

# Youth Data Survey

8th, 10th, and 12th grade students from  
Harrisonburg City Schools & Eastern Mennonite School





# 2025 Youth Data Survey

The Institute for Innovation in Health and Human Services (IIHHS) at James Madison University is pleased to present the 2025 Youth Data Survey Report.

The Youth Data Survey and Report would not be possible without the help and support of our local schools, community organizations, and many dedicated volunteers.

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Many dedicated volunteers



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# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

# YDS Background

James Madison University's Institute for Innovation in Health and Human Services (IIHHS) is pleased to present the 2025 Youth Data Survey (YDS) Report for Harrisonburg and Rockingham County. The YDS has taken place every two years since 1997 and continues to provide key data about local youth risk behaviors which enables the community to develop priority areas around youth issues.

Administered by IIHHS, the YDS is a collaborative effort involving many community partners, including Harrisonburg City Public Schools, Eastern Mennonite High School, James Madison University, the Healthy Community Collaborative, Harrisonburg-Rockingham Community Services Board, and Sentara RMH Community Health. Over 30 agency representatives and community volunteers assist with the administration of the survey every two years. The goal of the YDS is to examine the current and longitudinal trends around local youth risk behaviors with an approach that taps into the larger community question of what assets we need in our community to help people successfully navigate from infancy to adulthood.

The objectives of the YDS for the community are the following:

- Produce reliable information on risk behaviors
- Assess needs
- Ascertain gaps in service
- Assist in determining priority areas
- Allow agencies access to local data in order to write successful grant applications to address identified community needs
- Evaluate the impact agency programs have on the local youth over time.

The ultimate goal is to improve the quality of life for the children and youth in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County.

## **YDS Administration**

Every two years in the fall, a locally created survey is administered to approximately half of all 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in Harrisonburg City Public Schools and Eastern Mennonite School. Prior to the 2025 survey, Rockingham County Public Schools also participated in data collection efforts; however, RCPS was not able to participate in the 2025 survey administration.

Every 10 years, a committee comprised of local agency representatives and interested community members evaluate the survey and make any necessary additions and revisions. JMU students assist IIHHS staff and help secure and train agency representatives and community volunteers to administer the survey.

# 2025 YDS Report

## **2025 Survey Administration**

The survey was administered between October 30th and November 16th, 2025 to youth in Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County. Surveys were completed by 712 students.

This survey was approved by the JMU Institutional Review Board Legacy-23-3858.

## **Structure of this Report**

This report presents information on key issues affecting the youth in our community. The data is presented by topic, first with a comparison of key points in 2023 and 2025 and then a detailed report of 2025 findings among youth in our community. The Appendix includes limitations of the survey and where to look for further information.

## **Limitations of the YDS**

The YDS is a cross-sectional survey, which captures a moment in time. Some limitations of this survey include:

- This survey *cannot establish causality*. Therefore, it is not possible to tell if one activity caused another (for example, we cannot infer that talking with parents about drug use caused fewer students to use drugs).
- Youth may not have accurately remembered items they were asked to recall, which is called *recall bias*.
- *Social desirability bias* may have been present. As youth were in a classroom setting, they may have answered questions to please their peers, teacher, and/or person administering the survey.
- As 50% of youth were sampled from each school and the survey was administered in school, *selection bias* may have been present as students who were absent for any reason, including skipping school without parental permission, suspension, etc. may not have responded.

## **For More Information**

Archived survey instruments and reports from all administrations of the Youth Data Survey (1997-2025) are available on the IIHHS website (<http://www.jmu.edu/iihhs/youthdata.shtml>). IIHHS staff are available to give specialized presentations or reports for any interested group.

For more information and requests, please contact:  
Jennifer Rea at (540) 568-2559 or [reajl@jmu.edu](mailto:reajl@jmu.edu)

