

SUMMARY REPORT

2019

WISCONSIN
Youth Risk Behavior Survey



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

SUMMARY REPORT

2019 Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

What is the YRBS?.....	2
In Their Own Voices	4
Key Findings.....	6
Protective Factors	7
Mental Health.....	8
Bullying	9
Suicide and Help-Seeking	10
Screen Use and Online Behavior	12
School Safety	14
Sexual and Dating Violence	15
Tobacco and Electronic Smoking Devices	16
Housing and Neighborhood	18
Sexual Behaviors.....	19
Alcohol and Other Drugs	20
Traffic Safety.....	22
Nutrition.....	23
Physical Health.....	24
Wisconsin Trends Summary (1993-2019).....	26

WHAT IS THE YRBS?

The 2019 Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) was conducted as part of a national effort by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to monitor health risk behaviors of the nation's high school students. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has administered the YRBS to a representative sample of Wisconsin high school students every two years beginning with 1993.

The YRBS is a self-administered, anonymous questionnaire that students take in a proctored environment during the school day. In 2019 the questionnaire was shortened to 89 questions, and participating schools were allowed to add one of four optional modules. Survey procedures were designed to protect the privacy of students by allowing anonymous and voluntary participation. Local parent permission procedures were followed before administration, including informing parents that their child's participation was voluntary.

The data used for this report are based on a scientific sample that is representative of all public high school students in Wisconsin. The 2019 state sample includes responses from 1,829 students in 45 public, charter, and alternative high schools in Wisconsin during the spring of 2019. The school response rate was 92%, the student response rate was 89%, and the overall response rate was 82%.

The weighted demographic characteristics of the sample are as follows:

Gender	
Female	48.3%
Male	51.7%

Grade Level	
9th grade	25.5%
10th grade	24.7%
11th grade	24.1%
12th grade	25.5%

Race/Ethnicity	
American Indian/Native American*	0.8%
Asian/Pacific Islander*	3.5%
Black/African-American*	9.2%
Hispanic/Latino	11.4%
Multiple (two or more races selected)*	4.0%
White*	71.2%

*Non-Hispanic

The table below shows the prevalence of other groups that feature prominently in this report.

Other Characteristics of Sample	
LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender)	9.7%
Health Condition (Has physical disability or chronic health condition)	11.8%
Receives special education services	8.8%
Food Insecure (Experienced hunger due to lack of food at home)	24.7%
Low Grades (Reports getting mostly Ds or Fs in school)	6.8%
Has lived in four or more places	34.1%

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction made the 2019 YRBS questionnaire, as well as a middle school questionnaire, available to any interested high schools and/or middle schools across the state for their own use. This led to the widespread uptake of the YRBS for school, district, Cooperative Education Service Agency (CESA), and county-level results. Assuming adequate participation rates across all grades, high school results of those local reports can be compared to the state results presented here.



IN THEIR OWN VOICES

A small, random number of YRBS respondents across all YRBS surveys (meaning both the surveys included in the state sample and the surveys used for local data) were invited to offer open-ended feedback on the survey and the topics covered. This feedback is used to help DPI review the questionnaire and get a better understanding of the lived experiences behind the numbers. Here are some of the responses from students that help illustrate some of the results in this report. Quotes are presented here as originally written and are not corrected for spelling or grammar.

"The combination of school, after school activities/ sports, clubs, work, spending time with family, spending time with friends, being physically active every day, and having a healthy diet WHILE dealing with social media, puberty, pressure, and drama is CRAZY OVERWHELMING!!!!!! Please understand every teen is doing their best they can in this society..."

"um my friend threntened to kill herself so i dont know what to do and my best friend and i are on the wrong so i guess i am alittle dipressed but i dont know who to turn to who can i trust if not family and friends?"

"...a lot of families here can't support themselves and their families, this is a big thing here that many people don't talk about. Because kids are having to provide for their families and others they tend to lose focus in school..."

"I am depressed, and I know other people who are as well. I feel as if it's hard to speak out about it to other classmates, teachers, and counselors because of the stigma sorrounding mental health."

"Too many kids in this day and age go around feeling confused, anxious and unsure about things like friends, family, their future, and the life they are living in. Kids don't really get to express these things to anyone or at least people they can feel good about talking to or trust. When they don't have these things and people to rely on, it shows on their grades, social appearance, and mood towards things."

"I'm doing good, and generally this school is very good on making students feel included, safe, and mentally good."



KEY FINDINGS

Compared with prior years, most YRBS indicators remain statistically unchanged. Wisconsin's results do show notable decreases in smoking and traditional tobacco products, along with an increase in vaping or electronic tobacco products. Other drug and alcohol indicators remain the same or continue to decrease.

Screen use continues to increase. Positive health indicators such as sleep, physical activity, and eating breakfast continue to decline. Anxiety increased and other mental health issues remain high, though not statistically higher than in 2017. Students' reports of their own health, as well as their belonging in school, have dropped notably. There are also some indicators of a declining sense of physical safety.

The 2019 Wisconsin YRBS contained new questions on the following topic areas: sexting, concussions, housing mobility, screen use at night, lifetime sexual abuse or assault, number of supportive adults, extracurricular participation, use of "hard" drugs, access to food, and special education¹. Such questions provide new windows into the issues facing young people, including disaggregation of the data by economic indicators (access to food) and special education.

Some student groups show consistently higher risks across topic areas. Overall, the following groups generally report fewer supports and more challenges:

- Females²
- Students of color
- Students with health conditions (e.g., chronic condition or physical disability)
- Students receiving special education services
- Students facing food insecurity (i.e., hunger due to a lack of food at home)
- Students who have moved many times
- Students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT)
- Students with low grades (D's or F's)

This list reflects statistical patterns in the YRBS data, but individual differences still matter. A student who is not in any of these groups may still face significant challenges and need additional support. Conversely, a student who falls into one or more of the categories listed above can still thrive, especially in a supportive and responsive setting. Rather than painting a picture of students who are damaged, the results provide a window into some of the many invisible struggles that so many strong and capable young people contend with every day.

¹Not all students who receive special education services may have participated in the YRBS based on their unique individual needs. Survey respondents with special education services should be considered a distinct subgroup of all students receiving special education services.

²Females generally report both higher levels of support and higher levels of challenge or risk factors.

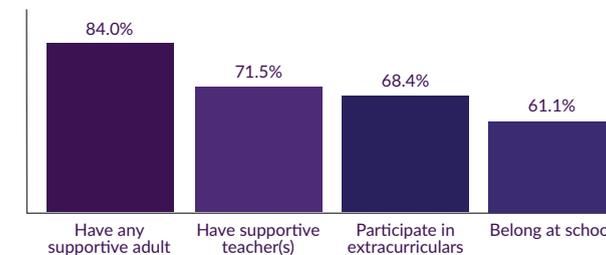
PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Positive influences have been described as assets or protective factors. These assets have the power to protect youth from risk behaviors and some forms of victimization, as well as promote healthy behaviors and general well-being. Historically, Wisconsin high school students have reported high levels of assets. In 2019, students reported some decreases to what have generally been high levels of social support and belonging.

Generally, students who report having strong adult support, as well as high levels of school and extracurricular participation and belonging, are less likely to engage in risk behaviors (e.g., physical fights, carrying a weapon, alcohol and drug use, risky sexual behavior) and more likely to report positive mental health and higher grades.

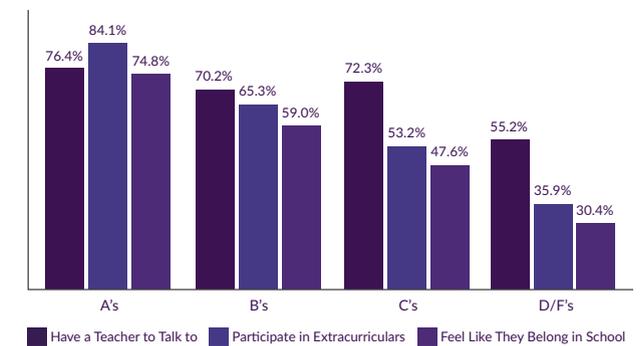
- Overall, 61.1% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they belong at their school; down from 70.8% in 2017.
- A new question was added asking students how many adults, besides their parents, they felt comfortable speaking with about a problem in their lives. 84.0% of students had at least one such "supportive adult" in their lives. Females (87.8%) were significantly more likely than males (80.8%) to report having one or more supportive adults.

Prevalence of Protective Factors



- 71.5% of students reported having at least one teacher or other adult at school they could talk to. That figure was highest for students getting A's (76%) and students receiving special education services (77%), although the difference between students who do and do not receive special education services is not statistically significant. Students with low grades (D's or F's) were least likely to report having a teacher to talk to (55%).

