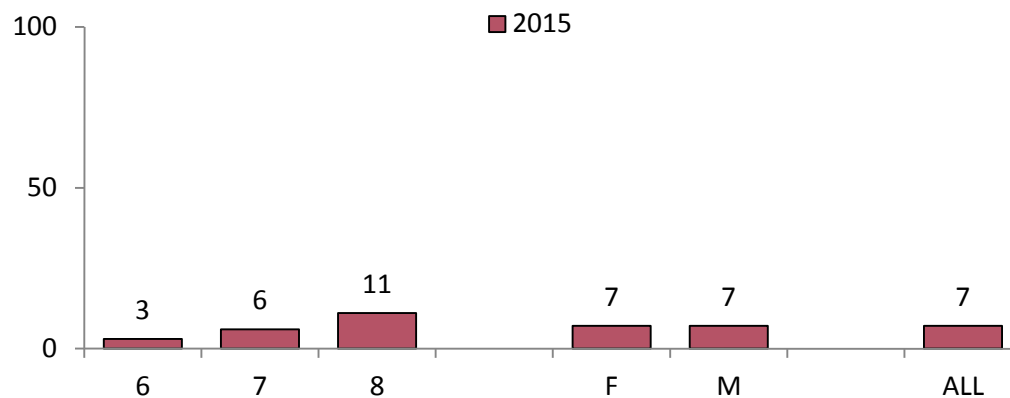
Percent of students who attempted to quit smoking cigarettes during the past 12 months



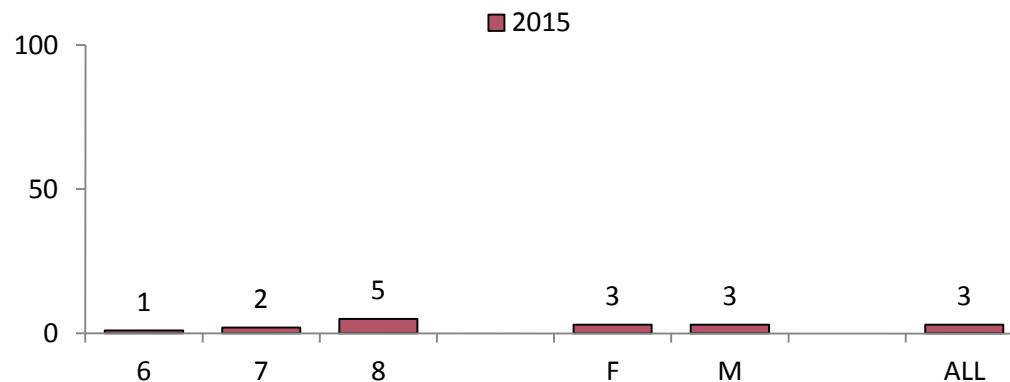
## Electronic Vapor Product Use

- Questions about electronic vapor products were added to the 2015 survey. These products include e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes, vape pipes, vaping pens, e-hookahs, and hookah pens. Examples are blu, NJOY, and Starbuzz.
- **Nearly one in ten students (7%) have ever tried an electronic vapor product and 3% of students have used one during the last 30 days.**
- Ever trying an electronic vapor product significantly increased with each grade.
- Eighth graders were significantly more likely than sixth or seventh graders to have used one of these products during the last 30 days.
- There were no significant gender differences for ever or currently using an electronic vapor product.

Percent of students who have ever used an electronic vapor product



Percent of students have used an electronic vapor product during the last 30 days



## Other Tobacco Use

- **Overall, 2% of students reported using smokeless tobacco, or cigars, cigarillos, and little cigars during the past 30 days.**
- Eighth graders were significantly more likely than sixth and seventh graders to use smokeless tobacco products, and to smoke cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars during the previous 30 days.
- Males were significantly more likely than females to use smokeless tobacco and to smoke cigars.
- The use of smokeless tobacco and cigars did not significantly change from 2013 to 2015.

Percent of students who:	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Used smokeless tobacco products including chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip such as Redman, Levi Garrett, Beechnut, Skoal, Skoal Bandits, or Copenhagen on one or more of the past 30 days	2	2	1	1	3	1	3
Smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars on one or more of the past 30 days	1	2	1	1	2	1	2

