

REPORT ON

THE 2016 YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY

FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, AND 12

AGGREGATE REPORT OF

STUDENTS FROM THE ACTON-BOXBOROUGH,

CONCORD, CONCORD-CARLISLE,

GROTON-DUNSTABLE, HARVARD, LITTLETON, MAYNARD,

NASHOBA REGIONAL, AND WESTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FOR

EMERSON HOSPITAL

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BACKGROUND AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In 1997, Ms. Leslie Luppold, the Senior Vice-President of Operations for Emerson Hospital, reached out to several school districts from the hospital's service area to attempt to determine areas of common interest and concern. A number of discussions ensued and through this process, Emerson Hospital and the Health Education Coordinators from the four school districts which responded, decided to collaborate on the development and implementation of the first joint Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) Project in 1998.

Using an instrument based on the YRBS from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, students from grades 6, 8, and 11 were surveyed and the responses to those surveys were tabulated and analyzed. Much information of value to Emerson Hospital, the four school districts (the Acton and Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools, the Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional Schools, the Littleton Public Schools, and the Westford Public Schools), as well as their respective communities, important to program planning and curriculum development, was gathered and shared broadly.

This effort was undertaken for a second time (including three additional school districts: the Boxborough Public Schools, the Groton-Dunstable Regional Schools, and the Maynard Public Schools) in the year 2000. Because of the success of the first two projects, it was decided to undertake this effort in 2002 and every other year thereafter in the hopes of developing up-to-date, reliable data on youth risk behavior. Also, beginning with the survey of 2000, the scope was expanded to include all students from grades 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12.

In 2011 Emerson Hospital and the seven school districts were pleased to welcome two additional districts (the Harvard Public Schools and the Nashoba Regional Schools) who had decided to join in this important project. In 2014 the Boxborough Public Schools merged with the Acton and Acton-Boxborough Public Schools to form one unified school district. With the support and encouragement of administration from Emerson Hospital and each school district, a committee comprised of representatives from Emerson Hospital and Health Education Coordinators from the now eight area school districts, met and worked for several months to update and refine the YRBS and the process for its implementation and analysis.

The members of this committee included: Ms. Bonnie Kaplan-Goldsmith from Emerson Hospital; Ms. Marilyn Bisbicos from the Acton and Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools; Ms. Kristen Herbert from the Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional Schools; Ms. Ann Russo from the Groton-Dunstable Regional Schools; Mr. Drew Skrocki from the Harvard Public Schools; Ms. Maureen McMahon from the Littleton Public Schools; Ms. Lisa MacLean from the Maynard Public Schools; Ms. Donna Linstrom from the Nashoba Regional Schools; Mr. Sean O'Leary from the Westford Public Schools; Ms. Elizabeth Denny from Market Street Research; and Mr. James Byrne from Northeast Health Resources. It is because of their continuing commitment and collaboration that this project and report are a reality.

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INTRODUCTION

Through the support and assistance of Emerson Hospital, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey was implemented with students in grades 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 from eight school districts in the hospital's service area, during March of 2016. These surveys were primarily based on those developed specifically for middle school and high school students at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. Students responded to questions which fall under general categories of risk behaviors including: safety, violence, stress, suicide, tobacco use, alcohol use, drug use, gambling, HIV/AIDS education, sexual behavior, dietary behavior, and physical activity. Emerson Hospital and the eight school districts contracted with Northeast Health Resources (NHR) to assist in the design of the instrument and to carry out the tabulation and an analysis of the data gathered from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

Every other year, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education carries out a Youth Risk Behavior Survey for high school students from a cross-section of school systems in the state. The most recent of these surveys for which data is currently available was carried out during the Spring of 2015 and was administered to students from randomly selected public school systems. A comparison with certain of the data from the results of that survey will also be provided. No such survey for middle school students is carried out on a state-wide basis.

The data gathered from the surveys in each of the school districts, was tabulated individually and then combined to form an aggregate database. The eight school systems included in this aggregate are the Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools, the Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional Schools, the Groton-Dunstable Regional Schools, the Harvard Public Schools, the Littleton Public Schools, the Maynard Public Schools, the Nashoba Regional Schools, and the Westford Public Schools.

After much consideration and planning (and being piloted in 2010), the 2016 Grade 6 survey was carried out on a web-enabled basis in all of the eight school districts. Also, the 2016 grade 8 survey (piloted in 2012) was carried out on a web-enabled basis in all of the school districts. The surveys themselves were identical in all ways to the traditional paper and pencil surveys except that they were carried out online.

