



YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR

SURVEY RESULTS

2016

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is a national survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) every two years among representative samples of high school and middle school students. The survey monitors six types of health-risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death and disability among youth and adults, including:

- Behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence
- Sexual behaviors that contribute to unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection
- Alcohol and other drug use
- Tobacco use
- Unhealthy dietary behaviors
- Inadequate physical activity

In Rhode Island, YRBS is jointly administered by the Departments of Health and Education. High schools and middle schools are given the opportunity to participate in the random state survey. The survey was administered in Rhode Island schools from January to May 2015 by Market Decisions, Inc.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- All YRBS data about risk behaviors and at-risk students: www.health.ri.gov/data/youth
- CDC survey, tools for comparing YRBS results to various locations: www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs
- To request a custom analysis of the statewide data, contact YRBS Coordinator Tara Cooper at 401-222-7628.

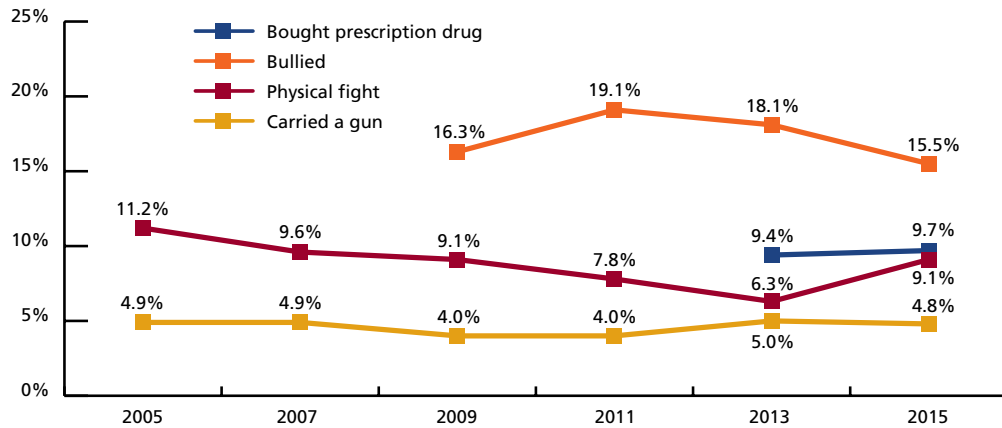


EXIT

HIGH SCHOOL RISK BEHAVIORS: ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

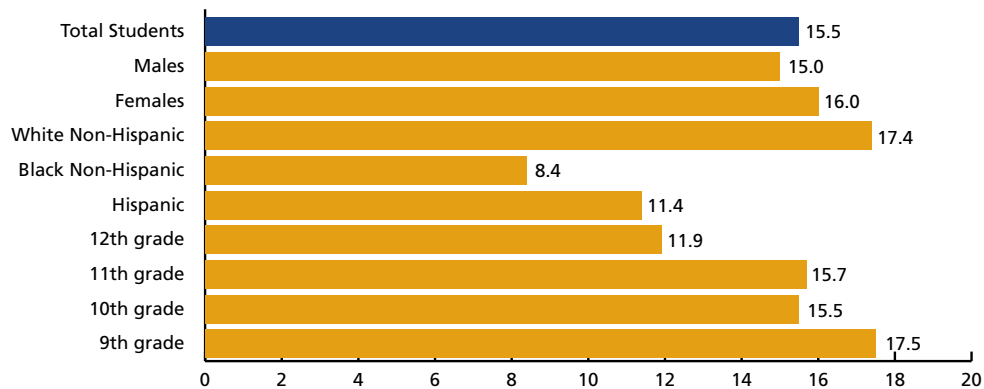
Overall, the prevalence of risk behaviors that occur on school property has remained unchanged for the past 10 years. Despite some modest improvements in reducing physical fights on school property in 2011 and 2013, the percentage increased in 2015.