## Current Use of Any Tobacco or Electronic Vapor Product

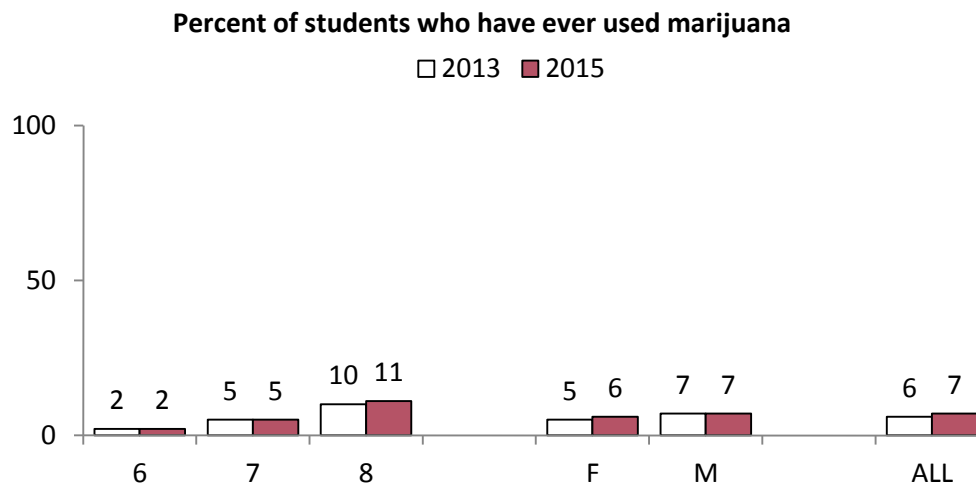
- **During the past 30 days, 4% of students have used a tobacco product such as cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, or cigars, cigarillos or little cigars. 5% of students have used a tobacco product or electronic vapor products.**
- Eighth graders were significantly more likely than sixth and seventh graders to use cigarettes, cigars, or smokeless tobacco. Use of any tobacco product, including electronic vapor products increased with each grade level.
- Male students were more likely than females to use cigarettes, cigars, or smokeless tobacco. However, there were no differences by gender for use of any tobacco products.

Percent of students who:	All	Grade			Gender	
	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Currently used cigarettes, cigars, or smokeless tobacco	4	2	3	6	3	4
Currently used any tobacco product including electronic vapor products	5	3	4	8	5	6



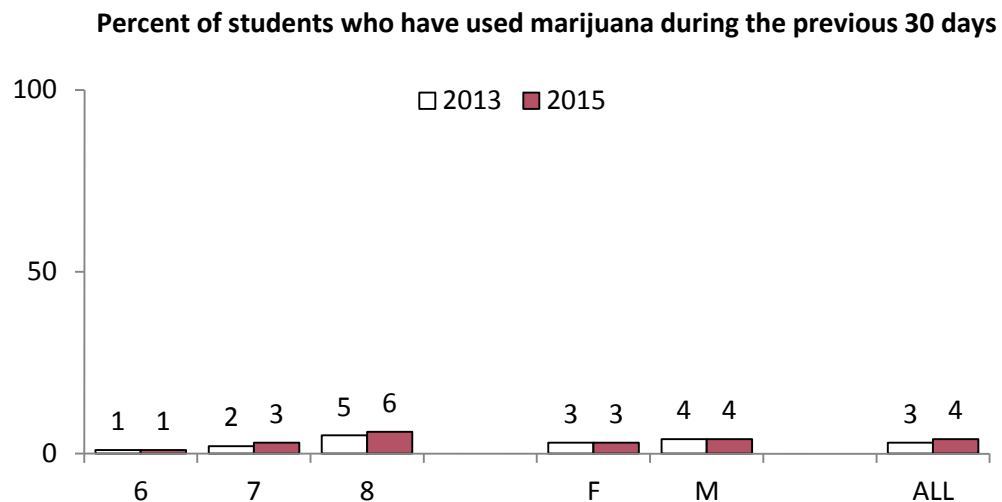
## Lifetime Marijuana Use

- **Overall, 7% of students have ever used marijuana.**
- Marijuana use increased significantly with each grade.
- There were no significant differences by gender for ever using marijuana.
- There has been no difference in lifetime marijuana use since 2011.
- **Only 1% of students tried marijuana before age 11.**
- Students in eighth grade were significantly more likely than sixth and seventh graders to report trying marijuana before age 11.
- Males were more likely than females to use marijuana before age 11.
- Early marijuana use did not change significantly since 2011.



## Marijuana Use

- **Overall, 4% of students used marijuana during the previous 30 days. 1% used marijuana more than 10 times during the last 30 days.**
- Current marijuana use increased significantly with each increasing grade. There were no differences by gender.
- There was no significant change in current marijuana use from 2013 to 2015.



## Other Drug Use

- **Of all students, 5% reported ever using inhalants and 3% reported ever misusing prescription drugs such as OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin, codeine, Adderall, Ritalin, or Xanax.**
- Inhalant use did not differ by grade or gender.
- Eighth graders were more likely than sixth or seventh graders to report misusing a prescription drug.
- Prescription drug misuse did not differ by gender.
- From 2013 to 2015, there were no significant differences in the percent of students who have used inhalants or taken a prescription drug without a doctor's note.

Percent of students who:	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Ever used inhalants	5	5	5	4	6	5	5
Ever took a prescription drug without a doctor's prescription	3	3	2	3	4	3	3

## Exposure to Cigarette Smoke and Tobacco Advertisements

- **During the past seven days, 28% of students were in the same room with someone who was smoking cigarettes and 21% were in a car with someone who was smoking.**
- Being in the same room or car as a smoker increased significantly with each grade.
- Female students were more likely than male students to report exposure to cigarette smoke.
- Exposure to cigarette smoke in a room or car both decreased significantly from 2013 to 2015.
- **When at a gas station, supermarket, or convenience store 52% of students reported seeing advertisements for cigarettes or other tobacco products at least most of the time.**
- Students were more likely to report seeing advertisements for tobacco at a gas station, supermarket, or convenience store as their grade level increased.
- There were no significant differences by gender.

