

**REPORT ON**

**THE 2008 YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY**

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

**FOR THE**

**ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**AND THE**

**ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOLS**

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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 seven school districts) 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 May of 2007, with the support and encouragement of administration from Emerson Hospital and each school district, a committee comprised of a representative from Emerson Hospital and Health Education Coordinators from seven 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; Dr. Carolyn Imperato from the Acton and Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools; Mr. Curtis Bates from the Boxborough Public Schools; Ms. Kathy Bowen from the Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional Schools; Ms. Alice Lenhart from the Groton-Dunstable Regional Schools; Ms. Patricia Trahman from the Littleton Public Schools; Ms. Lisa MacLean from the Maynard Public Schools; Mr. John Lyons from the Westford Public Schools; 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 in seven school districts including the Acton and Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools, during March of 2008. 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, suicide, tobacco use, alcohol use, drug use, gambling, HIV/AIDS education, sexual behavior, dietary behavior, and physical activity. Emerson Hospital and the seven 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 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 was carried out during the Spring of 2007 and was administered to students from 59 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 seven school systems included in this aggregate are the Acton and Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools, the Boxborough Public Schools (grade 6 only), the Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional Schools, the Groton-Dunstable Regional Schools, the Littleton Public Schools, the Maynard Public Schools, and the Westford Public Schools. As part of the following analysis, a comparison with certain of the data from the results of that aggregate will also be provided.

## **SURVEY PROCESS**

In the Acton and Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools it was agreed that the Youth Risk Behavior Survey would be distributed to all students in grades 6, 8, and 9 through 12 during March of 2008. Parents were informed in advance of the survey and twenty-four students were exempted at parental request. The survey was administered in each school over the course of the school day to all students in attendance on March 11, 2008. In each school the survey was administered by professional staff from the school 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 835 students who responded to the middle school survey: 387 from grade 6 (females – 203, males – 180), and 448 from grade 8 (females – 210, males – 233). Four sixth grade respondents and five eighth grade respondents did not indicate their gender.

There were a total of 1,812 students who responded to the high school survey: 481 from grade 9, 443 from grade 10, 454 from grade 11, and 425 from grade 12. There were 877 females and 928 males who responded to the survey. Seven students did not indicate their gender and nine students did not indicate their grade.

## **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 tenth of one percent, and not all percentages will total exactly 100 due to rounding and no responses in some cases.

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

### Aggregate of Respondents From Seven School Districts 2008 YRBS Student Sample

#### Grade and Gender

##### Grade 6: 1,458 Respondents

Females	52.6%
Males	46.7%
Gender not indicated	0.7%

##### Grade 8: 1,425 Respondents

Females	46.5%
Males	52.6%
Gender not indicated	0.9%

##### Grade 9: 1,541 Respondents

Females	48.5%
Males	51.3%
Gender not indicated	0.1%

##### Grade 10: 1,473 Respondents

Females	50.2%
Males	49.4%
Gender not indicated	0.4%

##### Grade 11: 1,446 Respondents

Females	49.6%
Males	50.3%
Gender not indicated	0.1%

##### Grade 12: 1,296 Respondents

Females	48.5%
Males	51.5%
Gender not indicated	0.1%

**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS (CONT'D)**

**School District**

**Grade 6:**

Acton	26.5%	387
Boxborough	5.3%	78
Concord	13.6%	199
Groton - Dunstable	13.9%	203
Littleton	8.4%	122
Maynard	6.3%	92
Westford	25.9%	<u>377</u>
		1,458

**Grade 8:**

Acton - Boxborough	31.4%	448
Concord	12.1%	172
Groton - Dunstable	14.2%	203
Littleton	8.5%	121
Maynard	6.0%	86
Westford	27.7%	<u>395</u>
		1,425

**High School:**

Acton - Boxborough	31.3%	1,812
Concord - Carlisle	19.7%	1,143
Groton - Dunstable	12.9%	747
Littleton	6.0%	347
Maynard	5.1%	294
Westford	25.0%	<u>1,451</u>
		5,794

## **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 Acton and Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools. 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 65 questions in grade 6, 89 questions in grade 8, and 111 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 2007 Massachusetts High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey and the seven school district aggregate data. It is hoped that the following as well as a more detailed analysis of the results of this survey, will assist the Acton and Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools and their Health Advisory Committee in their on-going development of health education curriculum.