FIGURE 1. REPORTED HEALTH RISKS OCCURRING ON SCHOOL PROPERTY, AMONG STUDENTS IN GRADES 9-12, RHODE ISLAND, 2005-2015.



A CLOSER LOOK: BULLIED ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

FIGURE 2. PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN GRADES 9-12 WHO WERE BULLIED ON SCHOOL PROPERTY, IN PAST 12 MONTHS, RHODE ISLAND, 2015.



POPULATION(S) AT RISK: Being bullied on school property in the past year was more frequently reported by White non-Hispanic ninth-grade students; however, this behavior is pervasive in all demographic groups.

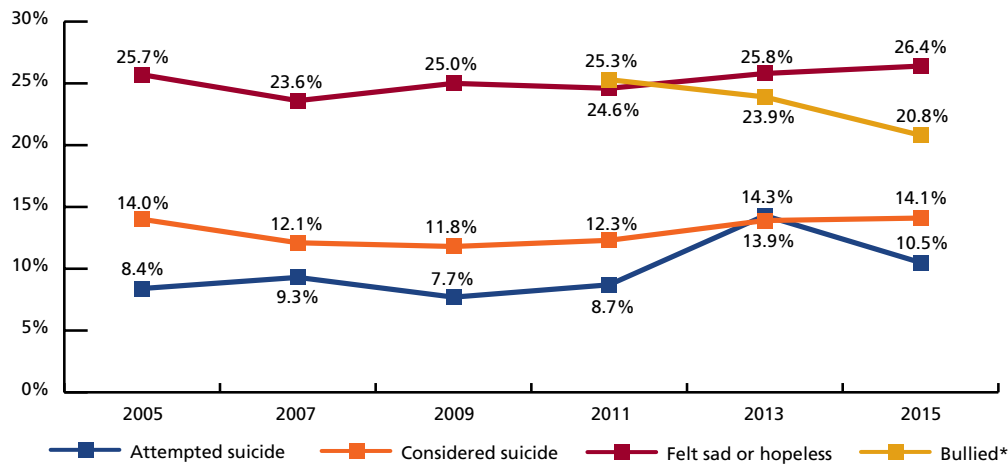
TAKING RISKS EARLY: 2015 Rhode Island Middle School Data - Behaviors on school property

- About 4 out of 10 (38.0%) of middle school students were ever bullied on school property.
- One in four middle school students (26.0%) do not feel like they belong at their school.

HIGH SCHOOL RISK BEHAVIORS: MENTAL HEALTH

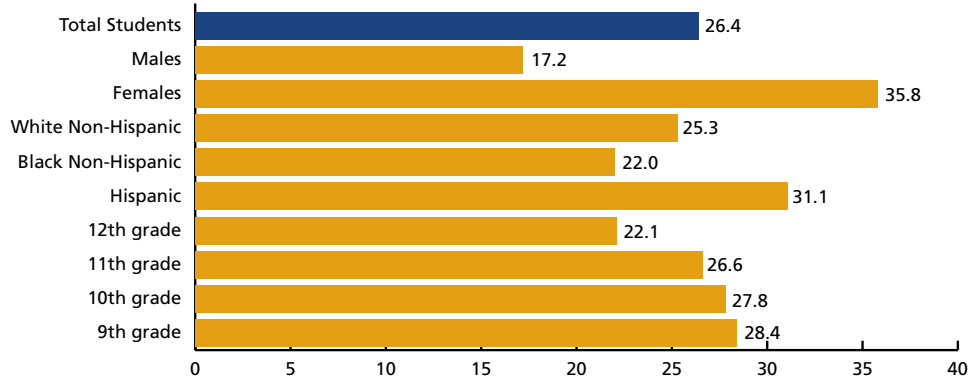
There has been little or no change in the proportion of students who are bullied (bullied on school property or electronically bullied in the past 12 months). Prevalence for sad feelings and consideration of suicide remained steady at 26.4% and 14.0%, respectively. The proportion of students who attempted suicide declined from 14.1% to 10.5% in 2015 but was still elevated compared to previous years.