Percent of students who :	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Were in the same room with someone who was smoking cigarettes during the past 7 days	30	28	24	28	31	29	27
Were in the same car with someone who was smoking cigarettes during the past 7 days	22	21	17	20	23	22	19
Always or most of the time saw tobacco ads when they were at a gas station, supermarket, or convenience store.	---	52	47	52	55	52	52

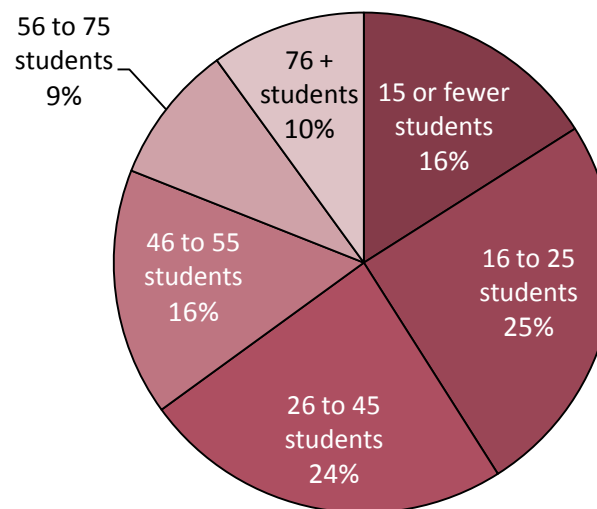
NOTE: Seeing advertisements for tobacco products in a store was new in 2015.

## Perceived Cigarette Use by Other Students

The survey asked, “Out of 100 Vermont high school students, how many do you think smoke cigarettes?”

- Almost half (41%) of middle school students think that less than a quarter of high school students smoke. 19% think that 56 or more high school students smoke, 10% of students think over three quarters of high school students smoke.
- Students reporting that they think 56 or more high school students smoke did not differ by gender. However, students in seventh grade were more likely to report this than eighth graders.
- Students reporting that they think 56 or more high school students smoke out of 100 did not significantly change from 2013 to 2015.

Percent students who think that, out of 100 Vermont high school students, the number of who smoke cigarettes is:



## Peer Disapproval of Alcohol, Cigarette, and Marijuana Use

- **Most students think it would be wrong or very wrong for someone their age to use cigarettes (94%), marijuana (90%) or alcohol (88%).**
- Overall, students were significantly more likely to disapprove of someone their age smoking cigarettes than drinking alcohol or using marijuana.
- Disapproval decreased significantly with each increasing grade for all three substances.
- Female students were more likely than males to report disapproval of peer alcohol and marijuana use.
- In 2015 significantly fewer students believed it was wrong or very wrong for their peers to use marijuana compared to those in 2013.

Percent of students who believe it is wrong or very wrong for someone their age to use:	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Smoke cigarettes	94	94	97	95	92	95	94
Drink alcohol	88	88	94	90	83	90	87
Use marijuana	92	90	97	92	93	91	89

## Parental Disapproval of Alcohol, Cigarette, and Marijuana Use

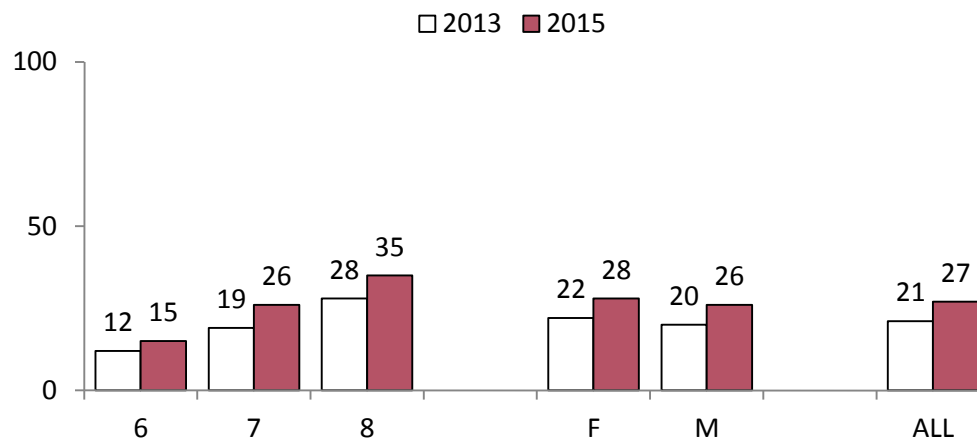
- **Over nine out of every ten students perceive that their parents think it is wrong or very wrong for them to use cigarettes (96%), marijuana (94%), or alcohol (91%).**
- Overall, perception of parental disapproval was significantly higher for smoking cigarettes than using marijuana or alcohol.
- Eighth graders were significantly less likely than younger students to believe their parents would feel it was wrong or very wrong to use alcohol or marijuana.
- Males were significantly less likely than females to believe their parents would feel it was wrong for someone to use alcohol.
- Perceived parental disapproval of alcohol, cigarette and marijuana did not change.

