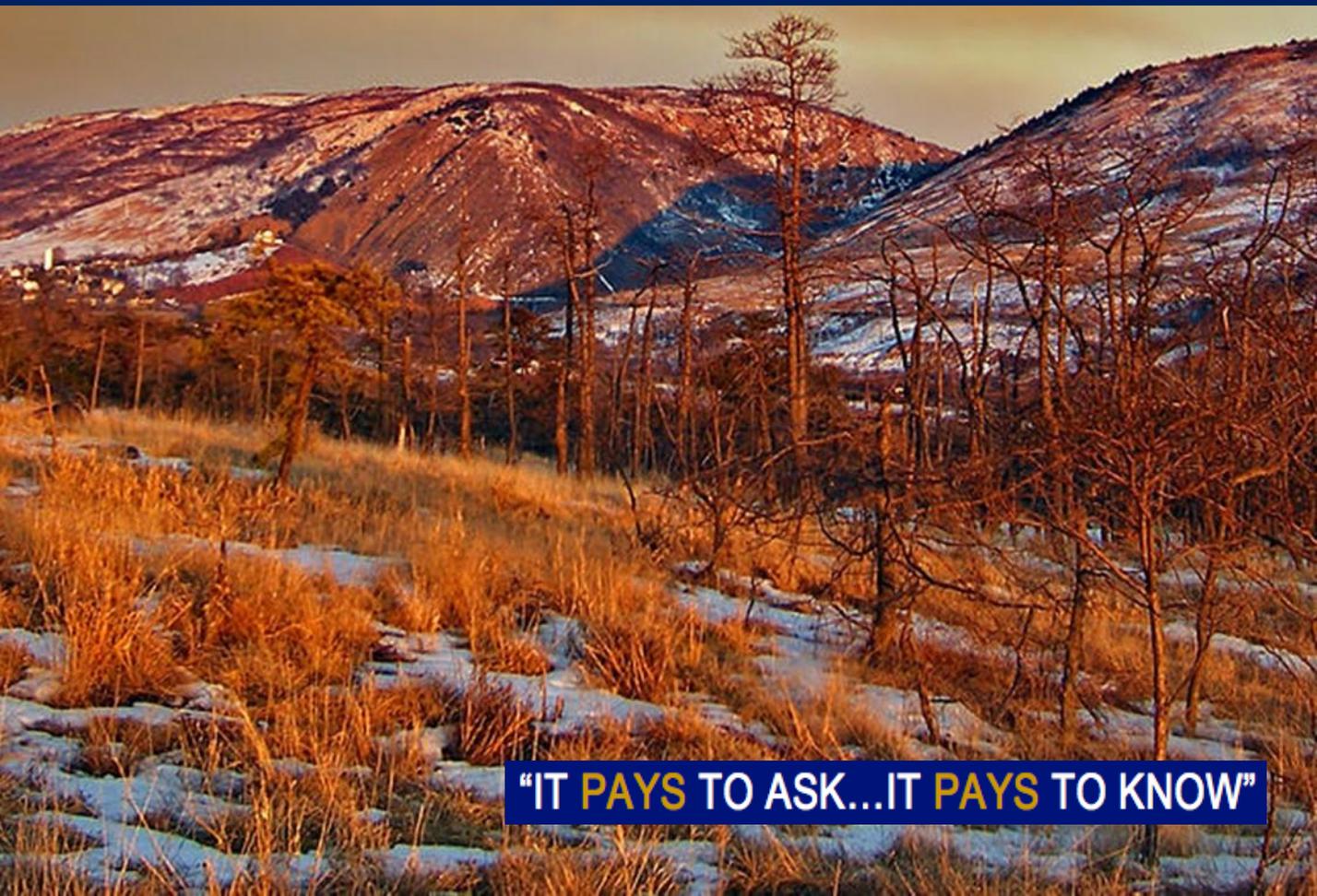


Report Example

The Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS)

2019 Data Highlights: Strengths, Challenges, Trends

County/School District/Community Name



“IT PAYS TO ASK...IT PAYS TO KNOW”

Introduction

History

Since 1989, the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) has sponsored the administration of the PAYS (Pennsylvania Youth Survey) to most of the Commonwealth. In 2013, the PA Dept. of Education (PDE) and PA Dept. of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) joined PCCD in sponsoring school-district participation in the survey.

This survey is provided in odd-numbered years to school students in the 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grades, to learn about their behavior, attitudes and knowledge concerning alcohol, tobacco & other drugs, school climate & safety, depression, and violence. This survey is anonymous, voluntary, and confidential; identity is not connected to the youths' answers.

As stated by PCCD, the data gathered in the PAYS serves two important primary needs. The PAYS gives data on critical information concerning the changes in patterns of use and abuse of harmful substances and behaviors to important community and government stakeholders. The PAYS also assesses risk and protective factors that will help guide prevention efforts and action steps to areas where they are likely to have the greatest impact.

This Report

This report will breakdown the data received in the PAYS for (insert your county/school district/community name), and will highlight those critical areas that show a need for improvement within the Youth Behaviors section, while also celebrating some of our strengths. Following this, the Risk and Protective factors will showcase and assess the factors which have the most impact on our youth. Some trends and relationships will be explained as the authors of this report have felt they are important in understanding probable outcomes for the youth.

Data Selection Process

All the data in this report was taken from the PAYS report for (insert your county/school district/community name). When referencing youth behaviors, the data highlighted was selected for its significant percentage of youth who reported exhibiting these behaviors. While it is important to identify areas for improvement, it is also important to celebrate the positives as well; therefore significant percentages of positive behavior were highlighted.