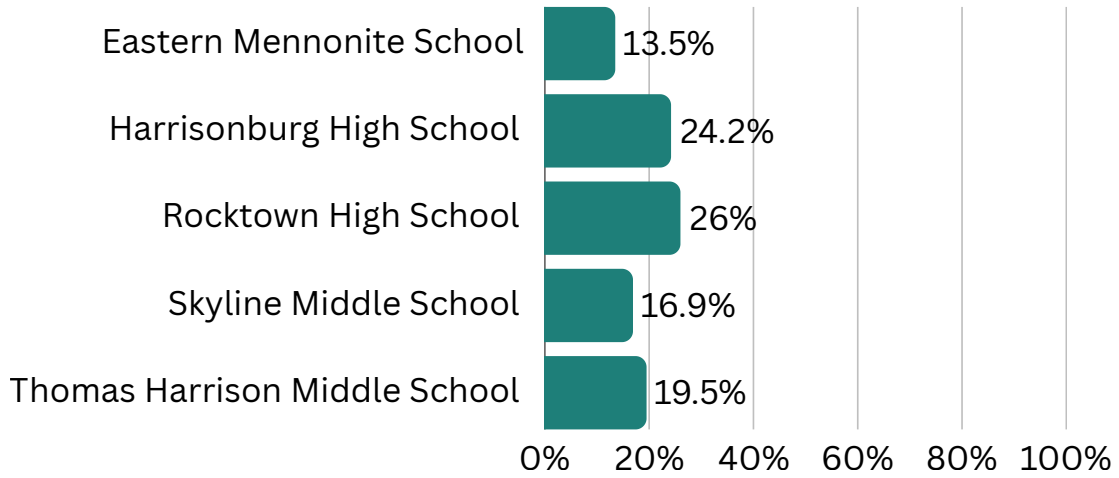




# DEMOGRAPHICS

# Demographics

## School Attended



## Grade Level

8th grade

42.7%

10th grade

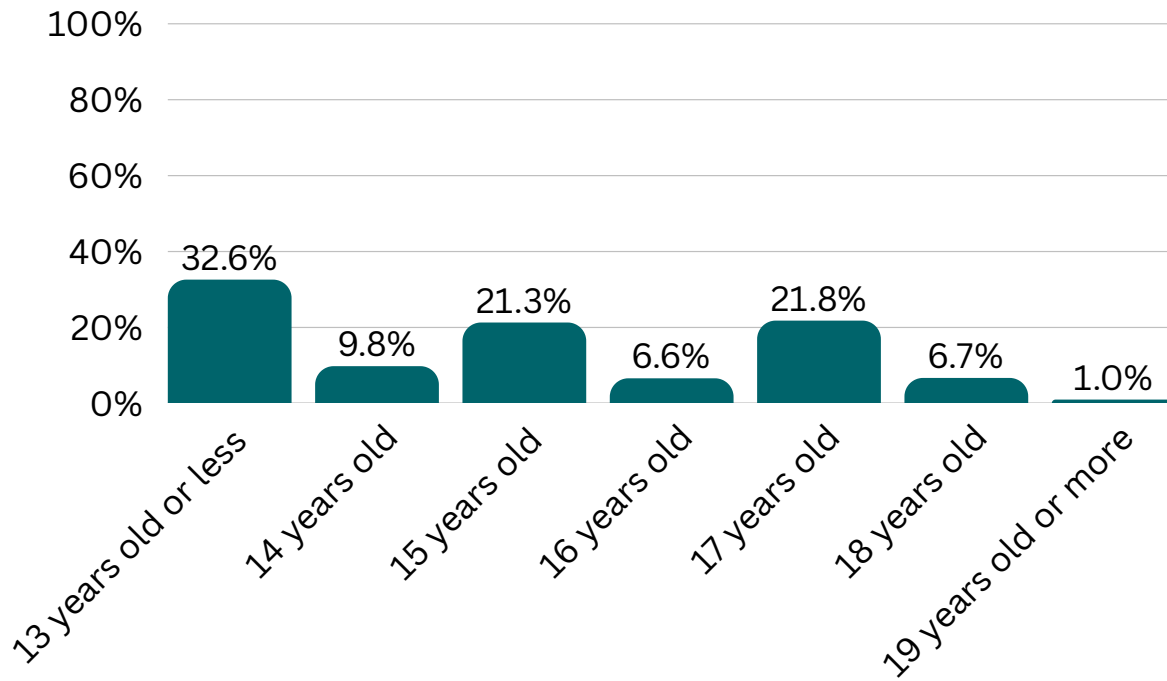
28.7%

12th grade

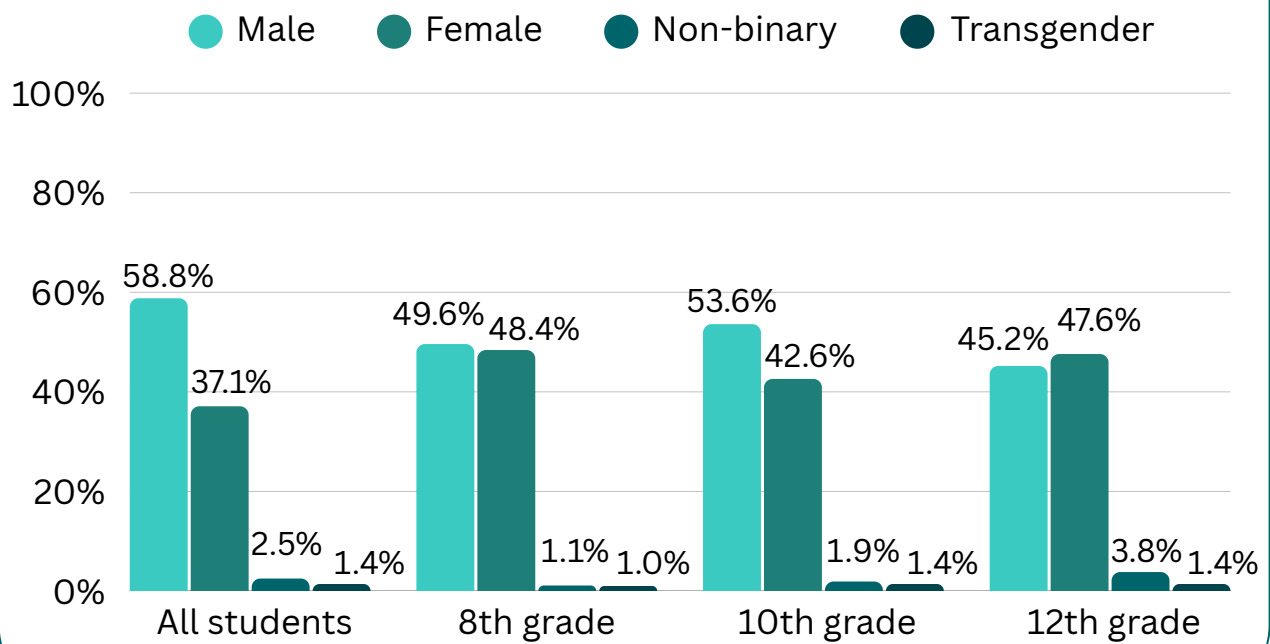
28.7%

# Demographics

## Age

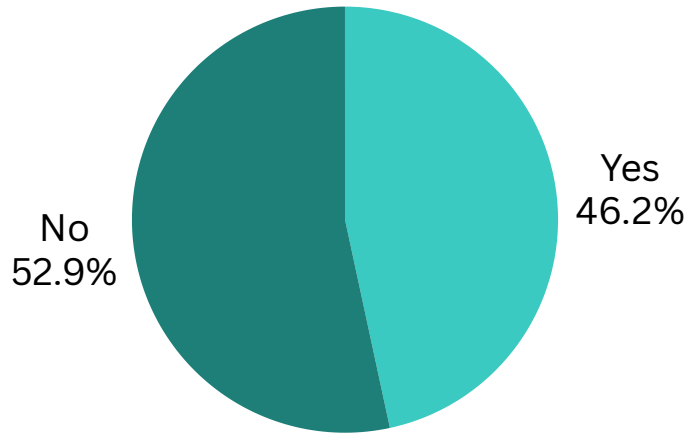


## Gender

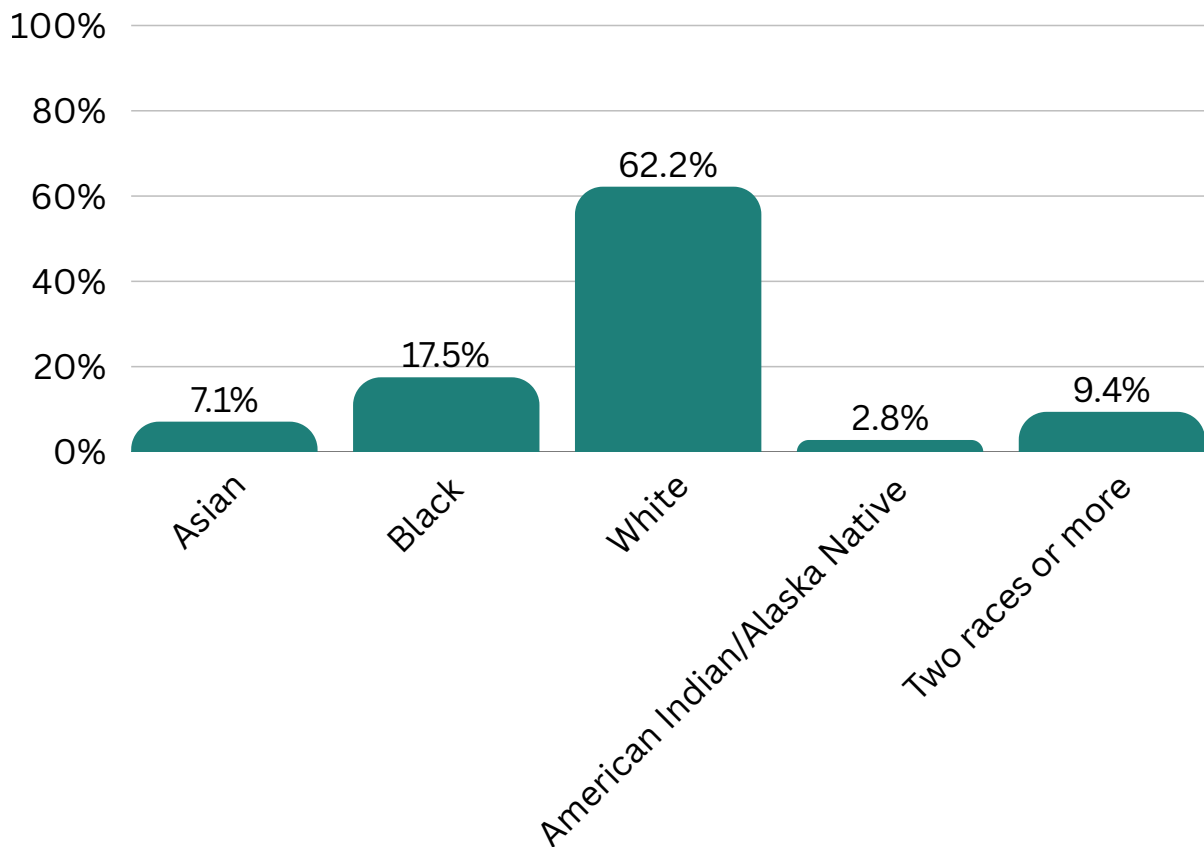


# Demographics

## Ethnicity: Hispanic/Latino

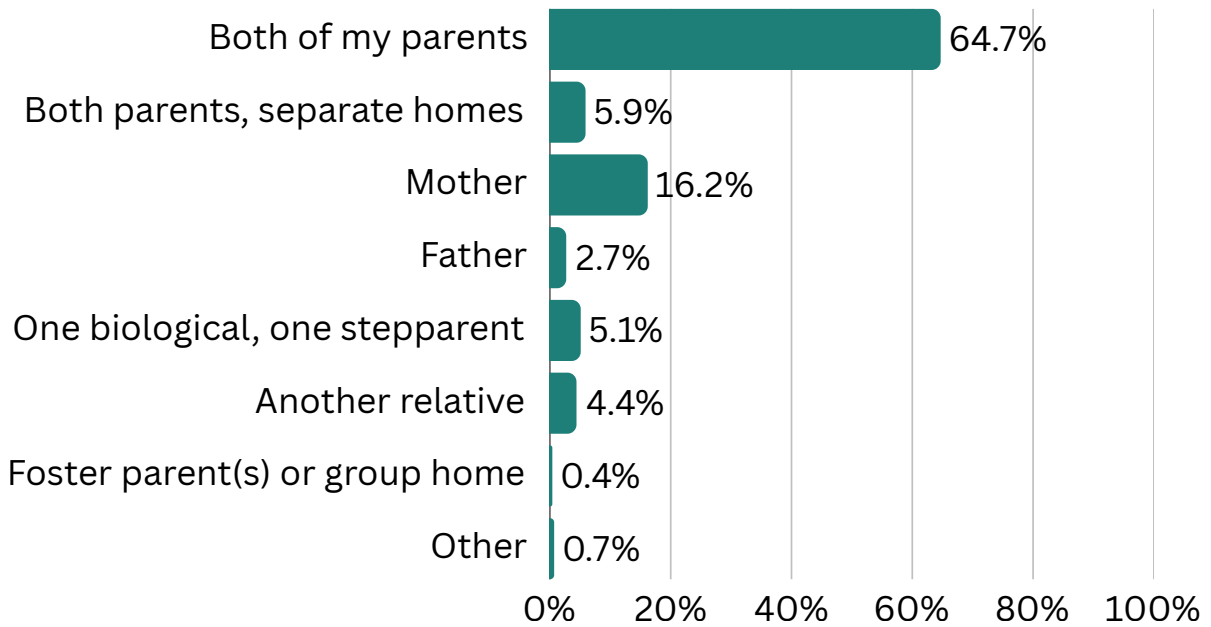


## Race

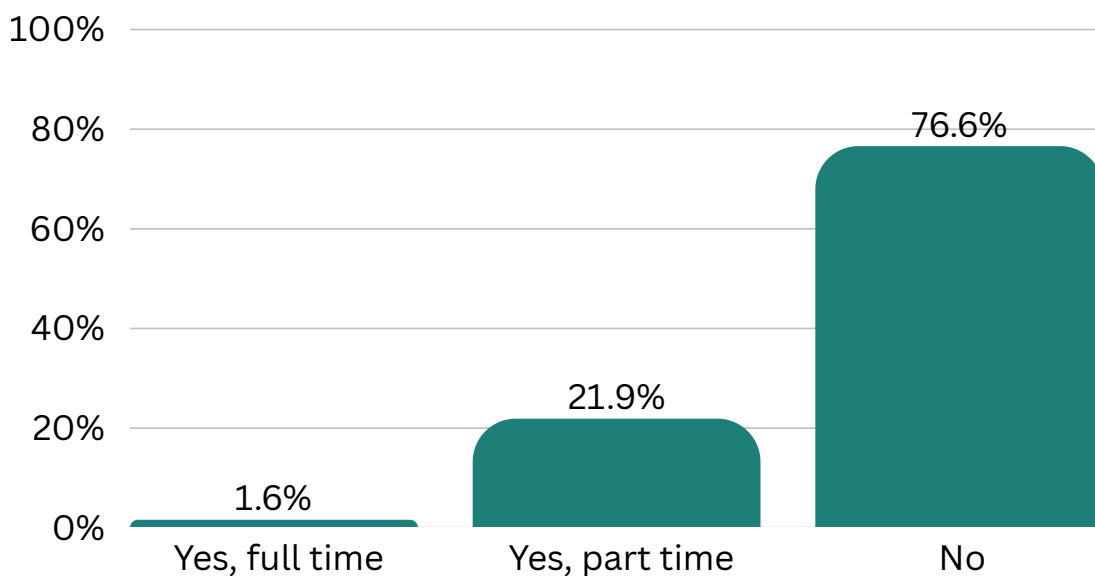


# Demographics

## Living Arrangements

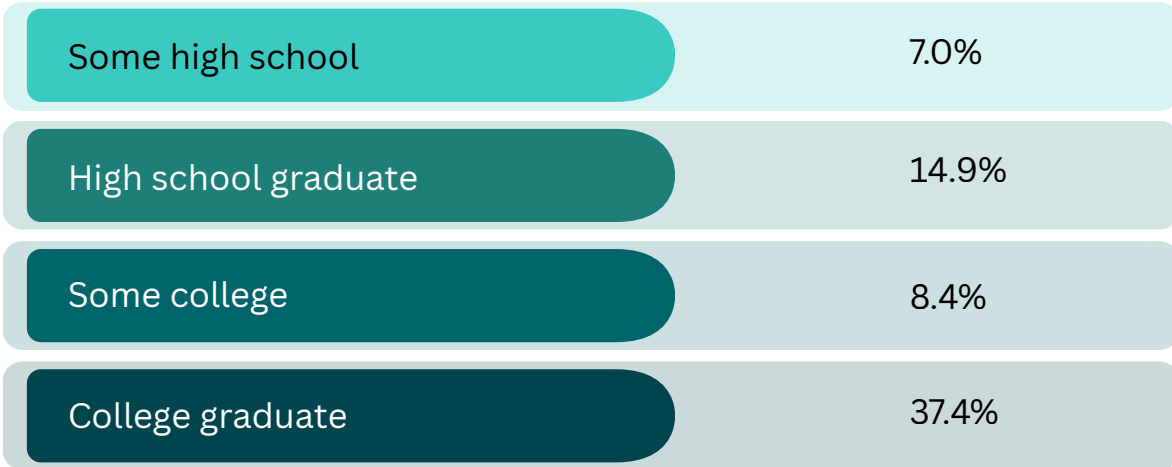


## Employment Status

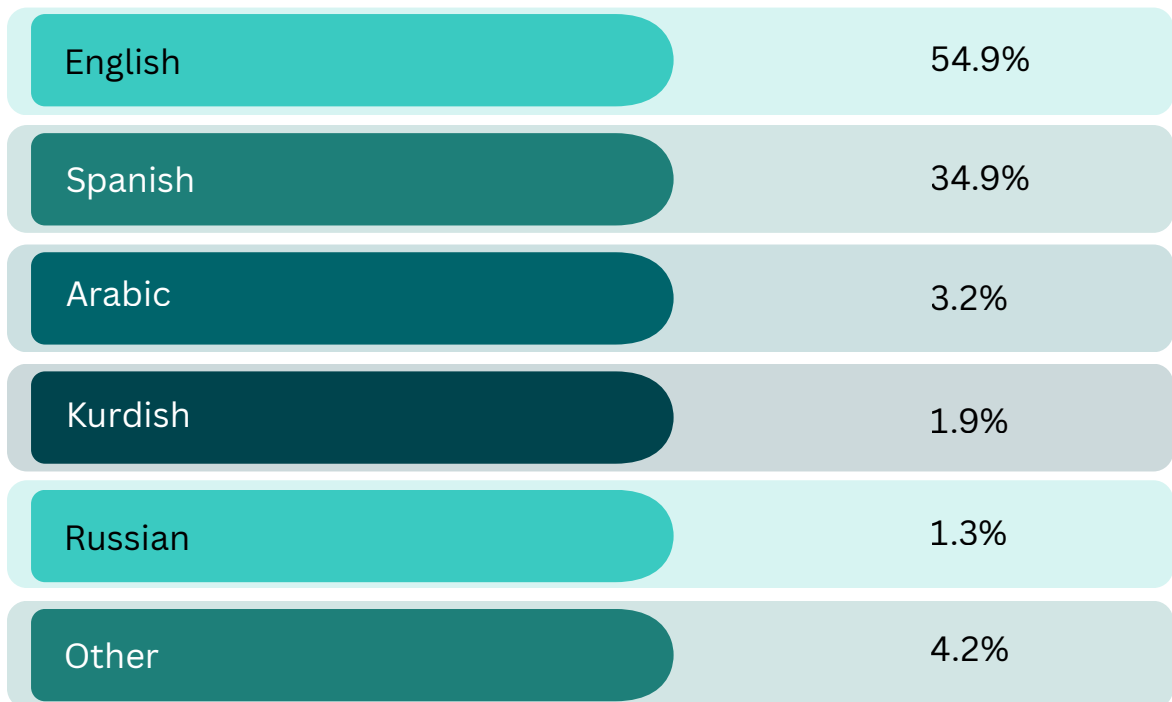


# Demographics

## Parental Education Level



## Language Spoken at Home





# HEALTH & WELLNESS

# Health & Wellness

## Trends: 2023-2025

In 2025, **50.5% of youth** reported their weight was “about right” compared with 43.1% in 2023.

**Comfort with body size** increased from 64.9% in 2023 to **69.0%** in 2025.

**Youth felt more comfortable with their weight in 2025.**



In 2025, **32.4%** of youth reported being **slightly or very overweight**; however, only **10.4%** reported having been told they were overweight by a **medical provider**.

More youth got **8 or more hours of sleep** per night in 2025 (**43.5%**) than in 2023 (36.7%).

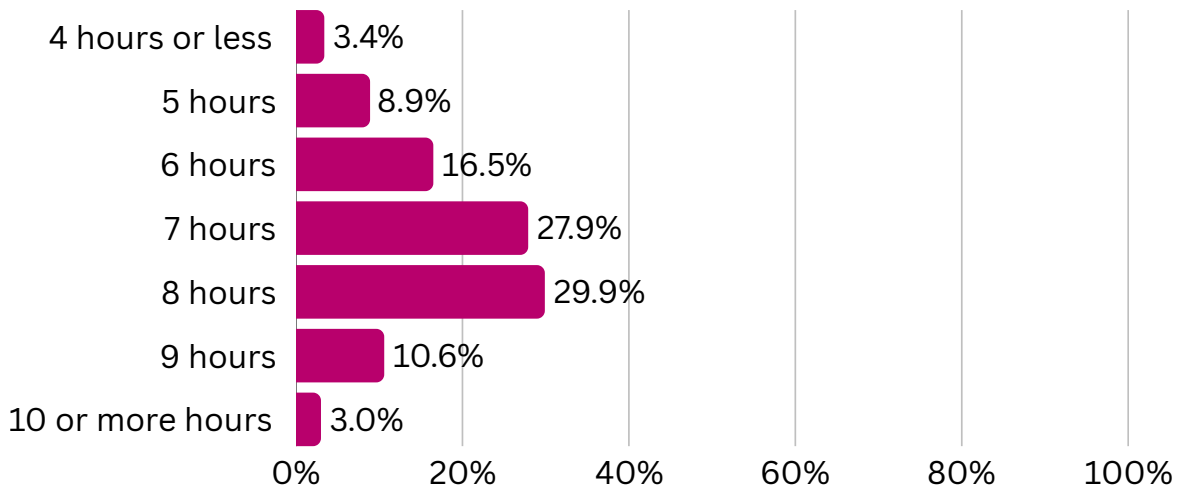


About the same number of youth reported that their **parents set rules in 2025 (89.0%)** compared with 2023 (90.3%).

However, youth also reported that their parents were *less likely* to **enforce rules in 2025 (68.5%)** compared with 2023 (74.0%).