School Inclusion and Belonging, by Self-Reported Grades



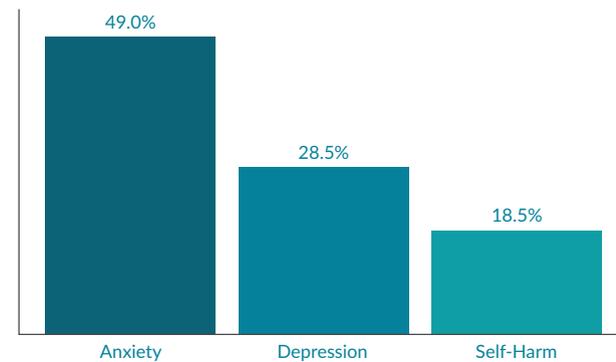
- 68.4% of students participate in school extracurricular activities, including sports, the arts, or other groups or clubs. Students in extracurriculars were 1.6 times more likely to feel like they belong at school (68.8% vs. 44.2%) and less likely to report depression (24.8% vs 35.8%). Efforts to expand extracurricular opportunities, especially to low-income and other marginalized student groups who are underrepresented (see e.g. Putnam 2015), are highly recommended.

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental and emotional well-being are paramount to school success. While many factors outside of school can influence a student's mental and emotional well-being, school environments can also influence a student's positive or negative mental health. The 2019 YRBS included questions related to depression, anxiety, and non-suicidal self-harm.

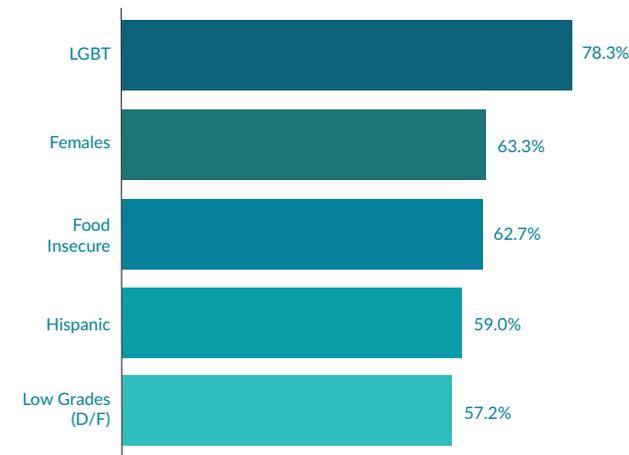
- Nearly one in two students reported anxiety (49.0%). This was an increase from 39.9% of students in 2017.

Self-Reported Rates of Anxiety, Depression, and Self-Harm



- More than two out of three girls in 10th and 11th grades reported anxiety. Other groups with very high anxiety levels are listed in the chart.

Self-Reported Anxiety Among Select Groups



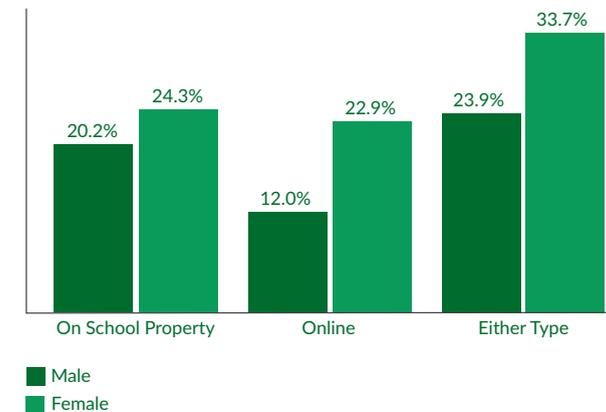
- While most groups showed an increase in anxiety, Black students were the only demographic group that showed a reduction in anxiety from 2017 to 2019 (from 48.9% to 28.7%).
- Rates of depression and self-harm are showing long-term increases but were statistically unchanged from 2017.
- When looking across questions, the majority of Wisconsin high school students (59.4%) have experienced depression, anxiety, self-harm, or suicidal ideation in the past 12 months.

BULLYING

The Wisconsin YRBS asks students about being bullied at school as well as being bullied online during the past 12 months.

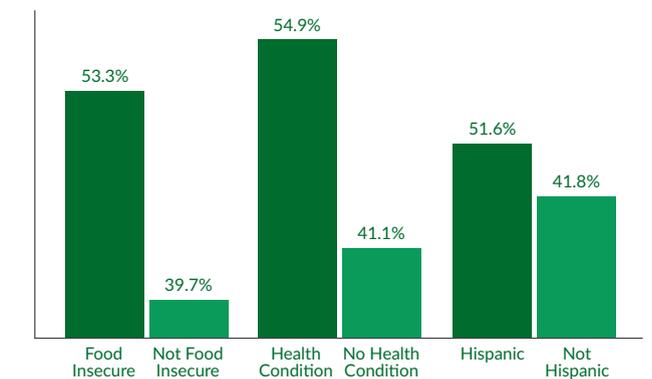
- 22.3% of students report being bullied on school property and 17.4% of students report being bullied online (e.g., through social media or text).
- Rates of both bullying on school property³ and online bullying remain steady, with no statistical change from 2017 or prior years.

Experiences of Different Types of Bullying, by Sex



- Some student groups are more likely than their peers to see bullying as a problem at their school. The chart below shows these differences for three notable groups and their comparison groups: students who have experienced hunger in the past 30 days ("Food Insecure"), students with physical disabilities or chronic health conditions ("Health Condition"), and Hispanic students.

Sees Bullying as a Problem at School For Select Groups



- About one-third of students who experienced bullying (whether on school property, online, or both) also considered suicide (32.1%), as opposed to 9.1% of students who have not been bullied. This does not necessarily mean that the bullying itself was the cause of suicidal ideation; there are some shared risk factors that make students both more likely to be bullied and at greater risk for suicidality. Despite the elevated risk, it's important to keep in mind that most students who are bullied do not report suicidality.

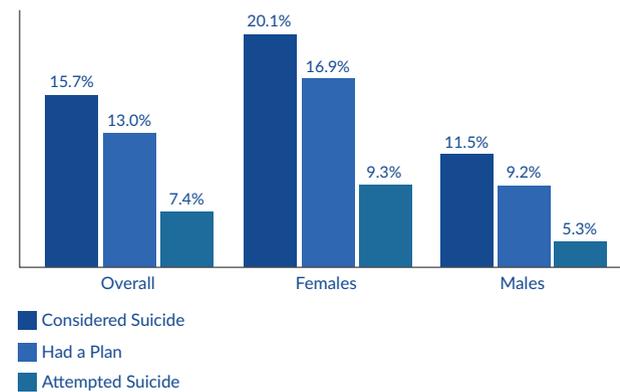
³Listed as "in-person" bullying in some YRBS reports.

SUICIDE AND HELP SEEKING

The YRBS asks students a series of questions about suicidal thoughts and behaviors during the past 12 months, each with greater severity.

- 15.7% seriously considered suicide.
- 13.0% made a plan.
- 7.4% attempted suicide.
- Although ten-year trends are towards more suicidal ideation, suicidality remained unchanged from 2017 rates for Wisconsin students overall and for males, females, white students, and Hispanic students.

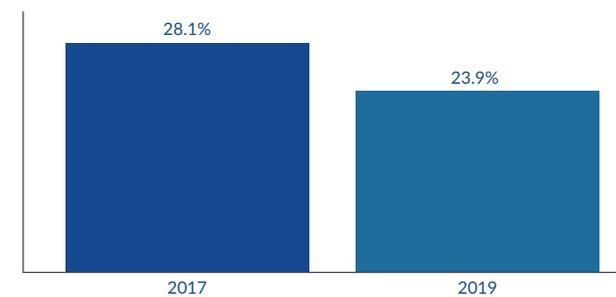
Suicidal Ideation and Behavior: Overall and by Sex



- Black students reported significant decreases from 2017 in considering suicide (23.2% to 11.2%) and planning suicide (20.2% to 11.1%); the number of black respondents who reported on suicide attempts in 2019 was too small to report.

