Massachusetts Department of
ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY
EDUCATION

Massachusetts
Department of Public Health

Health and Risk Behaviors of Massachusetts Youth 2013

MAY 2014

This document is available online at: www.doe.mass.edu/cnp/hprograms/yrbs and www.mass.gov/dph/hsp

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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May 2014

Dear Colleagues, Parents, and Students:

The Massachusetts Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education and Public Health (ESE, DPH) are pleased to present the results of two coordinated surveys of Massachusetts adolescents, the 2013 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (ESE) and the Massachusetts Youth Health Survey (DPH). These two surveys were supported by funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and administered in a random sample of 144 public secondary schools by the University of Massachusetts Center for Survey Research in the spring of 2013. Combining results from both surveys, *Health and Risk Behaviors of Massachusetts Youth, 2013* presents key indicators of the behavioral and health risks reported by middle school and high school youth.

This report provides important information about behaviors and conditions that may compromise the health, safety, and wellbeing of young people across the Commonwealth. These behaviors include tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use; behaviors leading to injuries, such as drinking and driving, fighting, and suicide attempts; dietary behaviors and physical inactivity; and sexual behaviors that may lead to sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy. The report also discusses the prevalence of health-related conditions such as obesity, chronic disease, oral health problems, and mental health concerns among our youth.

Results presented here show continued improvements in many important areas, especially some indicators of substance use, nutrition, violence, and personal safety. These improvements attest to the success of efforts by schools, community programs, healthcare workers, and families to foster the healthy development of young people in Massachusetts. Even so, despite clear successes, there are still behaviors in which improvements have not been seen, most notably sexual risk behaviors, physical activity, overweight, and mental health, areas that warrant continued concern and attention. Stronger efforts to address these problems and to promote the health of all young people remain a priority.

Thank you for your continued commitment to improving the lives and health of youth in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed. D
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and Secondary Education

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The joint administration of the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (MYRBS) and the Massachusetts Youth Health Survey (MYHS) was only successful through the collaborative efforts of the Massachusetts Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) and Public Health (DPH), along with the University of Massachusetts' Center for Survey Research (CSR) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We would like to extend our thanks to the 5,519 public high school students and 3,666 public middle school students who participated in the 2013 MYRBS and MYHS. We would also like to thank the school principals, teachers, nurses and superintendents of the 57 high schools and 87 middle schools represented for welcoming us into their classrooms. Their commitment to the health of their students is apparent and commendable.

Chiniqua Milligan of the Coordinated School Health Program, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and Diane Gonsalves, Bureau of Health Information, Statistics, Research and Evaluation, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, prepared the report. A special thanks to Anthony Roman, University of Massachusetts, Boston Center for Survey Research, and the many people at both departments who provided invaluable input and feedback.

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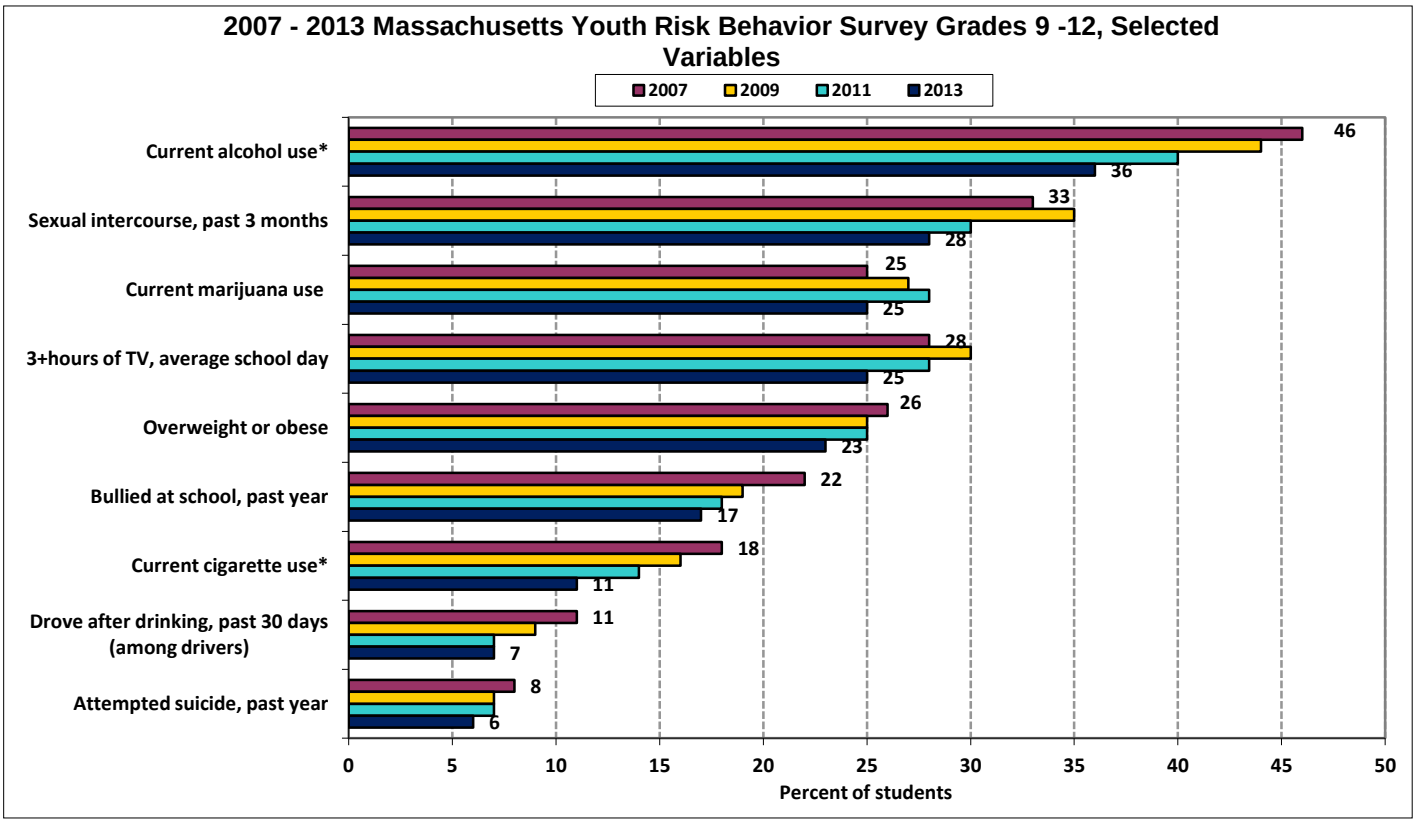
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Health and Risk Behaviors of Massachusetts Youth, 2013, is the product of a collaborative effort between the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) and Department of Public Health (DPH) to conduct two youth surveys in Massachusetts public secondary schools in the spring of 2013. Altogether, 9,185 students in 144 schools participated in the surveys. ESE's Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey measures high school risk behaviors over time. DPH's Youth Health Survey measures middle school student risk behaviors as well as other health status indicators in high school.



SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Many adolescent risk behaviors have shown significant improvements since 2011. Since 2011 improvements have been seen in nearly all areas of risk assessed by the MYRBS, including but not limited to sexual risk behaviors, mental health, tobacco use and personal safety. In particular, a lower percentage of high school students in 2013 reported having been or gotten someone pregnant, intentionally harming themselves without wanting to die, ever smoking cigarettes and never or rarely wearing a seatbelt.

Some important risk areas remain statistically unchanged. Among high school students, there have been no significant improvements in the percent reporting recent marijuana use, having attempted suicide in the past year or alcohol use at last sex. Also unchanged are high school students' reports of obesity.

Many risk behaviors begin in middle school. Unlike significant improvements in risk behaviors seen among high school students, there have been no significant improvements in risk for middle school students between 2011 and 2013. Alcohol use, tobacco use, dietary behaviors, weight, and mental health indicators have seen small fluctuations but remain statistically unchanged.

Some behaviors and factors that help protect against risky behaviors have worsened. Since 2011, significant declines have been seen in the percentage of students drinking the recommended daily intake of milk, and the percentage of students who have spoken with a parent or adult family member about sexuality or prevention of HIV, STDs or pregnancy in the past year. There has been a significant increase in the percentage of students reporting three or more hours of non-school related video game and computer usage.

Information regarding several risk factors is beginning to emerge. In 2013, new questions about texting while driving, cell phone use while driving and sexual victimization while impaired were asked. Among high school students who had driven a car in the previous month, 32% sent a text or email and 39% talked on a cell phone while driving. One percent (1%) of high school students reported having sex with someone in the past 12 months because they were drunk, high, passed out, or asleep.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Health and Risk Behaviors of Massachusetts Youth, 2013 presents the results of the fourth collaborative administration of the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (MYRBS) and the Massachusetts Youth Health Survey (MYHS).

The MYRBS is conducted every two years by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) with funding from the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The survey monitors youth risk behaviors related to the leading causes of morbidity and mortality among adolescents. Since 1993, the MYRBS has surveyed public high school students from a scientifically selected random sample of schools across the Commonwealth.

At various times during the past 20 years, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has conducted surveys of Massachusetts youth to assess health behaviors and other health indicators. DPH surveys students in middle and high schools (grades 6 through 12). In 2003, the Center for Survey Research of the University of Massachusetts-Boston (CSR) began working with DPH to update and administer the questionnaire, which was at that time named the Massachusetts Youth Health Survey (MYHS).

In 2005 ESE and DPH began a collaborative effort to coordinate survey administration. Working with CSR, the two agencies developed revised versions of the MYRBS and MYHS with a core set of questions common to both surveys. Since 2007, CSR has been contracted to simultaneously administer both surveys. This report summarizes findings from the 2013 surveys.

SAMPLE AND PARTICIPATION

For the high school surveys, MYRBS and MYHS, the CDC used a two-stage sampling method to produce representative samples of students in grades 9 – 12; all public schools having at least one of grades 9 through 12 were eligible to participate. In the first stage, schools were selected with a probability proportional to school enrollment size. In the second stage, classes of a required subject or required period were selected randomly.[1] Once classes were selected, half were randomly assigned to receive the MYRBS and half the MYHS. Trained survey administrators from CSR administered the surveys in the participating schools. Including both surveys, usable data were collected from 5,519 high school students in 57 schools. The overall response rates (i.e., the school response rate multiplied by the student response rate) were 67% for MYRBS and 68% for the MYHS.

For the middle school survey (MYHS), CSR used similar scientific procedures to select a representative random sample of middle schools and classrooms within those schools. CSR staff administered the MYHS in selected schools and classes. Data were collected from 3,666 middle school students from grades 6 through 8 in 87 schools. The overall response rate was 68%.

ANALYSIS AND STATISTICS PRESENTED

The statistics presented in this report are weighted (i.e., adjusted for nonresponse and distribution of students by grade, sex and race/ethnicity) in order to be representative of Massachusetts high school and middle school students as a whole. Since each of the surveys includes a scientifically selected sample of public school students, not a complete census, 95% confidence intervals provide a range of values that most likely contain the true percent estimates for the population. They are not presented in this report.

Results reported for high school students are derived from the MYRBS, except for a few instances when the data are from the MYHS and are noted as such. In most instances, results from 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011 and 2013 administrations are shown for key variables Many statistics reported in this report are displayed graphically; however, on occasion the text will provide further information. Statistically significant increases or decreases, based on non-overlapping 95% confidence intervals, between 2011 and 2013 are presented in the graphs with an asterisk and discussed in the text. All middle school results presented in this report were derived from the MYHS.

All data collected for the MYRBS and the MYHS are based on self-report from students. Self-reported data may be subject to error for several reasons, including inaccurate recall of events.[2]

[1]"Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Methodology of the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System", MMWR: September 2004, Vol. 53, N0. RR-12, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Atlanta Ga. 30323. [2]National Center for Health Statistics. (January 11, 2007). Reliability of Survey Estimates. Retrieved August 2, 2007, fromhttp://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/ahcd/reliability.htm

DEMOGRAPHICS

Figure 1: Demographic Characteristics of the 2013 MYHS and MYRBS Student Samples N (weighted %)

	Middle School	High School	
	MYHS (n= 3,666)	MYHS (n= 2,801)	MYRBS (n=2,718)
Sex			
Female	1,787 (48.8%)	1,424 (51.4%)	1,339 (49.5%)
Male	1,831 (51.2 %)	1,322 (48.6%)	1,371 (50.5%)
Missing	48	55	8
Grade			
6th grade	1,209 (33.1%)	--	--
7th grade	1,280 (33.3%)	--	--
8th grade	1,161 (33.4%)	--	--
9th grade	--	731 (25.8%)	697 (26.9%)
10th grade	--	752 (26.5%)	743 (25.1%)
11th grade	--	702 (24.6%)	677 (24.2%)
12th grade	--	607 (23.0%)	584 (23.5%)
Ungraded or Other	5 (0.1%)	2 (0.1%)	5 (0.2%)
Missing	11	7	12
Race/Ethnicity [a]			
White (non-Hispanic)	2,361 (67.3%)	1,844 (66.0%)	1705 (68.9%)
Black or African-American (non-Hispanic)	191 (8.2%)	236 (9.0%)	212 (8.9%)
Hispanic or Latino	529 (16.3%)	364 (13.8%)	419 (14.1%)
Asian or Pacific Islander	168 (4.1%)	161 (6.1%)	181 (5.9%)
Other or Multiple Ethnicity	172 (4.1%)	133 (5.1%)	127 (2.2%)
Missing	245	63	74