SURVEY PROCESS

After discussions between Emerson Hospital and the Health Education Coordinators from each district it was agreed that the Youth Risk Behavior Survey would be distributed to all students in attendance on the survey dates in grades 6, 8, and 9 through 12. Parents were informed in advance of the survey and sixty-six students were exempted at parental request. With one middle school exception the surveys were administered in each school district during the week of March 7, 2016. In most districts students in each school were surveyed simultaneously, in others they were surveyed over the course of one school day, and in one district, middle school students were surveyed in early April. In all of the eight school districts grade 6 students and grade 8 students were surveyed in a web-enabled format all simultaneously or over the course of a school day. In all cases the survey was administered by professional staff from the district. Teachers were provided with written instructions which were read to students before taking the survey.

Once all of the surveys were completed, they were gathered and tabulated. There were a total of 10,787 students who responded to the survey: 1,771 from grade 6, 1,764 from grade 8, and 7,252 from the high school. At the high school level, forty-seven students did not indicate their grade or indicated they were ungraded. For a description of certain of the demographic characteristics of respondents, please refer to the tables on subsequent pages.

Of the 11,834 students from the eight area school districts involved in this project and enrolled in grades 6, 8, and 9 through 12 on the dates of administration, 10,787 participated in the survey. This constitutes a participation rate of 91% (Grade 6: 93%; Grade 8: 94%; and High School: 90%).

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Frequencies of responses are reported for all items in the survey and cross-tabulations are provided for three demographic characteristics: grade, gender, and grade/gender. The results of the survey, including all cross-tabulations, are presented under separate cover. Please note that the data results were tabulated in percentages, rounded to the nearest whole percent, and not all percentages will total exactly 100 due to rounding and no responses in some cases.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Aggregate of Respondents From Eight School Districts 2016 YRBS Student Sample

Grade and Gender

Grade 6: 1,771 Respondents

Females	52.1%
Males	47.5%
Transgender	0.3%
Gender not indicated	0.1%

Grade 8: 1,764 Respondents

Females	48.6%
Males	49.9%
Transgender	1.1%
Gender not indicated	0.3%

Grade 9: 1,931 Respondents

Females	49.1%
Males	49.6%
Transgender	1.0%
Gender not indicated	0.3%

Grade 10: 1,810 Respondents

Females	51.0%
Males	47.7%
Transgender	1.0%
Gender not indicated	0.3%

Grade 11: 1,770 Respondents

Females	49.6%
Males	49.1%
Transgender	1.0%
Gender not indicated	0.3%

Grade 12: 1,694 Respondents

Females	49.0%
Males	49.4%
Transgender	1.4%
Gender not indicated	0.2%

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS (CONT'D)

School District

Grade 6:

Acton - Boxborough	23.9%	423
Concord	12.6%	223
Groton - Dunstable	10.2%	181
Harvard	5.1%	91
Littleton	5.7%	101
Maynard	6.4%	113
Nashoba	15.1%	267
Westford	21.0%	<u>372</u>
		1,771

Grade 8:

Acton - Boxborough	23.6%	417
Concord	11.1%	195
Groton - Dunstable	11.2%	197
Harvard	5.0%	88
Littleton	7.0%	124
Maynard	6.0%	106
Nashoba	12.6%	223
Westford	23.5%	<u>414</u>
		1,764

High School:

Acton - Boxborough	23.7%	1,716
Concord - Carlisle	16.4%	1,187
Groton - Dunstable	10.3%	744
Harvard	5.1%	368
Littleton	5.2%	377
Maynard	4.5%	326
Nashoba	13.7%	993
Westford	21.2%	<u>1,541</u>
		7,252

OVERVIEW OF MAJOR FINDINGS

There is much important and relevant information to be found in an analysis of the tabulations of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey as taken by students from the eight school districts included in this report. This is true when one looks at the tabulations of all students taken as a group and is especially so when one looks at the cross-tabulations by grade and gender.

With students having responded to 59 questions in grade 6, 89 questions in grade 8, and 113 questions at the high school, much can be said about the responses to each of those questions. However, it is not the intention here to discuss the results of each question. Rather, it is the intention of this report to highlight certain of the results and to offer comparisons with data gathered from the implementation of the 2015 Massachusetts High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey. It is hoped that the following as well as a more detailed analysis of the results of this survey, will assist Emerson Hospital and the school systems and communities with which it works in their on-going development of health education programs and services for young people.