MIDDLE SCHOOL – GRADES 6 AND 8SAFETY

- **2.4%** of sixth grade respondents (1.3% - aggregate) and **6.1%** of eighth grade respondents (6.6% - aggregate) **report that they “never” or “rarely” wear a seatbelt when riding in a car** (grade 6: females – 1.0%, males – 3.9%; grade 8: females – 2.9%, males – 8.8%).
- **12.3%** of sixth grade respondents (14.9% - aggregate) and **24.2%** of eighth grade respondents (31.8% - aggregate) **report that they “never” or “rarely” wear a helmet when riding a bicycle**. In each grade males (grade 6 – 18.3%, grade 8 – 25.7%) report never or rarely wearing a bicycle helmet more frequently than females (grade 6 – 7.0%, grade 8 – 22.8%).
- **2.3%** of sixth grade respondents (2.7% - aggregate) and **6.1%** of eighth grade respondents (8.2% - aggregate) **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** on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey (grade 6: females – 1.5%, males – 3.3%; grade 8: females – 4.3%, males – 7.9%).
- **9.4%** of sixth grade respondents (9.5% - aggregate) and **21.5%** of eighth grade respondents (18.1% - aggregate) **report having ever given information about themselves over the internet to someone they never met** (other than for purchases) (grade 6: females – 9.9%, males – 8.9%; grade 8: females – 25.6%, males – 18.3%).
- **14.6%** of sixth grade respondents (11.6% - aggregate) and **14.1%** of eighth grade respondents (14.0% - aggregate) **report having ever met someone in person with whom they initially had contact over the internet**. Males report doing so most frequently (grade 6: females – 11.1%, males – 18.5%; grade 8: females – 11.7%, males – 16.5%).

VIOLENCE RELATED BEHAVIORS

- **9.2%** of sixth grade respondents (7.3% - aggregate) and **13.9%** of eighth grade respondents (14.7% - aggregate) **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 – 14.5%, grade 8 – 22.4%) were much more likely to have done so than were females (grade 6 – 4.5%, grade 8 – 4.8%). Further, **0.8%** 6<sup>th</sup> grade respondents (0.3% - aggregate) and **1.3%** of 8<sup>th</sup> grade respondents (2.4% - aggregate) **report having done so on school property during the school day.**
- **14.4%** of sixth grade respondents (12.5% - aggregate) and **12.6%** of eighth grade respondents (15.3% - aggregate) **report having been in a physical fight on school property** at least once in the twelve months prior to the survey. Male respondents (grade 6 – 24.3%, grade 8 – 19.0%) were much more likely to have done so than were females (grade 6 – 5.9%, grade 8 – 5.2%).
- **Over one-fourth (27.0%)** of sixth grade respondents (23.4% - aggregate) and **24.1%** of eighth graders (23.4% - aggregate) **report having been bullied in school** during the twelve months prior to the survey (grade 6: females – 24.3%, males – 30.0%; grade 8: females – 21.4%, males – 26.2%). Among all respondents, **3.7%** (3.0% - aggregate) of 6<sup>th</sup> graders and **3.0%** (4.0% - aggregate) of 8<sup>th</sup> graders **report having resisted with physical force.**
- **10.5%** of eighth grade respondents (8.5% - aggregate) **report having been sexually harassed by someone in school** during the 12 months prior to the survey (females – 13.6%, males – 7.9%).
- **6.7%** of eighth grade respondents (5.9% - aggregate) **report having ever been hurt physically or sexually by a date or someone they were going out with** (females – 6.7%, males – 6.9%). **3.2%** of respondents (3.2% - aggregate) **report having ever done so to someone else.**
- **12.7%** of eighth grade respondents (11.9% - aggregate) **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. **10.0%** of all respondents (9.2% - aggregate) **report having done so to someone else.** Again, there was no variation by gender.
- **14.2%** of eighth grade respondents (13.5% - aggregate) **report having hurt themselves on purpose (for example by cutting, burning, or bruising yourself on purpose)** on at least one occasion during the previous twelve months. There was little variation by gender (females – 15.3%, males – 13.5%).

