# 2023 VERMONT YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY

**ESSEX NORTH SU** 

2

The Vermont Department of Health would like to acknowledge the work and effort of all the schools, teachers and students who participate in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey each year.

#### THANK YOU! ESSEX NORTH SU SCHOOLS

High School CANAAN SCHOOLS

Middle School CANAAN SCHOOLS

Copies of the questionnaires, state-wide reports, data briefs, and additional sub-state reports are available online.

Visit the Vermont Department of Health YRBS website at: https://www.HealthVermont.gov/yrbs



3

#### **Table of Contents**

About the YRBS	4
Methodology	
Using the YRBS	
How Accurate are the Results?	8
Understanding and Interpreting the Results	9
High School Results	
Demographics	12
Unintentional Injuries and Prevention	13
Violence and Bullying	15
Mental Health	17
Lifetime Substance Use	18
Current Substance Use	
Other Substance Use Behaviors and Experiences	22
Perceptions Around Substance Use	
Sexual Health	25
Weight	
Physical Activity	
Nutrition	
Social Determinants of Health	
Protective Factors	
Middle School Results	
Demographics	
Unintentional Injuries and Prevention	
Violence and Bullying	
Mental Health	
Lifetime Substance Use	
Current Substance Use	
Perceptions Around Substance Use	
Sexual Health	
Physical Activity	
Nutrition	
Social Determinants of Health	
Protective Factors	46

#### About the YRBS

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is a national school-based survey that monitors the health-risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death and disability among youth and young adults. These include:

- Behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries
- Violence
- Alcohol and other drug use
- Tobacco use
- Unhealthy dietary behaviors
- Inadequate physical activity
- Sexual health behaviors related to pregnancy and STDs

The YRBS also measures other high priority health-related behaviors and protective factors. These include:

- Prevalence of obesity
- Attitudes and perceptions related to substance use
- Food and housing insecurity
- Youth assets
- Academic achievement

5

#### About the YRBS

In Vermont, the Department of Health works with the Agency of Education and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to administer the YRBS. It is typically conducted every two years during the spring semester. The YRBS was first administered in 1993 among students in grades 8 through 12. Since 2011, Vermont has conducted two separate surveys: a high school survey of students in grades 9 through 12, and a middle school survey of students in grades 6 through 8.

The middle school and high school surveys differ. The middle school survey is shorter and focuses more on lifetime behaviors and includes questions on fighting, bullying, suicidality, substance use, attitudes and perceptions about substance use, sexual activity, nutrition, physical activity, youth assets, and other factors related to health equity. The high school survey includes questions on these topics as well as more in-depth questions on current behaviors such as driving behaviors and self-reported height and weight.

Copies of the Vermont high school and middle school surveys as well as previous surveys can be found online at: https://www.HealthVermont.gov/yrbs



6

#### Methodology

The YRBS is a biennial school-based survey. In Vermont, students in all public schools and select independent schools across the state are invited to participate in the YRBS. Historically, this has always taken place in the Spring semester. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and remote learning, the 2021 survey was delayed and administered during the fall of 2021.

Survey procedures were designed to protect the privacy of students. The YRBS is confidential, anonymous, and optional for students. All students are read a standard set of directions and asked to complete the self-administered survey. Completion of the survey depends on a student's ability to read and complete the questionnaire independently or with the use of computer assisted technology (e.g., screen readers). Thus, students with very limited reading skills or significant intellectual or learning disabilities, may not be adequately represented in this data. Students can decline participation at any time or skip any questions they do not wish to answer. In addition, to protect students' anonymity, data is suppressed when less than 50 students respond to a question or less than 5 students answer a question in a particular way.

In 2019, Vermont began administering a web-based version of the YRBS. Students complete the YRBS online using a unique, random login code to access the survey online. No survey logic or skip patterns are used to ensure that all students complete the survey in approximately the same time frame, regardless of how they answer a question.