(a) Students were allowed to indicate multiple racial/ethnic categories. If Hispanic/ Latino was indicated as an ethnic identification, whether alone or in combination with other ethnic categories, the student was categorized as Hispanic/Latino. The Other or Multiple Ethnicity category includes American Indian or Alaskan Natives and youth who indicated several ethnicities that did not include Hispanic/Latino.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

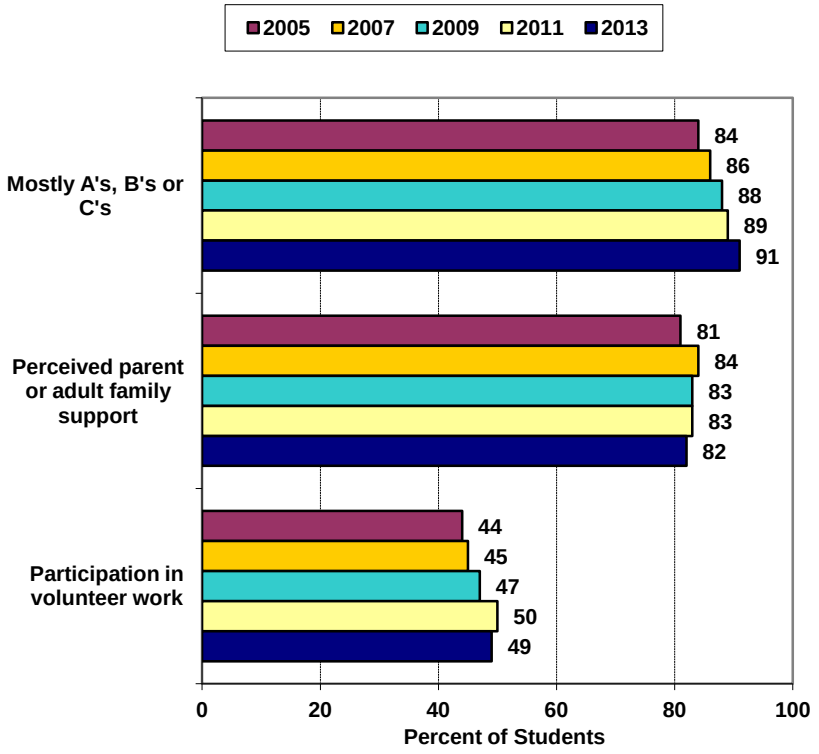
The 2013 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey included several measures of potential protective factors among students. These included: (1) self-reported academic achievement, (2) perceived parent or family support, (3) participation in volunteer work or community service and (4) perceived care, encouragement and support from teachers.

Most students (91%) reported receiving mostly A's, B's, or C's for grades in the past year.

Participation in volunteer work increased with grade in school. Twelfth grade students were significantly more likely than ninth and tenth grade students to have participated in volunteer work (57% vs. 40% and 48%, respectively). There was also a significant difference in reported volunteer work by gender, 55% of female students reported this behavior versus 43% of male students.

In 2013, students were asked about feelings of care, encouragement and support from teachers. Seventy percent (70%) of students agreed or strongly agreed that their teachers really care about them and give them encouragement and support. This was a significant increase from the 63% reported in 2011.

Figure 2: Protective Factors Reported by High School Students, 2005-2013 (MYRBS)

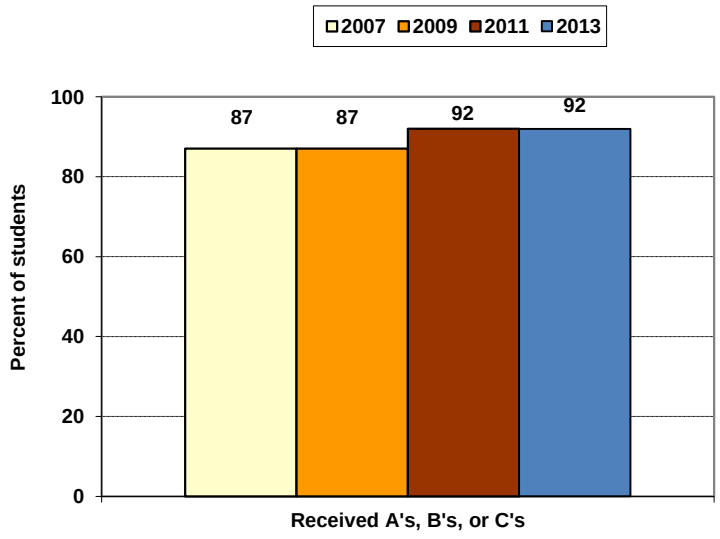


MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

The 2013 Massachusetts Youth Health Survey for middle school students included one measure of a potential protective factor: self-reported academic achievement. Academic achievement is considered as having received mostly A's, B's, or C's for grades in the past year.

In 2013, 92% of middle school students reported receiving A's, B's or C's for grades.

Figure 3: Academic Achievement Across MA Middle School Students, 2007-2013 (MYHS)



ALCOHOL USE

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

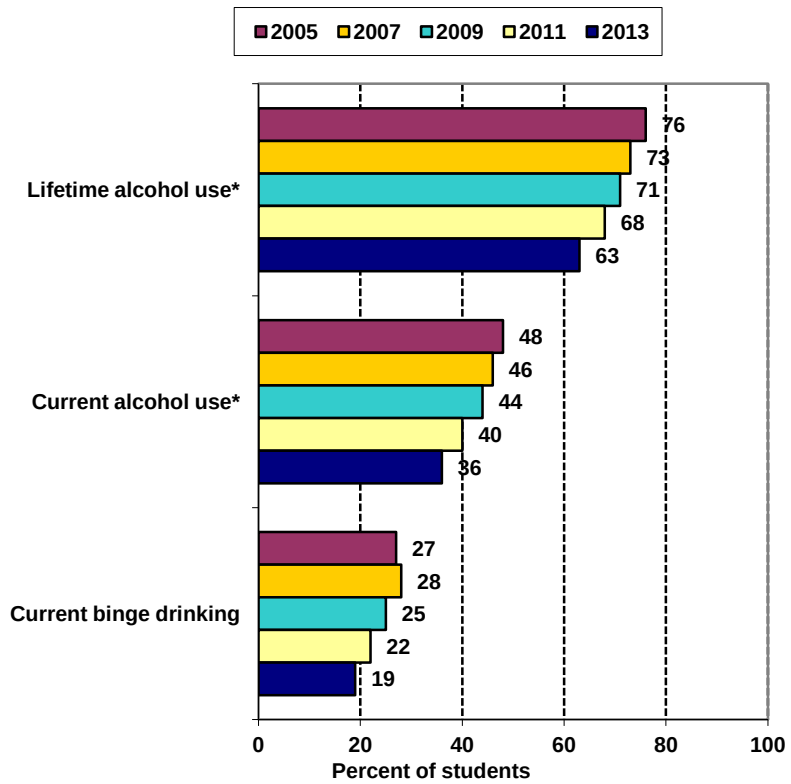
Both the percentage of students who reported ever having at least one drink of alcohol (lifetime use) and the percentage of students who reported having an alcoholic beverage in the previous 30 days (current use) have significantly declined since 2011.