SUICIDE

- **5.8%** of sixth grade respondents (5.0% - aggregate) and **11.9%** of eighth grade respondents (11.1% - aggregate) **report having seriously considered attempting suicide** during the twelve months prior to the survey (grade 6: females - 5.4%, males – 6.1%; grade 8: females – 15.4%, males – 9.1%).
- **1.3%** of sixth grade respondents (1.3% - aggregate) and **6.1%** of eighth grade respondents (5.8% - aggregate) **report having actually attempted suicide** on at least one occasion during the twelve months prior to the survey (grade 6: females – 1.5%, males – 1.1%; grade 8: females – 4.3%, males – 7.8%). Further, among 8<sup>th</sup> graders **who report attempting suicide 33.3% report that such attempt resulted in receiving medical treatment from a doctor or nurse.**

TOBACCO USE

- **0.5%** of sixth grade respondents (one female, one male) (1.2% - aggregate) and **10.4%** of eighth grade respondents (12.6% - aggregate) **report having ever tried cigarette smoking** (grade 8: females – 8.2%, males – 12.5%). Further, **8.1% of eighth graders report having tried cigarette smoking for the first time before the age of 11.**
- **0.3%** of sixth grade respondents (one male) (0.3% - aggregate) and **5.2%** of eighth grade respondents (6.2% - aggregate) **report having smoked cigarettes on at least one occasion** during the thirty days prior to the survey (grade 8: females – 3.8%, males – 6.4%).
- **0.5%** of sixth grade respondents (0.3% - aggregate) **report having smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars** during the thirty days prior to the survey, while **4.7%** of eighth grade respondents (5.4% - aggregate) **report having done so.** Eighth grade male respondents (6.5%) report smoking cigars more frequently than females (2.9%).
- When eighth graders were asked their perception about how many students at their grade level in their school had smoked cigarettes during the previous month, **17.0% believed that over one-quarter of their peers had done so.** In fact, **5.2%** of all eighth grade respondents actually **report having smoked cigarettes during the previous month.**

ALCOHOL USE

- **4.5%** of sixth grade respondents (4.8% - aggregate) and **16.0%** of eighth grade respondents (23.8% - aggregate) **report having ever had a drink of alcohol other than for religious reasons** (grade 6: females – 0.5%, males – 8.9%; grade 8: females – 14.3%, males – 17.8%). Further, **6.3%** of sixth graders and **6.6%** of eighth graders **report having done so for the first time before the age of 12.**
- **2.1%** of sixth grade respondents (1.7% - aggregate) and **9.4%** of eighth grade respondents (12.4% - aggregate) **report having had at least one drink of alcohol on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey.** There was no variation by gender in grade eight (grade 6: females – 0.5%, males – 3.9%).
- **6.0%** of eighth grade respondents (7.3% - aggregate) **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. Male and female respondents report this experience with equal frequency.
- **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, 34.5% believed that at least one-quarter of their peers had done so.** In fact, **9.4%** of all eighth grade respondents actually **report having used alcohol during the previous month.**

ILLEGAL DRUG USE

- **0.5%** of sixth grade respondents (one female, one male) (0.7% - aggregate) and **4.3%** of eighth grade respondents (8.5% - aggregate) **report having ever used marijuana** (grade 8: females – 2.4%, males – 6.1%). Further, **no** sixth graders and **3.4%** of eighth graders **report having used marijuana for the first time before the age of 12**.
- **0.3%** of sixth grade respondents (0.4% - aggregate) and **3.8%** of eighth grade respondents (6.1% - aggregate) **report having used marijuana on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey** (grade 8: females – 3.4%, males – 4.3%).
- **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, 12.9% believed that at least one-quarter of their peers had done so. In fact, 3.8% of all eighth grade respondents actually report having used marijuana during the previous month.**
- **1.8%** of sixth grade respondents (3.0% - aggregate) and **6.1%** of eighth grade respondents (7.6% - aggregate) **report having sniffed glue, or breathed the contents of spray cans, or inhaled any paints or sprays to get high** at least once during the thirty days prior to the survey (grade 6: females – 0.5%, males – 3.4%; grade 8: females – 5.8%, males – 6.5%).
- **4.8%** of eighth graders (5.5% - aggregate) **report having used someone else's prescription medication** during the twelve months prior to the survey. There was no variation by gender.
- **2.9%** of eighth graders (4.0% - aggregate) **report having used MDMA (i.e. ecstasy, "E", "X")** at least once during their lives (females – 1.4%, males – 4.3%).
- **0.5%** of sixth grade respondents (two females) (1.1% - aggregate) and **6.0%** of eighth grade respondents (6.1% - aggregate) **report having been offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property** during the twelve months prior to the survey (grade 8: females – 5.4%, males – 6.6%).