#### Using the YRBS

#### Engaging students, schools, and communities

The YRBS can detect changes in risk behaviors over time and identify differences among ages, grades, and genders. With these data, school and community organizations can focus prevention efforts and determine whether school policies and community programs are having the intended effect on student behaviors.

Think of the YRBS as a tool for starting discussions, for educating the community, for planning and evaluating programs, and for comparing Vermont students with other students nationwide.

**Start the Conversation:** Use the YRBS to begin a conversation with teens about the personal choices they make or about the health of their community. Ask them if the results accurately reflect what they see happening around them. How do they explain the results? From their perspective, what is or is not working? How would they promote healthy behaviors?

**Increase Awareness:** The YRBS provides an opportunity to break through "denial" and make community members aware of the risks that their young people face. It can also dispel myths and correct misinformation about the "average teenager." The YRBS can accentuate the positive and celebrate the fact that many students are abstaining from behaviors that endanger their health and their ability to succeed.

**Plan and Evaluate Programs:** The YRBS can serve as the basis of a community needs assessment. It can help identify strengths and weaknesses in communities and can inform strategies to address those weaknesses.

Remember to Look at the Positive Side: In most cases, the majority of adolescents are NOT engaging in risky behaviors. Although most of the charts examine the prevalence of risk behaviors, please do not forget about the percentage of adolescents who are NOT engaging in these behaviors.

**Participate in Getting to 'Y':** Getting to Y provides an opportunity for students to take a lead in bringing meaning to their own Youth Risk Behavior Survey data and taking steps to strengthen their school and community based on their findings. Schools and districts across the state form teams to analyze local level data, identify areas of strength and concern, and create a preliminary action plan. Through the Getting to 'Y' program, students attend a training day where they learn tools and strategies to examine data, explore root causes, and create next action steps. In addition, teams plan and host a community dialogue event to share their executive summary with the school and community.

For more information on upcoming Getting to Y trainings, newsletters, and resources visit Getting to Y at <a href="http://www.upforlearning.org/initiatives/getting-to-y">http://www.upforlearning.org/initiatives/getting-to-y</a>



7

#### How Accurate are the Results?

Research indicates data of this nature may be gathered as credibly from adolescents as from adults. The anonymous survey design and survey environment encourages students to be honest and forthright.

Numerous precautions are taken to ensure the reliability and validity of the results. The CDC runs over 100 consistency checks on the data to exclude careless, invalid, or logically inconsistent answers. These internal reliability checks help identify the small percentage of students who falsify their answers.

The CDC also weights data, a mathematical procedure that makes data representative of the population from which it was drawn.

The results in this report are weighted by sex, grade, and race/ethnicity in order to compensate for absenteeism and incomplete surveys. The weighting allows the results to be fully representative of middle school students in grades 6 through 8 (middle school survey) and high school students grades 9 through 12 (high school survey). Weighting permits us to draw inferences about the school-based student population in Vermont.

More information on survey reliability including "Do students tell the truth" is available on the Vermont Department of Health YRBS webpage at: https://www.HealthVermont.gov/yrbs



9

#### **Understanding and Interpreting the Results**

#### Statistical Differences

Throughout this report, statistically significant differences are noted. Statistical significance is calculated by comparing the 95% confidence intervals of two or more values. If the confidence intervals overlap, the percentages are not different. In other words, the two groups are not statistically different from one another. If the confidence intervals do not overlap, there is a statistical difference between the two groups.

A 95% confidence interval is a range of values and can vary due to the size of a particular population or how consistently students responded to an item. Sometimes, when comparing the responses of two or more groups, the overall percent may look very different, but the two numbers are not statistically different. Other times, the two values may be very close but differ statistically.

While this report notes statistical differences, we encourage you to consider meaningful differences: does the disparity merit a targeted intervention, show a real change in health, or otherwise mean something important to the community (statistics aside).

#### **Data Suppression**

For some questions, not enough students respond to be able to report an estimate. In those instances, a dot (.) indicating "too few students" is noted in the table. Reportable estimates include a numerator of at least 5 students and denominator of 50 or more students.