Percent of students who believe their parents feel it is wrong or very wrong for someone their age to use:	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Smoke cigarettes	96	96	96	96	96	97	96
Drink alcohol	91	91	92	92	90	93	90
Use marijuana	95	94	96	95	92	94	94

## Discussions about Smoking

- **Overall, 27% of students were asked if they smoked by a health professional in the past 12 months.**
- Being asked by a health professional about smoking increased significantly with each increasing grade.
- Female students were more likely than males to report being asked about smoking by a health professional.
- The percent of students who were asked by a health professional about smoking increased significantly from 2013 to 2015.

Percent of students who in the past 12 months were asked if they smoked by any doctor, dentist, nurse, or other health professional





## Perceived Harmfulness of Alcohol, Cigarette, and Marijuana Use

- **Overall, 71% of students believed people greatly risked harming themselves if they smoke a pack of cigarettes everyday, while 59% believed using marijuana regularly causes great harm, and 48% believed having five or more drinks of alcohol once or twice each weekend did so.**
- Students were significantly more likely to perceive that people their age greatly risk harming themselves by smoking a pack of cigarettes daily than by using marijuana regularly, and significantly more likely to risk great harm by using marijuana regularly than by having five or more drinks of alcohol once or twice each weekend.
- Perception of harm for regular marijuana use decreased significantly with each grade. Eighth graders were also more likely than students in seventh grade to perceive harm from binge drinking.
- Perceived of harm from binge drinking was significantly higher among female than male students.
- Perceived harm from binge drinking and regularly using marijuana both significantly decreased from 2013 to 2015.

Percent of students who believe it would be harmful to:	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Smoke one or more packs of cigarettes per day	71	71	70	72	72	71	72
Have five or more drinks of alcohol once or twice each weekend	51	48	49	49	46	49	46
Use marijuana regularly	64	59	67	61	51	60	58

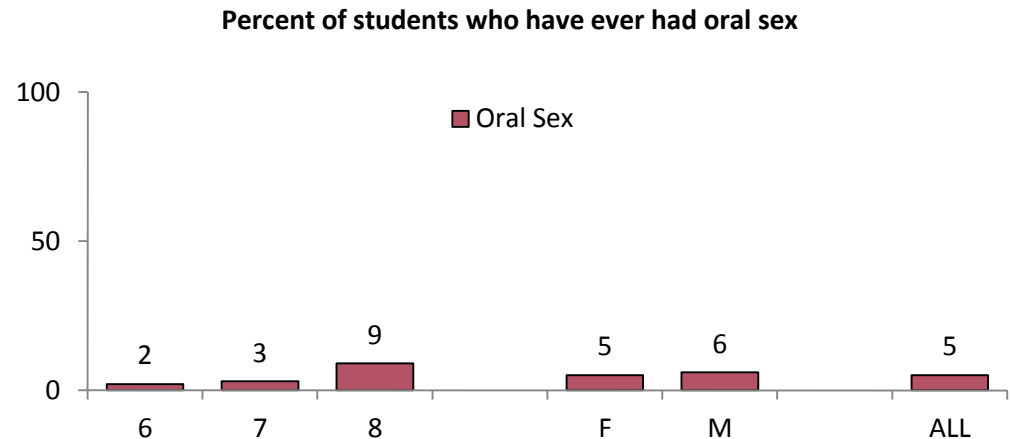
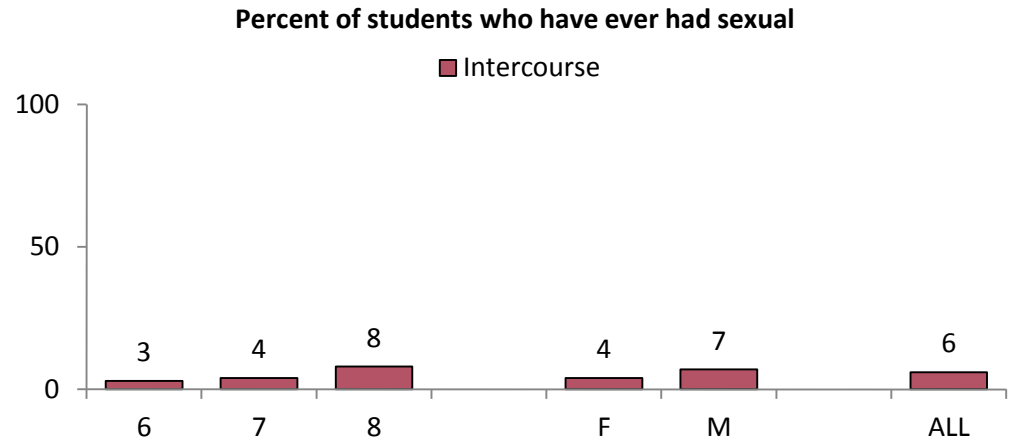
## Perceived Availability of Alcohol, Cigarette, and Marijuana Use