# Healthy Behaviors

## Average Number of Hours of Sleep on a School Night

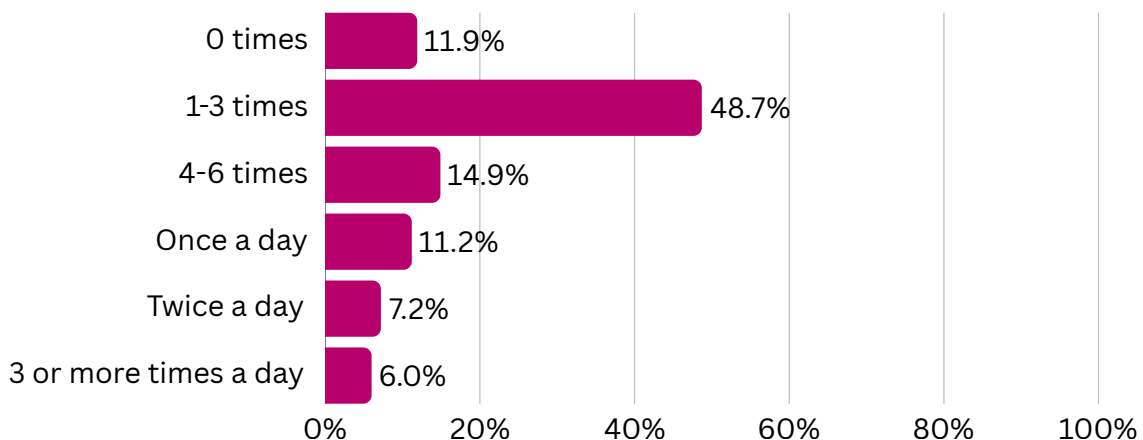


**83.6%** have one or more adult, other than their parents, who **encourage or listen** to them.

**83.4%** have an adult in their household who tries to make sure their **basic needs** are met.

## Sugary Beverage Consumption

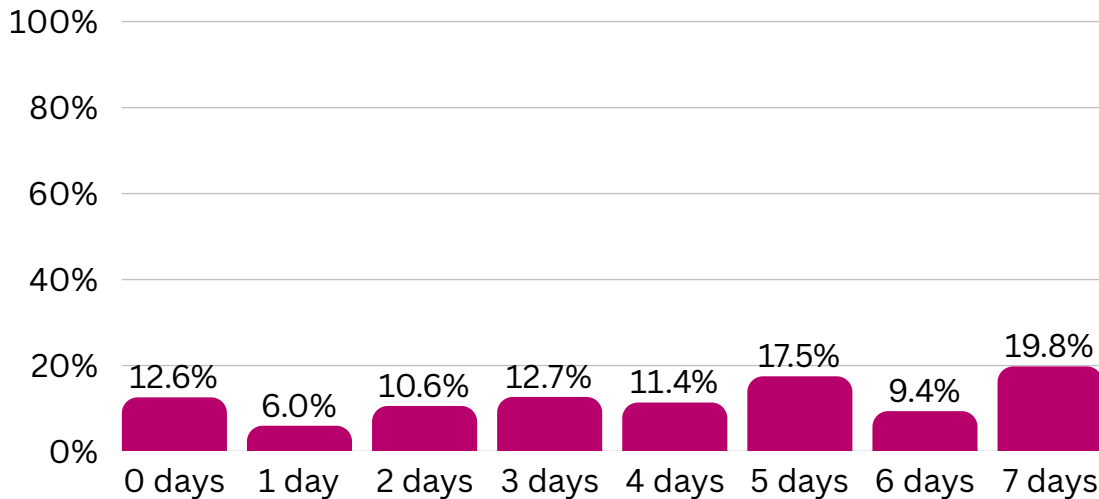
Youth reported how many days in the last week they consumed drinks that were sweetened with sugar.



# Exercise and Extracurricular Activities

## Number of Days of Exercise Per Week

Youth reported the number of days they were physically active for at least 60 minutes in the last 7 days.

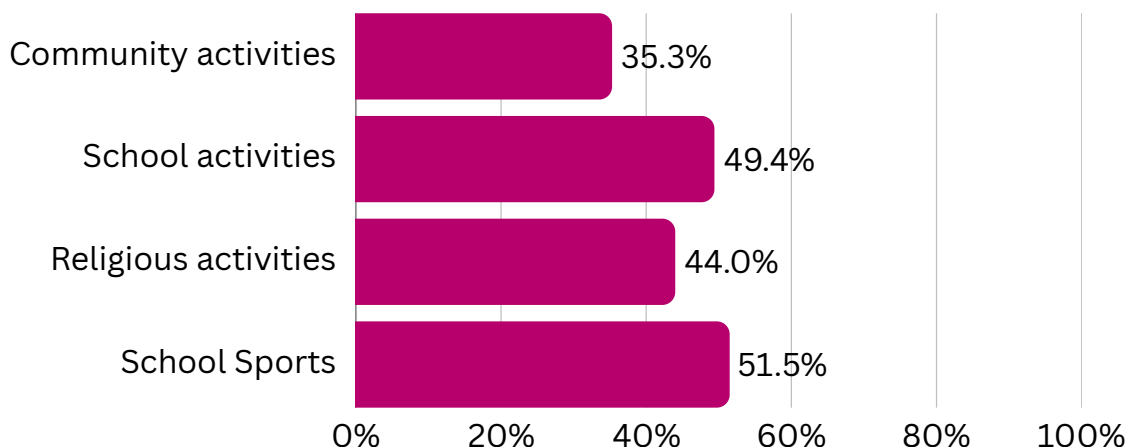


**88.8%** reported there were many chances to get involved in **sports, clubs and other activities outside of class.**

**71.7%** reported that school staff let them and/or their parents know when they have **done something well.**

## Participation in Extracurricular Activities

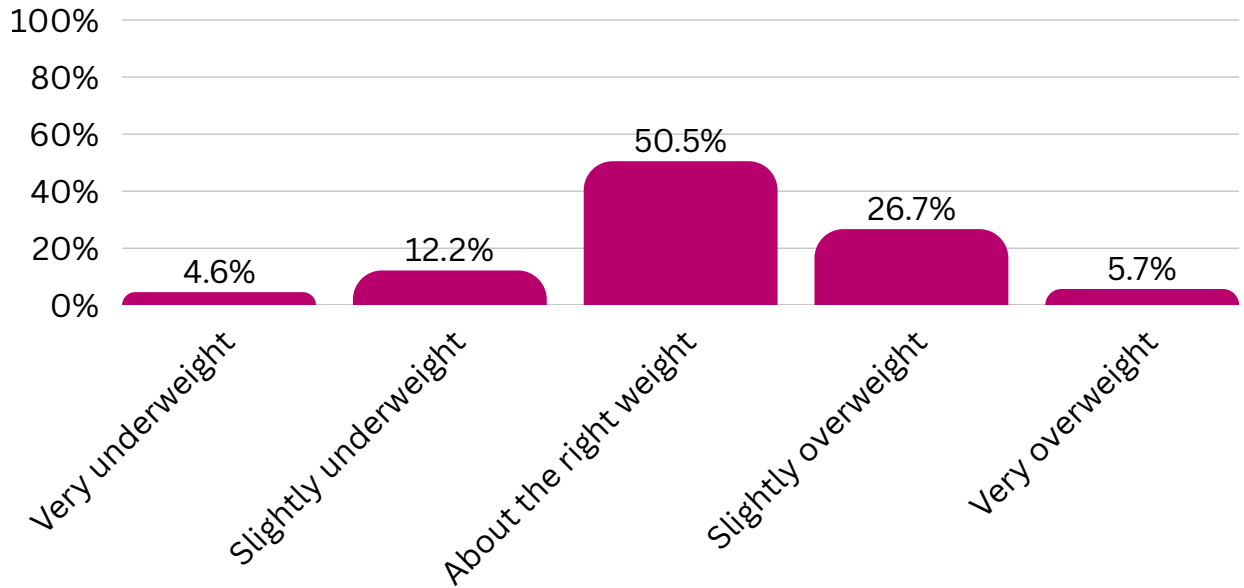
Youth who reported participation in community, school, religious, and school sports activities sometimes, often, or a lot.



# Body Image

## Self-Report of Weight

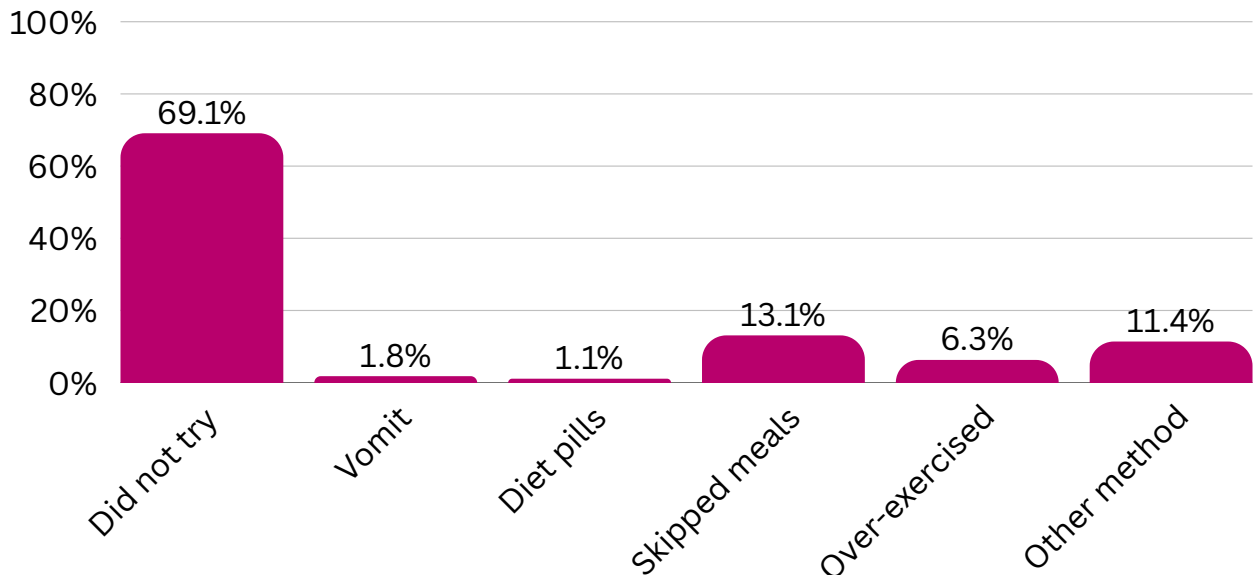
Youth reported how they think of themselves with options from very underweight to very overweight.



**74.6%** of youth reported being comfortable with their **body size**.

## Weight Loss Methods

Youth reported any weight loss techniques they had used in the last 30 days.



## Mental Health

**13.9%** received a clinical diagnosis of **anxiety**.

**9.6%** received a clinical diagnosis of **depression**.

**24.6%** reported feeling **sad or hopeless** daily for 2+ weeks in the last year.

**69.0%** reported **never** having been diagnosed with a **mental health disorder**.

**83.0%** reported never intentionally causing **self harm**.

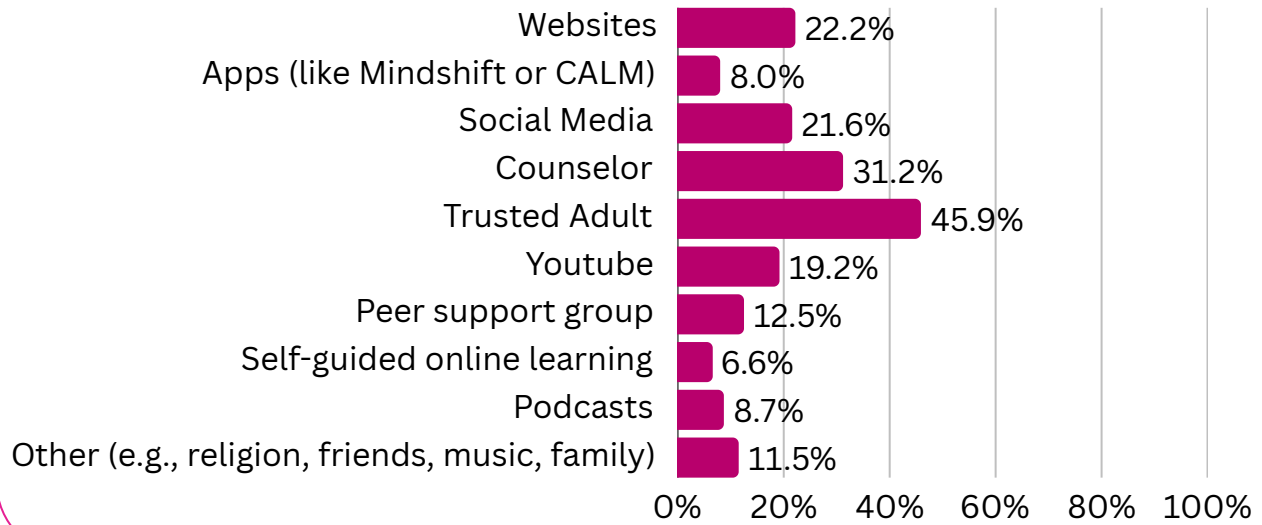
**13.3%** have considered **suicide**, **6.5%** have planned **suicide**.

**84.9%** agreed their **school prioritizes students' mental health** and emotional well-being.

**32.9%** of youth were interested in **mental health resources**.

# Social Support

## Where Youth Look for Mental Health Resources

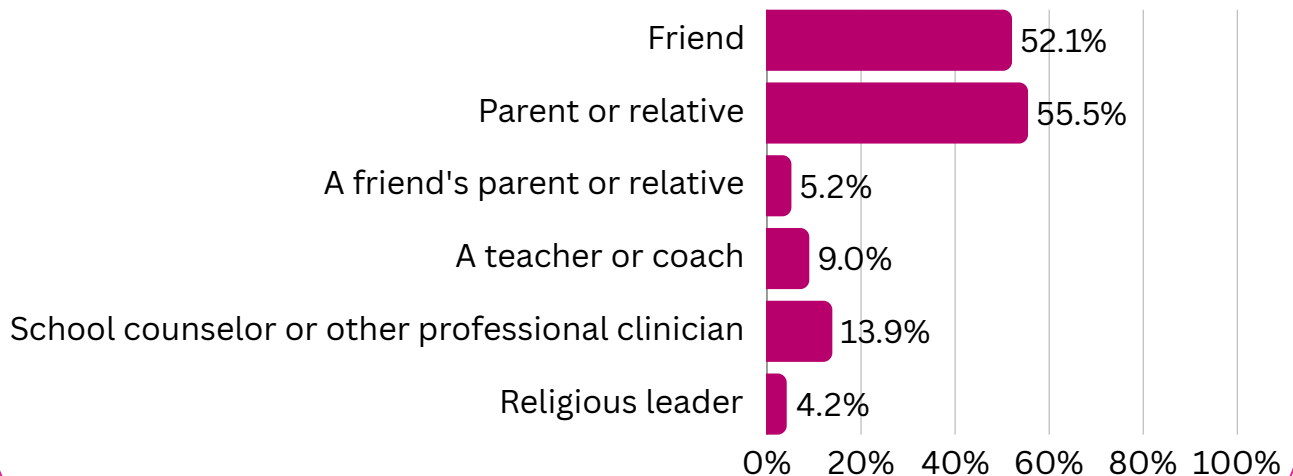


### Healthy Relationships

- **53.9%** reported rarely or never talking with their parents about healthy relationships.
- **68.5%** reported healthy relationships were rarely or never taught in school.