10

#### Key Terms and Statistical Differences

Each table includes the overall statewide and supervisory union prevalence rates (%). Prevalence rates by subpopulations are included at the local level. Overall statistical comparisons between the statewide and supervisory union rates as well as statistical differences within a supervisory union by subpopulations are indicated within each table. These are noted using the following key terms and statistical differences:

- VT All students in Vermont
- SU All students in ESSEX NORTH SU
- . Too few students to report
- \* Significant difference between groups



2023 VERMONT YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY

11

# 2023 VERMONT YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY REPORT

HIGH SCHOOL RESULTS



https://www.HealthVermont.gov/yrbs

#### Demographics

Year in SchoolN%9th grade102110th grade91811th grade82712th grade1534	ESSEX NORTH SU Overall		N 42
10th grade91811th grade827	Year in School	N	%
11th grade 8 27	9th grade	10	21
	10th grade	9	18
12th grade 15 34	11th grade	8	27
	12th grade	15	34

Note: Students are not required to answer questions on the YRBS. Therefore, totals by specific demographics may not equal the overall total. N = Unweighted number of students; % = Weighted percent



#### Unintentional Injuries and Prevention

	VT	SU/SD
Rarely or never wore a helmet when they rode a bicycle or skateboard or rollerbladed, among those who rode a bicycle or skateboard or rollerbladed, past year	42	
Had a concussion from playing a sport or being physically active, past year	18	

	νт	SU/SD
Had at least one sunburn, past year	72	
Most of the time or always wear sunscreen when outside for at least one hour	32	

	νт	SU/SD
Were asked by a doctor, dentist, or nurse if they smoked, among those who saw a provider in the past year	49	



#### Unintentional Injuries and Prevention

	νт	SU/SD
Texted or e-mailed while driving a car or other vehicle, among students who drive, past 30 days	38	
Drove a car or other vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol, among students who drive, past 30 days	7	
Drove a car or other vehicle when they had been using marijuana, among students who drive, past 30 days	12	

	νт	SU/SD
Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol, past 30 days	19	
Rode in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been using marijuana, past 30 days	22	



### Violence and Bullying

	νт	SU/SD
Were in a physical fight, past year	16	
Were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property, past year	9	
Carried a weapon on school property, past 30 days	5	

	∣ ∨т	SU/SD
Were bullied, past 30 days	21	
Bullied someone else, past 30 days	13	
Were electronically bullied, past year	18	

	∨т	SU/SD
Did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school, past 30 days	10	
Ever saw someone get physically attacked, beaten, stabbed, or shot in their neighborhood	17	



#### Violence and Bullying

	νт	SU/SD
Report someone has ever done sexual things to them that they did not want	23	
Reported someone they were dating or going out with did sexual things that they did not want, among students who dated or went out with someone, past year	14	
Experienced physical dating violence, among students who dated or went out with someone, past year	9	



	νт	SU/SD
Reported that their mental health was most of the time or always not good, past 30 days	34	
Most of the time or always bothered by feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge, past year	36	
Felt sad or hopeless, past year	29	

	νт	SU/SD
Purposely hurt themselves without wanting to die, past year	23	
Made a plan about how they would attempt suicide, past year	14	
Attempted suicide, past year	7	

	∣ ∨т	SU/SD
Most of the time or always get the kind of help they need, among those who felt sad, angry, hopeless, or anxious	31	
Would most likely talk to a teacher, counselor or other adult in their school or an adult outside of school who is not a family member about their feelings, among students who felt sad, angry, or anxious	7	

# = Significantly . = Too few students to report; \* = Statistical differences between groups; increases/decreases with each grade level; + = Older students significantly different from younger students



17

#### Lifetime Substance Use

	νт	SU/SD
Ever drank alcohol	49	
Ever smoked a cigarette	18	
Ever tried an electronic vapor product	32	
Ever tried marijuana	35	