MIDDLE SCHOOL – GRADES 6 AND 8SAFETY

- **1.0%** of sixth grade respondents and **3%** of eighth grade respondents **report that they “never” or “rarely” wear a seatbelt when riding in a car.** There was little or no variation by gender in either grade.
- **9%** of sixth grade respondents and **21%** of eighth grade respondents **report that they “never” or “rarely” wear a helmet when riding a bicycle.** Males in grade 8 (grade 6 – 9%, grade 8 – 24%) report never or rarely wearing a bicycle helmet more frequently than female respondents (grade 6 – 9%, grade 8 – 17%).
- **2%** of sixth grade respondents and **4%** of eighth grade respondents **report having ridden in a car driven by a minor (under age 21) who had been drinking alcohol or using other drugs** on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey. There was little variation by gender.
- **6%** of sixth grade respondents and **6%** of eighth grade respondents **report having been repeatedly threatened, humiliated, or experienced hostile behaviors (bullied) from others electronically** during the previous twelve months. This experience of cyber-bullying varied very little by gender in either grade. Further, **2%** of sixth graders and **2%** of eighth graders **report doing so to someone else.**
- **7%** of all eighth grade respondents **report sending or receiving sexually explicit messages of photos electronically (also called “sexting”)** during the previous twelve months. There was no variation by gender.
- **More than one respondent in six (18%)** among eighth graders reports having looked at pornographic material on at least one day in the previous 30 days. Male respondents (28%) report doing so much more frequently than females (6%).

VIOLENCE-RELATED BEHAVIORS

- **6%** of sixth grade respondents and **10%** of eighth grade respondents **report having carried any type of weapon such as a gun, knife or club** during the thirty days prior to the survey. Male respondents (grade 6 – 11%, grade 8 – 16%) were much more likely to have done so than were females (grade 6 – 2%, grade 8 – 3%). Further, **two 6th grade respondents and 0.5% of 8th grade respondents report having done so on school property during the school day.**
- **10%** of sixth grade respondents and **10%** of eighth grade respondents **report having been repeatedly threatened, humiliated or experienced hostile behaviors from others (bullied) in school** during the twelve months prior to the survey. There was little variation by gender in either grade. Further, **2%** of sixth graders and **2%** of eighth graders **report doing so to someone else.**
- **7%** of eighth grade respondents **report having received unwelcome comments or actions of a sexual nature which made them uncomfortable (sexual harassment) in school** during the twelve months prior to the survey (females – 10%, males – 3%).
- **2%** of eighth grade respondents **report having ever been hurt physically or sexually by a date or someone they were going out with.** There was no variation by gender. **1%** of all respondents **report having ever done so to someone else.**
- **8%** of eighth grade respondents **report having been shouted at, sworn at, scared, threatened, or insulted by someone they were dating or going out with** on at least one occasion during the twelve months prior to the survey. There was no variation by gender. **5%** of all respondents **report having done so to someone else.**
- **11%** of eighth grade respondents **report having hurt themselves on purpose (cuts, burns, bruises)** on at least one occasion during the previous twelve months. Female respondents (16%) report doing so more than twice as frequently as males (6%).

STRESS

- **30%** of sixth grade respondents and **43%** of eighth graders **report having experienced somewhat high or very high levels of stress as a result of their academic workload** during the previous twelve months. Females in both grades (grade 6 – 33%, grade 8 – 51%) report this experience more frequently than males (grade 6 – 26%, grade 8 – 35%).
- **17%** of sixth grade respondents and **24%** of eighth grade respondents **report having experienced somewhat high or very high levels of stress as a result of events in school** during the previous twelve months prior to the survey. In grade 6 there was no variation by gender while in grade 8 female respondents report this experience more frequently (females – 28%, males – 19%).
- When asked to select from a list which **strategies they use most frequently to deal with stress**, the four strategies most frequently reported by respondents were **exercise** (grade 6 – 42%, grade 8 – 51%), **watching television** (grade 6 – 34%, grade 8 – 43%), **meditation/relaxation activities** (grade 6 – 27%, grade 8 – 21%), and eating (grade 6 – 22%, grade 8 – 28%). Of note is that **36%** of sixth graders and **32%** of eighth graders also **report using “other” strategies to deal with stress**.

SUICIDE

- **5%** of sixth grade respondents and **8%** of eighth grade respondents **report having seriously considered attempting suicide** during the twelve months prior to the survey. There was no variation by gender in grade 6 (grade 8: females – 10%, males – 5%).
- **2%** of sixth grade respondents and **2%** of eighth grade respondents **report having actually attempted suicide** on at least one occasion during the twelve months prior to the survey. There was very little variation by gender in either grade.

TOBACCO USE

- **1%** of sixth grade respondents and **5%** of eighth grade respondents (females – 2%, males – 6%) **report having ever tried cigarette smoking**. Further, **0.3%** of sixth graders and **2%** of eighth graders **report having smoked a whole cigarette for the first time before the age of 11**.
- **One** sixth grade respondent and **2%** of eighth grade respondents **report having smoked cigarettes on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey**.
- **1%** of eighth graders **report having smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars** during the thirty days prior to the survey.
- **1%** of sixth grade respondents and **4%** of eighth graders **report having used an electronic cigarette** (also called vaping) at least once during the thirty days prior to the survey (Grade 8: females – 2%, males - 5%).