- **Over one third of students (36%) believe that alcohol is easy to obtain compared to 27% who think cigarettes are easy to obtain and 14% who think marijuana is easy to obtain.**
- Believing it would be easy to obtain alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana significantly increased with each grade level.
- Male students were more likely to perceive cigarettes and marijuana as easy to obtain compared to female students. There was no difference by gender for ease of access to alcohol.
- Believing it would be easy to obtain alcohol decreased significantly from 2013 to 2015.

Percent of students who report that it would be <i>sort of easy</i> or <i>very easy</i> to get	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Smoke cigarettes	26	27	18	24	34	25	29
Drink alcohol	38	36	24	33	46	35	37
Use marijuana	14	14	6	12	22	13	16

## Lifetime Sexual Experiences

- **Overall, 6% of students reported having had sexual intercourse during their lifetime and 5% have had oral sex.**
- Ever having sexual intercourse and oral sex significantly increased with each increasing grade.
- Female students were significantly less likely to report ever having sexual intercourse or oral sex compared to males.



NOTE: These questions were new in 2015.

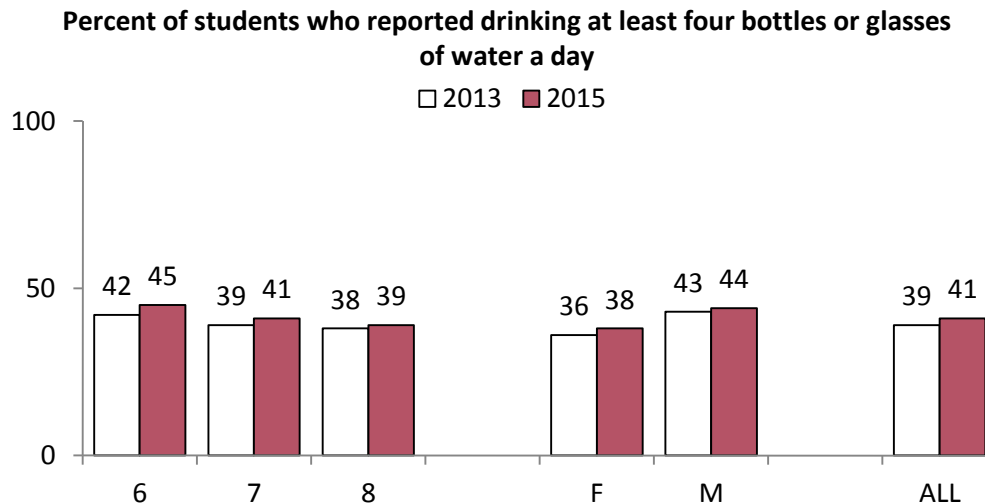
## Breakfast Consumption

- **More than half of students (52%) ate breakfast every day in the past week and 70% ate breakfast on at least five days.**
- Sixth grade students were significantly more likely than seventh and eighth grade students to eat breakfast on seven days of the previous week.
- Females were significantly less likely to eat breakfast every day than males.
- There was no significant change in the percent of students eating breakfast everyday between 2013 and 2015.

Percent of students who ate breakfast:	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
On all of the past seven days	52	52	61	51	48	45	59
On at least five of the past seven days	69	70	77	70	65	64	73
On less than three of the past seven days	18	17	11	17	20	21	13
On zero of the past seven days	7	7	4	7	8	8	6

## Water Consumption

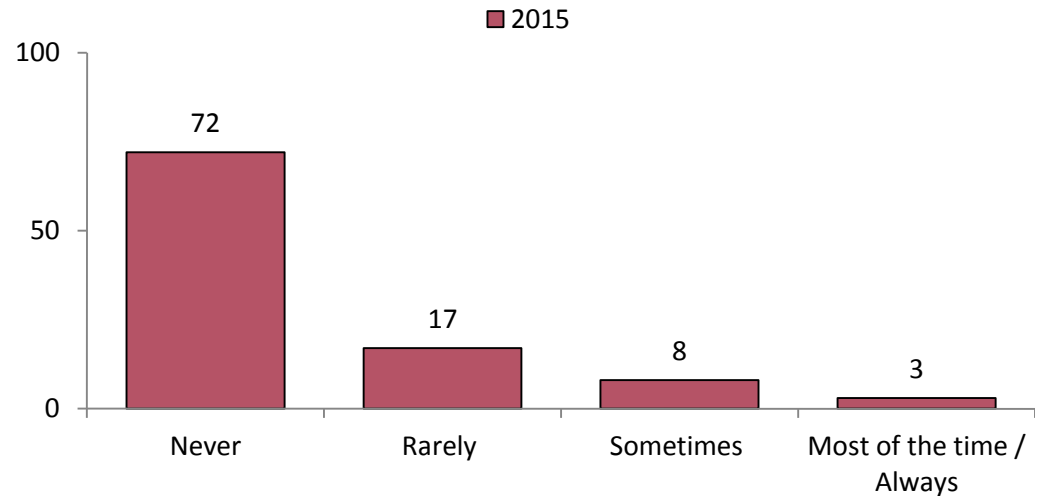
- **Overall, 41% of students reported drinking at least four bottles or glasses of water a day and 42% reported drinking two to three bottles or glasses of water a day.**
- Sixth graders were significantly more likely than older students to report drinking at least four bottles or glasses of water a day.
- Males were more likely than females to report drinking at least four bottles or glasses of water a day.
- Drinking four or more glasses of water a day significantly increased from 2013 to 2015.