GAMBLING

- **15.2%** of sixth grade respondents (13.9% - aggregate) and **26.2%** of eighth grade respondents (26.8% - aggregate) **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 – 22.8%, grade 8 – 37.0%) report this behavior much more frequently than females (grade 6 – 8.4%, grade 8 – 14.9%). Further, **7.6% of sixth graders** and **16.8% of eighth graders report having gambled** during the prior thirty days.
- **2.1%** of sixth grade respondents (one male) (1.7% - aggregate) and **5.1%** of eighth grade respondents (4.8% - aggregate) **report having spent one or more hours online using the internet to gamble** during the previous month (grade 6: females – 0.5%, males – 3.9%; grade 8: females – 1.6%, males – 8.2%).

HIV/AIDS EDUCATION

- **9.7%** of sixth grade respondents (38.8% - aggregate) and **64.4%** of eighth grade respondents (67.2% - aggregate) **report having ever been taught about AIDS or HIV infection in school** (grade 6: females – 8.0%, males – 11.7%; grade 8: females – 59.1%, males – 69.4%).
- **26.1%** of sixth grade respondents (31.5% - aggregate) and **38.3%** of eighth grade respondents (37.6% - aggregate) **report having ever talked about AIDS or HIV infection with their parents or other adults in their family.** There was no variation by gender in either grade.

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

- **One eighth grade respondent in ten (9.8%) reports having ever had sexual intercourse** compared to 11.0% from the six district aggregate. Male respondents (13.5%) were more likely to have had this experience than were females (5.8%). Further, **3.8%** of all eighth graders (3.2% - aggregate) **report having had sexual intercourse for the first time before the age of 12.**
- **10.7%** of eighth grade respondents (11.2% - aggregate) **report having ever had oral sex.** Males (13.5%) report this experience more frequently than females (7.7%).

DIETARY BEHAVIOR

- **59.3%** of sixth grade respondents and **58.9%** of eighth grade respondents **described themselves as being at about the right weight** while many were trying to lose weight (grade 6 – 24.5%, grade 8 – 34.7%) (aggregate: grade 6 – 29.1%, grade 8 – 33.6%) and others were trying to gain weight (grade 6 – 10.3%, grade 8 – 11.3%). In both grades female respondents (grade 6 – 31.3%, grade 8 – 48.8%) were much more likely to be trying to lose weight than were males (grade 6 – 16.8%, grade 8 – 21.7%).
- During the thirty days prior to the survey, **in order to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight:**
  - **51.8%** of sixth graders (55.7% - aggregate) and **59.9%** of eighth graders (59.3% - aggregate) **report having exercised.**
  - **15.7%** of sixth graders (20.4% - aggregate) and **23.1%** of eighth graders (23.5% - aggregate) **report having eaten less food, fewer calories, or foods low in fat.**
  - **1.6%** of sixth graders (1.7% - aggregate) and **4.1%** of eighth graders (5.6% - aggregate) **report having gone without eating for 24 hours or more.**
  - **1.0%** of sixth graders (0.7% - aggregate) and **2.5%** of eighth graders (one female) (2.2% - aggregate) **report having taken any diet pills, powders, or liquids without a doctor's advice.**
  - **0.5%** of sixth graders (0.5% - aggregate) and **4.6%** of eighth graders (3.7% - aggregate) **report having vomited or taken laxatives.**
- **10.4%** of sixth grade respondents (14.6% - aggregate) and **23.7%** of eighth grade respondents (26.7% - aggregate) **report that they ate breakfast on fewer than five days during the week before the survey.** In grade eight, females (27.1%) report eating breakfast on fewer than five days during the week before the survey more frequently than males (20.8%) while there was very no variation by gender in grade 6.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- **77.7%** of sixth grade respondents (77.5% - aggregate) and **86.7%** of eighth grade respondents (79.4% - aggregate) **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.** In each grade males (grade 6 – 81.7%, grade 8 – 89.1%) report such regular exercise more frequently than females (grade 6 – 74.2%, grade 8 – 83.9%).
- **11.8%** of sixth grade respondents (15.8% - aggregate) and **43.3%** of eighth grade respondents (41.4% - aggregate) **report that they get seven or fewer hours of sleep each night on average** (grade 6: females – 9.4%, males – 14.7%; grade 8: females – 51.5%, males – 35.7%).
- **11.4%** of sixth grade respondents (15.4% - aggregate) and **17.0%** of eighth grade respondents (18.0% - aggregate) **report that they watch TV for at least 3 hours or more per day on an average school day.** Males (grade 6 – 13.0%, grade 8 – 18.8%) report doing so slightly more frequently than females (grade 6 – 10.0%, grade 8 – 15.4%).