Nearly one-fifth (19%) reported binge drinking (having five or more drinks of alcohol in a row within a couple of hours) in the previous 30 days. Binge drinking increased with grade level in school with ninth graders less likely than eleventh and twelfth graders to report this behavior (9% vs. 22% and 29%, respectively).

Ninth graders were significantly less likely than student in all other grades to report lifetime alcohol use (47% vs. 63% (10th), 71% (11th) and 74% (12th)), and current alcohol use (22% vs. 33% (10th), 40% (11th) and 49% (12th)).

Eleven percent (11%) of students reported having the first alcohol drink, other than a few sips, before the age of 13 (MYHS 2013).

Figure 4: Alcohol Use Among High School Students, 2005-2013 (MYRBS)



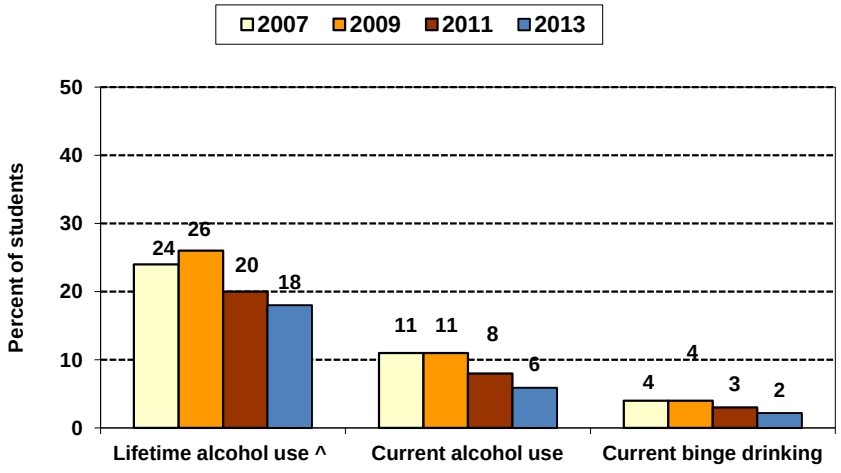
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

The percent of middle school students who reported ever having at least one drink of alcohol in their lifetime (lifetime use) was 18% in 2013.

Six percent (6%) of students reported current alcohol use and 2% of students reported current binge drinking in 2013.

Alcohol use indicators show an increase as grade level increases. In 2013, lifetime use of alcohol was 10% for 6th graders and 30% for 8th graders. Current use of alcohol was 2% in 6th grade and 10% in 8th grade.

Figure 5: Alcohol Use Among Middle School Students, 2007-2013 (MYHS)



* Statistically significant difference comparing 2011 and 2013 ^ Percentages reflect a change in variable calculation.

TOBACCO USE

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Indicators of cigarette smoking (lifetime and current cigarette use) have significantly declined among Massachusetts high school students since 2011.

In 2013, 32% of high school students reported ever having smoked a cigarette, 5% reported smoking before age 13, and 11% reported current cigarette use.

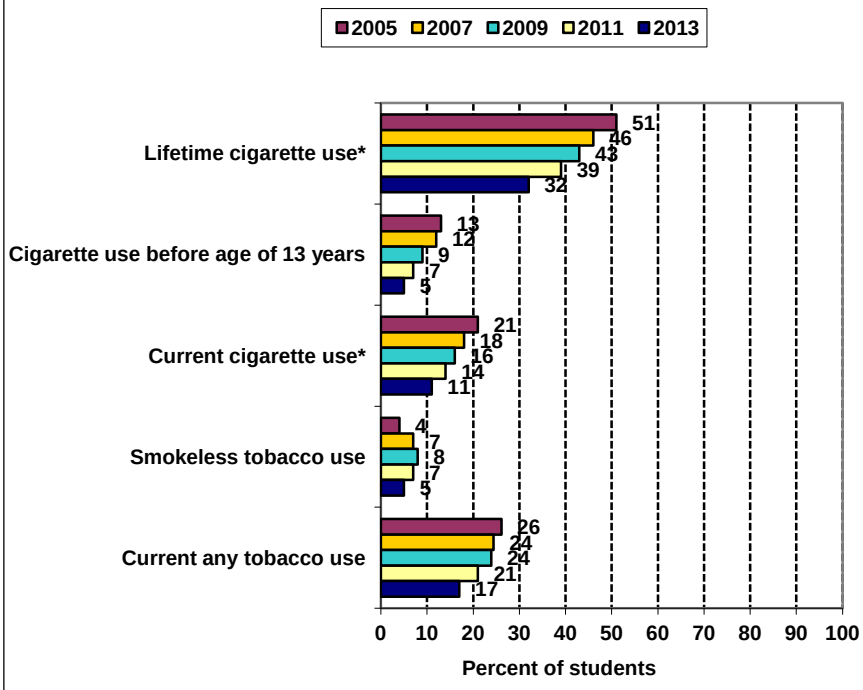
Overall, 5% of high school students reported smokeless tobacco use (chewing tobacco, snuff, dip or snus) in the past 30 days. Males were eight times more likely to report this behavior than females (8% vs. 1%).

Eleven percent (11%) of high school students reported smoking cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars during the previous 30 days, a significant decline since 2011.