Contents:

- Youth Behaviors - 3
- Risk & Protective Factors - 14



Youth Behaviors

The issues that affect the greatest percentages of our school district youth are bullying, students being hurt or abused, attitudes and behaviors favorable to underage drinking, mental health concerns, and suicide thoughts/risk.

On the other hand, students in this school district showed great commitment and involvement in school, and reported that the adults at their school have a great impact in stopping bullying. Another point of interest is that they reported feeling safe while at school.

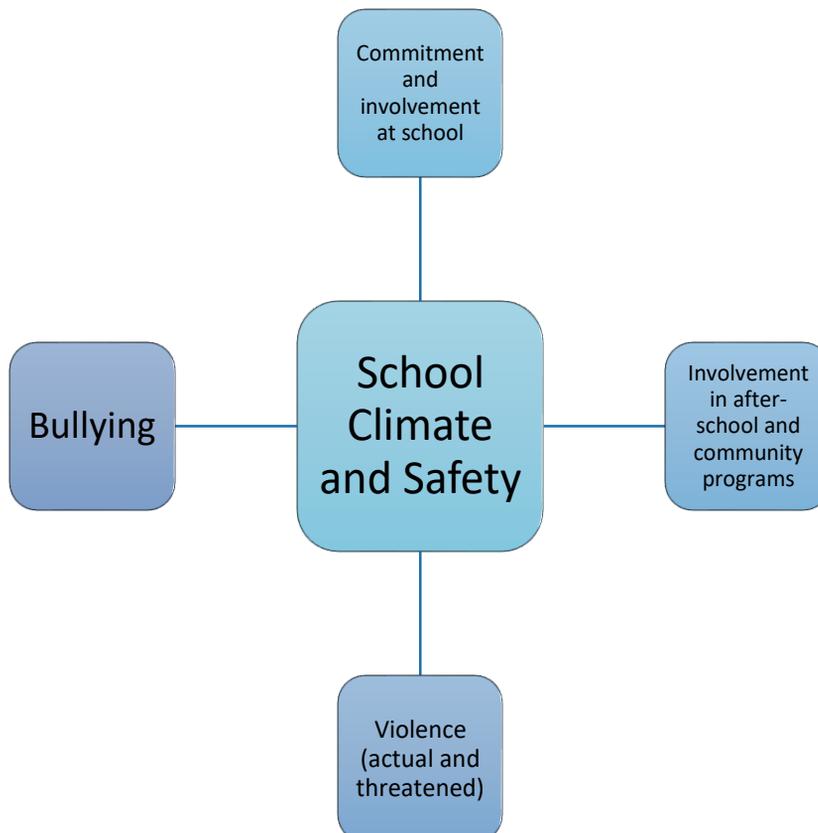
School Climate & Safety

Over the last 15 years, many youth surveys, including PAYS, have evolved to include school climate and safety as focal points for prevention programming and policy planning.

Why is this Important?

This section will provide an overview of reports of bullying and youth safety issues at school. It is important to understand a youth's school climate, and what they may be experiencing day by day. Youth spend the majority of their day in school and even extended hours in school-sponsored activities. Creating safe supportive schools is essential to ensuring students' academic and social success.

School climate and safety are measured in four ways: commitment and involvement at school, involvement in after-school and community programs, violence (actual and threatened), and bullying.



Bullying

Overall, 31.7% of students in (insert your county/school district/community name) indicated experiencing bullying in the past 12 months (compared to 28.2% of students at the state level). Students who indicated experiencing bullying in the past 12 months reported that “the way I look [clothing, hairstyle, etc.]” (45.8% of students), “some other reason” (37.8% of students), and “my size [height, weight, etc.]” (32.3% of students) were the most frequent reasons they were bullied.

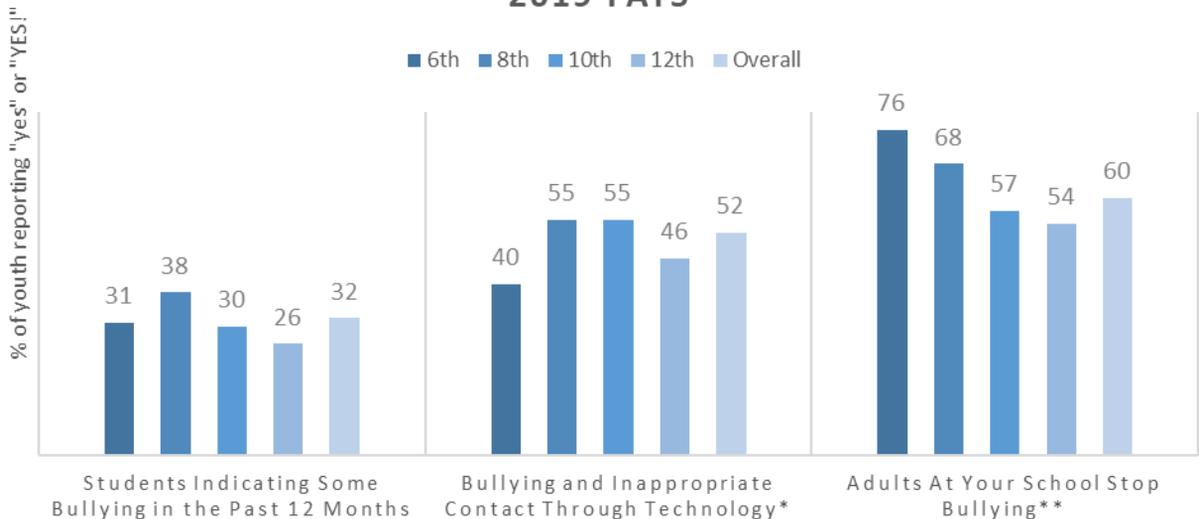


Why is this Important?