## Went Hungry

- **During the previous 30 days, 3% of students reported always feeling hungry or were hungry most of the time because there was not enough food in their home.**
- There were no differences by grade or gender for going hungry during the previous 30 days.

During the previous 30 days, percent of students reported feeling hungry because there was not enough food in their home

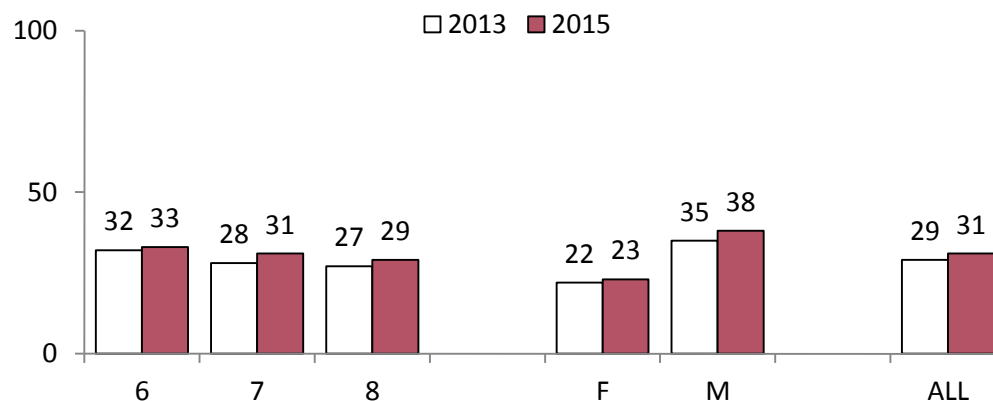


NOTE: This question was new in 2015.

## Physical Activity

- Overall, 3 in 10 students (31%) participated in 60 minutes of physical activity every day, per the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Guidelines, and 58% reported being physically active on five or more days.
- Sixth grade students were more likely than eighth grade students to report participating in daily physical activity.
- Males were significantly more likely than females to participate in daily physical activity.
- There was a significant increase from 2013 to 2015 in the percent of students reporting daily physical activity.
- The percent of students reporting no physical activity also increased significantly from 2013 to 2015 (6% to 8%). There were no differences in those reporting no physical activity by grade or gender.

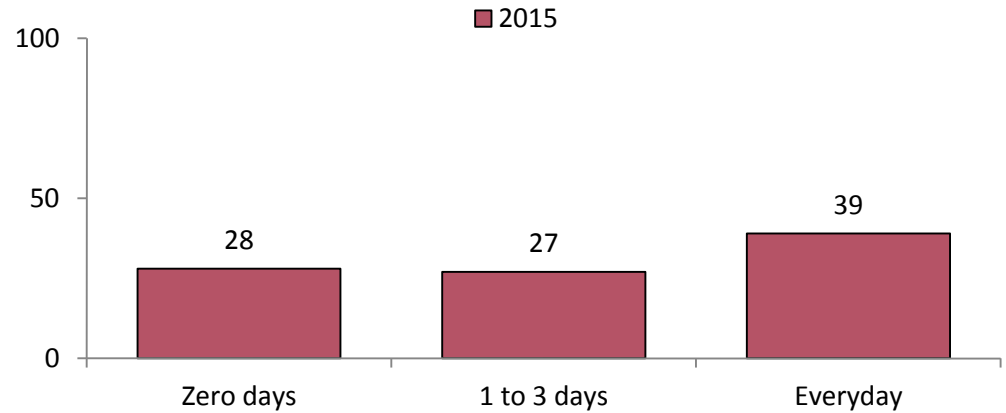
Percent of students who participated in at least 60 minutes of physical activity *every day* during the past seven days