ALCOHOL USE

- **3%** of sixth grade respondents and **11%** of eighth grade respondents **report having ever had a drink of alcohol other than for religious reasons**. Males in both grades (grade 6 – 5%, grade 8 – 14%) were more likely to have done so than were females (grade 6 – 1%, grade 8 – 9%). Further, **2%** of sixth graders and **2%** of eighth graders **report having done so for the first time before the age of 12**.
- **1%** of sixth grade respondents and **5%** of eighth grade respondents **report having had at least one drink of alcohol on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey**. There was little variation by gender in either grade.
- **4%** of all eighth grade respondents **report having attended parties held in homes in their school district where alcohol use by teens is allowed, either occasionally or frequently** during the twelve months prior to the survey (females – 3%, males – 4%).
- When eighth graders were asked their perception about how many students at their grade level in their school had used alcohol during the previous month, **6% believed that over half had done so** and another **13% (total of 19%) believed that over a quarter of their peers had done so**. In fact, **5%** of all eighth grade respondents actually **report having used alcohol during the previous month**.

ILLEGAL DRUG USE

- **1%** of sixth grade respondents and **3%** of eighth grade respondents **report having ever used marijuana**. 8th grade males (4%) were more likely to have ever used marijuana than were females (2%). Further, **2%** of eighth grade respondents **report having ever used some form of synthetic marijuana such as “Spice”, “K2”, or in some edible form** (females – 1%, males – 2%).
- **Two** sixth grade respondents and **3%** of eighth grade respondents **report having used marijuana on at least one occasion** during the thirty days prior to the survey. In grade 8, male respondents (3%) report recent marijuana use more frequently than females (1%).
- **When eighth graders were asked their perception about how many students at their grade level in their school had used marijuana during the previous month, 8% believed that at least one-quarter of their peers had done so.** In fact, **3%** of all eighth grade respondents actually **report having used marijuana during the previous month**.
- **4%** of sixth grade respondents and **5%** of eighth grade respondents **report having ever sniffed glue, or breathed the contents of spray cans, or inhaled any paints or sprays to get high**. There was no variation by gender in grade 6 (Grade 8: females – 3%, males – 6%).
- **5%** of sixth grade respondents and **6%** of all eighth grade respondents **report having ever used any prescription medication that was not prescribed for them specifically by a doctor** (grade 6: females – 4%, males – 5%; grade 8: females – 8%, males – 4%).
- **2%** of eighth graders **report having ever used a prescription opiate medication that was not prescribed by a doctor specifically for them**. 5% indicate that they are not sure.
- **0.3%** of sixth grade respondents and **3%** of eighth grade respondents **report having been offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property** on at least one occasion during the twelve months prior to the survey (grade 8: females – 2%, males – 3%).

GAMBLING

- **9%** of sixth grade respondents and **16%** of eighth grade respondents **report having gambled by betting on the lottery, Keno, sporting events, casino games, cards, or racing** at least once during the twelve months prior to the survey. Male respondents in both grades (grade 6 – 12%, grade 8 – 22%) report this behavior more frequently than females (grade 6 – 7%, grade 8 – 10%).

HIV/AIDS EDUCATION

- **13%** of sixth grade respondents and **35%** of eighth grade respondents **report having ever talked about AIDS or HIV infection with their parents or other adults in their family**. There was little variation by gender in grade 8 (Grade 6: females – 10%, males – 17%).

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

- **4%** of eighth grade respondents **report having ever had sexual intercourse**. Male respondents (6%) were more likely to have had this experience than were females (1%). **2% of all eighth graders report having had sexual intercourse for the first time before the age of 12.**
- **5%** of eighth grade respondents **report having ever had oral sex, either given or received**. Male respondents (6%) report this experience more frequently than females (2%).

DIETARY BEHAVIOR

- **Over half** of all respondents (grade 6 – 61%, grade 8 – 56%) **described themselves as being at about the right weight** while many were trying to lose weight (grade 6 – 27%, grade 8 – 33%) and others were trying to gain weight (grade 6 – 10%, grade 8 – 12%). Female respondents, especially in grade 8 (41%), were more likely to be trying to lose weight than were eighth grade males (25%).
- During the thirty days prior to the survey, **in order to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight:**
 - **60%** of sixth graders and **59%** of eighth graders **report having exercised** (grade 6: females – 59%, males – 62%; grade 8: females – 57%, males – 61%).
 - **21%** of sixth graders and **24%** of eighth graders **report having eaten less food, fewer calories, or foods low in fat** (grade 6: females – 20%, males – 22%; grade 8: females – 29%, males – 19%).
 - **2%** of sixth graders and **4%** of eighth graders **report having gone without eating for 24 hours or more** (grade 6: females – 3%, males – 2%; grade 8: females – 5%, males – 2%).
 - **1%** of sixth graders and **2%** of eighth graders **report having vomited or taken laxatives**. There was no variation by gender.
- **6%** of sixth grade respondents and **11%** of eighth grade respondents **report drinking a caffeinated beverage such as coffee, coffee drinks, tea, soda, sports drinks, or drinks like Red Bull** at least once per day on average during the previous seven days. In grade 6 there was no variation by gender (grade 8: females – 9%, males – 13%).
- **14%** of sixth grade respondents and **25%** of eighth grade respondents **report that they ate breakfast on fewer than five days during the week before the survey** (Grade 6: females – 15%, male – 12%; grade 8: females – 28%, males – 22%).