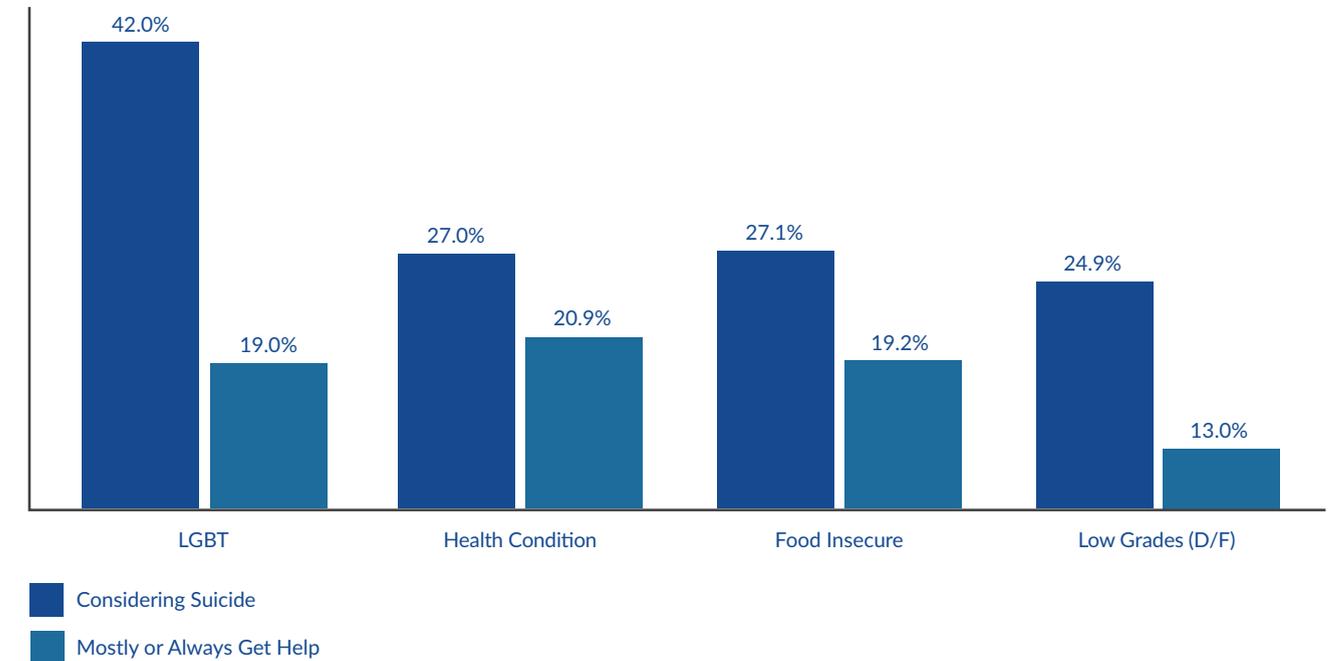
Seeking and finding help is an important component of mental health. Starting in 2017, students taking the YRBS were asked whether they received the kind of help they needed when they felt distressed. In 2019, fewer than one in four students who felt sad, empty, hopeless, angry, or anxious, agreed that they received the help they needed “most of the time” or “always”; this was a decrease from 2017.

Most of the Time or Always Receive the Help They Need



- When asked who they are most likely to seek out for emotional support, most students (50.7%) said they would turn to a friend or sibling; 33.8% of students reported a parent, teacher, or other adult, while 15.5% were not sure.

Suicidality Help Gap for Select Groups



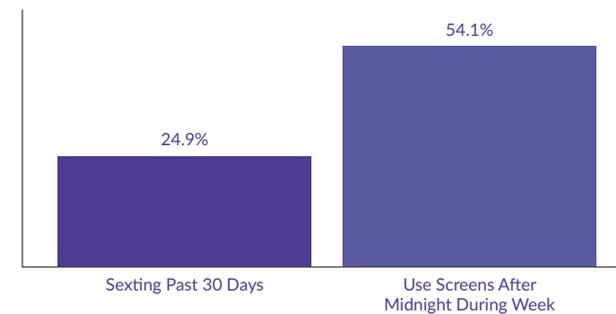
- Some student groups are more likely to seriously consider suicide than they are to receive the help they need when distressed. The chart above shows the most pronounced cases of this “help gap”. For instance, 42.0% of students who are LGBT have seriously considered suicide, but only 19.0% of students who are LGBT say they receive the help they need when in emotional distress. The gap is similar for students with low grades (24.9% considering suicide while only 13.0% receive the help they need.)
- The chart above shows percentages overall for each group (e.g., 42% of all students who are LGBT considered suicide and 19% of all students who are LGBT got help most of the time or always, regardless of whether or not they were suicidal.) Note, however, that the “help gap” is even worse when looking just at students who are considering suicide: students who are considering suicide are half as likely as their peers to say they get help “most of the time” or “always” (13.0% vs. 27.0%); 66% of students considering suicide said that they “rarely” or “never” receive the help they need.

SCREEN USE AND ONLINE BEHAVIOR

Like adults, young people spend much of their time online or otherwise in front of a screen; daily reported screentime (excluding TV) continues to increase. The 2019 YRBS contained one question related to daily screen use, as well as two new questions related to screens and online behavior: the first new question asked how many school nights students were online or otherwise using screens between midnight and 5:00 a.m. This was intended to capture the extent to which screen use was interfering with sleep. The second new question was aimed at “sexting”; it asked students how many times in the past 30 days they sent, received, or shared nude photos or other sexual images.

- Nearly half of students (48.9%) reported three or more hours of recreational, nontelelevision screentime per day (e.g., video or computer games, social media, browsing, texting, etc). This number has been steadily increasing since the question was first asked in 2007.
- Another question asked specifically about television use; 17.7% of students reported three or more hours of TV viewing per day. That number is statistically unchanged from 2017, but lower than when the question was first asked (26.1% in 2005).

Prevalence of Certain Online Behaviors

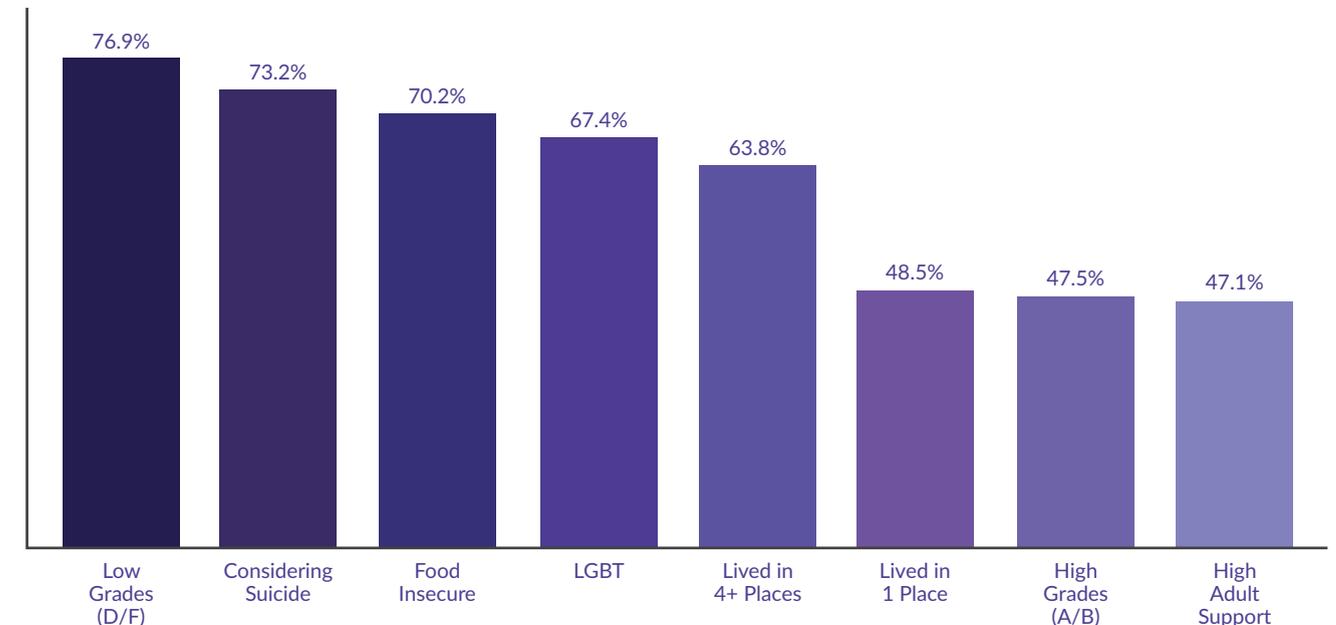


- More than half of students (54.1%) reported using screens after midnight at least one school night per week. Approximately one in seven students (15.0%) reports such use every night.
- Rates of screen use at night were very similar for both male (54.5%) and female (53.4%) students.
- While using screens after midnight is common for all groups, it is more common for some groups of students than others. Those who are most likely to use screens after midnight include students who are LGBT, students facing hunger (“food insecure”), those who’ve lived in four or more places, students of color, and students with low grades. Students who are depressed, anxious, and suicidal are also more likely to use screens after midnight. Conversely, students with high levels of adult support (i.e., three or more supportive adults), high grades, and high stability (e.g., fewer moves and no food insecurity) are less likely to use screens after midnight.