## Social Support for Serious Emotional Distress

Who youth would talk with if they were experiencing severe emotional distress.







# ALCOHOL USE

# Alcohol Use

## Trends: 2023-2025



Youth alcohol consumption decreased in 2025.

The number of youth reporting **never consuming alcohol** increased from 81.1% in 2023 to **90.2%** in 2025.

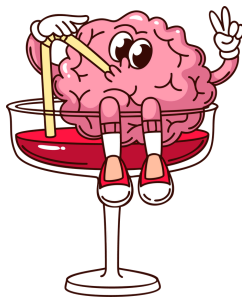
Fewer youth talked with their parents about alcohol in 2025.

The number of youth reporting **rarely or never talking with their parents about alcohol** increased from 62.0% in 2023 to **68.3%** in 2025.



Youth reported that it was easier to access alcohol in 2025.

Overall, there was a **3.9%** increase in ease in accessing alcohol between 2023 and 2025.



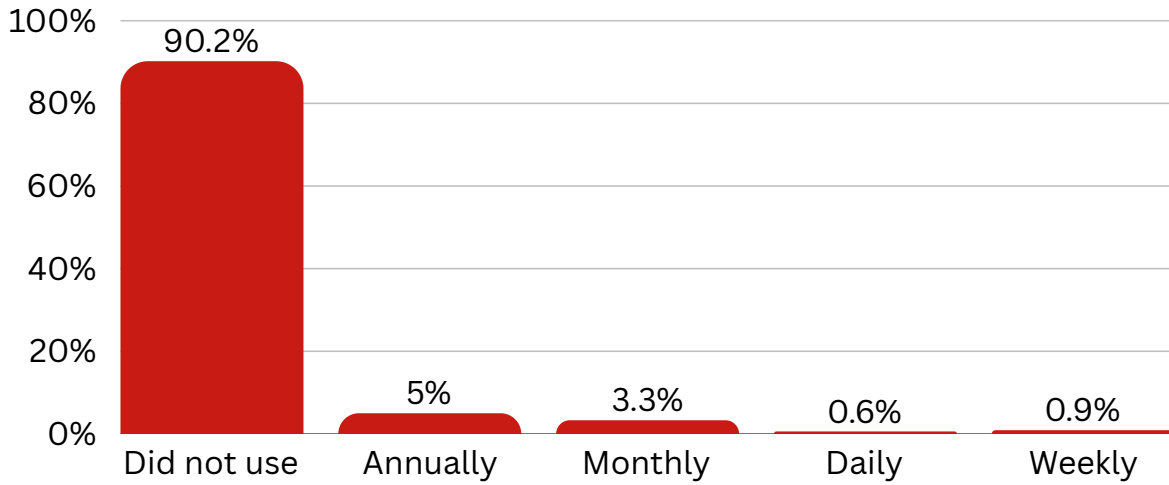
Youth perceived alcohol consumption to be less risky in 2025.

Fewer youth **perceived alcohol consumption to be a moderate or great risk** in 2025 (**63.9%**) compared to 2023 (69.3%).



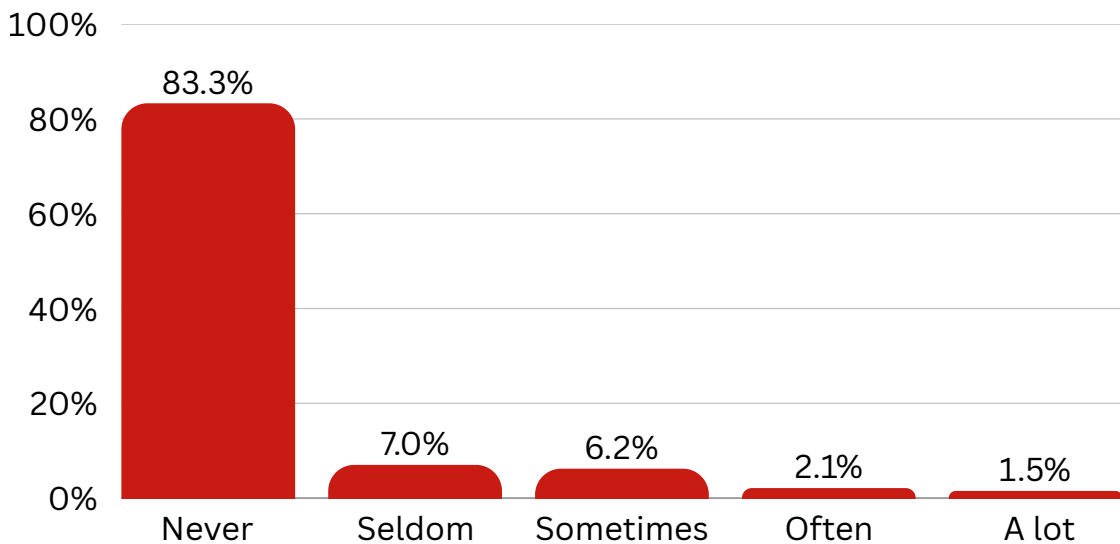
# Alcohol Use

## Frequency of Alcohol Use



The majority of youth reported that they and their friends **did not use alcohol**, with most who reported using alcohol using it **very infrequently** (i.e., once a year).

## Frequency of Friend Alcohol Use

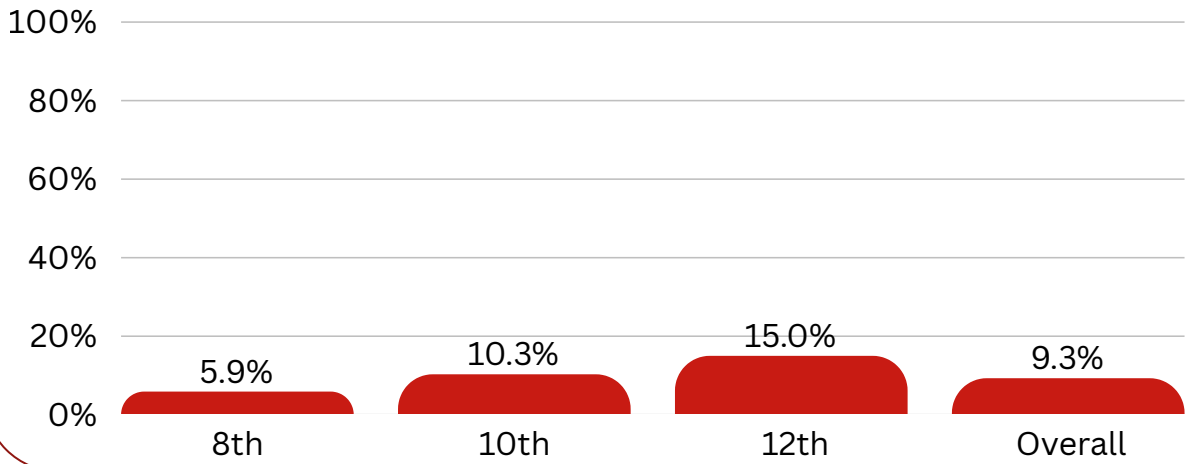


Youth whose **friends disapproved of alcohol** use were less likely to use alcohol than those whose **parents disapproved**.

# Alcohol Use

## Youth By Grade Who Use Alcohol

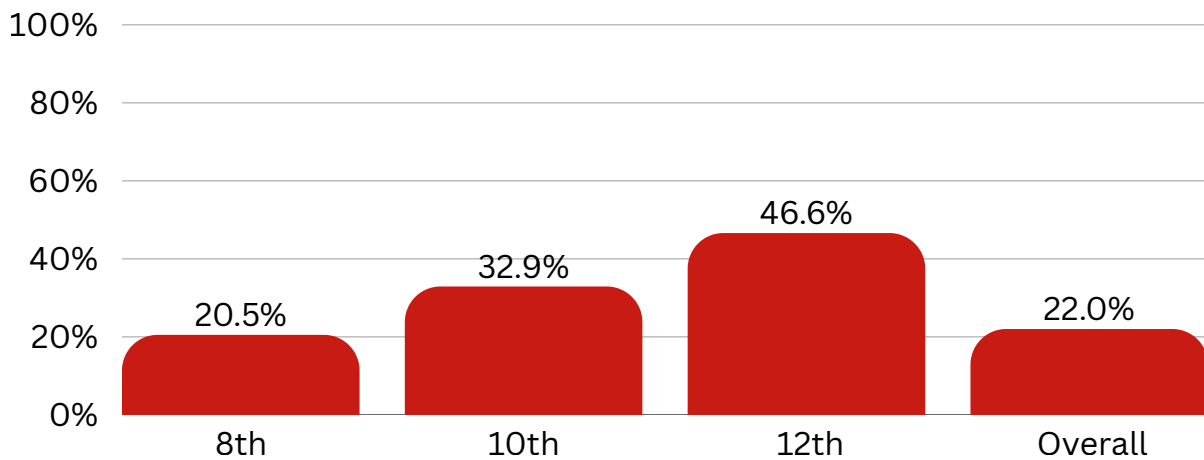
Youth who reported using alcohol in the last year.



**90.7%** of youth reported not using **alcohol** in the last year.

## Ease of Getting Alcohol by Grade

Youth who report it is very or fairly easy to get alcohol.

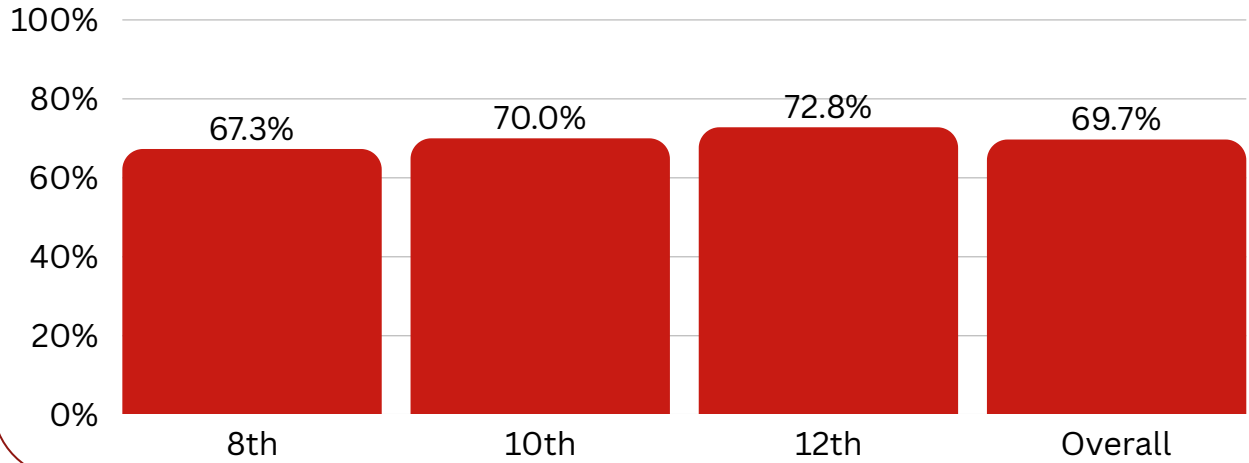


**12.1%** of youth reported wanting more information about avoiding **alcohol**.

# Alcohol Use

## Perceived Harm of Alcohol Use by Grade

Youth who think alcohol use is wrong or very wrong.

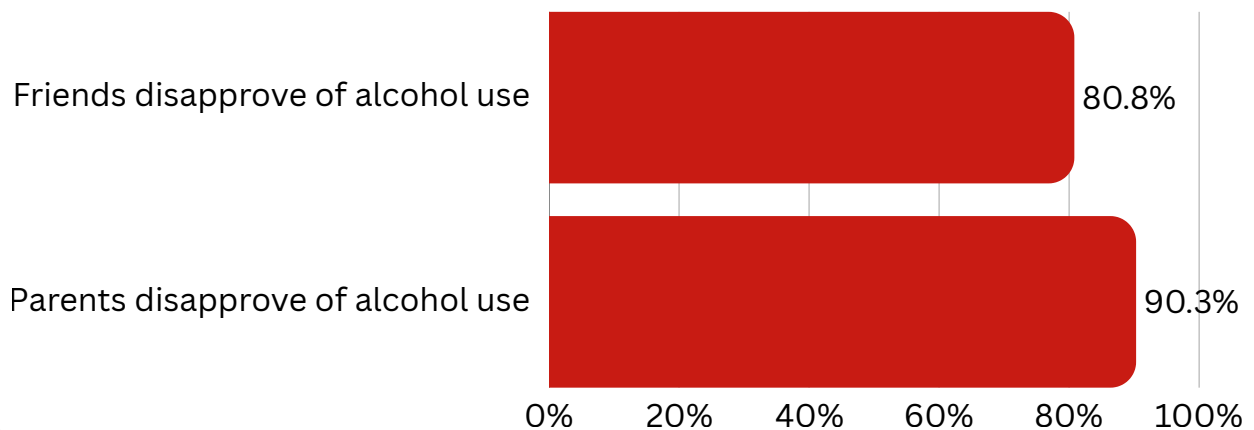


**68.3%** of youth reported that they rarely or never talked with their parents about **alcohol**.

**70.9%** of youth reported that their teachers rarely or never talked about **alcohol in school**.

## Perception of Alcohol Use

Youth indicated whether their friends or parents think alcohol use is wrong.







# TOBACCO & VAPE USE

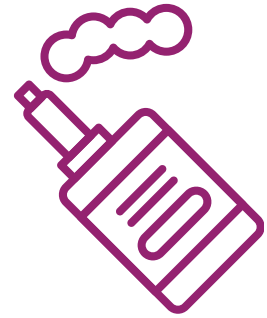
# Tobacco & Vape Use

## Trends: 2023-2025

**Vape use decreased in 2025.**

Overall, **vape use** among youth *decreased from 25.9%* in 2023 **to 7.3%** in 2025.