Bullying behavior contributes to lower attendance rates, lower student achievement, low self-esteem, and depression, as well as higher rates of both juvenile and adult crime.

The most effective way to address bullying is through comprehensive, school-wide programs.

BULLYING AND INTERNET SAFETY 2019 PAYS



*Bullying and inappropriate contact through technology combines the data from, “Inappropriate sexual contact through technology” and “Bullying through texting or social media.”

**On the survey, “Adults at your school stop bullying” reads: “Adults at your school stop bullying when they see/hear it/student tells them about it.”

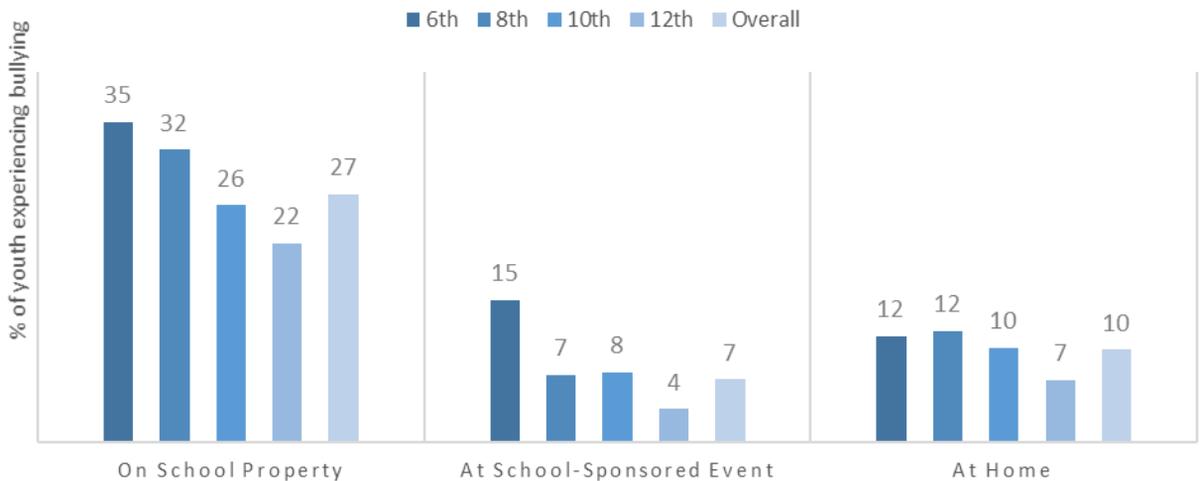
Graph shows percentages of youth answering “yes” or “YES!”
Question text:

During the past 12 months, have you been bullied through texting and/or social media?

In the past 12 months, did anyone when using technology ever try to get you to talk online about sex, look at sexual pictures, or do something else sexual?

Do adults at your school stop bullying when they see/hear it or when a student tells them about it?

LOCATION OF BULLYING 2019 PAYS



Five locations are described in the larger report, three locations are highlighted in this graph, and these locations had the highest percentages of youth reporting bullying.

Question text: If you have been bullied in any way in the past 12 months, where were you bullied? (Mark all that apply. - On school property; At a school-sponsored event; While going to or from school; In the community; At home; I was not bullied)

Commitment and Involvement in School

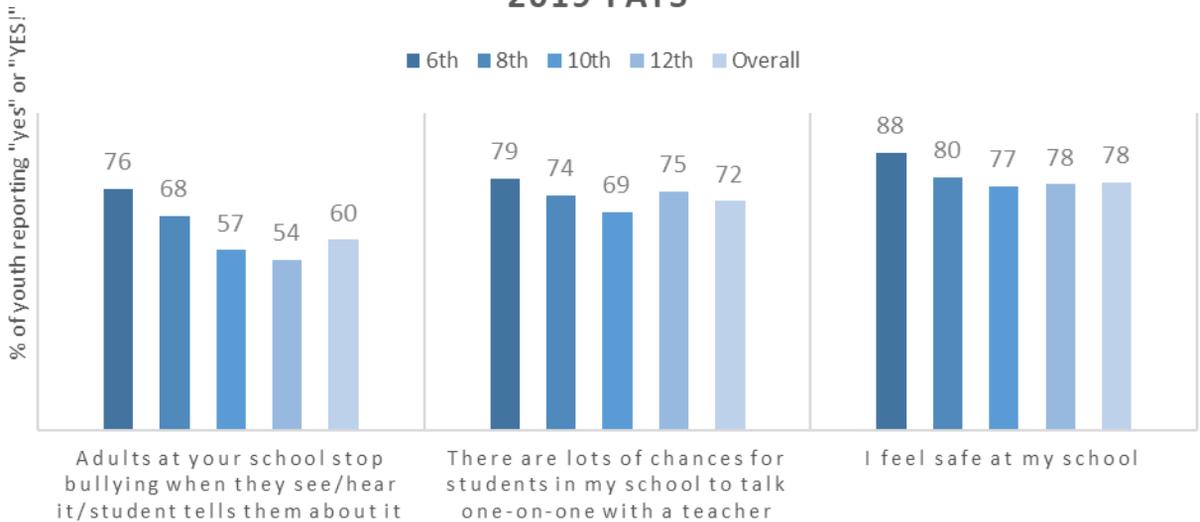
Why is this Important?

Students who show increased investment in school activities results in greater bonding and adoption of the school's standard of behavior, reducing the likelihood that the students will become involved in problem behaviors.

Students who demonstrate a lack of commitment to school are more likely to have ceased viewing being a student as a positive role. These students have a higher risk for a variety of problem behaviors.

A feeling of safety was reported by 78.2% of the students, compared to 83.4% at the state level. 72.3% students reported opportunities to talk with a teacher one-on-one (state rate: 77.2%) and 84.7% reported chances to be part of class discussions or activities (state rate: 86.7%). 51.5% of students reported that teachers praise them when they work hard in school (state rate: 52.7%).