	νт	SU/SD
Had their first drink of alcohol before age 13 years	14	
Smoked a cigarette before age 13 years	7	
First tried an electronic vapor product before age 13	7	
Tried marijuana for the first time before age 13 years	6	



#### Lifetime Substance Use

	∨т	SU/SD
Ever misused a prescription pain medicine	9	•
Ever used cocaine	3	
Ever used inhalants	7	
	2	
	2	•



#### **Current Substance Use**

	νт	SU/SD
Currently smoked cigarettes or cigars or used smokeless tobacco or electronic vapor products	18	
Currently smoked cigarettes	6	
Currently used an electronic vapor product	16	
Currently used smokeless tobacco	3	
Currently smoked cigars	4	

	۷т	SU/SD
Currently drank alcohol	27	
Binge drank, past 30 days	13	
Currently used marijuana	22	
Misused any prescription medication, past 30 days	5	



#### **Current Substance Use**

	vт	SU/SD
Usually got electronic vapor products by buying them themselves in a convenience store, supermarket, discount store, or gas station, among students who used EVP, past 30 days	4	
Primarily used EVP because they were curious about them, among students who used EVP, past 30 days	25	
Primarily used EVP because friends or family used them, among students who used EVP, past 30 days	19	

	νт	SU/SD
Used an electronic vapor product to vape marijuana, among students who used marijuana, past 30 days	65	
Usually used marijuana by smoking it in a joint, bong, pipe, or blunt, among students who used marijuana, past 30 days	67	
	3	
Usually used marijuana by vaping it, among students who used marijuana, past 30 days	15	



#### Other Substance Use Behaviors and Experiences

	νт	SU/SD
Attended school under the influence of alcohol or other illegal drugs, past year	12	
Tried to quit using all tobacco products, past year	12	
Ever lived with a parent or guardian who was having a problem with alcohol or drug use	27	



#### Perceptions Around Substance Use

	νт	SU/SD
Say if they wanted to get electronic vapor products, it would be sort of easy or very easy for them to get some	60	
Say if they wanted to get alcohol, it would be sort of easy or very easy for them to get some	66	
Say if they wanted to get marijuana, it would be sort of easy or very easy for them to get some	58	

	νт	SU/SD
Think it is wrong or very wrong for someone their age to use electronic vapor products	70	
Think it is wrong or very wrong for someone their age to drink alcohol	53	
Think it is wrong or very wrong for someone their age to use marijuana	55	•



#### Perceptions Around Substance Use

	νт	SU/SD
Responded that their parents or guardians feel it would be wrong or very wrong for them to use electronic vapor products	89	
Responded that their parents or guardians feel it would be wrong or very wrong for them to drink alcohol	67	
Responded that their parents or guardians feel it would be wrong or very wrong for them to use marijuana	75	

	∨т	SU/SD
Think people greatly risk harming themselves, physically or in other ways, if they use electronic vapor product regularly	42	
Think people greatly risk harming themselves, physically or in other ways, if they have five or more drinks of alcohol once or twice each weekend	35	
Think people greatly risk harming themselves, physically or in other ways, if they use marijuana regularly	24	



#### Sexual Health

	νт	SU/SD
Were ever tested for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)	8	
Were tested for a sexually transmitted disease (STD), past year	8	

	νт	SU/SD
Ever had sexual intercourse	37	
Had sexual intercourse with four or more persons during their life	8	

	vт	SU/SD
Were currently sexually active, past 3 month	28	

	νт	SU/SD
Drank alcohol or used drugs before last sexual intercourse, among students who were currently sexually active	20	
Used a condom during last sexual intercourse, among students who were currently sexually active	49	



#### Sexual Health

	νт	SU/SD
	18	
Used birth control pills; an IUD or implant; or a shot, patch, or birth control ring before last sexual intercourse with an opposite-sex partner, among students who were currently sexually active	52	
Did not use any method to prevent pregnancy during last sexual intercourse with an opposite-sex partner, among students who were currently sexually active	7	