- Students with low grades (D’s or F’s) are 1.6 times more likely than students with high grades (A’s or B’s) to use screens after midnight (76.9% vs 48.5%).
- 2019 was the first year that the YRBS included a question on sexting. Overall, nearly one in four teens (24.9%) reported sending, receiving, or sharing nude photos or sexual images in the past 30 days.
- Males (24.7%) and females (24.9%) were equally likely to report sexting (i.e., that they had sent, received, or shared nude photos or other sexual images in the past 30 days.) There were no significant differences in rates of sexting across grade levels.

- While sexting is fairly common, it also overlaps with a number of other risk categories and behaviors. For example, students who sexted in the past 30 days were 2.8 times more likely to have a history of unwanted sexual contact and 2.2 times more likely to have experienced online bullying. They were also 1.6 times more likely to report depression and more likely to consider suicide. It’s important to note that most students who report sexting do not report any of these issues, and it’s not clear whether sexting increases the likelihood of such risks, or just co-occurs among students already facing these risks. Regardless, if a student is found to be sexting, it may be helpful to ask follow-up questions about safety and wellbeing.

Screens After Midnight for Select Groups

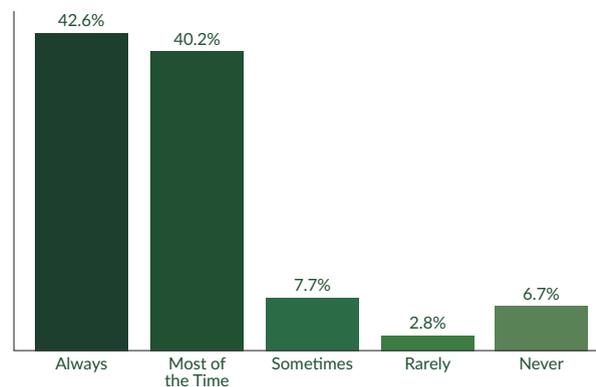


SCHOOL SAFETY

The vast majority of students continue to feel safe at school. In 2019, 82.8% of students felt safe at school “most of the time” or “always”. That figure remained steady from 2017.

- In 2019 9.6% of students “rarely” or “never” felt safe at school. While the previous YRBS showed a slight ten-year increase (from 2007-2017), current ten-year trends show no sustained change from 2009-2019.

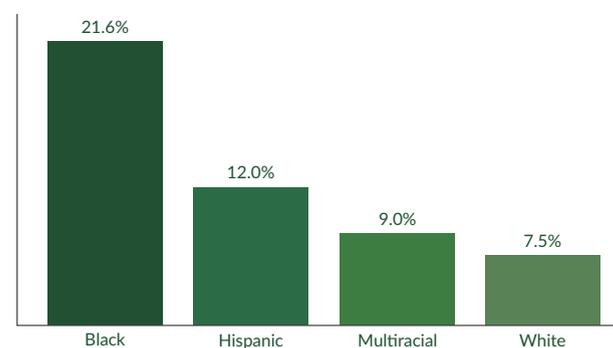
How Often Students Feel Safe at School



- Black students were more likely to say they do not feel safe at school (see chart above); white students were the least likely racial group to say they never or rarely felt safe at school.
- There was no change from 2017 in the percent of students who had skipped school due to safety concerns (6.8%), although the number is up from 2009.
- There was an increase in the percent of students who reported being in a physical fight on school property (from 7.3% in 2017 to 11.2% in 2019). This figure is also up slightly from 2013 (6.8%, no results available for 2015).

- The percent of students who had been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property (7.2%) was statistically unchanged from 2017, but up from 2013. Prior to 2013, such rates were decreasing.
- In 2019, the Wisconsin YRBS switched from a question about bringing any weapon to school, to a more specific question about bringing a gun to school in the past 30 days. 1.0% of respondents reported that they had “carried a gun on school property” in the past 30 days. Rates were 18 times higher for males than females (1.8% vs. 0.1%).
- Approximately one in four students (23.1%) agreed or strongly agreed that violence was a problem at their school. Conversely, fewer students than in 2017 disagreed or strongly disagreed that violence was a problem at their school (51.9% in 2017 vs. 43.7% in 2019).

Rarely or Never Feel Safe at School
By Race and Ethnicity

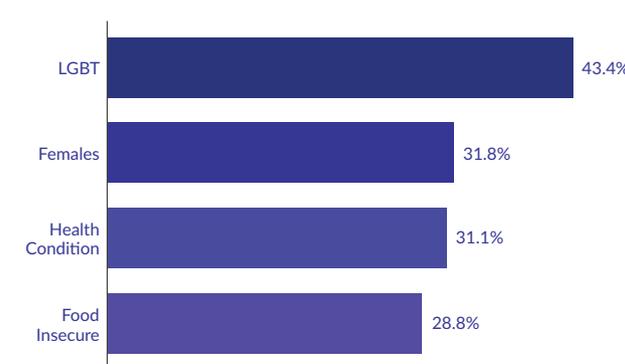


SEXUAL AND DATING VIOLENCE

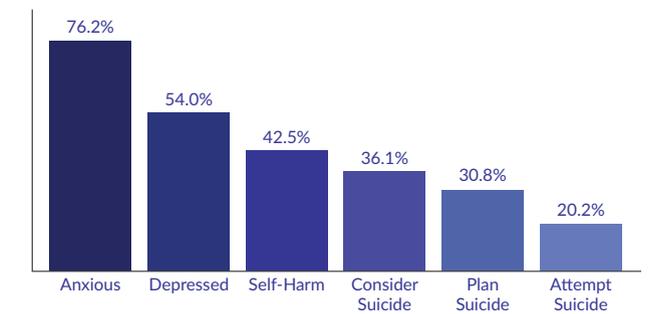
The YRBS includes some safety and victimization questions that are not restricted to the school environment. These include questions on whether a student has ever experienced rape, physical dating violence, sexual dating violence, or any unwanted sexual contact.

- Nearly one in five students (19.9%) reported that at least once in their lives, someone had forced them “to do sexual things you did not want to do.” This is referred to as “sexual assault or coercion” in this report.
- Most students who experienced sexual assault or coercion in their lifetimes (61%), indicated that it had happened more than once.
- For males, the lifetime sexual assault or coercion rate was 8.4%; for females, it was 31.8%.
- Experiences of sexual assault or coercion were more common among certain groups, including students who are LGBT, students with physical disabilities or chronic health conditions (“health condition”), and students facing food insecurity.

Ever Experienced Sexual Assault or Coercion
For Select Groups



Mental Health During Past 12 Months Among Students Who Ever Experienced Sexual Assault or Coercion



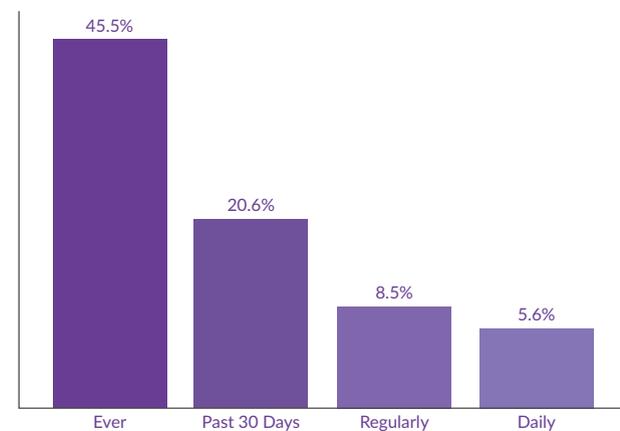
- Students who had experienced sexual assault or coercion at least once in their lives were (3.3) times more likely to seriously consider suicide and 4.79 times more likely to have attempted suicide than students who had not experienced sexual assault. Prevalence of mental health issues and suicidality among survivors of sexual assault or coercion appears in the graph below.
- 6.9% of students specifically indicated that they had been raped (i.e., forced to have sexual intercourse): 3.9% of males and 9.9% of females.
- Looking specifically at dating violence, 13.4% of students who had dated or gone out with someone during the past 12 months (6.7% of dating males and 20.0% of dating females) reported having been sexually assaulted by a dating partner within the past year. 8.3% of dating students (5.8% of dating males and 10.7% of dating females) reported having been physically assaulted (e.g., hit, slammed into something, etc.) by a dating partner within the past year.

TOBACCO AND ELECTRONIC SMOKING DEVICES

The use of electronic cigarettes or vaping devices is up sharply⁴, while conventional cigarettes and other forms of tobacco are down.