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- **82%** of sixth grade respondents and **80%** of eighth grade respondents **report having exercised or participated in physical activity for at least 20 minutes that made them sweat or breathe hard on at least three days during the seven days prior to the survey.** There was no variation by gender in grade 6 (grade 8: females – 77%, males – 83%).
- **4%** of sixth grade respondents and **11%** of eighth grade respondents **report that they spend more than three hours doing homework each day on average. There was little variation in gender in grade 6** (Grade 8: females – 14%, males – 8%).
- **17%** of sixth grade respondents and **38%** of eighth grade respondents **report that they spend four hours or more per day on an average school day using computers, television, phone, or other visual technology** (Grade 6: females – 16%, males – 18%; Grade 8: females – 40%, males – 35%).

HIGH SCHOOL - GRADES 9, 10, 11, AND 12

As mentioned earlier in this report, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey was administered to students from eight school districts in grades 9 through 12 during March of 2016. This report is an overview analysis of certain of the results of that survey. The complete tabulations of student responses to that survey are also available for review.

The following includes comparisons with certain of the data from the 2015 Massachusetts YRBS. It should be noted that several of the questions in this survey were not asked of students in the 2015 Massachusetts YRBS.

SAFETY

- **3%** of all respondents report “never” or “rarely” wearing a seatbelt when riding in a car driven by someone else. There was little variation by grade (females – 2%, males – 4%). Among those most likely to drive, **2%** of 11th graders and **3%** of 12th graders report “never” or “rarely” wearing a seatbelt when they themselves drive.
- **12%** of all respondents report having ridden in a car or other vehicle driven by a minor (under age 21) who had been drinking alcohol or using other drugs at least once during the thirty days prior to the survey. The incidence of this experience increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 5%, grade 10 – 8%, grade 11 – 15%, grade 12 – 19%). Male respondents (14%) report this experience more frequently than females (9%).
- **4%** of all respondents (9% - MA YRBS) report having driven a car or other vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey. Respondents from grade 12 (8%) and grade 11 (5%) were most likely to have done so. The groups which most frequently reported this behavior were 11th grade males (6%), 12th grade females (6%), and 12th grade males (10%). By comparison, **8%** report driving a car or other vehicle when they had been using marijuana during the same period of time.
- **23%** of all respondents report having driven a car while using a cell phone to talk without a hands-free option at least once during the previous thirty days. Among those most likely to drive, 34% of 11th graders and 55% of 12th graders report having done so (females – 22%, males – 24%). By comparison, **21%** report driving a car while using a cell phone to text, surf the web, or access social media during the same period of time.
- **6%** of all respondents report having been repeatedly threatened, humiliated, or experienced hostile behaviors (bullied) from others electronically during the previous twelve months. There was little variation by grade or gender. **Further, 3% of all respondents report doing so to someone else.**
- **22%** of all respondents report having sent or received sexually explicit messages or photos electronically (also called “sexting”) during the twelve months prior to the survey. The incidence of this experience increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 13%, grade 10 – 20%, grade 11 – 25%, grade 12 – 30%). Male respondents (23%) report this experience slightly more frequently than females (20%).
- **40%** of all respondents report having looked at pornographic material on at least one day in the previous 30 days. The incidence of this behavior increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 30%, grade 10 – 37%, grade 11 – 45%, grade 12 – 50%) and was highest among male respondents (females – 18%, males – 62%).