### Weight

	νт	SU/SD
Are overweight	14	
Are obese	14	

	νт	SU/SD
Described themselves as slightly or very overweight	29	
Were trying to lose weight	39	
Tried to lose weight or keep from gaining weight by going without eating for 24 hours or more, taking any diet pills, powders, or liquids, vomiting or taking laxatives, smoking cigarettes, or skipping meals	22	



#### Physical Activity

	νт	SU/SD
Did not participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on at least 1 day, past week	13	
Were physically active at least 60 minutes per day on 5 or more days, past week	52	
Were physically active at least 60 minutes per day on all 7 days, past week	28	



#### Nutrition

	νт	SU/SD
Did not eat breakfast, past week	14	
Ate breakfast on 5 or more days, past week	49	
Ate breakfast on all 7 days, past week	32	

	vт	SU/SD
Ate 5+ fruits/vegetables every day, past week	19	
Did not eat vegetables, past week	6	
Ate vegetables one or more times per day, past week	69	
Ate vegetables two or more times per day, past week	34	
Ate vegetables three or more times per day, past week	17	
Did not eat fruit or drink 100% fruit juices, past week	7	
Ate fruit or drank 100% fruit juices one or more times per day, past week	58	
Ate fruit or drank 100% fruit juices two or more times per day, past week	27	



#### Social Determinants of Health

	νт	SU/SD
Most of the time or always went hungry because there was not enough food in their home, past 30 days	2	
	4	
	3	

	νт	SU/SD
Have a disability or long-term health problem that keeps them from doing everyday activities	7	
Currently receive Special Education services through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan	18	



#### Protective Factors

	VT	SU/SD
Ate dinner at home with at least one parent or other adult family member on four or more days during the previous week	72	

	νт	SU/SD
Strongly agree or agree that their school has clear rules and consequences for behavior	48	
Felt that they were ever treated badly or unfairly in school because of their race or ethnicity	21	
Reported there is at least one teacher or other adult in their school that they can talk to if they have a problem	69	
During an average school week, spend 10 or more hours participating in afterschool activities	24	
Report they are most likely to attend a 4-year college or university, a community college, or technical school after high school	69	

	νт	SU/SD
Used social media several times a day	80	•



#### Protective Factors

	νт	SU/SD
Strongly agree or agree that in their community they feel like they matter to people	54	



33

# 2023 VERMONT YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY REPORT

MIDDLE SCHOOL RESULTS



#### Demographics

		Ν
Overall		17
Year in School	Ν	%
6th grade	6	30
7th grade	7	43
8th grade	4	27

Note: Students are not required to answer questions on the YRBS. Therefore, totals by specific demographics may not equal the overall total. N = Unweighted number of students; % = Weighted percent



#### Unintentional Injuries and Prevention

	νт	SU/SD
Rarely or never wore a bicycle helmet, among students who had ridden a bicycle	27	
Rarely or never wore a helmet when rollerblading or skateboarding, among students who used rollerblades or rode a skateboard	30	
	17	•

	νт	SU/SD
Had a sunburn, past year	62	•
Most of the time or always wear sunscreen	42	

	νт	SU/SD
Were asked by a doctor, dentist, or nurse if they used a tobacco product among those who saw a provider during the past year	26	

	νт	SU/SD
Do not always wear a seat belt	25	
Ever rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol	19	
Ever rode with a driver who had been using marijuana	13	





### Violence and Bullying

	νт	SU/SD
Were ever bullied on school property	47	
Were ever electronically bullied	30	
Were bullied, past 30 days	27	
Bullied someone else, past 30 days	12	

	νт	SU/SD
Were ever in a physical fight	40	
Ever saw someone get physically attacked, beaten, stabbed, or shot in their neighborhood	15	

	νт	SU/SD
Report someone has ever done sexual things to them that they did not want	13	

	• т	SU/SD
Did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school, past 30 days	12	



### Mental Health

	νт	SU/SD
Reported that their mental health was most of the time or always not good during the past 30 days	25	
Have ever done something to purposely hurt themselves without wanting to die, such as cutting or burning themselves on purpose	21	
Felt sad or hopeless, past year	24	