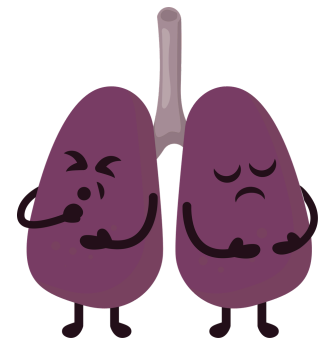
Among **12th grade** youth, **vape use** *decreased from 18.6%* in 2023 **to 9.3%** in 2025.



Youth reported it was **harder to get vape products in 2025** (32.8%) compared with 2023 (23.2%).

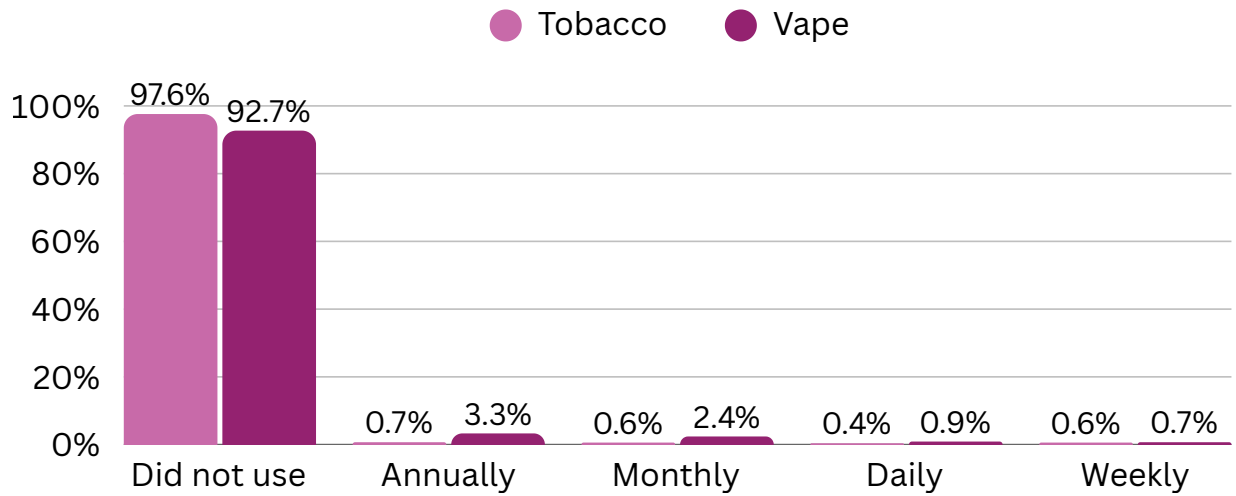
**In 2025, youth perceived *tobacco* and *vape* use to pose less of a health threat than in 2023.**

- 67.1% **perceived tobacco use to be a moderate or great risk** in 2025 compared to 80.0% in 2023.
- 66.6% **perceived vape use to be a moderate or great risk** in 2025 compared to 76.5% in 2023.



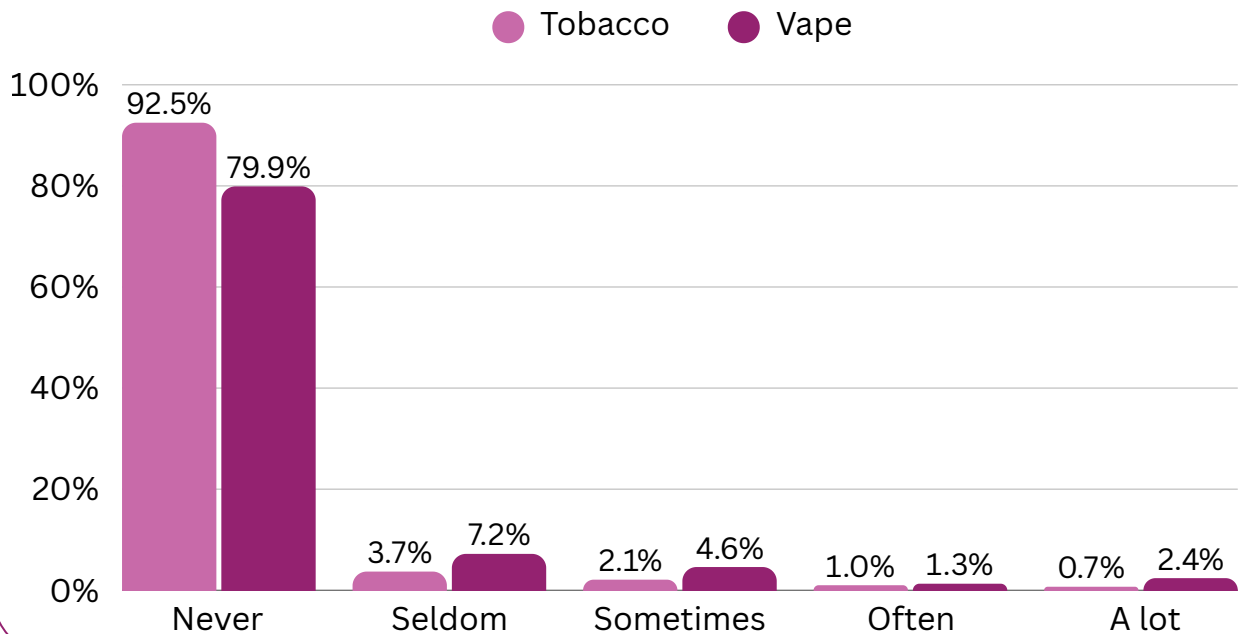
# Tobacco & Vape Use

## Frequency of Tobacco and Vape Use



**9.6%** of youth reported wanting more information about avoiding **tobacco and vape products**.

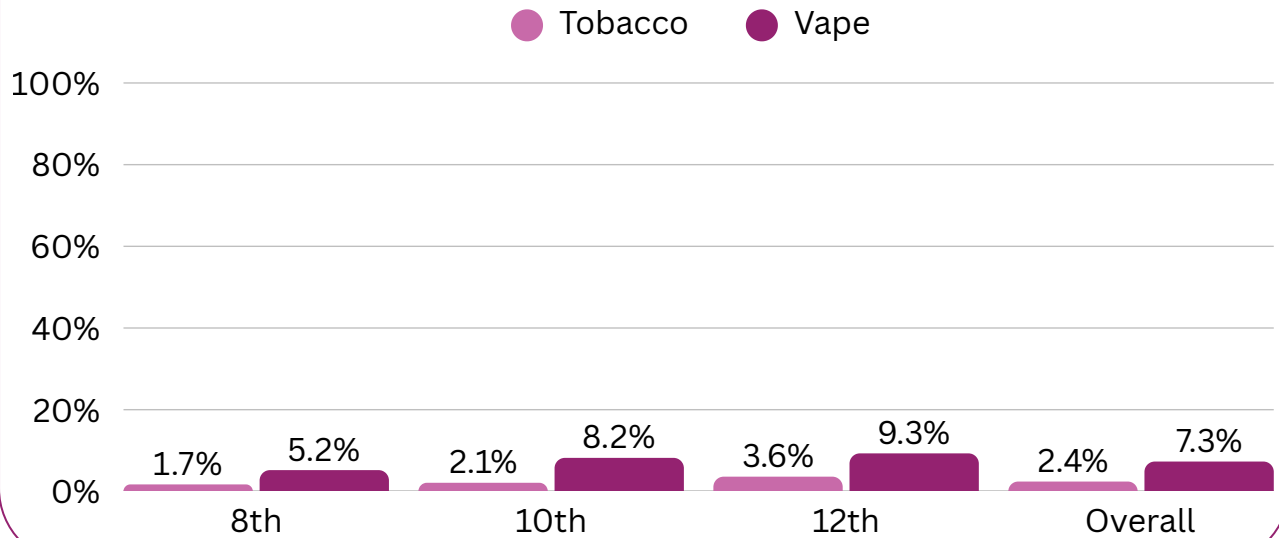
## Frequency of Friend Tobacco and Vape Use



# Tobacco & Vape Use

## Youth By Grade Who Use Tobacco and Vape Products

Youth who reported using tobacco and vape products in the last year.

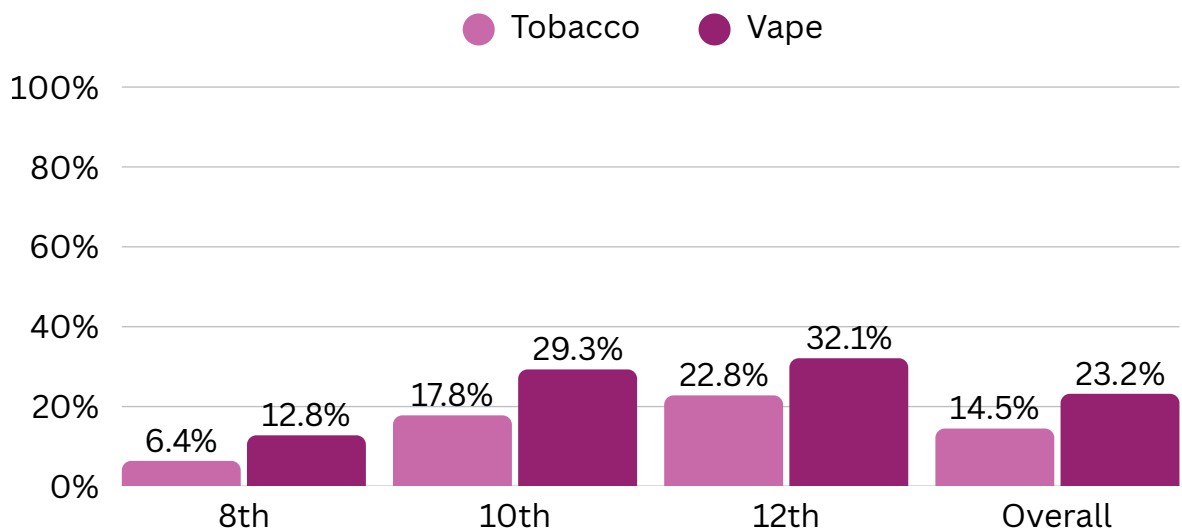


**92.7%** of youth reported not using **vape products** in the last year.

**97.6%** of youth reported not using **tobacco products** in the last year.

## Ease of Getting Tobacco and Vape Products by Grade

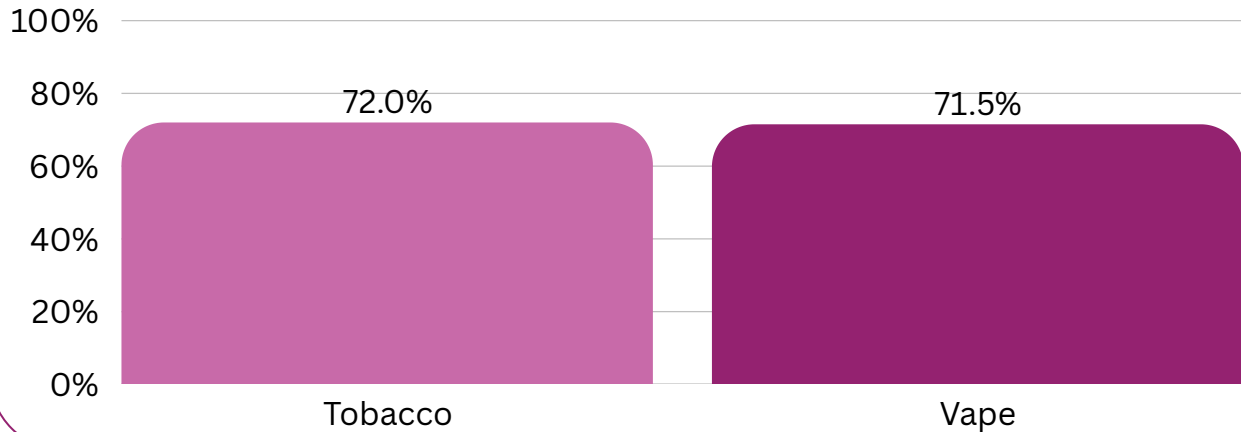
Youth who report it is very or fairly easy to get tobacco or vape products.



# Tobacco & Vape Use

## Perceived Harm of Tobacco and Vape Use

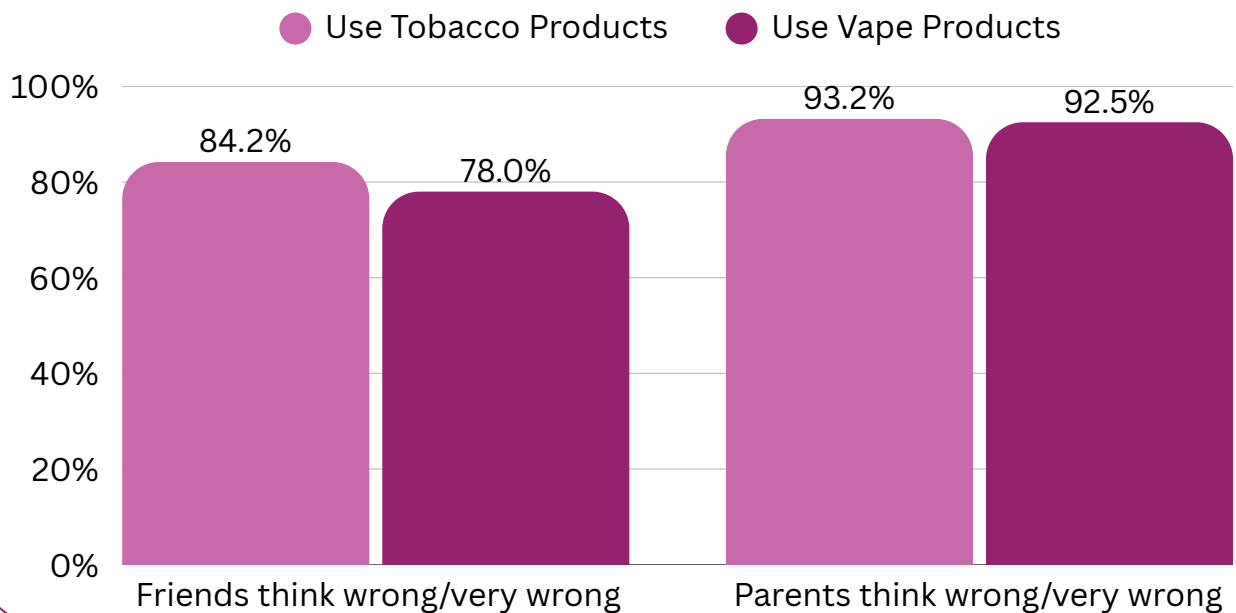
Youth who think tobacco and vape use is wrong or very wrong.