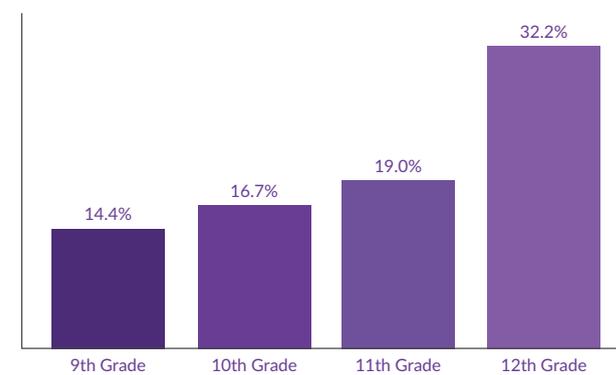
- Close to half of students (45.5%) have tried vaping, and one in five (20.6%) has vaped in the past 30 days. However, a closer look at past the 30 day vaping question shows that less than ten percent of students (9%) vape regularly (i.e., on at least 20 out of the last 30 days) and only 6% report vaping every day.

Vaping Frequency



- Past 30 day vaping rates are almost identical for males (20.0%) and females (21.4%). Seniors have higher rates than 9th or 10th graders.
- Approximately 30% (29.7%) of students who currently vape also currently smoke conventional (sometimes called “combustible”) cigarettes. Almost all students who smoke conventional cigarettes (94.5%), also vape.

Current Vaping by Grade Level

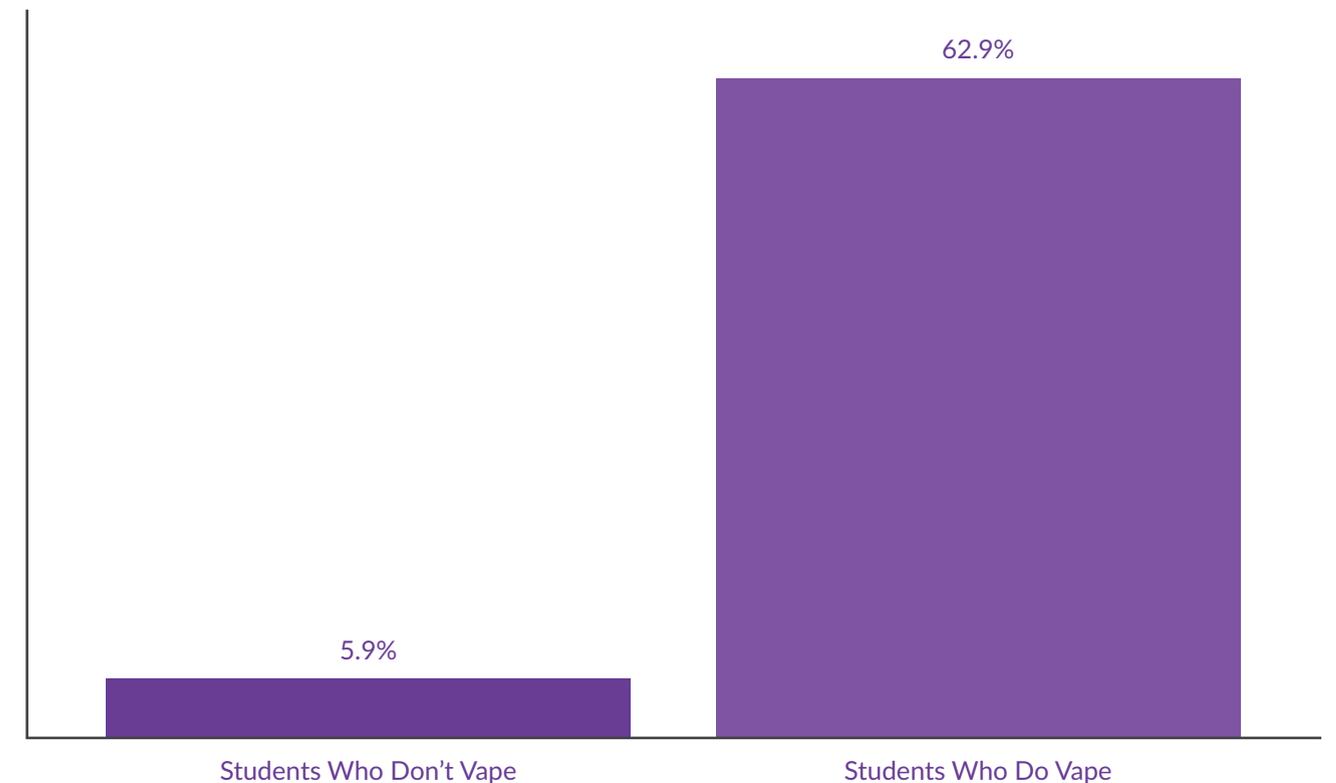


- Past 30 day use for conventional (“combustible”) cigarettes is 5.7% of students; for chew past 30 day use is 3.3%; for cigars or cigarillos past 30 day use is 4.7%.
- 8.9% of students have used any conventional tobacco products (cigarettes, cigars or cigarillos, chew) in the past 30 days. 22.2% of students have used any tobacco product, including conventional or vaping products.
- Along with the rise in vaping products has come an increase in the percent of tobacco users (including all tobacco products) who have tried to quit. That number increased from 37.6% in 2017 to 45.0% in 2019.

⁴Note that 2019 was the first year that the word “Juul” was added to the question; 2017 rates may have been under-reported because the vaping question did not mention “Juul”.

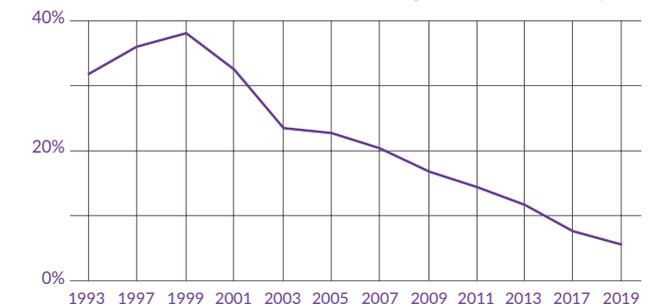
Current Marijuana Use

Among Students Who Do Not vs. Do Currently Vape



- Vaping products can contain different substances, including marijuana. The YRBS does not specifically ask students what substances they are vaping. However, most current vapers (62.9%) also report current marijuana use. Students who have vaped in the past 30 days are more than ten times more likely than non-vaping peers to also report the past 30 day use of marijuana.

Percent of Students Who Smoked Cigarettes (Past 30 Days)

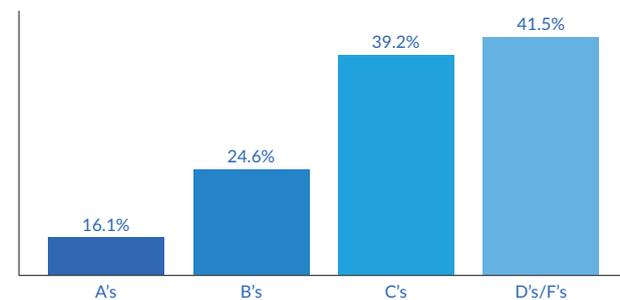


HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD

The 2019 YRBS included three new questions aimed at understanding students' experiences of security and stability outside of school. These included questions on access to food, or food security; perception of neighborhood safety; and housing mobility. Having access to food, a safe neighborhood, and stable housing are all important determinants of both health and academic performance.

- The 2019 YRBS results show that few students experience constant hunger due to lack of food in the home (3.4% reported going hungry "most of the time" or "always"), but many experience episodic hunger. Nearly one in four students (24.7%) reported ever having experienced hunger during the past 30 days.

Food Insecurity (Hunger) by Self-Reported Grades



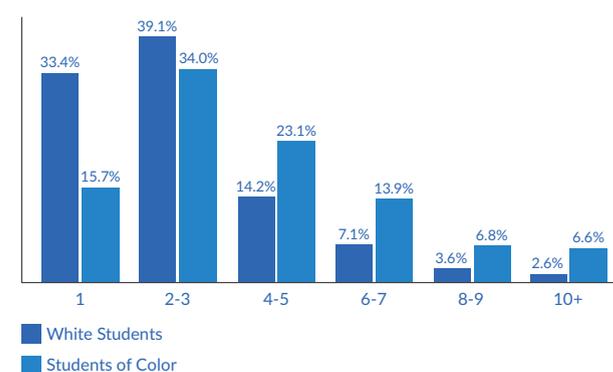
- Poverty is known to impact academic performance⁵. In the 2019 YRBS, students with low grades are also more likely to report being hungry at least some of the time. Given this pattern, schools might consider whether low- or under-performing students are getting regular meals throughout the month.

⁵For a short overview, see the American Psychological Association's "Education and Socioeconomic Status Factsheet" at <https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/factsheet-education.pdf>

⁶Data does not allow for breakdown by all racial and ethnic groups.