COMMITMENT TO SCHOOL 2019 PAYS



Graph shows percentages of youth answering “yes” or “YES!”

Question text:

Do adults at your school stop bullying when they see/hear it or when a student tells them about it?

There are lots of chances for students in my school to talk one-on-one with a teacher.

I feel safe at my school.

Youth Safety Issues

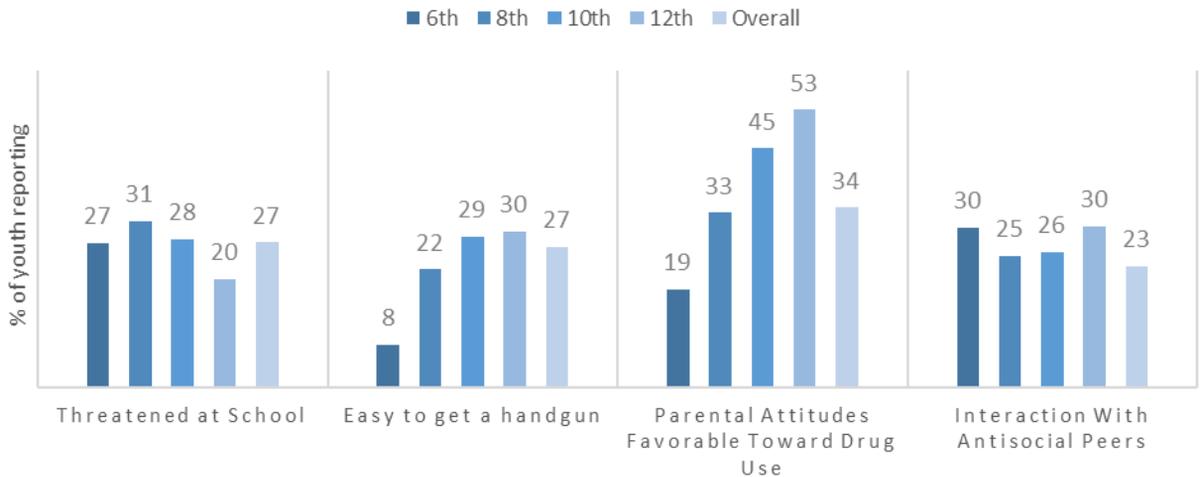
Violence on school property is widely held to have become a serious problem in recent decades, especially where weapons such as guns or knives are involved. The presence of drugs on school property is also an area of concern.

In the past twelve months, 27.4% of students in (insert your county/school district/community name) reported being threatened with violent behavior on school property (compared to 20.5% at the state level). 27.4% of students reported they had been threatened to be hit or beaten up on school property in the past 12 months (compared to a state rate of 20.5%).

Why is this Important?

It is important to understand a youth’s school climate, and what they may be experiencing day by day. In order to ensure that students achieve, advance, and remain in schools, it’s essential to create a safe and healthy environment and address any barriers to learning, such as violence and drugs.

YOUTH SAFETY ISSUES AND RISK 2019 PAYS



First two columns shows percentage of youth reporting, "1 or more times".
 Question text:
*In the past 12 months, how often have you:
 Been threatened to be hit or beaten up on school property?*
*How easy would it be for you to get any, if you wanted to get any of the following:
 A handgun (Students indicating "Sort of easy" or "Very easy").*

Last two columns shows percentage of youth at risk.
 Question text:
How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to: (d) Drink beer, wine or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum) regularly? (e) Smoke cigarettes? (f) Use marijuana?
Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past 12 months, how many of your best friends have: Been arrested? Dropped out of school? Stolen or tried to steal a motor vehicle such as a car or motorcycle? Been suspended from school? Carried a handgun? Sold illegal drugs?

Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drug Use

30-Day Use

Lifetime prevalence of use (whether the student has ever used the drug) is a good measure of student experimentation with a given substance. 30-day use (whether the student has recently used the drug) is a more sensitive measure of current activities.

The most common early initiation/higher prevalence substance used was alcohol (17.6% of students in [insert your county/school district/community name], compared to 16.8% at the state level). The next most frequent drug used was marijuana, with 11.6% indicating 30-day use (compared to 9.6% at the state level).



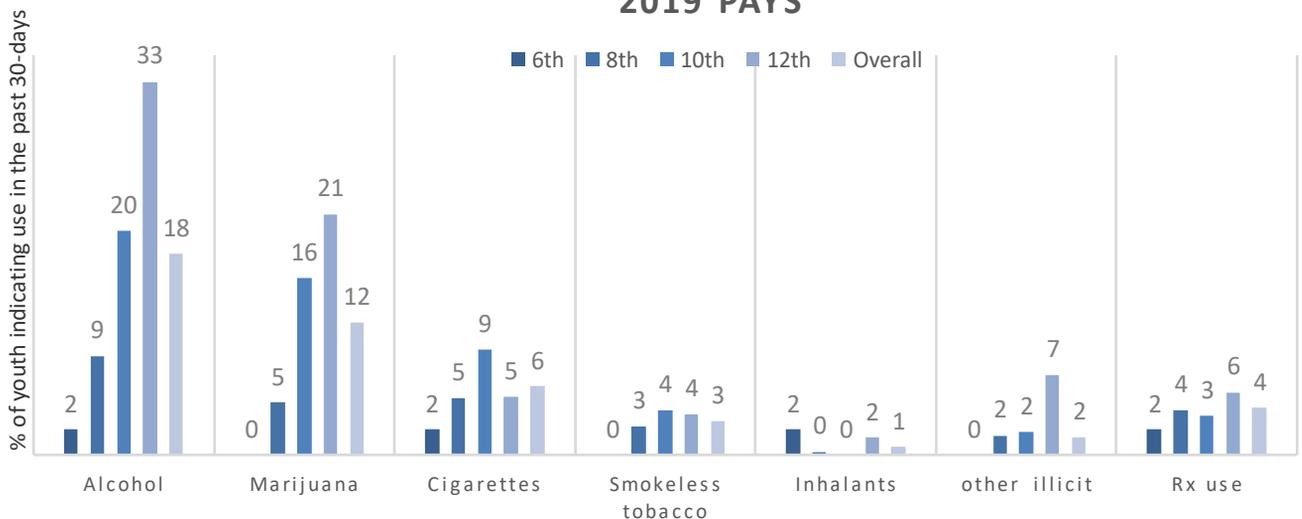
Why is this Important?