**72.2%** of youth reported that their teachers never or rarely talked about **tobacco or vape** (72.6%) in school.

## Perception of Tobacco and Vape Use

Youth indicated whether their friends or parents think alcohol use is wrong.



**77.1%** of youth reported that they never or rarely talked with their parents about **tobacco** and **76.0%** reported never or rarely talking with their parents about **vaping** products.





# DRUG USE

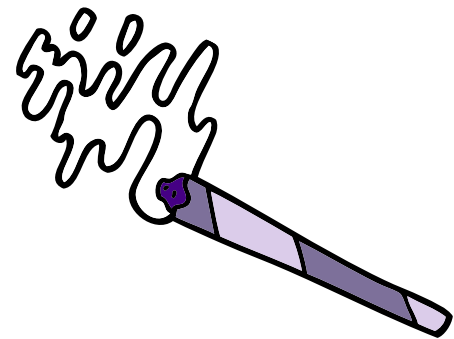
# Drug Use

## Trends: 2023-2025

**Marijuana was the most commonly used drug among youth in 2023 and 2025.**

4.7% of youth reported **marijuana use** in the last year. This is **down from 11.3% in 2023.**

**Marijuana use among friends decreased by 10.7%** in 2025 compared to 2023.



**Youth reported that it was harder to access marijuana in 2025 than in 2023.**

Overall, there was a **10.2% decrease** in **ease in accessing marijuana.**

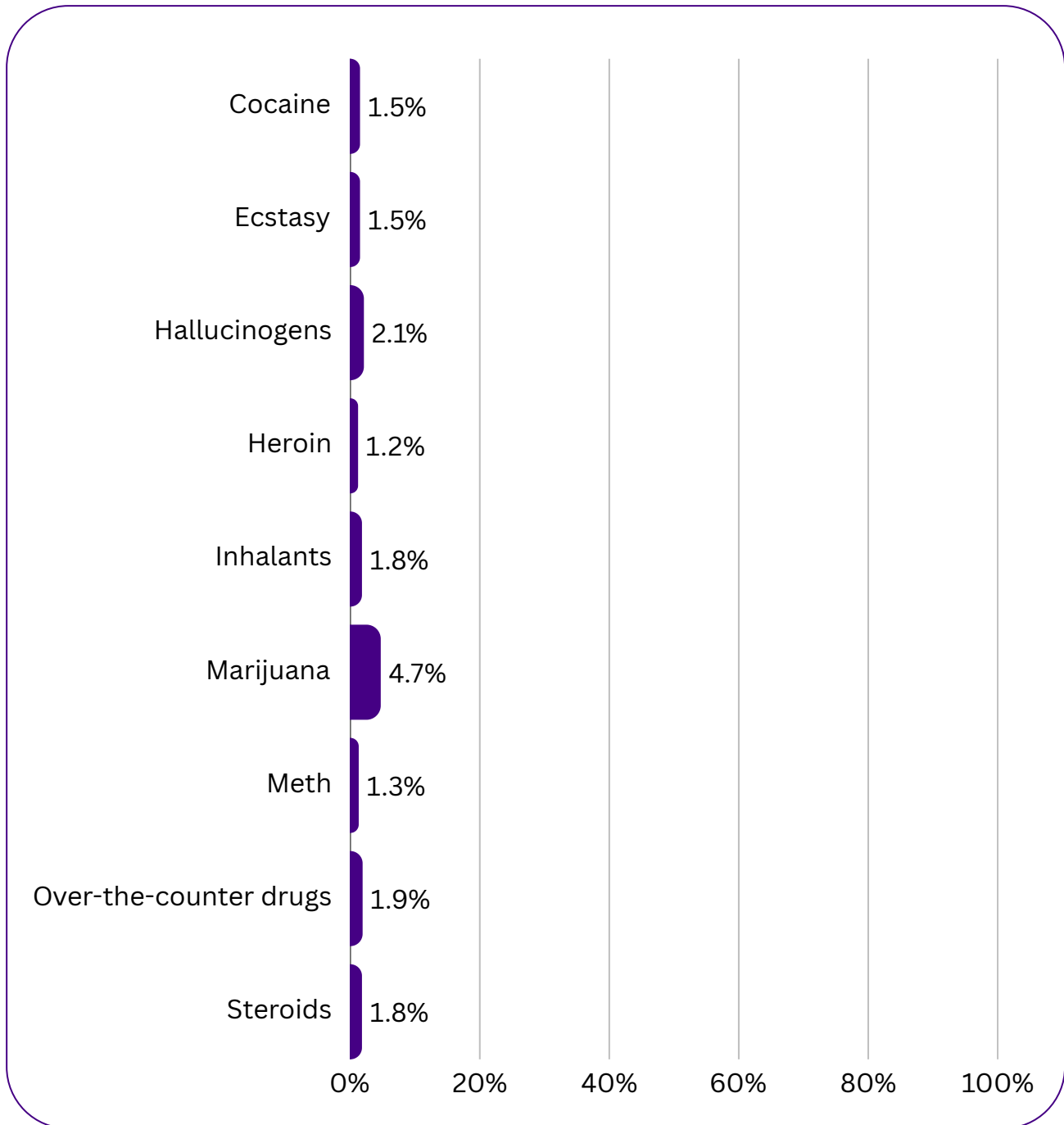
**More youth perceived marijuana use to be a moderate or great risk in 2025 (63.3%)** compared to 2023 (58.5%).

While there was a **5.9% increase** in youth reporting **talking about drugs in school** from 2023 to 2025...



...there was also an **increase** in youth that reported **rarely or never talking with their parents about drugs** from 2023 (62.7%) to 2025 (**70.0%**).

## Types of Drugs Used in Past Year

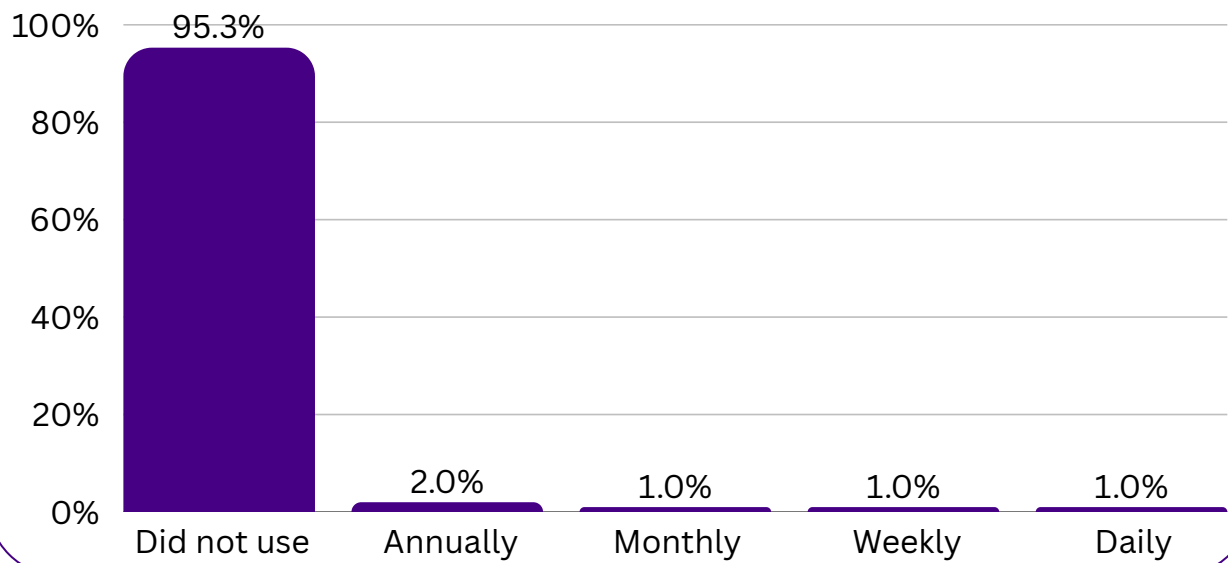


**9.3%** of youth reported that it would be very or fairly easy to get **prescription drugs** not prescribed to them.

**2.6%** of youth reported that it would be very or fairly easy to get **meth**.

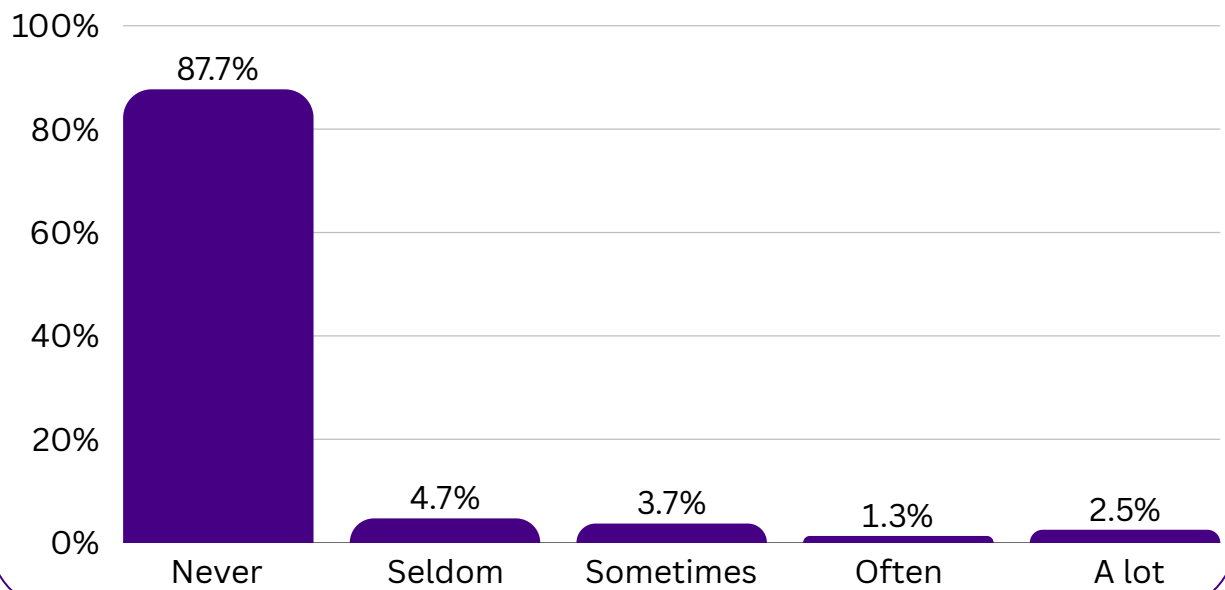
# Drug Use

## Frequency of Marijuana Use



**13.5%** of youth reported wanting more information about avoiding **drugs**.

## Frequency of Friend Marijuana Use

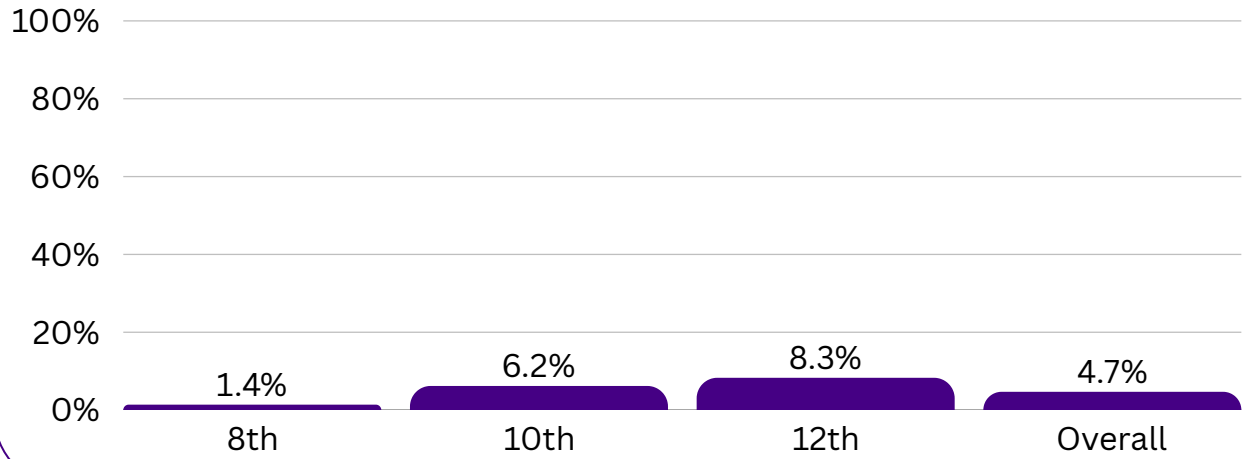


# Marijuana Use

Marijuana was the most commonly reported drug used among youth.