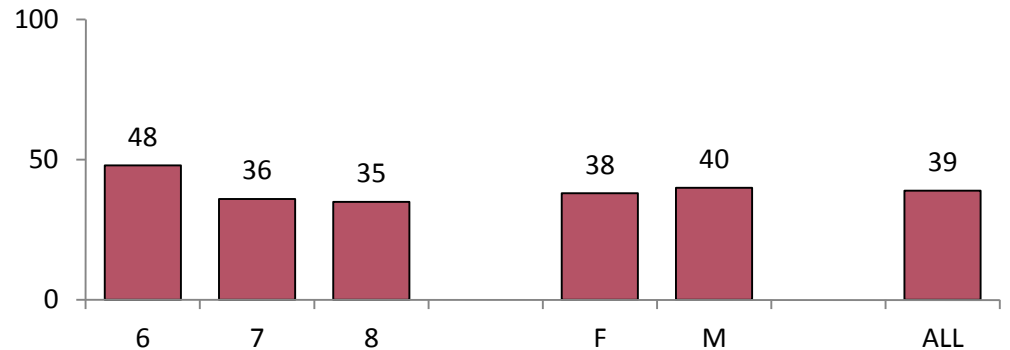
## Physical Activity at School

- **Daily physical activity breaks while at school were reported by 39% of students and 28% reported having no physical activity breaks. Examples of physical activity breaks include recess, time before or after classes, and short breaks during class. Physical activity breaks do not include activity during physical education classes.**
- Sixth graders were significantly more likely than older students to report having physical activity breaks during the school day.
- No other significant differences were reported.

**Percent of students reporting physical activity breaks such as recess or breaks during class during the average school week**



**Percent of students reporting daily physical activity breaks at school during the average school week**

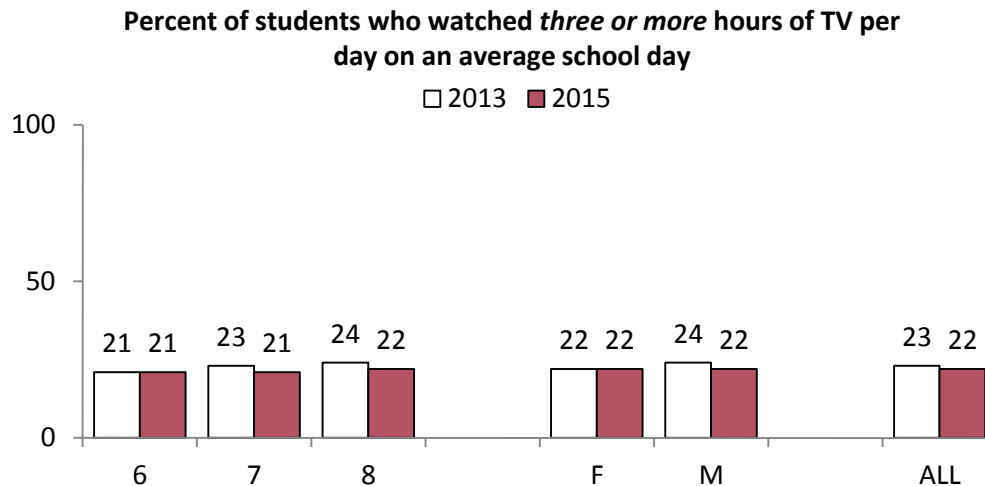


NOTE: This question was new in 2015.



## Television on an Average School Day

- **Overall, 1 in 5 students (22%) watched three hours or more of TV on an average school day and 6% spent five or more hours watching TV.**
- There were no significant differences by grade or gender among those who watched three or more hours of TV on a school day.
- In 2015, students were significantly less likely to report watching at least three hours of TV on an average school day, compared with 2013.