	νт	SU/SD
Ever seriously thought about killing themselves	20	
Ever made a plan about how they would kill themselves	15	
Ever tried to kill themselves	7	

	νт	SU/SD
Most of the time or always get the kind of help they need, among those who felt sad, angry, hopeless, or anxious	41	
Would most likely to talk to a teacher, counselor or other adult in their school or an adult outside of school who is not a family member about their feelings, among those who felt sad, angry, hopeless, or anxious	5	



#### Lifetime Substance Use

	VT	SU/SD
Ever drank alcohol	19	•
	7	
Ever tried an electronic vapor product	12	
Ever tried a flavored tobacco product	6	•
	8	•

	νт	SU/SD
Had their first drink of alcohol before age 11 years	9	•
	3	
	3	
	3	
	2	

	VT	SU/SD
Ever misused a prescription pain medicine	7	
Ever used inhalants	6	



#### **Current Substance Use**

VT	SU/SD
7	•
2	
6	
1	
1	

νт	SU/SD
5	•
4	

	νт	SU/SD
	14	
Primary used EVP because they were curious about them, past 30 days, among students who used EVP	29	



	νт	SU/SD
Say if they wanted to get electronic vapor products, it would be sort of easy or very easy for them to get some	24	
Say if they wanted to get alcohol, it would be sort of easy or very easy for them to get some	38	
Say if they wanted to get marijuana, it would be sort of easy or very easy for them to get some	20	

	νт	SU/SD
Think it is wrong or very wrong for someone their age to use electronic vapor products	89	

	νт	SU/SD
Believe that their parents or guardians feel it would be wrong or very wrong for them to use electronic vapor products	94	
Believe that their parents or guardians feel it would be wrong or very wrong for them to drink alcohol	86	
Believe that their parents or guardians feel it would be wrong or very wrong for them to use marijuana	92	

. = Too few students to report; \* = Statistical differences between groups; # = Significantly increases/decreases with each grade level



40

#### Perceptions Around Substance Use

	•	SU/SD
Think people greatly risk harming themselves, physically or in other ways, if they use electronic vapor products regularly	51	
Think people greatly risk harming themselves, physically or in other ways, if they have five or more drinks of alcohol once or twice each weekend	39	
Think people greatly risk harming themselves, physically or in other ways, if they use marijuana regularly	45	



#### Sexual Health

νт	SU/SD
5	
51	



#### Physical Activity

	νт	SU/SD
Did not participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on at least 1 day, past week	10	
Were physically active at least 60 minutes per day on 5 or more days, past week	59	
Were physically active at least 60 minutes per day on all 7 days, past week	34	

	νт	SU/SD
Played on at least one sports team, past year	69	

	νт	SU/SD
Walk or ride their bike to school at least once a week when weather permits	23	
Walk or ride their bike to school five days a week when weather permits	11	



#### Nutrition

	νт	SU/SD
Did not eat breakfast, past week	12	
Ate breakfast on 5 or more days, past week	60	
Ate breakfast on all 7 days, past week	42	



#### Social Determinants of Health

	νт	SU/SD
	2	
Experienced unstable housing, past 30 days	2	
People in their home most of the time or always speak a language other than English	7	



#### Protective Factors

	νт	SU/SD
Ate dinner at home with at least one of their parents or other adult family member on four or more days, past week	87	

	νт	SU/SD
Ever felt that they were treated badly or unfairly in school because of their race or ethnicity	25	
Have at least one teacher or other adult in their school that they can talk to if they have a problem	65	
Strongly agree or agree that their school has clear rules and consequences for behavior	56	
Spend 10 or more hours participating in afterschool activities during a typical school week	13	

	νт	SU/SD
Do not use social media such as Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, and Twitter	21	
Use social media such as Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, and Twitter several times a day	60	



#### Protective Factors

	νт	SU/SD
Strongly agree or agree that in their community they feel like they matter to people	56	