## Youth by Grade Who Use Marijuana

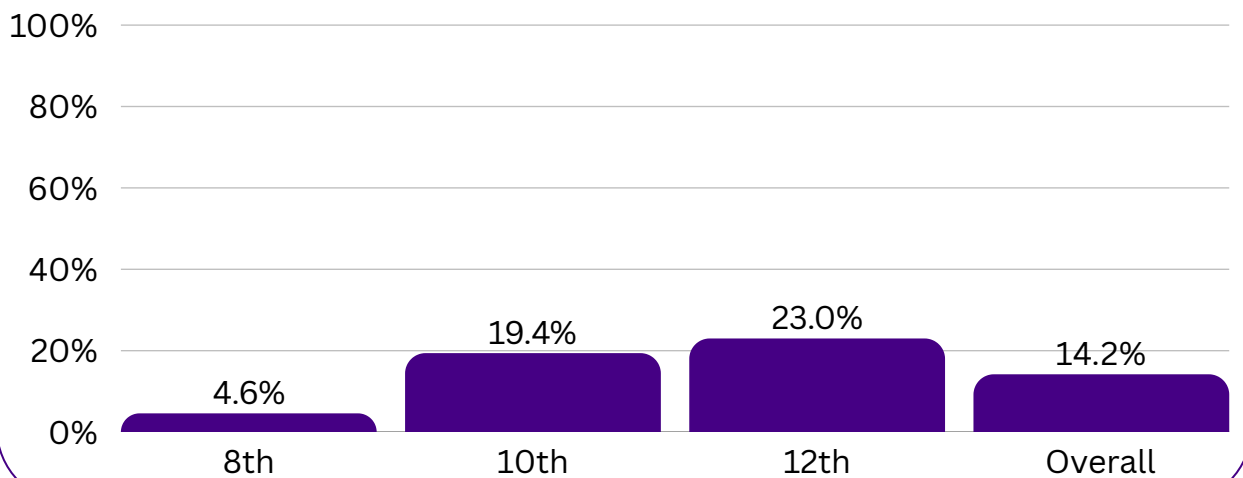
Youth who reported using marijuana in the last year.



95.3% of youth reported not having used **marijuana** in the last year.

## Ease of Getting Marijuana by Grade

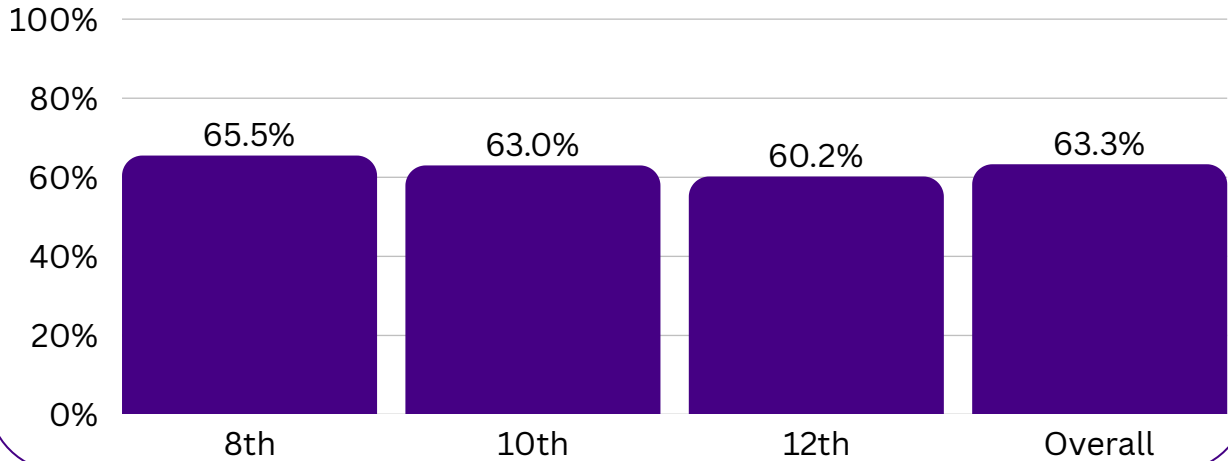
Youth who report it is very or fairly easy to get marijuana.



# Drug Use

## Percieved Harm of Marijuana Use by Grade

Youth who think marijuana use is wrong or very wrong.

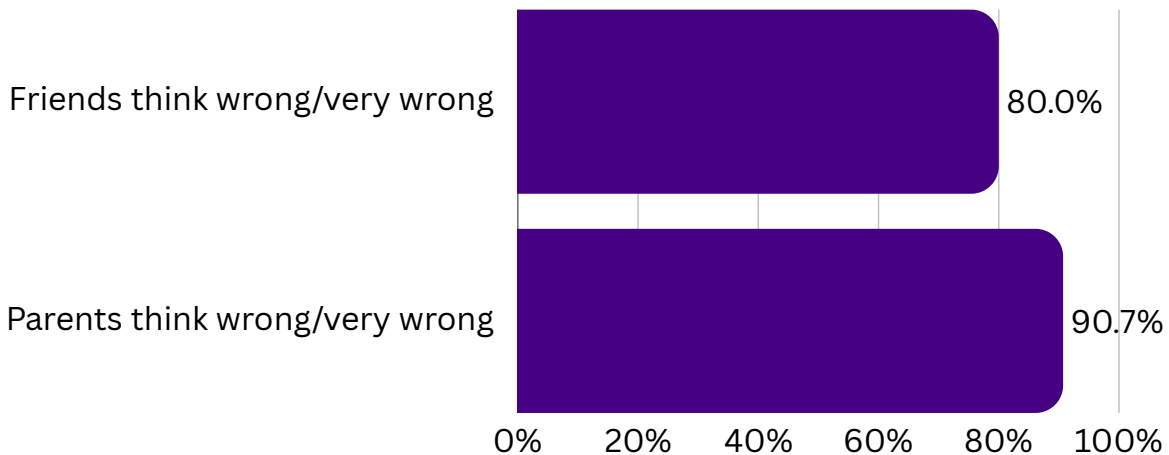


**70.9%** of youth reported that their teachers never or rarely talked about **drugs** in school.

**70.0%** of youth reported that they never or rarely talked with their parents about **drugs**.

## Perception of Marijuana Use

Youth indicated whether their friends or parents think alcohol use is wrong.





# SAFETY & RESPONSIBLE CHOICES

# Safety & Responsible Choices

## Trends: 2023-2025



**More youth reported unsafe driving practices in 2025 than 2023.**

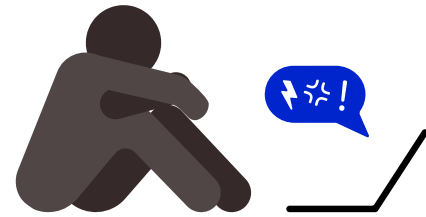
**Cell phone use while driving** increased from 16.3% in 2023 to **27.9%** in 2025.

**Seatbelt use** decreased from 84.8% in 2023 to **73.7%** in 2025.

While *fewer* youth reported **being bullied** in 2025 (**80.5%**) compared with 2023 (73.1%)...



...**bullying for one's physical appearance** increased from 7.9% in 2023 to **9.4%** in 2025.



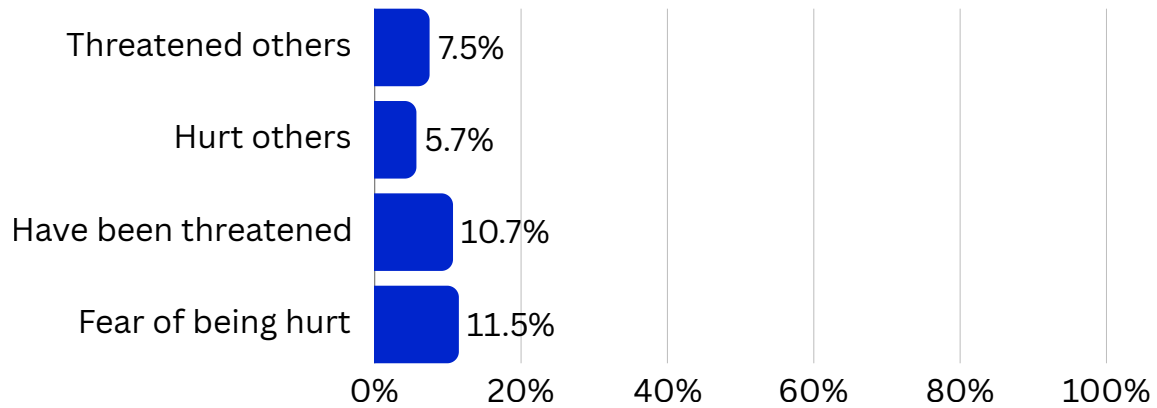
**19.5%** of youth reported they have been **electronically bullied** in 2025, which is *down* from 26.9% in 2023.

*More* youth **never skipped school without parent or guardian permission** in 2025 (**93.2%**) compared to 2023 (82.7%).

**Violence in schools** remained *relatively steady* between 2023 and 2025.

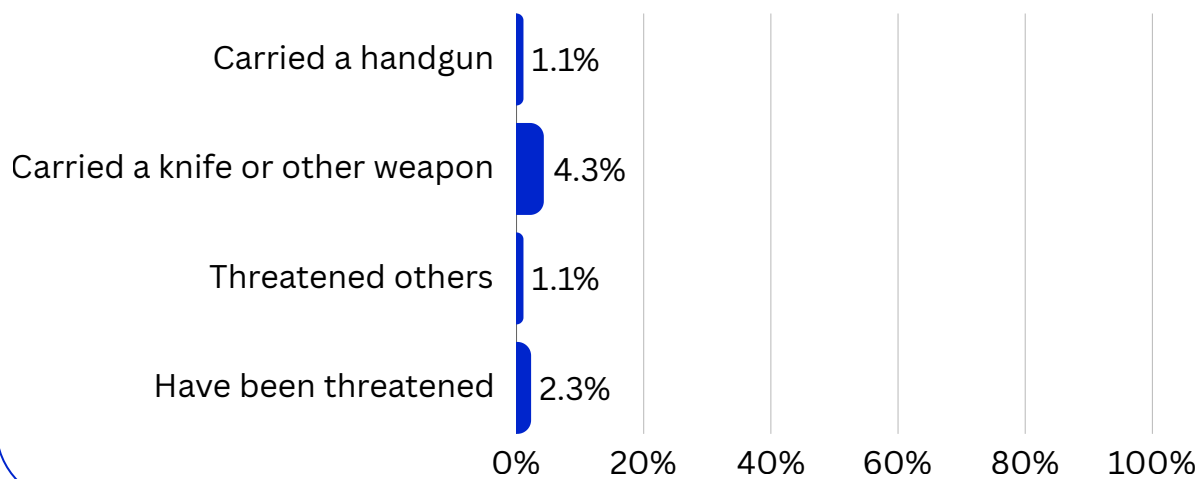
# Safety

## Youth Who Reported Violence at School Without a Weapon



Youth reported **seldom or never feeling safe** in school bathrooms (**18.0%**), parking lots (**17.9%**), halls (**17.5%**), cafeteria/lunch room (**16.2%**), locker rooms (**16.1%**).

## Youth Who Reported Violence at School With a Weapon

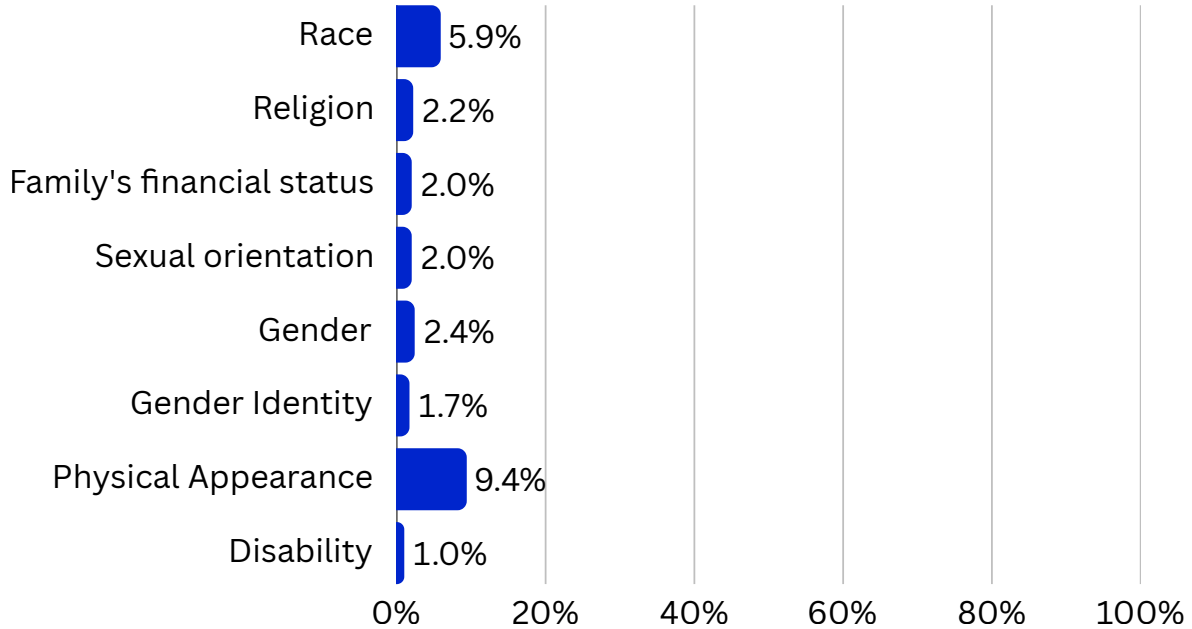


**5.3%** of youth reported being **physically injured** by someone they were dating or going out with at least once in the last year.

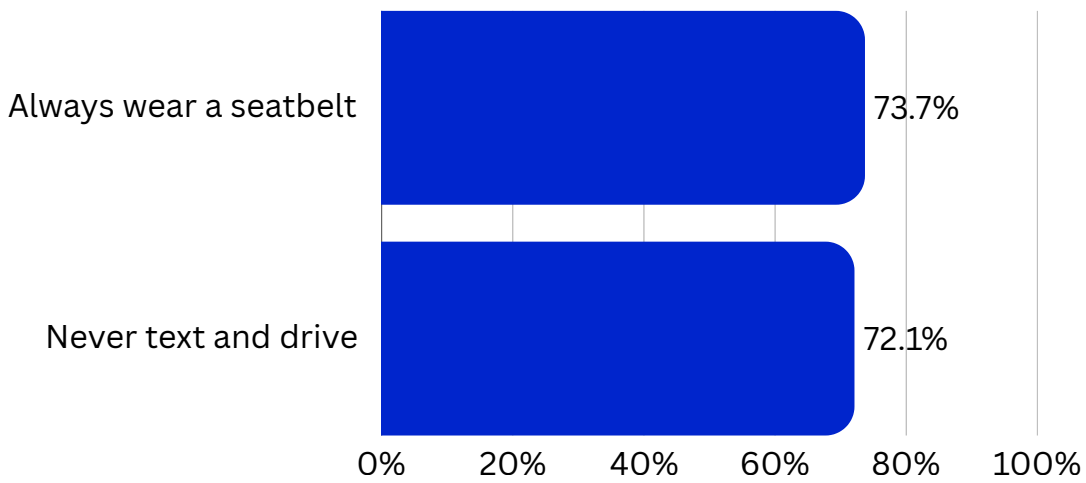
# Safety

80.5% of youth reported **not being bullied** in the last year.