Some of the more commonly abused drugs generally have more social acceptability, which may normalize the idea of drug use as acceptable. Their use may also “prime” the brain for addiction to other substances.

Students often believe that prescription drugs are safer than illicit drugs because they are prescribed by a doctor and dispensed by a pharmacist. This is particularly troubling given the adverse health consequences related to prescription drug abuse: physiological and psychological addiction, physical dependence, and the possibility of overdose.

The presence of an opioid, either illicit or prescribed by a doctor, was identified in 85% of drug-related overdose deaths in Pennsylvania in 2016; the Pennsylvania drug-related overdose death rate in 2016 was 36.5 per 100,000 people, far exceeding the national average (16.3 per 100,000).

30-DAY ATOD USE 2019 PAYS



Graph shows percent of youth indicating use in the past 30-days.

Question text:

How many times (if any) have you had beer, wine, or hard liquor in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?

How many times (if any) have you used marijuana (pot, hash, cannabis, weed) in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?

How frequently during the past 30 days have you smoked cigarettes?

How frequently during the past 30 days have you used smokeless tobacco?

How many times (if any) have you sniffed glue, breathed the contents of an aerosol spray can, or inhaled other gases or sprays in order to get high in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?

How many times (if any) have you used prescription pain relievers (such as Vicodin, OxyContin, Percocet, or Codeine) without a doctor's orders, in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?

How many times (if any) have you used prescription tranquilizers (such as Ambien, Lunesta, Valium, or Xanax) without a doctor telling you to take them in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?

How many times (if any) have you used prescription stimulants (such as Ritalin or Adderall) without a doctor telling you to take them in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?

Vaping

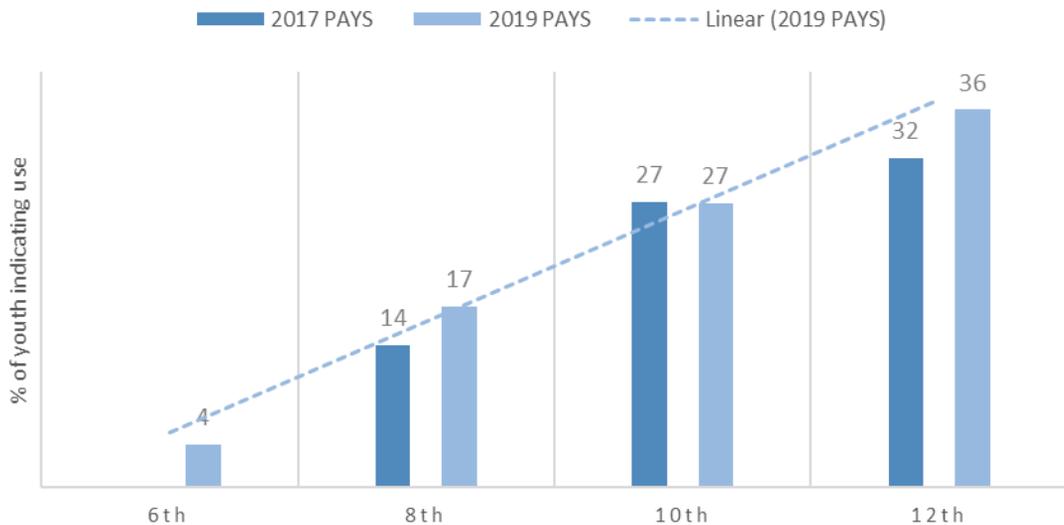
This is an emerging method of drug use where a device with a heating element is used to vaporize and inhale the psychoactive ingredients in tobacco (or sometimes marijuana).

Why is this Important?

While it is often portrayed a safer alternative to smoking, the data on vaping are scant and the risks poorly understood. According to an article by Johns Hopkins Medicine, as of Jan. 21, 2020, the CDC confirmed 60 deaths in patients with e-cigarette, or vaping, product use associated lung injury. Vaping can also be addictive, containing concentrated nicotine or sometimes marijuana.



VAPING/E-CIGARETTE - 30 DAY USE



Graph shows percent of youth indicating past 30-day use, across the grades, for both the 2017 and 2019 PAYS reports. The linear trendline shown, highlights the greater percentage of use across the grades for the 2019 PAYS.

Question text:

How frequently have you used an electronic vapor product such as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes, vape pens, e-hookahs, or hookah pens during the past 30 days?

PARENTS,
EDUCATORS, AND
HEALTH CARE
PROVIDERS
CAN HELP



VAPING TOOLKIT

Montgomery County Office of Drug and Alcohol

Gambling

Even though gambling activities are legally restricted to adults, there is clear evidence that underage youth actively participate in gambling.