FIGURE 3. REPORTED HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH MENTAL HEALTH, AMONG STUDENTS IN GRADES 9-12, RHODE ISLAND, 2005-2015.



A CLOSER LOOK: FELT SAD OR HOPELESS

FIGURE 4. PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN GRADES 9-12 WHO FELT SAD OR HOPELESS, RHODE ISLAND, 2015.



POPULATION(S) AT RISK: Female students were two times more likely to feel sad or hopeless (almost every day for two or more weeks in a row so that they stopped doing some usual activities during the 12 months before the survey) compared to males. Although a higher percentage of Hispanic students reported feeling sad or hopeless, there were no differences with racial or ethnic groups. After ninth grade, there was a modest decrease in students reporting feeling sad or hopeless.

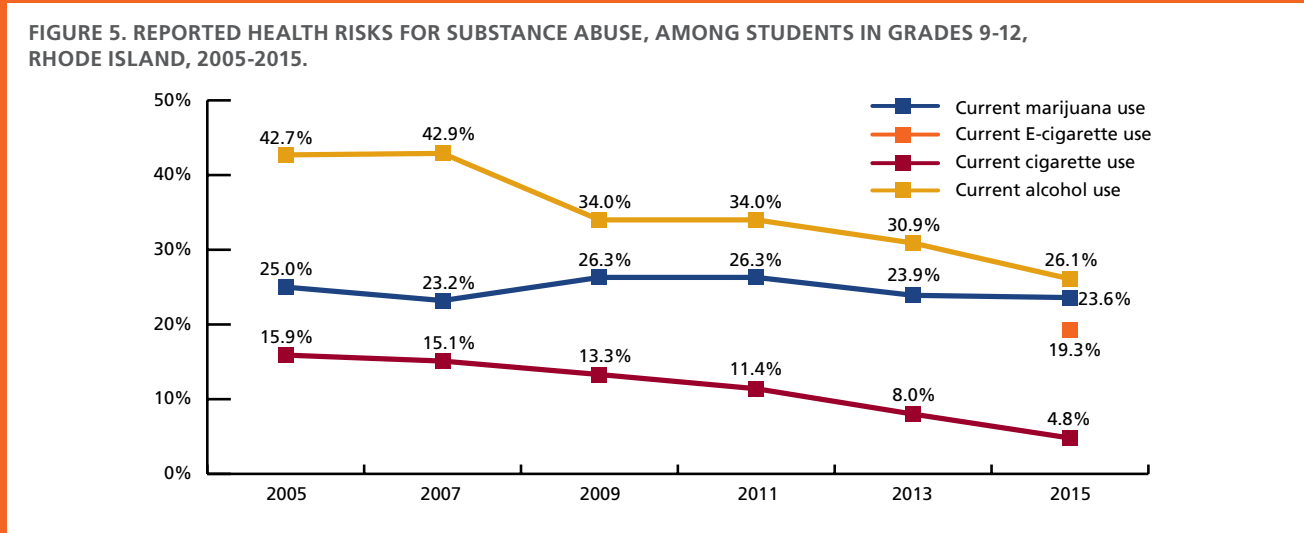
TAKING RISKS EARLY: 2015 Rhode Island Middle School Data - Behaviors related to mental health

- 17.2% of middle school students seriously thought about killing themselves. Female students were three times more likely than males to have suicidal thoughts (26.2% versus 8.8%).
- One in 20 (6.2%) middle school students tried to kill themselves.