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

As mentioned earlier in this report, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey was administered to Acton-Boxborough High School students in grades 9 through 12 during March of 2008. 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 2007 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey as well as the six district aggregate. It should be noted that some of the questions in this survey were not asked of students in the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

SAFETY

- **2.9%** of all respondents (5.7% - aggregate) (15% - MA YRBS) **report “never” or “rarely” wearing a seatbelt when riding in a car driven by someone else.** There was very little variation by grade (grade 9 – 2.3%, grade 10 – 2.7%, grade 11 – 2.4%, grade 12 – 4.2%) and no variation by gender. Among those most likely to drive, 1.6% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders and 3.8% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders report “never” or “rarely” wearing a seatbelt when they themselves drive.
- **16.7%** of all respondents (20.5% - aggregate) **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 (grade 9 – 2.1%, grade 10 – 13.4%, grade 11 – 22.9%, grade 12 – 29.6%). Male respondents (19.4%) report this experience more frequently than females (13.7%).
- **7.3%** of all respondents (8.4% - aggregate) (11% - 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 (17.4%) were most likely to have done so. The groups which most frequently reported this behavior were 11<sup>th</sup> grade males (9.1%), 12<sup>th</sup> grade females (17.0%), and 12<sup>th</sup> grade males (17.8%).
- **Nearly one-third (31.9%)** of all respondents (36.2% - aggregate) **report having driven a car while using a cell phone to talk or text** at least once during the previous thirty days. Among those most likely to drive, 49.3% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders and 72.7% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders report having done so. There was no variation by gender.
- **One-fourth (24.5%)** of all respondents (24.2% - aggregate) **report having ever given information about themselves over the internet to someone they never met (other than for purchases)** (grade 9 – 19.4%, grade 10 – 28.1%, grade 11 – 27.1%, grade 12 – 23.5%). There was no variation by gender.
- **15.3%** of all respondents (15.8% - aggregate) **report having ever met someone in person with whom they initially had contact over the internet.** Respondents from grade 10 report doing so most frequently (grade 9 – 12.9%, grade 10 – 18.1%, grade 11 – 14.6%, grade 12 – 16.0%). There was no variation by gender.

VIOLENCE RELATED BEHAVIORS

- **1.3%** of all respondents (2.5% - aggregate) **report having carried a gun on school property** on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey (grade 9 – 0%, grade 10 – 1.8%, grade 11 – 1.8%, grade 12 – 1.4%) (females – 0.2%, males – 2.3%).
- **4.5%** of all respondents (5.5% - aggregate) (5% - 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 – 2.9%, grade 10 – 5.0%, grade 11 – 6.2%, grade 12 – 3.8%). Males (6.9%) were more likely to have carried a weapon on school property than were females (1.9%). Further, **2.9%** report having done so **during the school day**.
- **2.4%** of all respondents (4.2% - aggregate) (5% - MA YRBS) **report having been threatened or injured by someone with a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property** at least once during the twelve months prior to the survey (grade 9 – 1.7%, grade 10 – 3.4%, grade 11 – 3.3%, grade 12 – 1.4%). Males (4.3%) report this experience much more frequently than females (0.5%).
- **4.3%** of all respondents (6.1% - aggregate) (11% - MA YRBS) **report having ever been hurt physically or sexually by a date or someone they were going out with**. The incidence of this experience was highest in grade 11 (6.0%) and lowest in grade 9 (2.5%) (females – 5.1%, males – 3.3%). Among all respondents, **1.5%** (2.8% - aggregate) **report having ever done so to someone else**.
- **13.0%** of all respondents (16.3% - aggregate) **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 each year by grade (grade 9 – 8.1%, grade 10 – 13.0%, grade 11 – 14.5%, grade 12 – 17.0%). Females (15.0%) report this experience slightly more frequently than males (11.1%). Among all respondents, **10.4%** (13.8% - aggregate) **report having done so to someone else**.
- **13.2%** of all respondents (15.5% - aggregate) (22% - MA YRBS) **report having been bullied in school** during the twelve months prior to the survey. The incidence of this experience decreased each year by grade (grade 9 – 18.0%, grade 10 – 16.5%, grade 11 – 10.6%, grade 12 – 7.3%) and was slightly higher among males (females – 10.8%, males – 15.4%). Further, **2.3%** of all respondents (3.1% - aggregate) **report that they resisted being bullied in school with physical force**.