## Reasons for Being Bullied



## Safe Driving Practices Among 12<sup>th</sup> Graders



## Responsible Choices

**53.4%** of youth reported two or more hours of **screen time** per day beyond their school work.

**84.9%** of youth reported never having **gambled or bet** money.

**96.1%** of youth reported never participating in **gang activities**.

**97.0%** of youth reported never or seldom getting in **trouble with the police**.

**83.3%** of youth reported never having been **suspended** from school.

**76.3%** of youth reported getting **good grades** often or a lot of the time.

**93.2%** of youth reported never **skipping school** without parental or guardian permission.

**84.2%** of youth reported never or seldom getting in **trouble**.





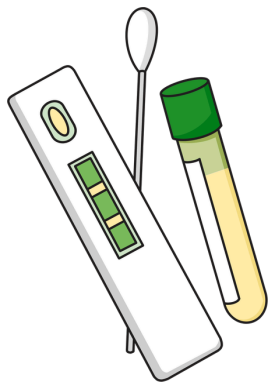
# SEXUAL HEALTH

# Sexual Health

## Trends: 2023-2025

Fewer students reported having sexual intercourse in 2025.

In 2025, **13.9%** of youth reported ever having intercourse compared with 16.9% in 2023.

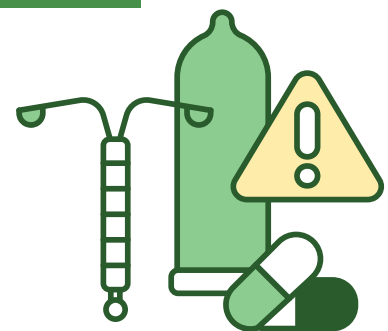


More students reported testing for STIs in 2025.

The number of sexually active youth who have **ever been tested for STIs and/or HIV/AIDS** increased from 16.5% in 2023 to **18.8% in 2025.**

Condoms were the most common contraceptive method used in 2023 (52.5%) and 2025 (45.9%).

**67.2%** of sexually active youth in 2025 reported **using an effective method of birth control** (condoms or hormonal) as their usual method. This is *down from 72.2%* in 2023.

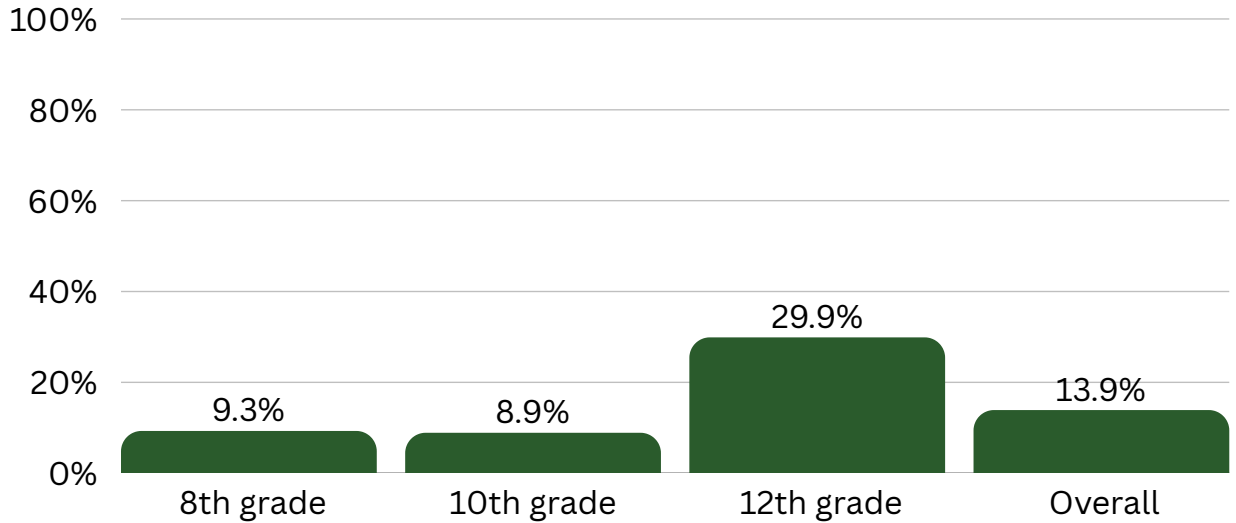


In 2025, nearly 1.3 (32.1%) of sexually active youth reported not using any protection the last time they had sex. This is an increase from 19.0% in 2023.

# Sexual Health

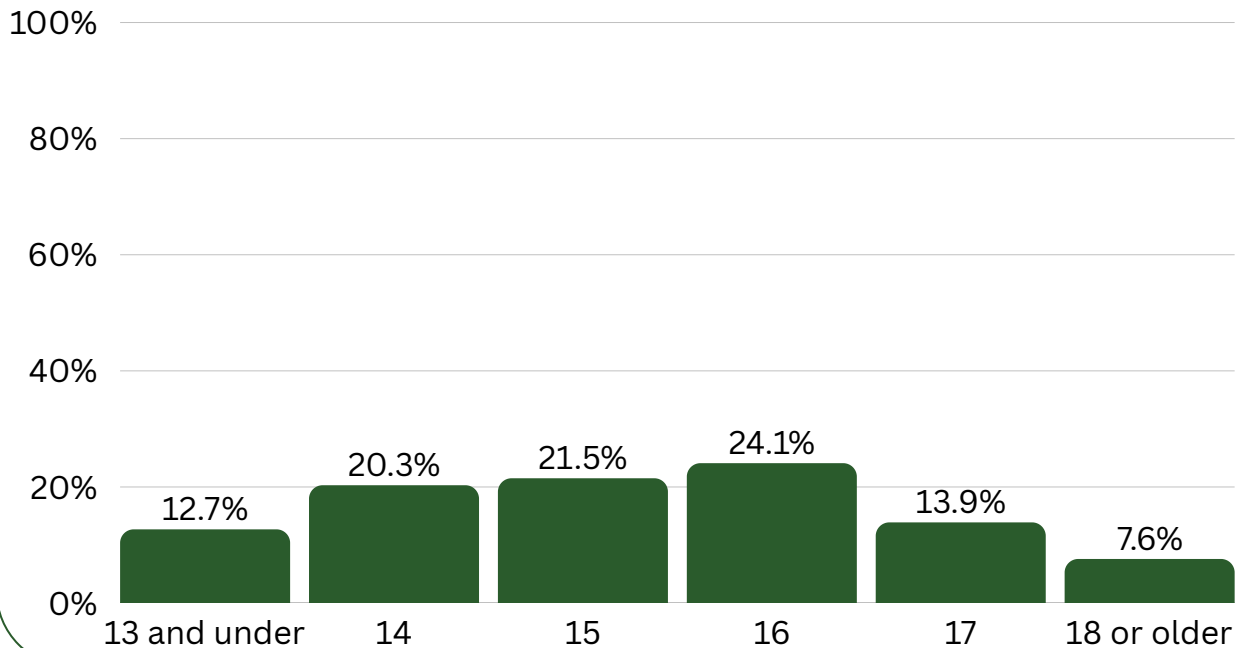
**86.1%** reported never having had **sexual intercourse**.

## Sexual Intercourse by Grade Level



## Age at First Time of Sexual Intercourse

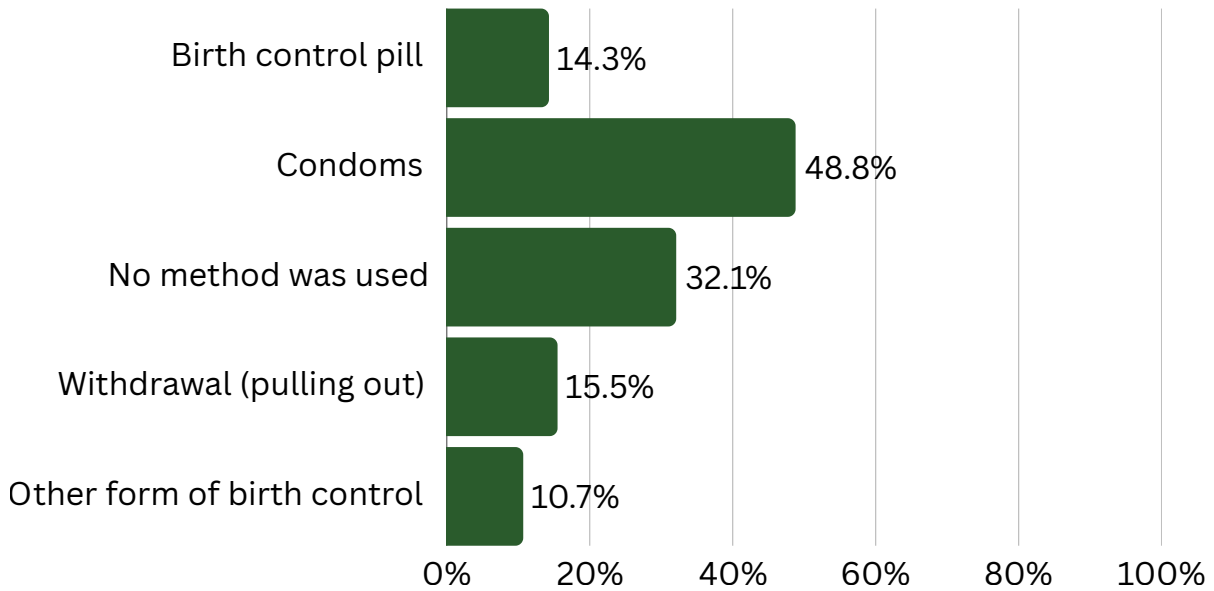
Reported for youth who have had sexual intercourse.



# Sexual Health

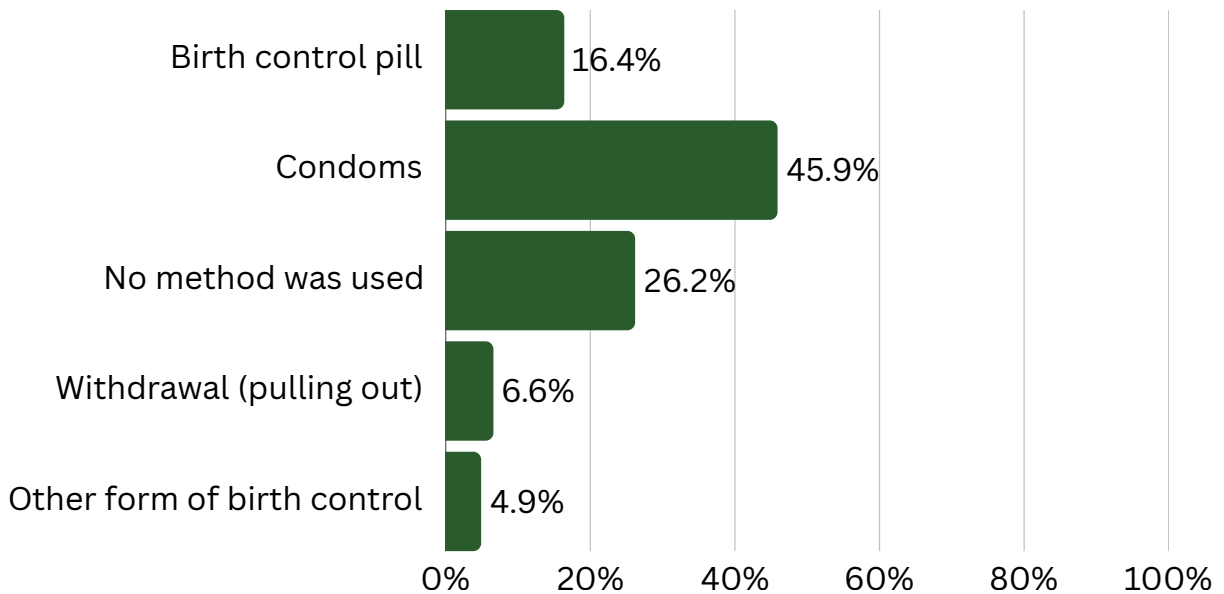
## Contraceptive Method Used Most Recently

Reported for youth who have had sexual intercourse.



## Most Commonly Used Choice of Contraceptive Method

Reported for youth who have had sexual intercourse.



## Sexual Health

The majority of youth reported infrequent conversations with their parents on topics related to sexual health.

**79.3%** rarely or never talked with their parents about **avoiding unwanted sexual contact.**

**83.6%** rarely or never talked with their parents about **sexually transmitted infections** and **HIV/AIDS.**

**77.3%** rarely or never talked with their parents about **preventing pregnancy.**

**78.1%** rarely or never talked with their parents about **sex.**

**66.7%** rarely or never talked with their parents about **consent.**

**12.8% of females** reported ever **receiving a touch** of a sexual nature which they **did not consent to** or want.

**9.1% of females** reported they had been **forced to do sexual things** they did not want to do **by someone they were dating** or going out with.

## Sexual Health

**76.3%** of sexually active youth reported **never testing** for **STIs**.

**13.2%** of youth reported wanting more information on **pregnancy prevention**.

**10.8%** of youth wanted more information on **avoiding unwanted sexual contact**.

The **majority** of youth reported that **teachers infrequently taught about sexual health** topics in school.