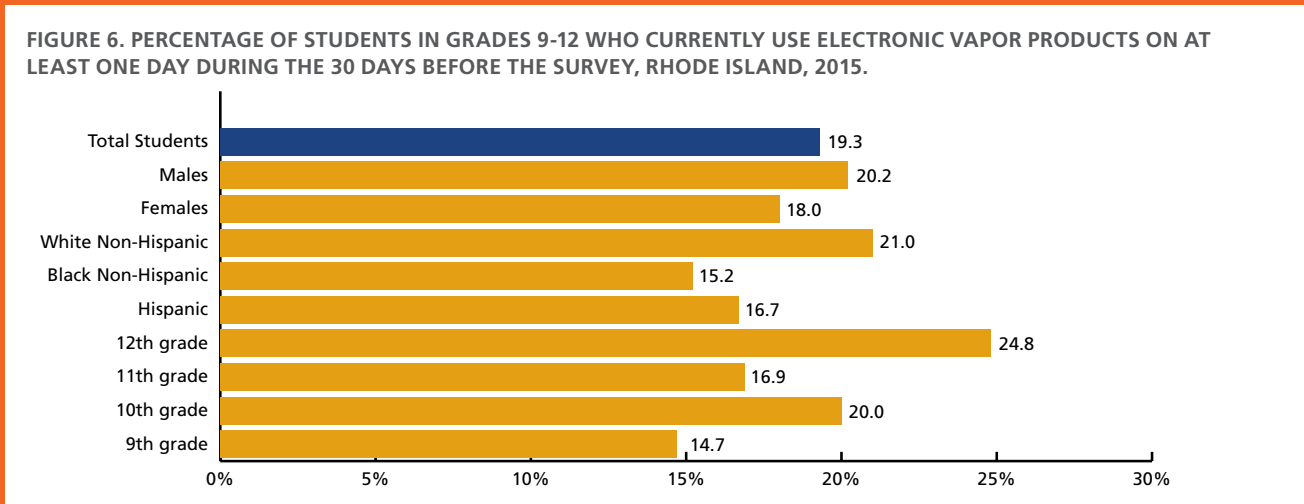
* This percentage includes students who were bullied on school property or who were bullied electronically (email, chat rooms, instant messaging, websites, texting) during the 12 months before the survey.

HIGH SCHOOL RISK BEHAVIORS: SUBSTANCE USE

Current alcohol use has declined significantly from 2005 to 2015 (42.7% to 26.1%). Current cigarette use overall has dramatically decreased in the past 10 years from 15.9% to 4.8%. Despite these dramatic declines, one in five (19.3%) students report current e-cigarette use. Current marijuana use has remained steady at about 24% since 2005.



A CLOSER LOOK: CURRENT E-CIGARETTE USE



POPULATION(S) AT RISK: While almost one in five high school students are currently using e-cigarettes, some demographic groups reported higher use. Overall, all demographic groups are at risk for this emerging behavior.

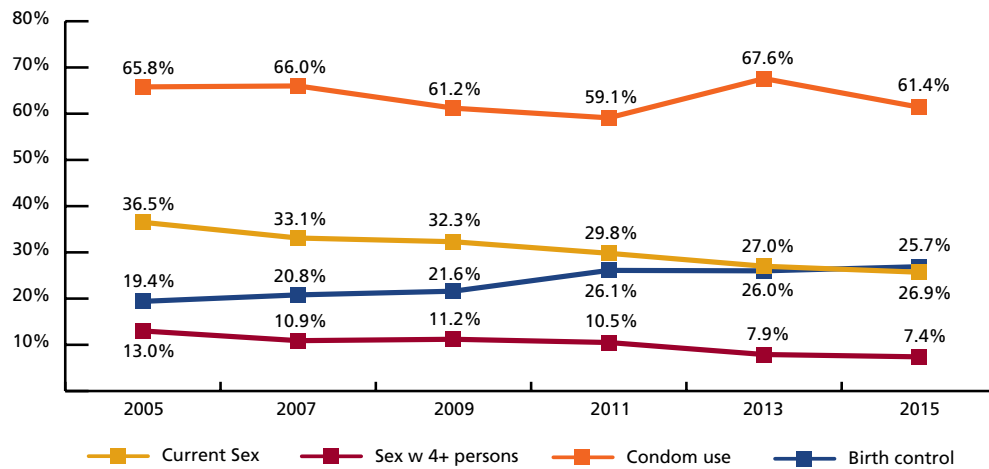
TAKING RISKS EARLY 2015 Rhode Island Middle School Data - Behaviors related to substance use

- Cigarette smoking has dramatically declined among middle school students (4.1% in 2007 to 0.9% in 2015). While the percentage of students smoking cigarettes has dropped, 15.6% of middle school students tried an electronic cigarette product and 7.6% currently use e-cigarettes.
- One in six (16.4%) middle school students ever drank alcohol. Nine percent of sixth graders ever tried a few sips compared to 21.5% of the eighth graders.