VIOLENCE RELATED BEHAVIORS (CONT'D)

- **6.2%** of all respondents (7.9% - aggregate) **report having been sexually harassed in school** during the twelve months prior to the survey. There was little variation by grade (grade 9 – 6.6%, grade 10 – 7.1%, grade 11 – 6.9%, grade 12 – 4.3%) (females – 8.1%, males – 4.4%).
- **11.8%** of all respondents (13.4% - aggregate) (17% - MA YRBS) **report having hurt themselves on purpose (cuts, burns, bruises)** on at least one occasion during the previous twelve months (grade 9 – 9.2%, grade 10 – 14.3%, grade 11 – 13.0%, grade 12 – 11.1%). Female respondents (15.4%) report such self-injury more frequently than males (8.4%).

SUICIDE

- **11.3%** of all respondents (11.8% - aggregate) (13% - MA YRBS) **report having seriously considered attempting suicide** during the twelve months prior to the survey. The incidence of this behavior was lowest in grade 12 (grade 9 – 9.6%, grade 10 – 13.0%, grade 11 – 13.7%, grade 12 – 8.9%). Female respondents (12.9%) report seriously considering suicide slightly more frequently than males (9.7%).
- **3.3%** of all respondents (4.4% - aggregate) (8% - MA YRBS) **report having actually attempted suicide** on at least one occasion during the twelve months prior to the survey. The incidence of this behavior was lowest in grade 9 (grade 9 – 1.7%, grade 10 – 3.2%, grade 11 – 4.6%, grade 12 – 3.8%). There was no variation by gender. Further, **among those who report attempting suicide, 20.7% report that such attempt resulted in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse.**

TOBACCO USE

- **18.8%** of all respondents (26.3% - aggregate) (46% - 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 – 6.9%, grade 10 – 15.4%, grade 11 – 20.8%, grade 12 – 33.7%) and was higher among males (females – 16.5%, males – 20.9%). Further, **5.0%** of all respondents (7.0% - aggregate) **report having tried cigarette smoking for the first time before the age of 13.**
- **7.6%** of all respondents (12.6% - aggregate) (18% - MA YRBS) **report having smoked cigarettes on at least one day during the thirty days prior to the survey** (grade 9 – 2.9%, grade 10 – 5.9%, grade 11 – 8.8%, grade 12 – 13.4%). There was little variation by gender (females – 6.5%, males – 8.7%).
- **8.3%** of all respondents (11.9% - aggregate) (15% - 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 recent cigar use increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 2.5%, grade 10 – 6.6%, grade 11 – 11.0%, grade 12 – 13.4%). Males (12.8%) were much more likely to have done so than were females (3.4%).

ALCOHOL USE

- **57.9%** of all respondents (63.2% - aggregate) (73% - 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 **8.7%** (12.1% - aggregate) (20% - 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 – 38.7%, grade 10 – 55.1%, grade 11 – 63.5%, grade 12 – 76.4%). There was little variation by gender (females – 58.9%, males – 56.9%).
- **31.7%** of all respondents (38.1% - aggregate) (46% - 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 – 11.1%, grade 10 – 27.6%, grade 11 – 35.8%, grade 12 – 55.2%). There was no variation by gender.
- **One respondent in five (20.4%)** (25.2% - aggregate) (28% - 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 – 5.2%, grade 10 – 16.1%, grade 11 – 23.2%, grade 12 – 38.8%). There was no variation by gender.
- **One-fourth (26.6%)** of all respondents (30.3% - aggregate) **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 was much higher among 12<sup>th</sup> graders (grade 9 – 8.1%, grade 10 – 22.0%, grade 11 – 32.7%, grade 12 – 45.4%). 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, 19.1% believed that over three-quarters of their peers had done so** and another 37.7% (total of 56.8%) believed that over half had done so. In fact, **31.7%** of all respondents actually **report having used alcohol during the previous month**.