Ninth grade students were significantly less likely than eleventh and twelfth grade students to report tobacco use:

- Lifetime cigarette use (22% vs. 35% and 39%)
- Current cigarette use (6% vs. 13% and 14%)
- Smokeless tobacco use (2% vs. 5% and 6%)
- Current any tobacco use (10% vs. 21% and 23%)

Figure 6: Tobacco Use Among High School Students, 2005-2013 (MYRBS)



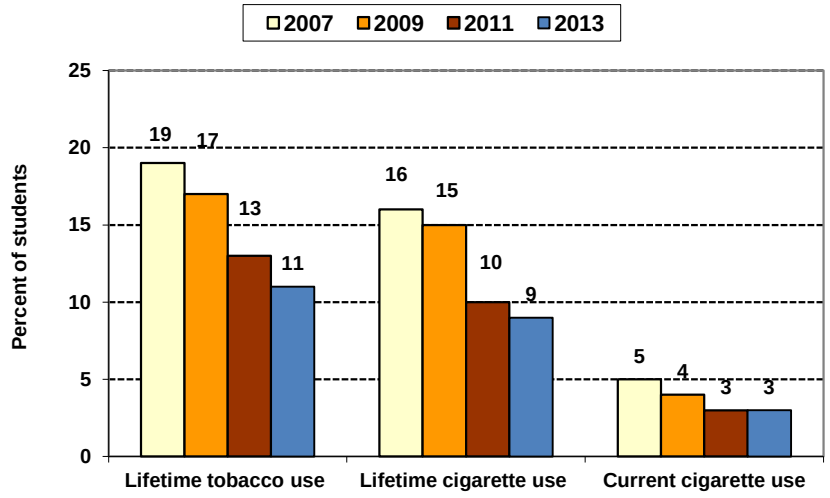
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Among middle school students, the percentage of students in 2013 who reported ever trying a cigarette (lifetime use) was 9%. Lifetime use of cigarettes increases over the middle school grades, from 3% in 6th grade to 8% in 7th grade and 14% in 8th grade.

The percentage of middle school students who smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days (current cigarette use) was 3% in 2013.

In 2013, 11% of middle school students reported using a tobacco product including cigarettes, smokeless, or cigars. Lifetime use of tobacco increases with grade level (4% in 6th grade, 10% in 7th grade, and 17% in 8th grade).

Figure 7: Cigarette Smoking Among Middle School Students, 2007-2013 (MYHS)



* Statistically significant difference comparing 2011 and 2013

MARIJUANA USE

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

In 2013, forty-one percent (41%) of all high school students reported having used marijuana in their lifetime, -one quarter (25%) used marijuana in the past 30 days and 7% of students reported having used marijuana before the age of 13.

Male students were more likely than female students to report current use (28% vs. 22%) and use before age 13 (9% vs. 5%).

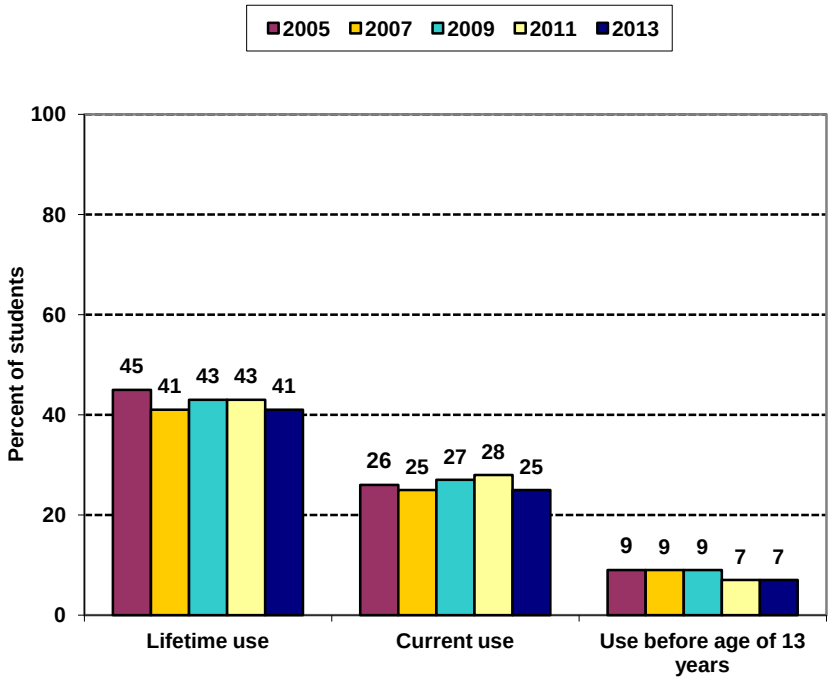
Lifetime and current marijuana use increased with grade level in school with significant differences among ninth graders and all other grades.

- Lifetime use: 26% (9th) vs. 40% (10th) , 48% (11th) and 53% (12th)
- Current use: 16% (9th) vs. 25% (10th), 29% (11th) and 30% (12th)

Less than half (38%) of high school students reported that they believe smoking marijuana occasionally would be a moderate or great risk to their health (MYHS 2013).

Seventy-five percent (75%) of high school students reported that it would be very easy or fairly easy for them to obtain marijuana (MYHS 2013).

Figure 8: Marijuana Use Among MA High School Students, 2005-2013 (MYRBS)



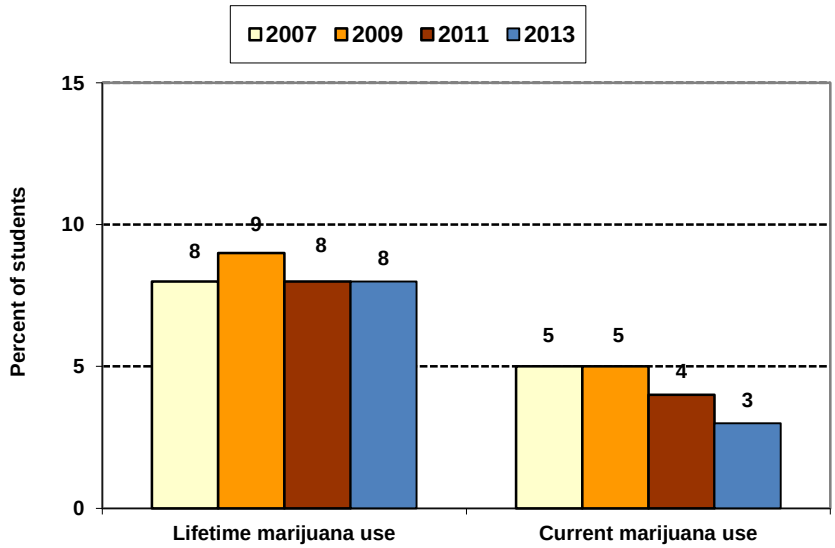
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

In 2013, 8% of middle school students reported having used marijuana at least once in their lives. Three percent (3%) of respondents reported current use of marijuana in 2013.

Reported lifetime marijuana use among middle school students increases by grade level (2% in 6th grade, 6% in 7th grade, and 14% in 8th grade). Current use of marijuana also increases by grade level (3% in 7th grade, and 7% in 8th grade).

Seventy-five percent (75%) of middle school students thought smoking marijuana occasionally would be a moderate or great risk to their health.

Figure 9: Marijuana Use Among MA Middle School Students, 2007-2013 (MYHS)



OTHER ILLICIT DRUG USE

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

The reported use of cocaine, methamphetamines, inhalants, needle to inject drugs and steroids by high school students has declined significantly since 2011.