HIGH SCHOOL RISK BEHAVIORS: SEXUAL ACTIVITY

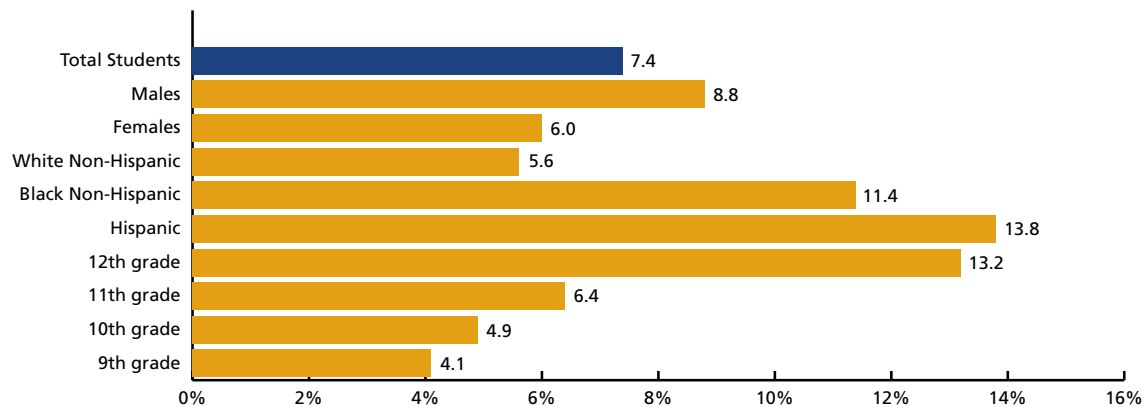
From 2005 to 2015, decreases occurred in the prevalence of high school students who are currently having sex, and the prevalence of having had sexual intercourse with four or more persons. Among sexually active students, the prevalence of using a condom during their last sexual intercourse did not change from 2005. A higher percentage of sexually active high school students did use birth control (before last sexual intercourse to prevent pregnancy) since 2005.

FIGURE 7. REPORTED HEALTH RISKS FOR SEXUAL ACTIVITY, AMONG STUDENTS IN GRADES 9-12, RHODE ISLAND, 2005-2015.



A CLOSER LOOK: SEX WITH FOUR OR MORE PARTNERS

FIGURE 8. PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN GRADES 9-12 WHO HAD SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH FOUR OR MORE PERSONS (DURING THEIR LIFE), RHODE ISLAND, 2015.



POPULATION(S) AT RISK: Overall, there was a decline in the percentage of students with multiple sex partners in the past 10 years, but there are demographic groups that are at risk of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV. The prevalence of having sexual intercourse with four or more partners in a lifetime is higher for Black and Hispanic students than for White students. The prevalence for 12th grade students is higher than for all other grades (9th, 10th, 11th grade students).

TAKING RISKS EARLY 2015 Rhode Island Middle School Data - Behaviors related to sexual activity

- Since 2009, the prevalence of middle school students who ever had sexual intercourse declined from 14.6% to 6.7%.
- Although this reduction in sexual activity among middle schoolers shows great progress, fewer middle school students have been taught about AIDS or HIV infection in school (67% in 2007 versus 53.5% in 2015).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank everyone who assisted with the 2015 YRBS, including school district superintendents, principals, teachers, and staff. Without the participation of Rhode Island's high school and middle school students, we would not have this rich and valuable data to help focus prevention efforts and determine whether school policies and community programs are having the intended effect on student behaviors.



www.health.ri.gov/data/youth



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