ILLEGAL DRUG USE

- **More than one-fourth (27.2%)** of all respondents (32.2% - aggregate) (41% - MA YRBS) **report having ever used marijuana** and **2.6%** (4.7% - aggregate) (9% - MA YRBS) **report having done so for the first time before the age of 13**. The incidence of lifetime marijuana use increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 7.8%, grade 10 – 21.5%, grade 11 – 35.4%, grade 12 – 46.0%) (females – 23.0%, males – 31.0%). Further, **18.5%** of all respondents (21.4% - aggregate) (25% - MA YRBS) **report having used marijuana on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey** (females – 13.7%, males – 23.0%).
- **When asked their perception about how many students at their grade level in their school had used marijuana during the previous month, 6.0% believed that over three-quarters of their peers had done so** and another 17.0% (total of 23.0%) believed that over half had done so. In fact, **18.5%** of all respondents actually **report having used marijuana during the previous month**.
- **7.4%** of all respondents (10.1% - aggregate) **report having used someone else’s prescription medication** during the twelve months prior to the survey (grade 9 – 4.4%, grade 10 – 6.1%, grade 11 – 10.2%, grade 12 – 8.9%). There was little variation by gender (females – 8.3%, males – 6.3%).
- **2.6%** all respondents (5.4% - aggregate) (9% - MA YRBS) **report having ever used any form of cocaine, including powder, crack, or freebase**. The incidence of lifetime cocaine use was nearly non-existent in grade 9 (grade 9 – 0.4%, grade 10 – 2.5%, grade 11 – 4.2%, grade 12 – 3.3%). There was no variation by gender.
- **2.9%** all respondents (4.5% - aggregate) **report having sniffed glue, or breathed the contents of spray cans, or inhaled any paints or sprays to get high** on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey. There was little variation by grade (grade 9 – 2.1%, grade 10 – 2.9%, grade 11 – 4.0%, grade 12 – 2.8%). There was no variation by gender.
- **3.6%** of all respondents (5.0% - aggregate) (7% - MA YRBS) **report having ever used MDMA (i.e. ecstasy, “E”, “X”)** (grade 9 – 0.4%, grade 10 – 3.4%, grade 11 – 3.8%, grade 12 – 6.8%). There was no variation by gender.

ILLEGAL DRUG USE (CONT'D)

- **6.1%** all respondents (7.9% - aggregate) **report having ever used any “other type” of illegal drug such as LSD (acid), PCP, mushrooms, Ketamine (Special K), Rohypnol (Roofies), or GHB.** The incidence of this behavior was highest in grade 12 (grade 9 – 1.5%, grade 10 – 4.1%, grade 11 – 8.4%, grade 12 – 10.6%) and was higher among males (females – 3.8%, males – 8.1%).
- **20.5%** of all respondents (20.0% - aggregate) (27% - 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. Respondents from grade 9 (14.0%) report this experience less frequently than those from grades 10 (18.8%), 11 (24.3%), or 12 (25.4%). Male respondents (24.5%) were more likely to have been offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property than were females (16.1%).

GAMBLING

- **33.7%** of all respondents (34.7% - aggregate) **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. There was relatively little variation by grade (grade 9 – 32.7%, grade 10 – 35.0%, grade 11 – 31.6%, grade 12 – 35.8%). Further, male respondents (47.8%) report doing so much more frequently than females (18.6%). In fact, **18.7%** of all respondents (19.6% - aggregate) **report having gambled during the previous month.**
- **3.8%** of all respondents (5.4% - aggregate) **report having spent one or more hours online using the internet to gamble** during the previous month (grade 9 – 2.7%, grade 10 – 5.0%, grade 11 – 4.9%, grade 12 – 2.8%). Male respondents (6.5%) report having done so more frequently than females (1.0%).

HIV/AIDS EDUCATION

- **52.5%** of all respondents (49.2% - aggregate) **report having ever talked about AIDS or HIV infection with their parents or other adults in their family** (grade 9 – 50.6%, grade 10 – 51.3%, grade 11 – 49.4%, grade 12 – 59.3%) (females – 57.0%, males – 48.2%).
- **96.3%** of all respondents (93.7% - aggregate) (89% - MA YRBS) **report having ever been taught about AIDS/HIV infection in school** (grade 9 – 99.2%, grade 10 – 95.9%, grade 11 – 93.8%, grade 12 – 96.4%). There was no variation by gender.

