

Screen Time among High Schoolers – Data Brief

Vermont 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)

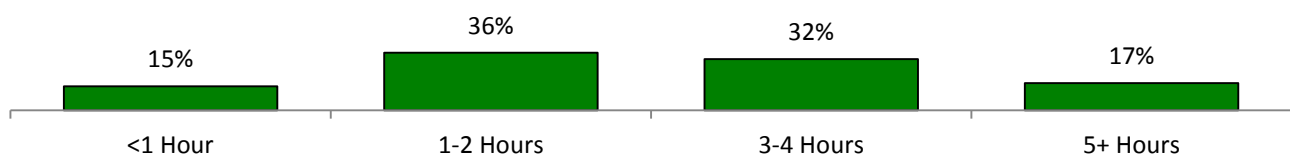
Background

Screen time is a risk factor for childhood obesity, attention problems, low school performance, sleep disturbances, and risky behaviors.¹ Spending excessive time engaging in sedentary behaviors is linked to higher risk of obesity and chronic health conditions in childhood. These effects may also be delayed into adulthood, even among those who are physically active and have healthy diets.² The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends no more than 2 hours of screen time a day for youth (ages 2-18 years);³ however, U.S. youth engage in approximately 7.5 hours of screen time a day.⁴ The Vermont YRBS defines screen time as any time spent watching TV, playing video games, or using a computer or hand-held device for non-school related activities on a school day.

Overall

In 2015, half of Vermont high school students engaged in 2 hours or fewer of non-school related screen time (15% less than 1 hour and 36% 1-2 hours). About a third (32%) engaged in 3-4 hours of screen time. One in 6 high schoolers engaged in either 5 or more hours of screen time (17%) that was not related to school work.

Hours Of Non-School Related Screen Time Engagement among High School Students, YRBS 2015

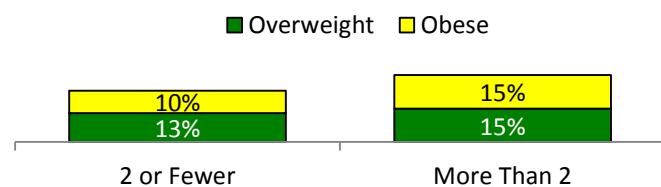


Girls were significantly more likely than boys to have engaged in 2 or fewer hours of screen time a day (52% vs. 50%). There were no differences in the hours of engagement in screen time by grade level.

Physical Activity and Nutrition

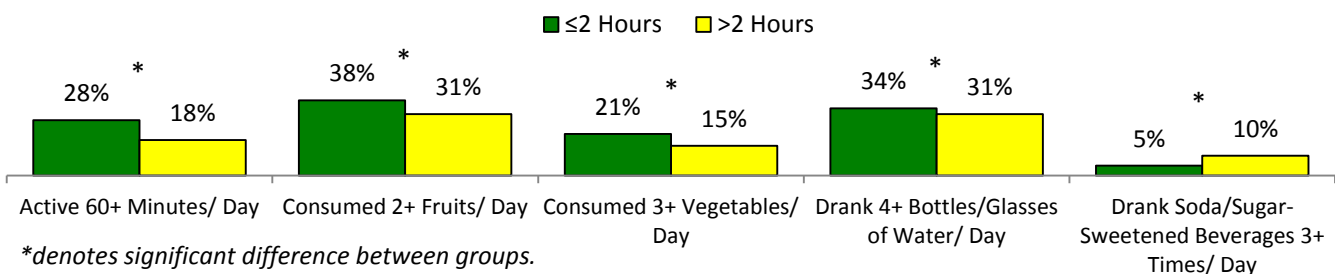
High school students who engaged in 2 or fewer hours of screen time a day were significantly less likely to be overweight or obese than students who engaged in 2 or more.

Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity among High School Students by Hours of Engagement in Screen Time, YRBS 2015



High school students who engaged in 2 or fewer hours of screen time a day were significantly more likely to be active for 60 or more minutes a day. Students who engaged in 2 or fewer hours of screen time a day were also more likely to consume 2 or more fruits and 3 or more vegetables a day. Students who engaged in 2 hours or fewer of screen time a day were more likely to drink 4 or more bottles of water and less likely to consume 3 or more sodas/sugary drinks a day than students who engaged in more than 2 hours.