- The vast majority of students (89.7%) feel safe in their neighborhoods "most of the time" or "always". This holds true across racial and ethnic lines: 93.2% of white students, 81.0% of Black students, 81.3% of Hispanic students, and 85.0% of multiracial students feel safe in their neighborhoods. Other racial groups were too small to report.
- Students who always or mostly feel safe in their neighborhoods report lower rates of anxiety (46.9%) than their peers who lack that regular sense of neighborhood safety (66.4%).
- Multiple moves can disrupt a student's education. When moves are the result of financial stress, family violence, or other stressful factors, it can impact a young person's health, education, and long-term opportunities.
- Wisconsin students of color are much more likely than their white, non-Hispanic counterparts to have faced multiple moves. White students are twice as likely (2.1 times) as students of color⁶ to have lived in the same place (e.g., apartment, house, etc.) their entire lives. Conversely, students of color are two and a half (2.5) times more likely to have lived in ten or more places in their young lives.

Number of Places Lived (Residences)
White Students vs. Students of Color

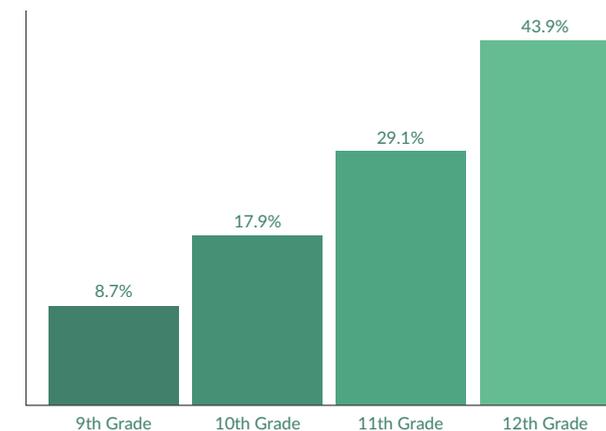


SEXUAL BEHAVIORS

Sexual behaviors are statistically unchanged from 2017. Long-term trends do indicate that young people are less sexually active than in the past⁷ and that those who are sexually active in high school start later and have fewer sexual partners than in the 1990s and early 2000s.

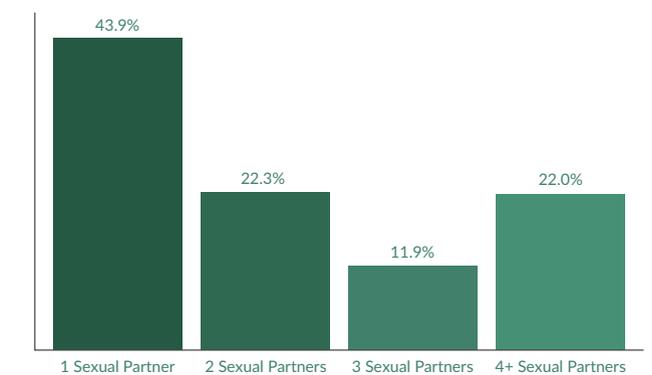
- 34.6% of students have ever had sex. This is statistically unchanged from 2017 rates.
- One in four students (25.0%) is currently sexually active, meaning sexual intercourse in the past 3 months. This is statistically unchanged from 2017 rates.

Currently Sexually Active, by Grade Level



- While young people might believe that "everyone" is sexually active, in fact, most high school students are not currently sexually active even by 12th grade (see chart above).

Number of Sexual Partners in Past Three Months
Sexually Active Students Online (Students Reporting Zero Partners Excluded)



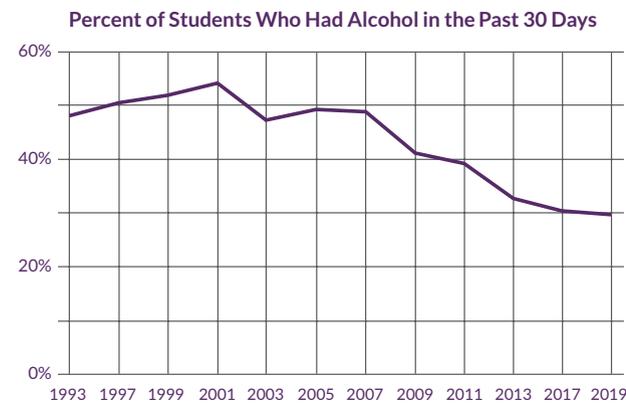
- 2.5% of students reported having had sexual intercourse before age 13. This represents less than one-tenth (7.3%) of all students who have ever had sexual intercourse.
- Relatively few students (7.5% of all students, meaning less than a fourth [22.0%] of sexually active students) report having had four or more sexual partners. The chart above shows the number of lifetime sexual partners reported by sexually active students.
- Most sexually active students (57.4%) report having used a condom during the last sexual intercourse. 20.6% percent of sexually active students reported using a condom along with another method of birth control. This is an increase from 13.3% in 2017.

⁷E.g., lifetime sexual activity is down from 47% in 1993 and the low 40% range in the early 2000s.

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

Alcohol use continued its downward trend, while other drug use in Wisconsin was generally unchanged from 2017 rates. Long-term trends are towards lower use rates across substances.

- 58.4% of students have ever had a drink. This was a statistical decrease from 64.5% in 2017.
- 29.8% of students reported that they currently drink (i.e., within the past 30 days). That figure is statistically identical to the 2017 rate (30.4%), but is also the lowest figure since Wisconsin first asked the question in 1993.



- In 2019, the question used to measure binge drinking changed. Previously the question asked students to select the number of days when they had consumed five or more drinks in a row. In 2019, the question was changed to ask students to select the largest number of drinks they had consumed in a row during the past 30 days. This change allowed for a more nuanced definition of binge drinking as five or more drinks for males and four or more drinks for females.
- Using the sex-specific definition of binge drinking (five drinks for males and four for females), in 2019 12.7% of students binge drank in the past 30 days: 11.9% of males had five or more drinks; 13.7% of females had four or more drinks.⁸

The YRBS asks questions about misuse of two legal drugs: prescription painkillers and over-the-counter medications.

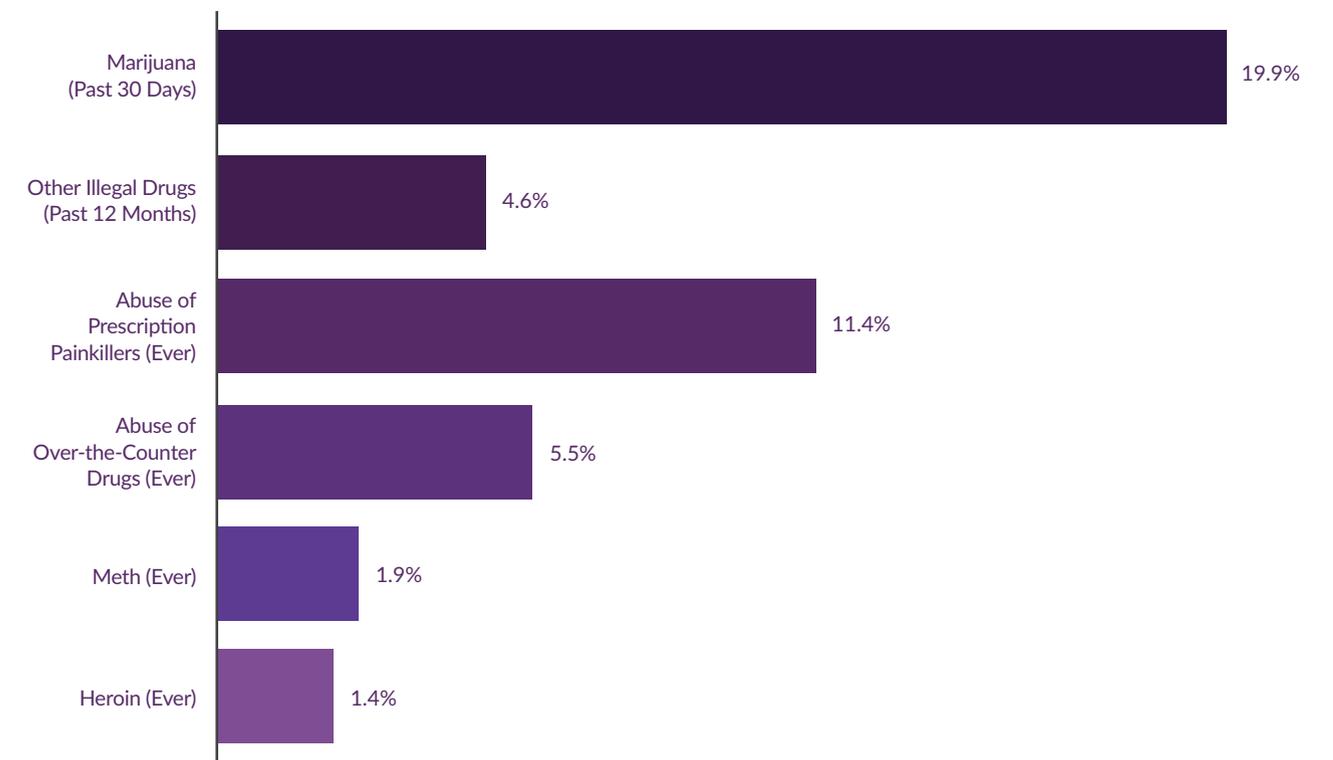
- Abuse of over-the-counter medications remained rare (5.5%).
- The question on prescription painkillers was introduced in 2017 due to concern over opioid addiction. Prescription painkiller abuse remained steady at 11.4% (vs. 11.2% in 2017).
- Males (11.7%) and females (11.0%) reported very similar rates of prescription drug misuse.