Two percent (2%) of all high school students have used a needle to inject illegal drugs.

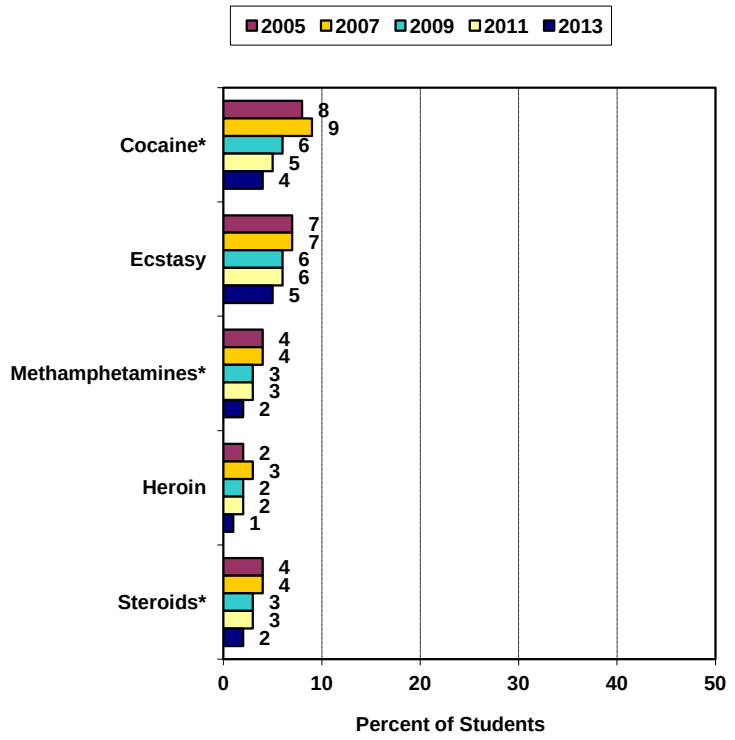
Male students were significantly more likely to report steroid use (2% vs. 1%).

Three percent (3%) of all students have used inhalants in the month before the survey. Ninth grade students were five times more likely than twelfth grade students to report this behavior (5% vs. 1%).

In 2013, thirteen percent (13%) of high school students reported ever taking a prescription drug that was not their own. Three percent (3%) reported this behavior in the previous 30 days. (MYHS 2013)

Five percent (5%) of high school students reported taking over-the-counter medication to get high at least once in their lifetime. (MYHS 2013)

Figure 10: Lifetime Use of Other Drugs by MA High School Students, 2005-2013 (MYRBS)



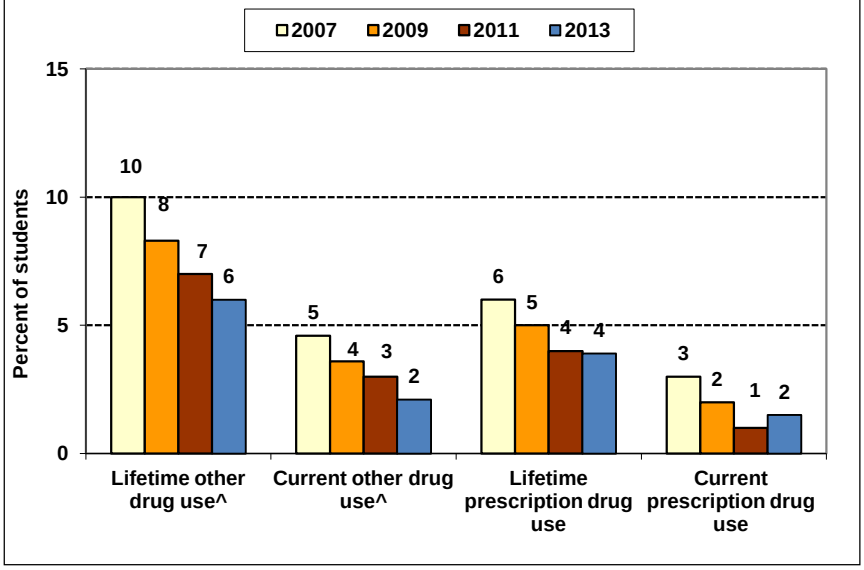
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

In 2013, 4% of middle school students reported lifetime use of prescription drugs that were not their own while 2% reported current use.

The "other drug" category includes inhalants, heroin, cocaine, amphetamines, methamphetamines, and ecstasy. In 2013, 6% of middle school students reporting using these drugs in their lifetime and 2% of students reported using in the past 30 days.

In 2013, 1% of middle school students reported taking over-the-counter medicine to get high (during their lifetime).

Figure 11: Other Drug Use by MA Middle School Students, 2007-2013 (MYHS)



* Statistically significant difference comparing 2011 and 2013 ^ Other drug category is comprised of inhalants, heroin, cocaine, amphetamines, methamphetamines, or ecstasy