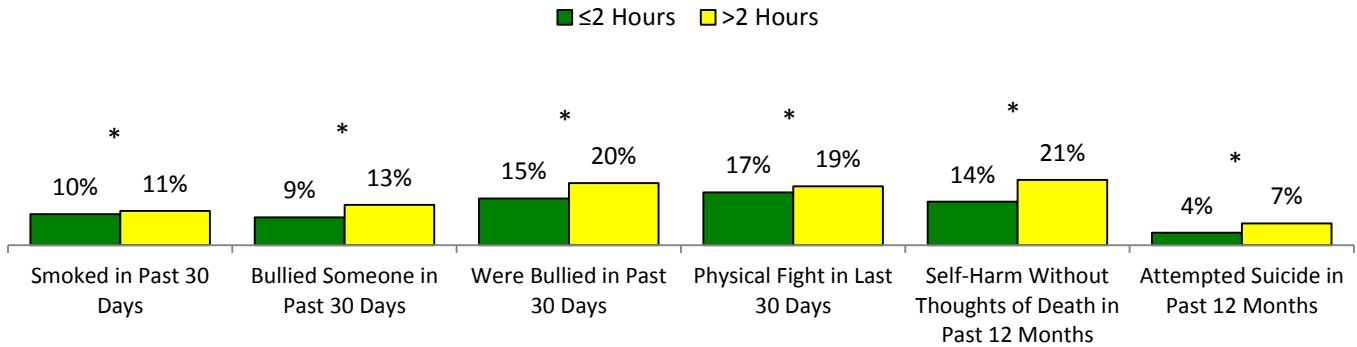
Nutrition/Physical Activity Factors by Hours of Engagement in Screen Time, YRBS 2015



Risk Behaviors

Students who engaged in 2 or fewer hours of screen time a day were less likely to have smoked, bullied another person, be bullied, be in a physical fight, intentionally harm themselves, or have attempted suicide when compared to students who engaged in more than 2 hours a day. Similar trends were seen among those who were electronically bullied (14% among those who engaged in 2 or fewer hours vs. 19% among those with more than 2 hours) or planned suicide (9% vs. 15%). Alcohol use among students did not vary by hours of engagement in screen time (30% vs. 30%).

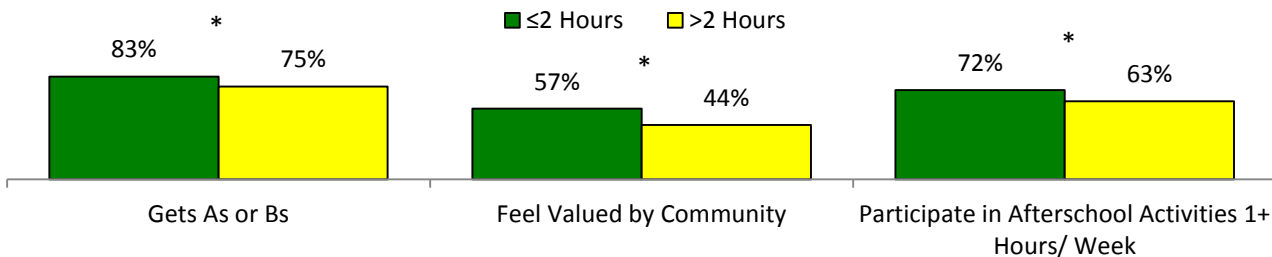
Engagement in Risk Behaviors by Screen Time among High School Students, YRBS 2015



Youth Assests

High school students who engaged in 2 or fewer hours of screen time a day were significantly more likely to get As or Bs, feel valued by their community, and participate in at least one hour of after school activities (e.g. sports, band, drama, or clubs run by school or community groups) when compared to students who engaged in more than 2 hours of daily screen time.

Youth Assests by Hours of Engagement in Screen Time among High School Students, YRBS 2015



Data Notes

The YRBS in 2015 measured only non-school related screen time so direct adherence to the AAPs recommendations for all screen time were not assessed. Not all screen time is sedentary as youth may engage in active screen time, active games, exercise or dance videos, or TV exercise programs. Changes to the screen time question on the YRBS have occurred in past years making comparisons across years difficult.

For more information on the YRBS contact Kristen Murry (kristen.murray@vermont.org).

For more information on this document please contact Paul Meddaugh, MS, Vermont Department of Health (paul.meddaugh@vermont.gov; 802-951-0133).

¹ Lo CB, Waring ME, Pagoto SL, Lemon SC. A television in the bedroom is associated with higher weekday screen time among youth with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADD/ADHD). *Preventive Medicine Reports*. 2015;2:1-3

² Lou DW. 2014. Sedentary behaviors and youth: current trends and the impact on health. *Active Living Research*, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. www.activelivingresearch.org.

³ American Academy of Pediatrics. Children, adolescents, and television. *Pediatrics*. 2001; 107(2):423-426.

⁴ Wethington H, Sherry B, Park S, Blanck HM. Active Screen Time Among U.S. Youth Aged 9-18, 2009. *Games Health Journal*. 2013;2(6):362-368.