⁸Using the prior definition of binge drinking, 11.4% of students (regardless of sex) had five or more drinks within a few hours. While this appears to be somewhat (though not statistically significantly) lower than the 2017 rate of 16.4%, a clear trend cannot be established because the question was phrased differently.

- Current (past 30 day) marijuana use is 19.9% and lifetime marijuana use is 30.6%. Both current use and lifetime use are statistically unchanged from 2017 levels.
- Less than 2% of students reported having ever used methamphetamines (1.9%) or heroin (1.4%). 4.6% of students reported having used any illegal drug besides marijuana within the past 12 months.

- The percent of students who were offered or sold drugs at school during the past year (13.7%) was at its lowest recorded level. This is a significant decrease from the prior YRBS (18.4% in 2017) as well as part of a long-term decrease. The percent of students who attended school under the influence of drugs or alcohol in the past 12 months was 12.2%; this was statistically unchanged from 2017.

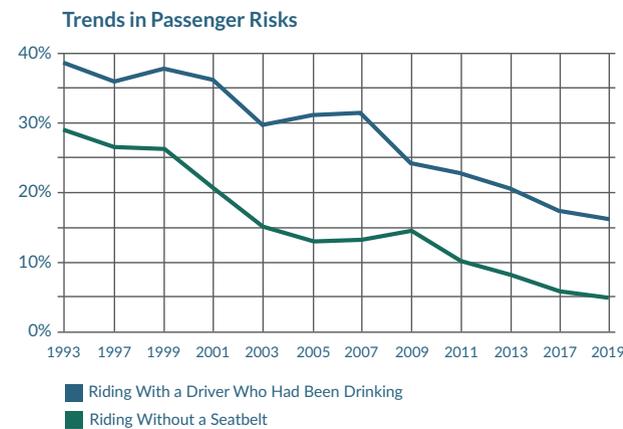
Drug Use Rates



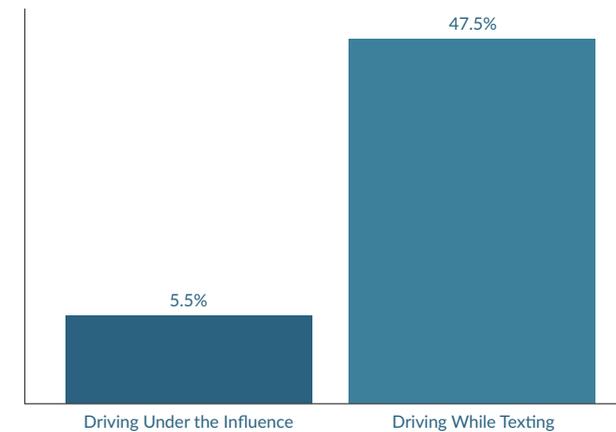
TRAFFIC SAFETY

Wisconsin's 2019 YRBS data continue to show positive trends in traffic safety.

- All student groups report sustained improvement in seatbelt use, though racial and ethnic disparities remain. The percent of students overall who “rarely” or “never” used a seatbelt in a car is 5.0%. Looking at the racial and ethnic categories with sufficient data to report, rates were 10.0% for black students, 10.1% for Hispanic students, 3.3% for multiracial students, and 3.3% for white students. The differences between black and white students are statistically significant.
- 16.2% of students reported having ridden in a vehicle with a driver (of any age) who had been drinking.



Risky Driving Behaviors (Past 30 Days)
Among Student Drivers Only



- 5.5% of student drivers reported having driven under the influence of alcohol.
- Just under half (47.5%) of student drivers reported texting while driving. This is similar to previous rates (47.9% in 2013 and 45.7% in 2017; no data available for 2015).

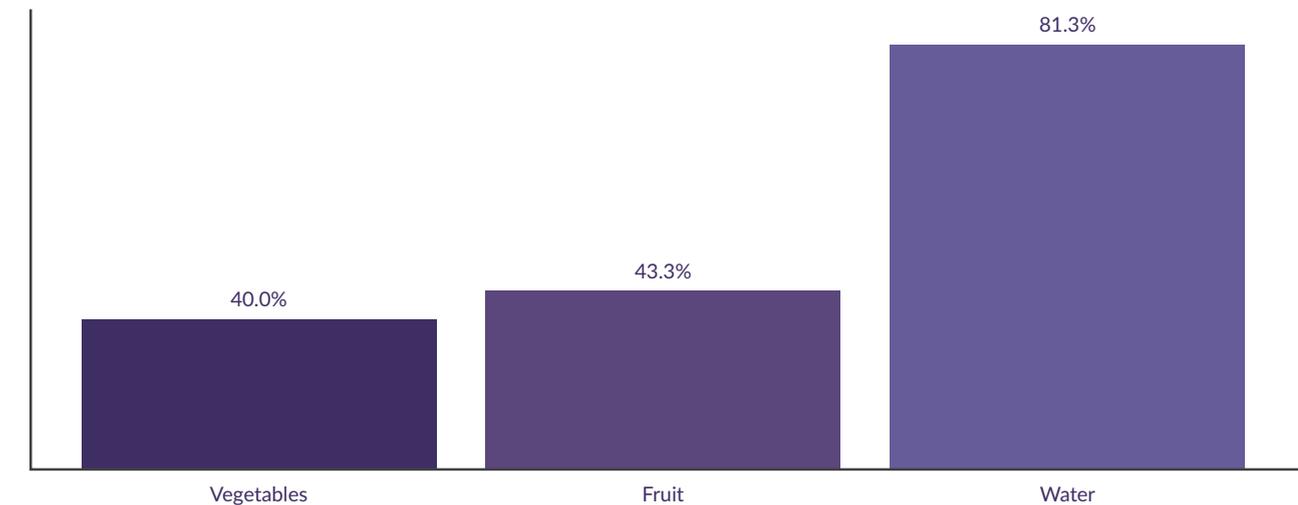
NUTRITION

In 2019, the Wisconsin YRBS moved away from a series of several questions asking about the consumption of specific vegetables and beverages, and towards a more consolidated list of general nutrition questions.

- In place of a long and changing list of non-alcoholic drinks that students use (e.g., sodas, energy drinks, milk, vitamin waters, etc.), the 2019 YRBS introduced a question on the consumption of plain water. Four out of five students (81.3%) drink plain water at least once a day; 56% drank plain water three or more times per day. Rates of water consumption did not differ significantly by race or sex.

- Approximately one-third of students (32.0%) eat breakfast every day. 15.3% do not eat breakfast. While those numbers are not statistically different from 2017, they are part of a longer trend away from regular breakfast consumption (e.g., up from 10.4% in 2011).
- Students who use screens late at night, as well as those who report getting little sleep in general, are less likely to eat breakfast. For instance, 24% of students who used screens after midnight ate breakfast every day, compared to 42% of students who did not use screens after midnight. While it's not clear that the late nights cause students to miss breakfast⁹, coming to school both sleep-deprived and without breakfast puts those students at a significant disadvantage.

Daily Consumption of Healthy Food and Water

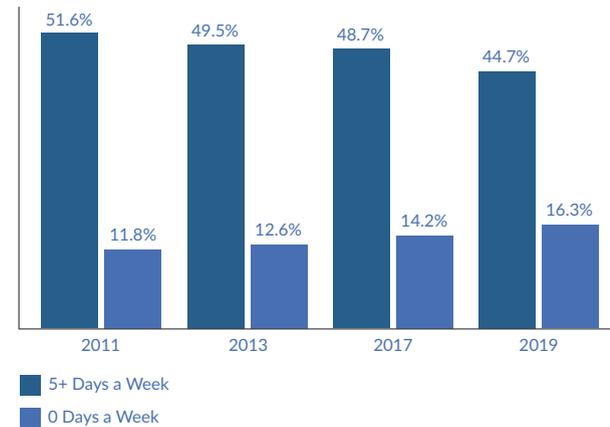


⁹The same conditions within the home could lead students to both lack sleep and miss breakfast.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

The 2019 YRBS showed some sustained improvements in nutrition and reductions in alcohol and drug use (see that section of this report). At the same time, students continued to report less physical activity, less sleep, and worse self-reported overall health.