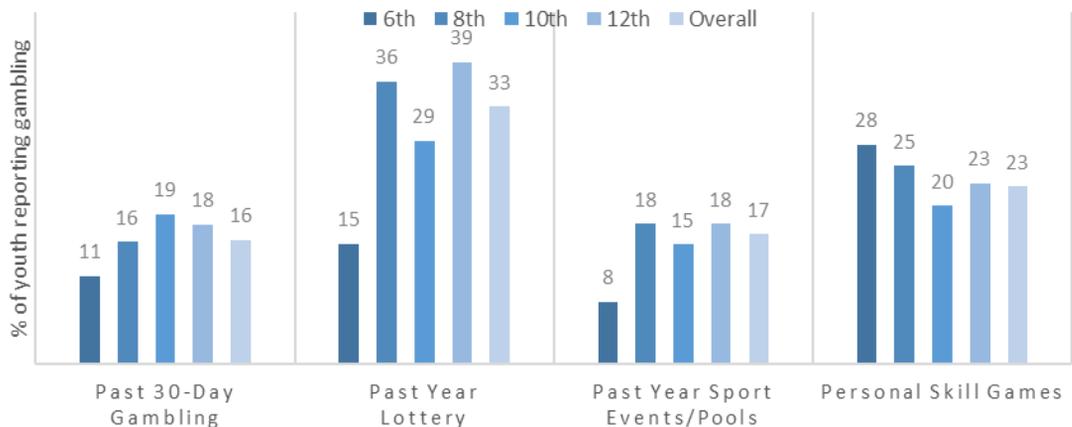
Why is this Important?

Despite being promoted as a harmless form of entertainment, gambling operates on the same reward pathways and the same neurotransmitters as ATOD addiction. Youth gambling is associated with alcohol and drug use, truancy, low grades, and risk-taking behavior.



Overall, 46.6% of students in this county engaged in gambling for money or anything of value in their lifetime (compared to 36.0% at the state level). The most frequently reported form of gambling was "lottery [scratch cards, numbers, etc.]" reported by 32.9% of students who had gambled in the past 12 months (compared to 21.4% at the state level).

GAMBLING 2019 PAYS



Graph shows percent of youth indicating past 30-day gambling (first column), and percentage reporting gambling 1 or more times in the past 12 months.

Question text:

In the past 30 days have you bet/gambled for money or anything of value?

During the past 12 months, how often have you bet/gambled, even casually, for money or valuables in the following ways:

Lottery (scratch cards, numbers, etc.), Sporting events or sports pools, Personal skill games (such as pool, darts, coin tossing, video games)

Mental Health Concerns and Suicide Risk

Mental Health Concerns

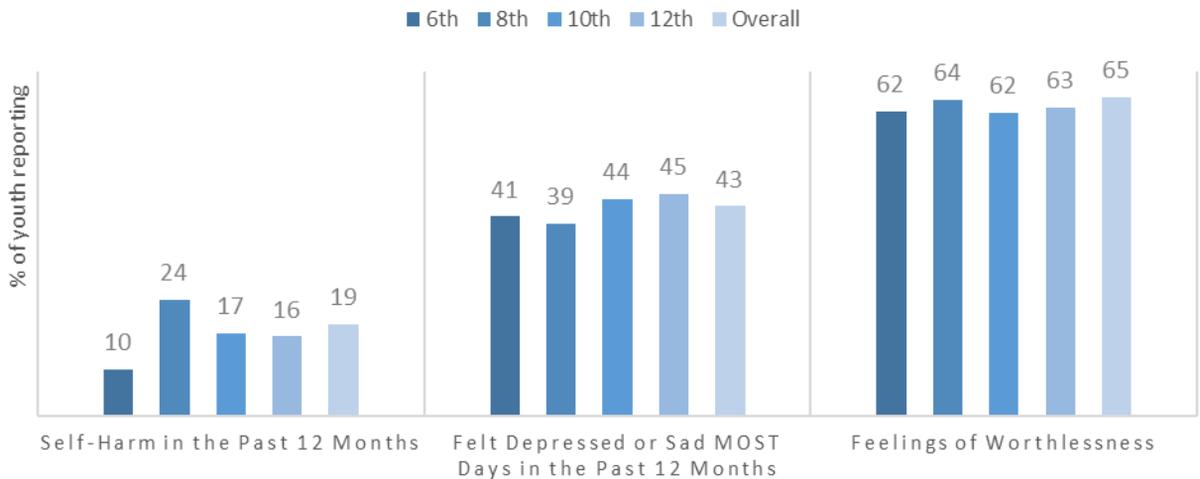
Why is this Important?

Several scientific studies have identified a link between mental health problems, such as depression, and the use of ATODs during adolescence. Depression is the number one risk factor for suicide by teens, a risk amplified in teens self-medicating with ATODs. Each year, approximately 157,000 youth between the ages of 10 and 24 receive medical care for self-inflicted injuries at Emergency Departments across the U.S. (CDC).

PAYS includes one question about self-harm and four questions that ask students about feelings—sadness, hopelessness, and worthlessness—that can be symptoms of depression.

The most common depressed thought was “at times I think I am no good at all,” reported by 39.4% of students in (insert your county/school district/community name.) 42.6% of students reported they felt sad or depressed MOST days in the past 12 months. Overall, 21.8% of students had seriously considered attempting suicide, compared to 16.5% of students at the state level.

MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS 2019 PAYS



Graph shows percentage of youth reporting 1 or more times (Self-harm)/Answering “yes” or “YES!”.

Question text:

How many times in the past 12 months have you:

Done anything to harm yourself (such as cutting, scraping, burning) as a way to relieve difficult feelings, or to communicate emotions that may be difficult to express verbally?

In the past 12 months have you felt depressed or sad MOST days, even if you feel OK sometimes?

At times I think I am no good at all.

All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a failure.