VIOLENCE-RELATED BEHAVIORS

- **1%** of all respondents **report having carried a gun on school property** on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey (females – 0.2%, males – 1.6%).
- **2%** of all respondents (3% - MA YRBS) **report having carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property** on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey (grade 9 – 1%, grade 10 – 2%, grade 11 – 3%, grade 12 – 3%). Males (3%) were more likely to have carried a weapon on school property than were females (1%). Further, **2% report having done so during the school day**.
- **3%** of all respondents (4% - MA YRBS) **report having been threatened or injured by someone with a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property** on at least one occasion during the twelve months prior to the survey. There was no variation by grade and very little variation by gender (females – 1%, males – 3%).
- **4%** of all respondents **report having ever been hurt physically or sexually by a date or someone they were going out with**. The incidence of this experience increased slightly each year by grade (grade 9 – 2%, grade 10 – 3%, grade 11 – 4%, grade 12 – 7%). Female respondents (5%) report this experience more frequently than males (3%) and **1% report having ever done so to someone else**.
- **One-tenth (10%)** of all respondents **report having been shouted at, sworn at, scared, threatened, or insulted by someone they were dating or going out with** on at least one occasion during the twelve months prior to the survey. The incidence of this experience increased slightly each year by grade (grade 9 – 7%, grade 10 – 8%, grade 11 – 11%, grade 12 – 12%) (females – 10%, males – 8%). Among all respondents, **8% report having done so to someone else**.
- **6%** of all respondents **report having been repeatedly threatened, humiliated, or experienced hostile behaviors (bullied) from others in school** during the twelve months prior to the survey. The incidence of this experience varied little by grade (grade 9 – 7%, grade 10 – 6%, grade 11 – 6%, grade 12 – 5%) and there was no variation by gender. Further, **2% report doing so to someone else**.

VIOLENCE-RELATED BEHAVIORS (CONT'D)

- **10%** of all respondents **report having received unwelcome comments or actions of a sexual nature which made them uncomfortable (sexual harassment) from others in school** during the twelve months prior to the survey. There was little variation by grade (grade 9 – 8%, grade 10 – 9%, grade 11 – 11%, grade 12 – 10%). The incidence of this experience was much higher among female respondents (females – 14%, males 4%).
- **14%** of all respondents **report having hurt themselves on purpose (cuts, burns, bruises) on at least one occasion** during the previous twelve months. There was little variation by grade (grade 9 – 13%, grade 10 – 16%, grade 11 – 15%, grade 12 – 13%). Female respondents (19%) report such self-injury much more frequently than males (8%).

STRESS

- **More than three respondents in five (62%) report having experienced somewhat high or very high levels of stress as a result of their academic workload** during the previous twelve months. The incidence of this experience was highest in grade 11 (grade 9 – 52%, grade 10 – 66%, grade 11 – 70%, grade 12 – 62%) and was much higher among females (females – 73%, males – 52%).
- **Over one-third (36%) of all respondents report having experienced somewhat high or very high levels of stress as a result of events in school** during the previous twelve months. The incidence of this experience was lowest in grade 9 (grade 9 – 30%, grade 10 – 36%, grade 11 – 41%, grade 12 – 37%) and higher among female respondents (females – 41%, males – 30%).
- When asked to select from a list which **strategies they use most frequently to deal with stress**, the four strategies most frequently reported by respondents were **exercise (55%), watching television (44%), eating (37%), and meditation/relaxation activities (21%)**. Of note is that **31%** also report using “other” strategies to deal with stress and **15%** report doing nothing.

SUICIDE

- **13%** of all respondents (15% - MA YRBS) **report having seriously considered attempting suicide** during the twelve months prior to the survey. There was little variation by grade (grade 9 – 12%, grade 10 – 14%, grade 11 – 14%, grade 12 – 14%). Female respondents (16%) report having done so more frequently than males (10%).
- **4%** of all respondents (7% - MA YRBS) **report having actually attempted suicide** on at least one occasion during the twelve months prior to the survey. There was no variation by grade (grade 9 – 3%, grade 10 – 4%, grade 11 – 4%, grade 12 – 4%) or gender (females – 4%, males – 3%).

TOBACCO USE

- **13%** of all respondents (28% - MA YRBS) **report having ever tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs.** The incidence of lifetime cigarette smoking increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 5%, grade 10 – 9%, grade 11 – 16%, grade 12 – 20%). Males (15%) report having ever tried cigarette smoking more frequently than females (9%). Further, **3%** of all respondents **report having smoked a whole cigarette for the first time before the age of 13.**
- **5%** of all respondents (8% - MA YRBS) **report having smoked cigarettes on at least one day during the thirty days prior to the survey.** The incidence of recent cigarette smoking also increased slightly each year by grade (grade 9 – 2%, grade 10 – 3%, grade 11 – 7%, grade 12 – 8%) (females – 3%, males – 7%).
- **6%** of all respondents (10% - MA YRBS) **report having smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars** on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey. The incidence of this behavior increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 1%, grade 10 – 4%, grade 11 – 8%, grade 12 – 11%). Males (9%) were much more likely to have done so than were females (2%).
- **One respondent in eight (12%)** (24% - MA YRBS) **reports having used an electronic cigarette (e-cigarette), also called vaping, during the previous 30 days.** The incidence of this behavior increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 5%, grade 10 – 10%, grade 11 – 15%, grade 12 – 19%) and was higher among male respondents (females – 9%, males – 14%).