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

- **23.7%** of all respondents (27.2% - aggregate) (44% - MA YRBS) **report having ever had sexual intercourse.** The incidence of lifetime sexual intercourse increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 7.3%, grade 10 – 20.2%, grade 11 – 27.7%, grade 12 – 41.6%). There was very little variation by gender (females – 22.7%, males – 24.5%). Further, **2.0%** of all respondents (3.4% - aggregate) (6% - MA YRBS) **report having had sexual intercourse for the first time before the age of 13.**
- **5.6%** of all respondents (7.5% - aggregate) (12% - MA YRBS) **report having had sexual intercourse with four or more partners** during their lives. The incidence of this behavior was highest in grade 12 (grade 9 – 1.5%, grade 10 – 5.3%, grade 11 – 6.8%, grade 12 – 9.7%) (females – 4.7%, males – 6.6%).
- **18.8%** of all respondents (21.3% - aggregate) (33% - 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 – 4.4%, grade 10 – 15.8%, grade 11 – 23.5%, grade 12 – 33.0%). There was no variation by gender.
- **6.6%** of all respondents (7.9% - aggregate) **report having drunk alcohol or used drugs before they had sexual intercourse the last time** (grade 9 – 1.7%, grade 10 – 5.9%, grade 11 – 8.0%, grade 12 – 11.3%) (females – 6.0%, males – 7.2%).
- **30.8%** of all respondents (35.3% - aggregate) **report having ever had oral sex, either given or received.** The incidence of lifetime oral sex was highest in grade 12 (grade 9 – 11.9%, grade 10 – 28.7%, grade 11 – 37.1%, grade 12 – 47.4%). There was little variation by gender (females – 29.4%, males – 32.0%). Further, **28.0%** of all respondents (32.5% - aggregate) **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 had ever had sexual intercourse, 18.8% believed that more than half of their peers had done so.** In fact, **23.7%** of all respondents actually **report having ever had sexual intercourse.**

DIETARY BEHAVIOR

- While **60.4%** of all respondents **described themselves as being at about the right weight**, **37.7%** (39.0% - aggregate) (46% - MA YRBS) were **trying to lose weight** (grade 9 – 30.1%, grade 10 – 40.0%, grade 11 – 41.1%, grade 12 – 40.7%). Females (54.8%) were much more likely to be trying to lose weight than were males (21.4%) 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**:
  - **58.7%** of all respondents (59.4% - aggregate) **report having exercised**. (females – 68.9%, males – 49.1%)
  - **32.3%** of all respondents (33.7% - aggregate) **report having eaten less food, fewer calories, or foods low in fat**. (females – 47.0%, males – 18.3%)
  - **6.4%** of all respondents (8.2% - aggregate) (11% - MA YRBS) **report having gone without eating for 24 hours or more**. (females – 9.6%, males – 3.5%)
  - **2.3%** of all respondents (3.4% - aggregate) (6% - MA YRBS) **report having taken diet pills, powders, or liquids without a doctor's advice**. (females – 2.6%, males – 1.8%)
  - **3.9%** of all respondents (4.3% - aggregate) (5% - MA YRBS) **report having vomited or taken laxatives**. (females – 6.2%, males – 1.7%)
- **35.3%** of all respondents (36.4% - aggregate) **report having eaten breakfast on fewer than five days during the week prior to the survey**. The incidence of this behavior was higher in grade 12 (grade 9 – 30.1%, grade 10 – 34.6%, grade 11 – 34.3%, grade 12 – 43.1%). Females (37.9%) report not eating breakfast regularly more frequently than males (32.9%).
- **4.2%** of all respondents (5.9% - aggregate) **report having taken performance enhancing supplements such as androstenedione or creatine** on at least one occasion during the twelve months prior to the survey. The incidence of this behavior was lowest in grade 9 (grade 9 – 1.3%, grade 10 – 4.1%, grade 11 – 5.3%, grade 12 – 6.6%). Males (7.9%) report using these supplements much more frequently than females (0.3%).

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- **74.2%** of all respondents (72.3% - aggregate) **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 was lowest among 9<sup>th</sup> graders (grade 9 – 70.6%, grade 10 – 81.0%, grade 11 – 71.4%, grade 12 – 74.5%). Male respondents (75.8%) report regular exercise slightly more frequently than females (72.4%).
- **Two-thirds (67.5%)** of all respondents (67.3% - aggregate) **report that they get seven or fewer hours of sleep each night on average** (grade 9 – 55.6%, grade 10 – 66.4%, grade 11 – 74.6%, grade 12 – 74.2%). Female respondents (73.1%) report getting less sleep each night more frequently than males (62.1%).
- **10.0%** of all respondents (14.4% - aggregate) (28% - MA YRBS) **report that they watch television 3 hours or more per day on an average school day.** There was very little variation by grade (grade 9 – 9.5%, grade 10 – 9.8%, grade 11 – 10.9%, grade 12 – 9.8%) (females – 7.2%, males – 12.7%).