Suicide Risk

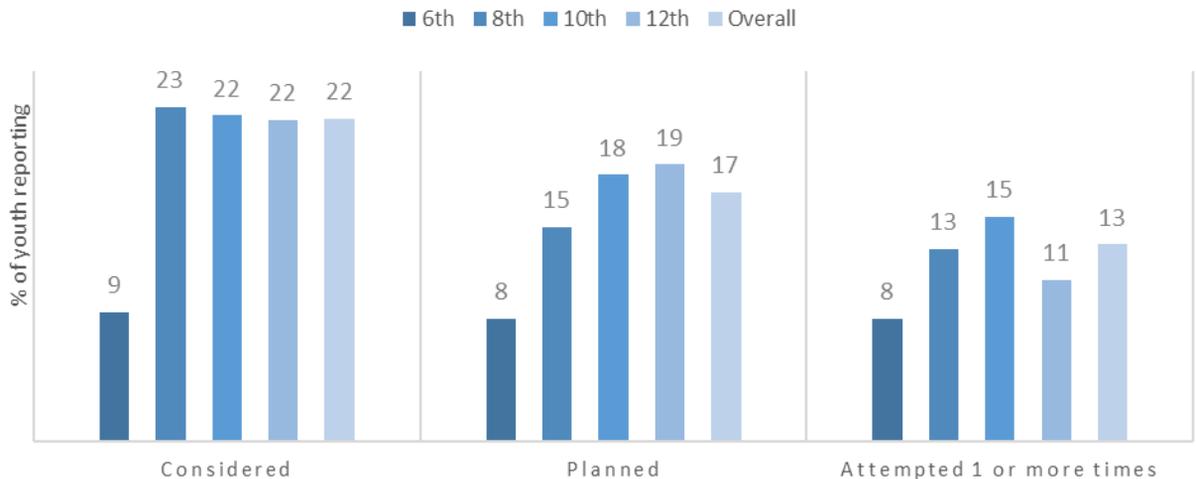
Of students who indicated they had been cyberbullied, 49% indicated feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for at least two weeks in past year that they stopped doing usual activities. In the past year, 38% of those students had considered suicide, 30.8% had made a suicide plan, and 26.9% had attempted suicide. The same relationship exists for students who indicated they had skipped school due to bullying fears in the past year. Of those students, 65.8% had felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for at least two weeks in past year that they stopped doing usual activities, 55.5% had considered suicide, 46.2% had made a suicide plan, and 44.8% had attempted suicide.



Why is this Important?

PAYS data shows a strong relationship between being bullied and depression and suicidal behaviors.

SUICIDE RISK 2019 PAYS



Graph shows percentage of youth reporting on suicide risk in terms of ideation, plan, and attempts.

Question text:

During the past 12 months:

Did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide?

Did you make a plan about how you would attempt suicide?

How many times did you actually attempt suicide?

Risk & Protective Factors

The Risk and Protective Factor Model of Prevention is a proven, effective way of reducing substance abuse and its related consequences. To prevent a problem, we need to identify the factors that increase the risk of that problem developing and then find ways to reduce the risks. To exert a positive influence and buffer against the negative influence of risk, we need to strengthen and increase protective factors.

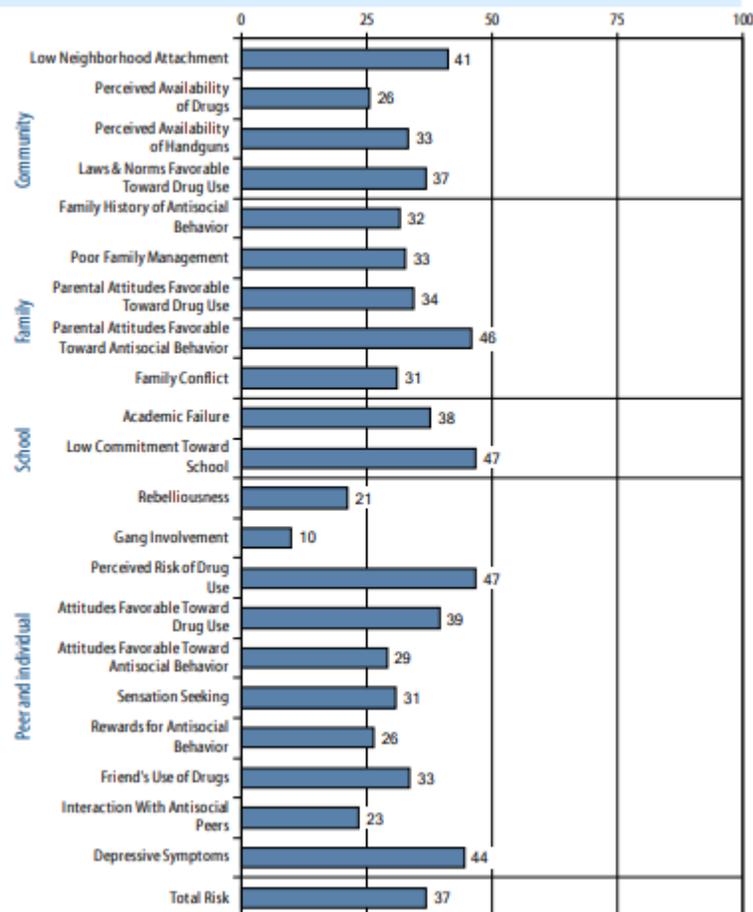
Why is this Important?

By measuring risk and protective factors in a population, specific risk factors that are elevated and widespread can be identified and targeted by policies, programs, and actions shown to reduce those risk factors and to promote protective factors.

Risk Factors

Just as medical researchers have found risk factors for heart disease such as diets high in fat, lack of exercise, and smoking, a team of researchers at the University of Washington have defined a set of risk factors for youth problem behaviors.