ALCOHOL USE

- **More than half (52%)** of all respondents (61% - MA YRBS) **report having had at least one drink of alcohol (other than for religious reasons) on at least one occasion during their lives** and **7%** (13% - MA YRBS) **report having had their first drink of alcohol before the age of 13**. The incidence of lifetime alcohol use increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 31%, grade 10 – 46%, grade 11 – 60%, grade 12 – 73%). There was no variation by gender.
- **29%** of all respondents (34% - MA YRBS) **report having had at least one drink of alcohol on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey**. The incidence of recent alcohol use also increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 11%, grade 10 – 24%, grade 11 – 34%, grade 12 – 50%). There was very little variation by gender (females – 30%, males – 28%).
- **One respondent in six (16%)** of all respondents (18% - MA YRBS) **reports having had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row** (within a couple of hours) on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey. The incidence of recent binge drinking increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 5%, grade 10 – 12%, grade 11 – 19%, grade 12 – 31%). Males (17%) report binge drinking slightly more frequently than females (15%).
- **Nearly one-quarter (24%)** of all respondents **report having attended parties held in homes in their school district where alcohol use by teens was allowed, either occasionally or frequently** during the twelve months prior to the survey. The incidence of this experience increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 9%, grade 10 – 19%, grade 11 – 27%, grade 12 – 43%). There was no variation by gender.
- **When asked their perception about how many students at their grade level in their school had used alcohol during the previous month, 17% believed that over three-quarters of their peers had done so and another 33% (total of 50%) believed that over half had done so**. In fact, **29%** of all respondents actually **report having used alcohol during the previous month**.

ILLEGAL DRUG USE

- **One-quarter (25%)** of all respondents (41% - MA YRBS) **report having ever used marijuana** and **2%** (6% - MA YRBS) **report having done so for the first time before the age of 13**. The incidence of this behavior increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 8%, grade 10 – 18%, grade 11 – 32%, grade 12 – 45%). Males (28%) were more likely to have ever used marijuana than were females (21%). Further, **16%** of all respondents (25% - MA YRBS) **report having used marijuana on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey** (females – 12%, males – 19%).
- **7%** of all respondents **report having ever used some form of synthetic marijuana such as “Spice”, “K2”, or in some edible form** (grade 9 – 2%, grade 10 – 4%, grade 11 – 8%, grade 12 – 13%). There was no variation by gender.
- **When asked their perception about how many students at their grade level in their school had used marijuana during the previous month, 7% believed that over three-quarters of their peers had done so and another 18% (total of 25%) believed that over half had done so**. In fact, **16%** of all respondents actually **report having used marijuana during the previous month**.
- **9%** of all respondents **report having ever used any prescription medication that was not prescribed by a doctor for them specifically** (grade 9 – 6%, grade 10 – 8%, grade 11 – 11%, grade 12 – 12%). There was very little variation by gender. Further, **6% report doing so in the previous twelve months**.
- **3%** of all respondents (5% - MA YRBS) **report having ever used any form of cocaine, including powder, crack, or freebase**. The incidence of lifetime cocaine use increased slightly each year by grade (grade 9 – 1%, grade 10 – 2%, grade 11 – 4%, grade 12 – 6%) and was higher among males (4%) than females (1%).
- **4%** of all respondents **report having ever used a prescription opiate medication that was not prescribed by a doctor specifically for them** (grade 9 – 1%, grade 10 – 4%, grade 11 – 7%, grade 12 – 6%). There was very little variation by gender.
- **3%** of all respondents (4% - MA YRBS) **report having ever used MDMA (i.e. molly, ecstasy, “E”, “X”)**. The incidence of this behavior increased slightly each year by grade (grade 9 – 1%, grade 10 – 2%, grade 11 – 4%, grade 12 – 5%). There was no variation by gender.

ILLEGAL DRUG USE (CONT'D)

- **4%** all respondents **report having ever used any “other type” of illegal drug such as LSD, PCP, mushrooms, Ketamine (Special K), Rohypnol (Roofies) or GHB.** The incidence of this behavior increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 1%, grade 10 – 2%, grade 11 – 6%, grade 12 – 8%). Male respondents (6%) were more likely to have ever used “other drugs” than were females (2%).
- **11%** of all respondents (20% - MA YRBS) **report having been offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property** on at least one occasion during the twelve months prior to the survey (grade 9 – 7%, grade 10 – 12%, grade 11 – 12%, grade 12 – 15%). Male respondents (13%) were more likely to have been offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property than were females (9%).

GAMBLING

- **One respondent in five (21%)** of all respondents **reports having gambled by betting on the lottery, Keno, sporting events, casino games, cards, or racing** at least once during the twelve months prior to the survey. The incidence of this behavior increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 17%, grade 10 – 19%, grade 11 – 20%, grade 12 – 28%). Males (30%) report having done so much more frequently than females (11%).