SUBSTANCE USE AT SCHOOL

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

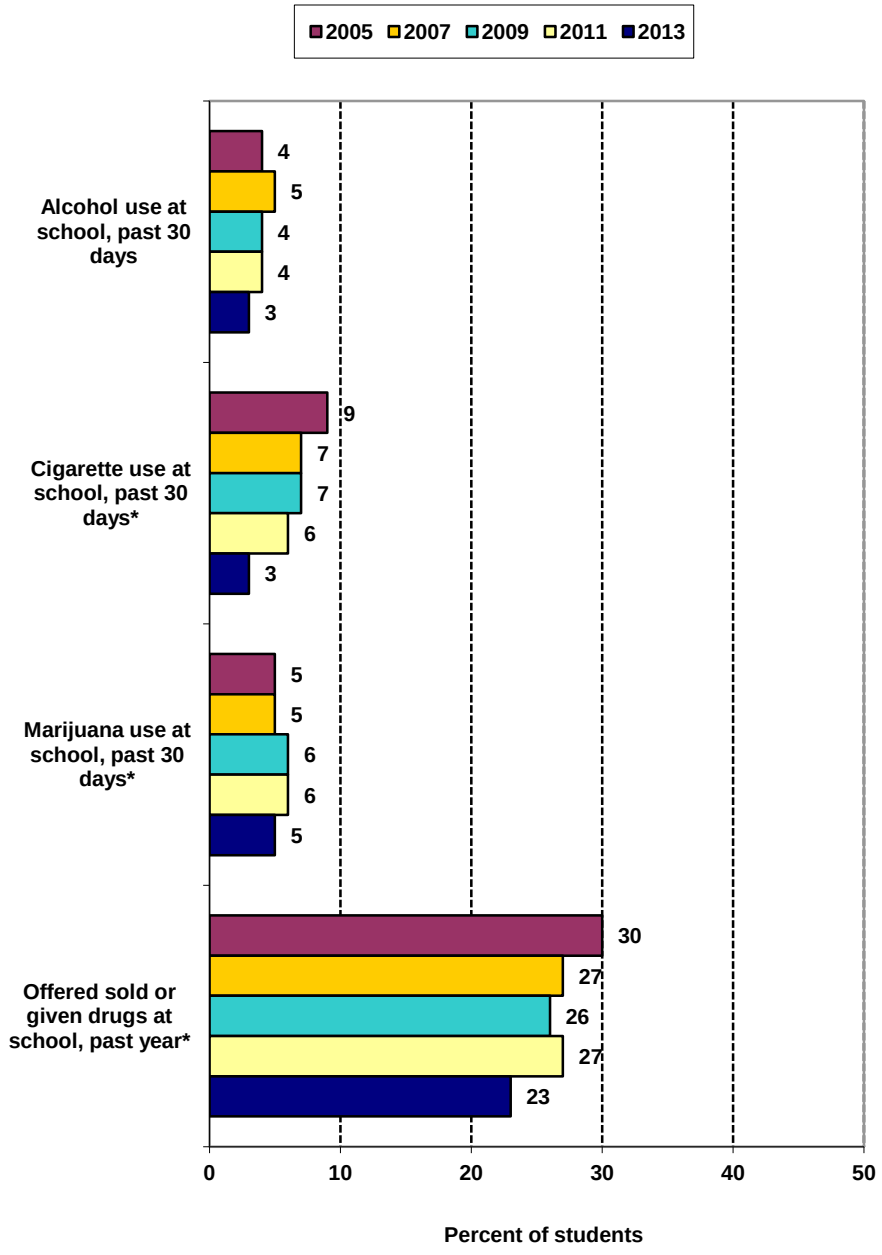
The 2013 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey included several measures of substance use on school property. These included alcohol, cigarette, and marijuana use in the previous 30 days and having been offered, sold or given drugs at school in the previous year. Most of these measures have declined significantly since 2011.

Half as many students reported cigarette smoking on school property in the previous thirty days in 2013 (3%) as in 2011 (6%).

Five percent (5%) of students used marijuana on school property in the previous month and 23% of high school students reported being offered, sold, or given an illegal drug by someone on school property during the previous 12 months.

Three percent (3%) of high school students reported drinking alcohol on school property on one or more of the past 30 days.

Figure 12: Substance Use on School Property Among MA High School Students, 2005-2013 (MYRBS)



(Note: Questions regarding substance use at school only appear on the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey and therefore are only asked of high school students.) * Statistically significant difference comparing 2011 and 2013

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Fifty-six percent (56%) of high school students reported attending physical education classes on one or more days in an average week. Students in the ninth and tenth grades were significantly more likely than students in the twelfth grades to have reported attending physical education classes on one or more days in an average week (65% (both 9th and 10th) vs. 38%).

In 2013, 25% of students reported three or more hours per day of watching television and 39% reported 3 or more hours of non-school related video game and/or computer usage, a significant increase since 2011.

Forty-four percent (44%) of students reported that they were physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes per day on five or more of the past seven days. Fifty-one percent (51%) of male students and 38% of female students reported this, which is a significant difference.

In 2013, 61% of students reported having been taught in school how to follow a personal fitness plan, which included setting personal fitness goals for themselves and keeping track of their progress.

Twenty percent (20%) of high school students reported walking, biking, rollerblading, or skateboarding to or from school on all 5 of the past 5 school days (MYHS 2013).

Figure 13: Physical Activity of High School Students, 2005-2013 (MYRBS)

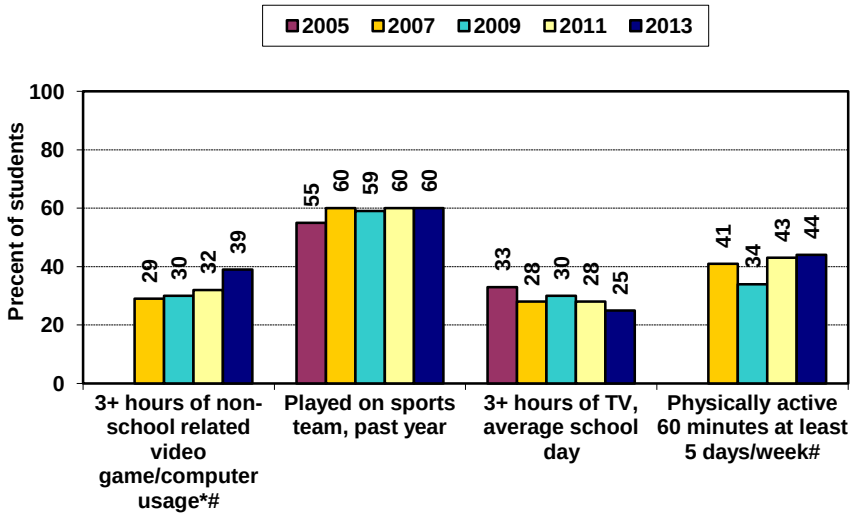
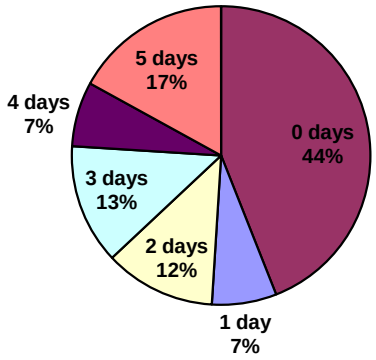


Figure 14: Number of Days Per Week High School Students Attended Physical Education Classes (MYRBS)



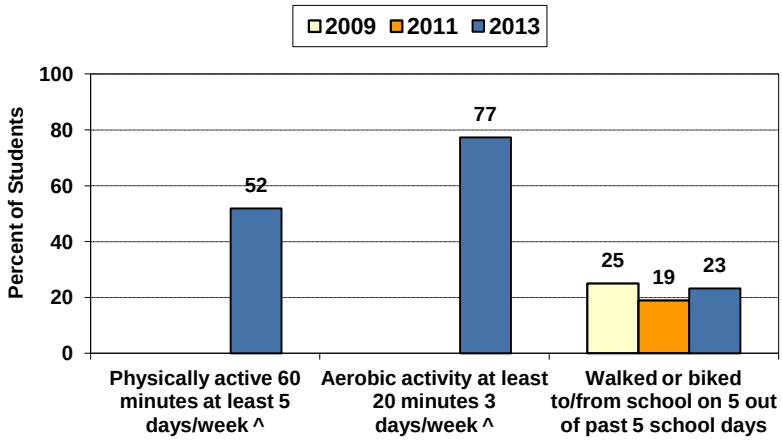
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

In 2013, 52% of middle school students reported that they were physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on five or more of the past seven days. Seventy–seven percent (77%) of middle school students reported aerobic activity of at least 20 minutes on three or more of the past seven days.