Risk Factors, 2019 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



CHALLENGES

Students reported the three highest overall (all grades combined) scores for the following risk factor scales:

- Peer/Individual - Perceived Risk of Drug Use (46.8% of students at risk)
- School - Low Commitment Toward School (46.8% at risk)
- Family - Parental Attitudes Favorable Toward Antisocial Behavior (46.0% at risk)

STRENGTHS

The three lowest overall scale scores were:

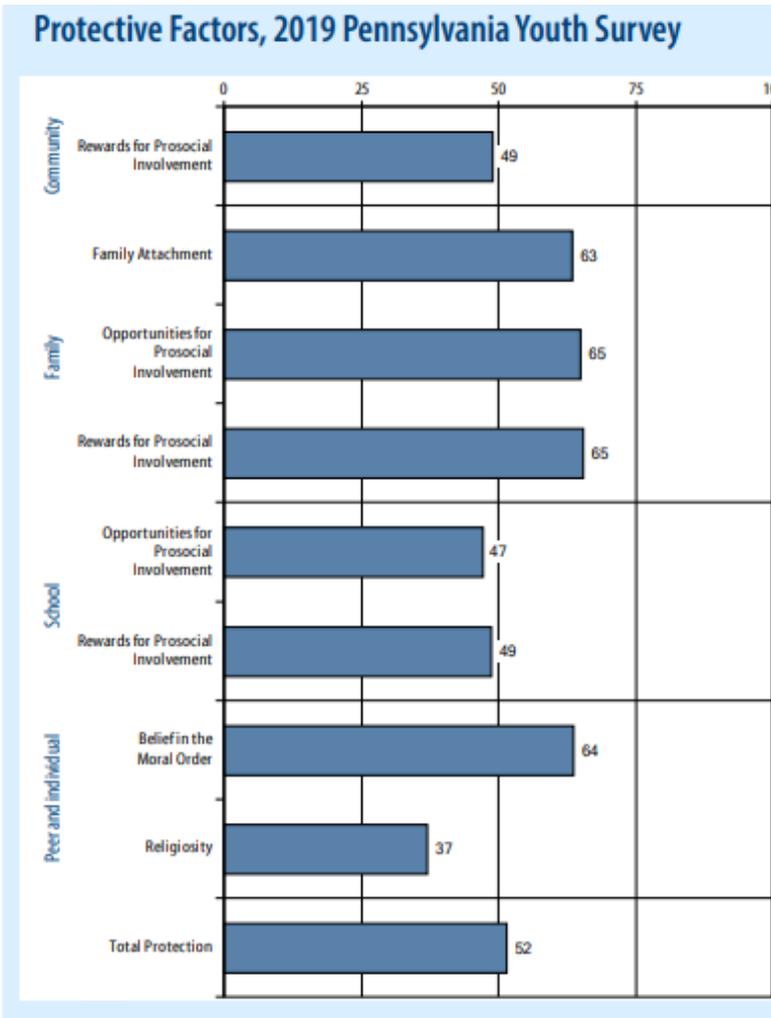
- Peer/Individual - Gang Involvement (10.0% at risk)
- Peer/Individual - Rebelliousness (21.2% at risk)
- Peer/Individual - Interaction with Antisocial Peers (23.4% at risk)

Trends

Community-level risk factors demonstrated a dramatic increase over the last two years.

Protective Factors

Protective factors identified through research include strong bonding to community, family, school, and peers, and healthy beliefs and clear standards for behavior. In order to promote academic success and positive youth development and prevent problem behaviors, it is necessary to address the factors that predict these outcomes.



STRENGTHS

Of the eight protective factor scales, the highest scores in the overall sample of students in this county were reported for:

- **Family - Rewards for Prosocial Involvement** (65.5% of students with protection)
- **Family - Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement** (65.0% with protection)
- **Peer/Individual - Belief in The Moral Order** (63.7% with protection)

CHALLENGES

The lowest protective factor scales in the overall sample were:

- **Peer/Individual - Religiosity** (37.0% with protection)
- **School - Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement** (47.1% with protection)
- **School - Rewards for Prosocial Involvement** (48.6% with protection)

Trends

Prosocial protective factors in the school increased over the last 2 years, whereas comparable family factors declined somewhat.

Youth Behavior Interpretation & Recommendations

- The rise in school-level protective factors are encouraging and may demonstrate that school-based prevention programs, after-school programs, and increased volunteering opportunities sponsored through schools are having a positive impact on our youth.
- The dramatic increase in community-level risk factors confirm what community members have been seeing and experiencing since the housing market crash, and subsequent loss of jobs and homes. Our community and neighborhoods are struggling to maintain a sense of cohesion.
- Although bullying is a concern, it is important to note the bonds between teachers and youth emphasized through youth trusting teachers to interfere and stop the bullying cycle. This is a powerful and encouraging realization for teachers; yes, they are pivotal in fostering a safe environment for youth. This trust, along with the perception of their availability and openness to meet one-to-one with students, contributes to student's overall feeling of safety at school.
- There is a strong relationship between youth experiencing bullying and youth reporting depressive symptoms and suicidal ideation, thus making it necessary to implement programming around bullying prevention to prevent and address negative mental health outcomes in teens.

Risk and Protective Factor Interpretation & Recommendations

- While policies that target any risk or protective factor could potentially be an important resource for students in (insert your county/school district/community), focusing prevention planning in high risk and low protection areas could be especially beneficial. In conjunction with a review of community-specific issues and resources, this information can help direct prevention efforts.
- The rise in family-level protective factors is encouraging and may demonstrate that family-based prevention programs are having a positive impact on parenting practices and in turn, our youth.
- The increase in school-level risk factors seems to indicate that school-based programs are not effectively engaging the youth.

“IT PAYS TO ASK...IT PAYS TO KNOW”