HIV/AIDS EDUCATION

- **43%** of all respondents **report having ever talked about AIDS or HIV infection with their parents or other adults in their family** (grade 9 – 40%, grade 10 – 45%, grade 11 – 42%, grade 12 – 45%). There was no variation by gender.

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

- **More than one-fifth (22%)** of all respondents (36% - MA YRBS) **report having ever had sexual intercourse**. The incidence of lifetime sexual intercourse increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 6%, grade 10 – 13%, grade 11 – 29%, grade 12 – 42%) (females – 20%, males – 23%). Further, **2%** of all respondents (3% - MA YRBS) **report having had sexual intercourse for the first time before the age of 13**.
- **4%** of all respondents (8% - MA YRBS) **report having had sexual intercourse with four or more partners** during their lives (grade 9 – 1%, grade 10 – 2%, grade 11 – 5%, grade 12 – 9%). There was little variation by gender (females – 3%, males – 5%).
- **17%** of all respondents (28% - MA YRBS) **report having had sexual intercourse on at least one occasion during the three months prior to the survey**. The incidence of recent sexual intercourse increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 4%, grade 10 – 10%, grade 11 – 21%, grade 12 – 34%). There was no variation by gender.
- **5%** of all respondents **report having drunk alcohol or used drugs before they had sexual intercourse the last time**. The incidence of this behavior increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 1%, grade 10 – 3%, grade 11 – 7%, grade 12 – 11%) (females – 4%, males – 6%).
- **5%** of all respondents **report that if they ever had sexual intercourse, a condom was “never” or “rarely” used**. The incidence of this experience increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 2%, grade 10 – 4%, grade 11 – 6%, grade 12 – 10%). There was no variation by gender.
- **29%** of all respondents **report having ever had oral sex, either given or received**. The incidence of lifetime oral sex increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 10%, grade 10 – 23%, grade 11 – 37%, grade 12 – 51%). There was little variation by gender. Further, **27%** of all respondents **report having oral sex at least once during the previous twelve months**.
- **When asked their perception about how many students at their grade level in their school have ever had sexual intercourse, 23% believed that over one-half of their peers had done so**. In fact, **22%** of all respondents actually **report having ever had sexual intercourse**.

DIETARY BEHAVIOR

- While **58%** of all respondents **described themselves as being at about the right weight, 39%** (46% - MA YRBS) were **trying to lose weight** (grade 9 – 37%, grade 10 – 39%, grade 11 – 39%, grade 12 – 43%). Females (55%) were much more likely to be trying to lose weight than were males (23%) who were much more likely to be trying to gain weight.
- During the thirty days prior to the survey, **in order to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight:**
 - **58%** of all respondents **report having exercised.** (females – 64%, males – 53%)
 - **32%** of all respondents **report having eaten less food, fewer calories, or foods low in fat.** (females – 45%, males – 20%)
 - **7%** of all respondents **report having gone without eating for 24 hours or more.** (females – 9%, males – 4%)
 - **3%** of all respondents **report having taken diet pills, powders, or liquids without a doctor’s advice.** (females – 3%, males – 3%)
 - **3%** of all respondents **report having vomited or taken laxatives.** (females – 5%, males – 2%)
- **One respondent in five (21%) reports drinking a caffeinated beverage such as coffee, coffee drinks, tea, soda, sports drinks, or drinks like Red Bull** at least once per day on average during the previous seven days. The incidence of regularly drinking caffeinated beverages increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 14%, grade 10 – 19%, grade 11 – 25%, grade 12 – 29%), and was higher among female respondents (females – 23%, males – 19%).
- **32%** of all respondents **report having eaten breakfast on fewer than five days during the week prior to the survey.** The incidence of this behavior varied little by grade (grade 9 – 30%, grade 10 – 30%, grade 11 – 34%, grade 12 – 35%) or gender (females – 34%, males – 30%).

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- **Nearly three-quarters (73%)** of all respondents **report having exercised or participated in physical activities for at least 20 minutes on at least three days during the week prior to the survey.** The incidence of such regular exercise decreased each year by grade (grade 9 – 76%, grade 10 – 73%, grade 11 – 72%, grade 12 – 69%). Males (77%) report having done so more frequently than females (69%).
- **One-quarter (24%)** of all respondents **report that they spend more than three hours doing homework each day on average** (grade 9 – 20%, grade 10 – 26%, grade 11 – 29%, grade 12 – 20%). Female respondents (30%) were much more likely to do so than were males (17%).
- **44%** of all respondents **report that they spend four hours or more per day on an average school day using computers, television, phones, or other visual technology.** The incidence of this behavior was highest in grade 12 (grade 9 – 42%, grade 10 – 42%, grade 11 – 45%, grade 12 – 49%). There was no variation by gender.