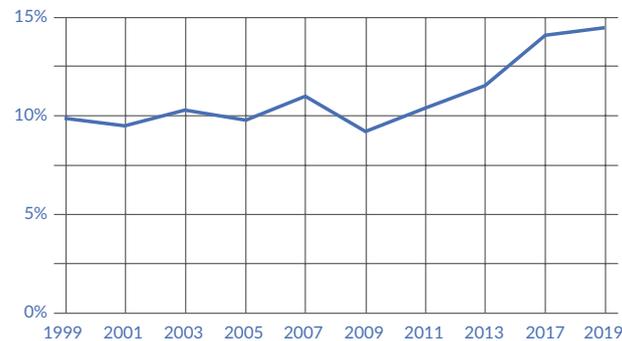
Trends in Physical Activity and Inactivity



- In 2019, 44.7% of students reported engaging in at least 60 minutes of physical activity five or more days per week. That is down from 51.6% when the question was first asked in 2011.
- Conversely, the percent of students who report no sustained physical activity in the past seven days (“0 days/week”) has risen from 11.8% in 2011 to 16.3% in 2019.
- There is a gender gap in physical activity, with 51.1% of males and 37.6% of females reporting 60 or more minutes of physical activity five or more days per week.

- The 2019 survey introduced a question about concussions. 14.0% of students reported having one or more sports-induced concussions during the past 12 months.
- The percent of students whose body mass index qualifies them as obese¹⁰ continues to increase over the long-term (from 9.9% in 1999 to 14.5% in 2019), although it is statistically unchanged from 2017 (14.5% in 2019 vs. 14.1% in 2017).

Obesity Trends

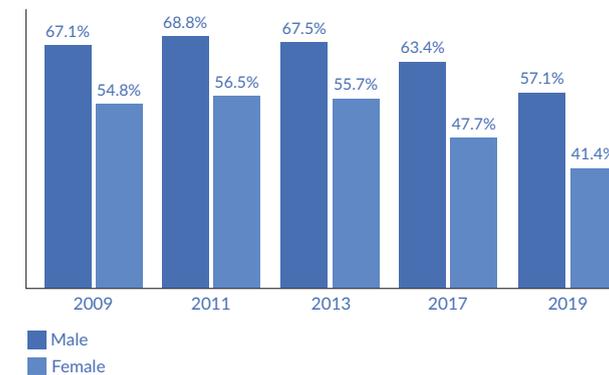


- Students who qualify as obese were half as likely as non-obese students to rate their health as “excellent” or “very good” (27% vs. 54%). They were also 33% more likely to report depression (36% vs. 27%). However, they were not significantly less likely to feel like they belonged at school.

¹⁰As calculated through self-reported weight and height. Obesity is defined as having a body mass index at or above the 95th percentile for age and sex.

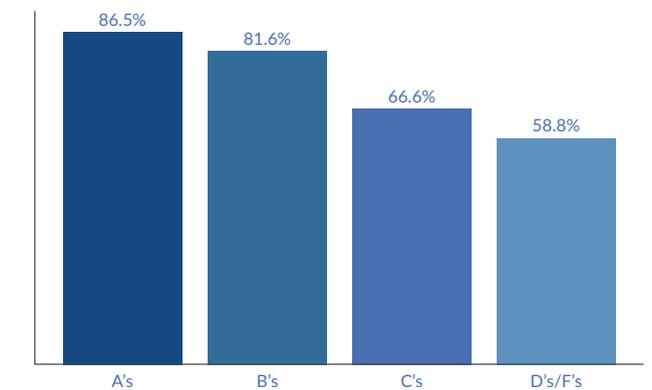
- The percent of students who described their general health as “excellent” or “very good” continued to fall, from 55.4% in 2017 to 49.5% in 2019.
- Male students were 38% more likely than females to describe their health as “excellent” or “very good”. The chart below shows the decline in self-reported health for both males and females over time.

Excellent or Very Good Health, by Sex



- The percent of students who regularly get eight or more hours of sleep remained steady at 26.7%. It continues to be below 2013 levels (35.0%).
- The most common response was seven hours of sleep per night. About one in five students reported five or fewer hours of sleep per night (20.3%); 21.5% reported six hours; 31.5% reported seven hours; and 26.7% reported eight or more hours.

Dental Care in Past 12 Months, by Grades



- Compared to students who get eight or more hours of sleep, students who get five or fewer hours of sleep are almost three times more likely to report depression (46% vs. 16%) and 1.7 times more likely to report anxiety (64% vs. 37%).
- 11.8% of students report a chronic health condition or physical disability.
- 19.6% of students report ever having been diagnosed with asthma.
- 79.4% of students report having seen a dentist within the past 12 months.
- There were significant differences in dental care across different student groups, including by race, by measures indicative of socioeconomic status (e.g., food insecurity and housing mobility), and by academic performance. Below are the differences by self-reported academic grades.
- Fewer than one-fifth of students (18.5%) “most of the time” or “always” use sunscreen when outside for an hour or more on a sunny day.

WISCONSIN TRENDS SUMMARY (1993-2019)

Below is a summary of key trends, as compiled by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Only questions with statistically significant changes are provided here. The time frame for the trend is denoted through footnotes and include 1993-2019 (a)¹¹, 2009-2019 (b)¹², 2017-2019(c)¹³, and other date ranges (d)¹⁴ that are available on the DPI website.

If the trend is consistently significant across several time frames, all time frames are noted. If there were conflicting trends over time (e.g., first a decrease and then an increase), only the most recent trend is noted.

"(-)" means numbers are decreasing; "(+)" means numbers are increasing.

Positive Health Trends

Alcohol

- (-) Ever drank^{b,c,d}
- (-) First drink before age 13^{a,b}
- (-) Current alcohol use^{a,b,d}

Tobacco and Electronic Smoking Devices

- (-) Ever tried smoking cigarettes^{b,c,d}
- (-) Currently smoke^{a,b}
- (-) Currently smoke cigars^{b,c,d} or use chew^c
- (+) Tried to quit using tobacco or vaping products^c

Other Drugs

- (-) Ever tried marijuana^{a,b}
- (-) Tried marijuana before age 13^a
- (-) Current use of marijuana^d
- (-) Were offered, sold, or given drugs on school property^{a,b,c}
- (-) Ever abused over-the-counter drugs^b

Traffic Safety

- (-) Rode in a car with a driver who had been drinking alcohol^{a,b}
- (-) Drove a car under the influence of alcohol^d
- (+) Seatbelt use^{a,b}

Sexual Behaviors

- (-) Ever had sex^{a,b}
- (-) First sexual intercourse before age 13^{a,b}
- (-) Currently sexually active^{a,b}
- (-) Multiple sexual partners^{a,b}
- (+) Use of multiple birth control methods^{c,d}

Mental Health and Suicide

- (-) Attempted suicide^d

Physical Health

- (+) Use sunscreen^d

¹¹a: 1993-2019

¹²b: 2009-2019

¹³c: 2017-2019

¹⁴d: See CDC trend report for date range

Negative Health Trends

Screen Use and Online Behavior

- (+) Use screens recreationally for three or more hours per day (not TV)^{b,c,d}

Tobacco and Electronic Smoking Devices

- (+) Currently vape^c
- (+) Frequent and daily vaping^c

School Safety

- (+) Threatened or injured with weapon on school property^d
- (+) In a physical fight at school^{c,d}
- (+) Miss school due to safety concerns^b
- (-) Say violence is not a problem at their school^c
- (-) Say bullying is not a problem at their school^b

Sexual and Dating Violence

- (+) Sexual violence by dating partner^{c,d}

Protective Factors

- (-) Sense of school belonging^c

Mental Health and Suicide

- (+) Report anxiety^c
- (+) Feel sad or hopeless^b
- (-) Receive the help they need when sad, empty, hopeless, angry, or anxious^c
- (+) Self-harm^b
- (+) Seriously considered suicide^{b,d}
- (+) Made a suicide plan^b

Other Health Issues

- (-) Say health is excellent or very good^{b,c}
- (+) Obesity^{b,d}
- (+) Ate fruit^{c,d}
- (-) Eat breakfast daily^{c,d}
- (-) Regular exercise^d
- (-) Sleep^d

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