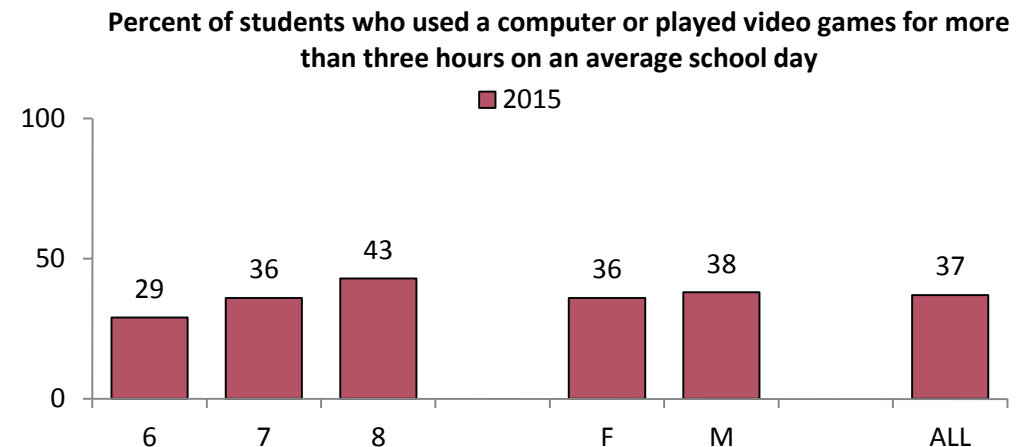
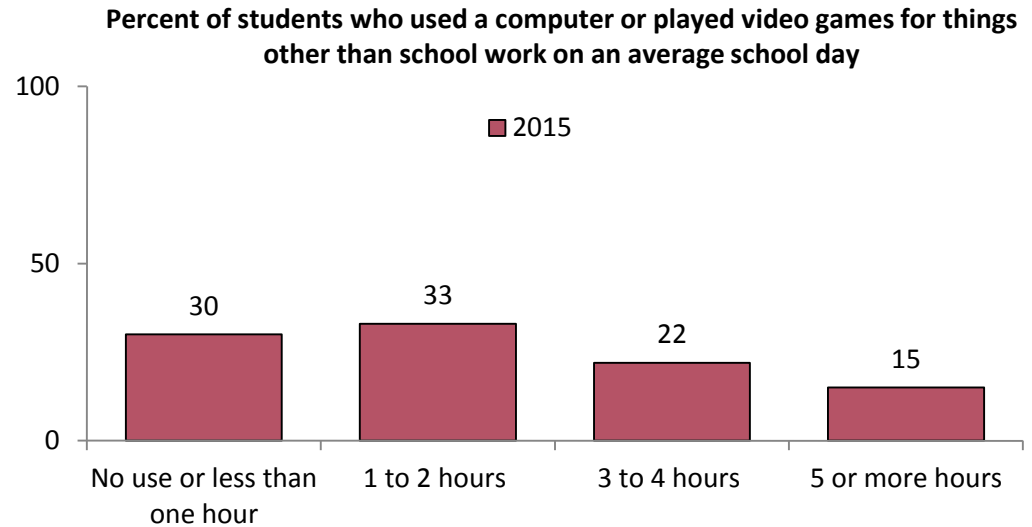
## Internet Usage

- Overall, 85% of students used the Internet on at least one day during the previous week for something not related to school.
- Nearly half (45%) went on the Internet on at least six of the previous seven days for something that was not for school.
- Not using the Internet significantly decreased with each grade.
- Males were significantly more likely than females to never use the Internet for something not related to school during the past seven days. Going online on at least six days did not differ by gender.
- Accessing the Internet on at least six days did not change from 2013 to 2015.

Percent of students who, in the past 7 days, went online for something that was not for school:	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
0 days	13	15	22	16	11	13	18
1 to 3 days	26	26	31	27	21	27	25
4 to 5 days	16	14	14	14	13	14	14
6 to 7 days	45	45	33	42	55	46	44

## Computer Use on an Average School Day

- In 2015, screen time was modified from “activities such as Xbox, PlayStation, Nintendo DS, iPod touch, Facebook, and the Internet” in 2013 to “things such as Xbox, PlayStation, an iPod, an iPad or other tablet, a smart phone, YouTube, Facebook or other social networking tool, and the Internet.” Caution should be taken when making comparisons to previous years.
- Overall, 7 in 10 students played video or computer games or used a computer for something that was not school work for at least one hour per day.**
- On the average day, 37% played video or computer games or used a computer for three or more hours per day on an average school day.**
- Spending three or more hours a day using a computer or playing video games increased significantly with each grade.
- There were no differences by gender for students using a computer for more than three hours per day.



## Talk to Parents about School

- **Overall, 4 out of 5 students (79%) spoke to their parents about school at least once a week. Half of all students (52%) talk with their parents nearly everyday,**
- Sixth grade students are more likely than eighth graders to report their parents talk to them at least once a week about school.
- There were no differences by gender for students whose parents talk to them at least weekly about school.
- There was no significant change in the percentage of students reporting talking to their parents at least weekly from 2013 to 2015.

Percent of students whose parents talked with them about school:	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Almost every day	51	52	57	54	47	54	50
About once or twice a week	29	27	24	26	31	26	29
About once or twice a month	9	9	8	9	10	9	9
Less than once a month	7	6	6	6	7	6	6
Never	5	6	5	5	6	5	6

## Feel Valued at School

- **Overall, 63% of students agreed or strongly agreed that their teachers really care about them and give them a lot of encouragement.**
- Agreeing that teachers really care about students decreased significantly with grade level.
- There were no differences by gender.
- **Overall, 43% of students agree or strongly agree that students help decide what goes on in their school.**
- Eighth graders were significantly less likely to believe that students help decide what goes on in school compared to sixth and seventh graders.
- There were no differences by gender.
- Students perceptions about teachers caring and deciding what goes on at school has not changed since 2011.

Percent of students who agree or strongly agree that:	All		Grade			Gender	
	2013	2015	6	7	8	F	M
Their teachers really care about them and give them a lot of encouragement	62	63	69	62	59	62	64
Students help decide what goes on in school	42	43	45	44	39	42	43

## Feel Valued by Community

- **Over half (55%) of students agree or strongly agree that they matter to people in their communities.**
- Feeling like they matter to their community decreased with increasing grade level.
- Males were significantly more likely than females to feel like they matter in their community.
- There was no significant difference from 2013 to 2015.

Percent of students who agree or strongly agree that “in your community you feel like you matter to people”