Twenty-three percent (23%) reported walking or biking to or from to school for all of the past 5 days.

In 2013, 24% of middle school students reported watching 3 or more hours of TV on an average school day and 36% reported playing 3 or more hours of video games on school days.

Figure 15: Physical Activity of Middle School Students, 2009-2013 (MYHS)



* Statistically significant difference comparing 2011 and 2013. # Not asked in 2005 ^ 2009 and 2011 not presented due to change in question order. Caution should be used when comparing 2013 estimates to prior years.

DIETARY BEHAVIORS

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

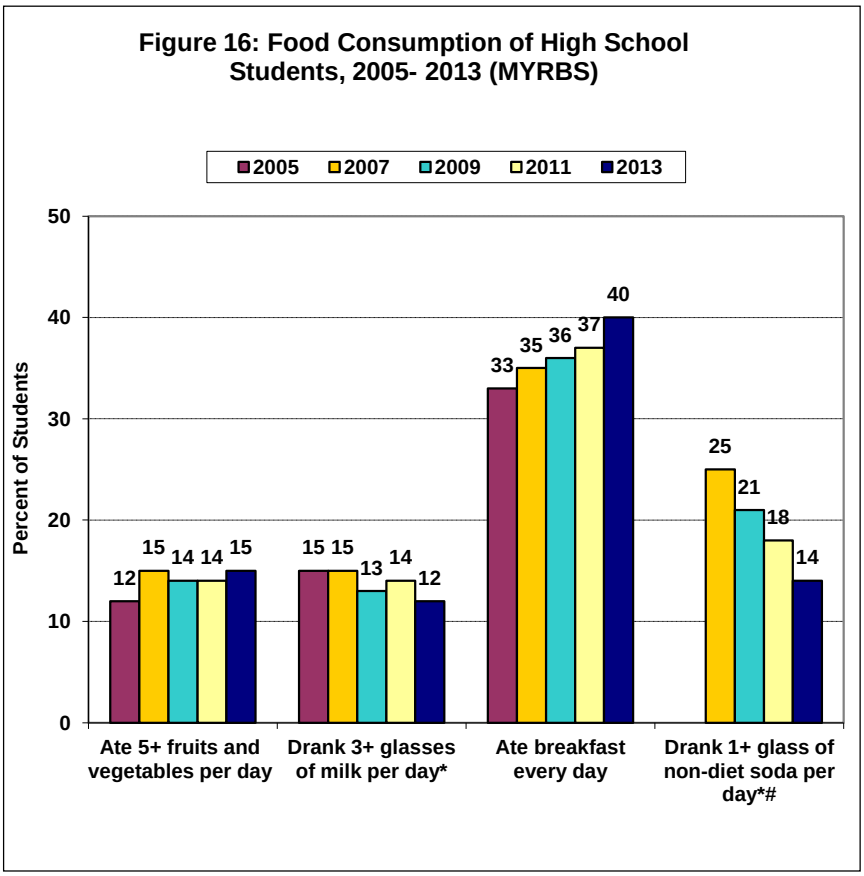
A new question to the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey in 2013 assessed the consumption of sport drinks by high school students. Nine percent (9%) of high school students reported have had a sport drink one or more times during the seven days before the survey. Male students were nearly three times more likely than female students to report this. (13% vs. 5%).

Since 2011 there has been a significant decline in the percentage of students reporting drinking the recommended three glasses of milk per day and the percentage of students who said that they drank non-diet soda one or more times per day during the past seven days. Males were significantly more likely than females to report both of these.

- Males were more than twice as likely as females to drink three or more glasses of milk. (16% vs. 7%)
- Eighteen percent (18%) of male students and 11% of female students said that they drank non-diet soda one or more times per day during the past seven days.

Fifteen percent (15%) of high school students reported consuming the recommended five or more servings of fruit and vegetables per day.

Most high school students (81%) reported that they had been taught in school how to choose healthy foods and eat a balanced, nutritious diet.

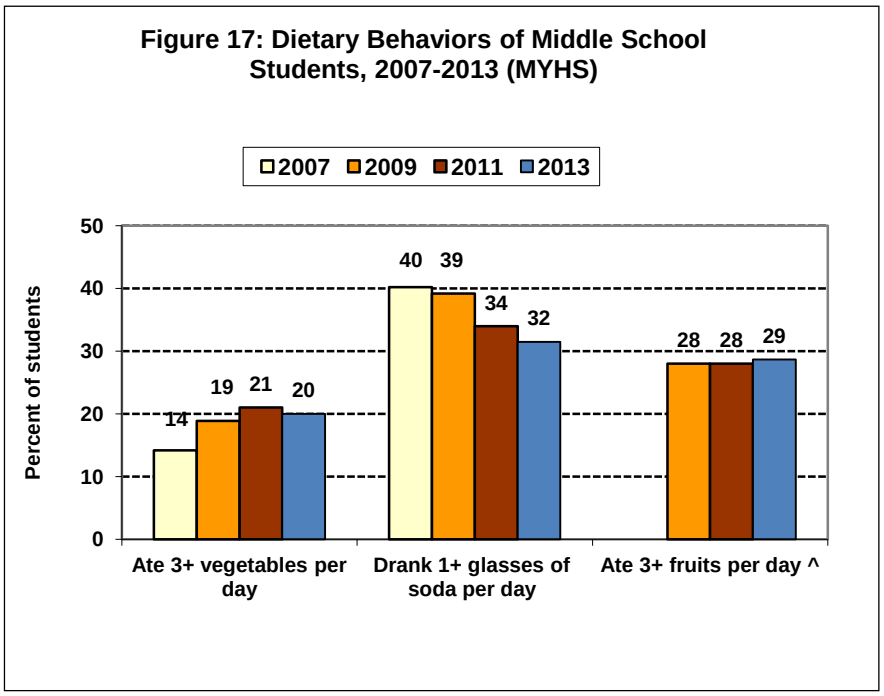


MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

In 2013, 32% of middle school students reported drinking one or more glasses of non-diet soda on the day preceding the survey. Though consumption of non-diet soda was the same across grades, 36% of males reported this behavior compared to 27% of females.

In 2013, 20% of middle school students reported consuming three or more servings of vegetables the day before the survey.

In 2013, 29% of middle school students ate three or more fruits on the day before the survey.



* Statistically significant difference comparing 2011 and 2013. # Not asked in 2005. ^ Not asked in 2007

WEIGHT AND WEIGHT CONTROL

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

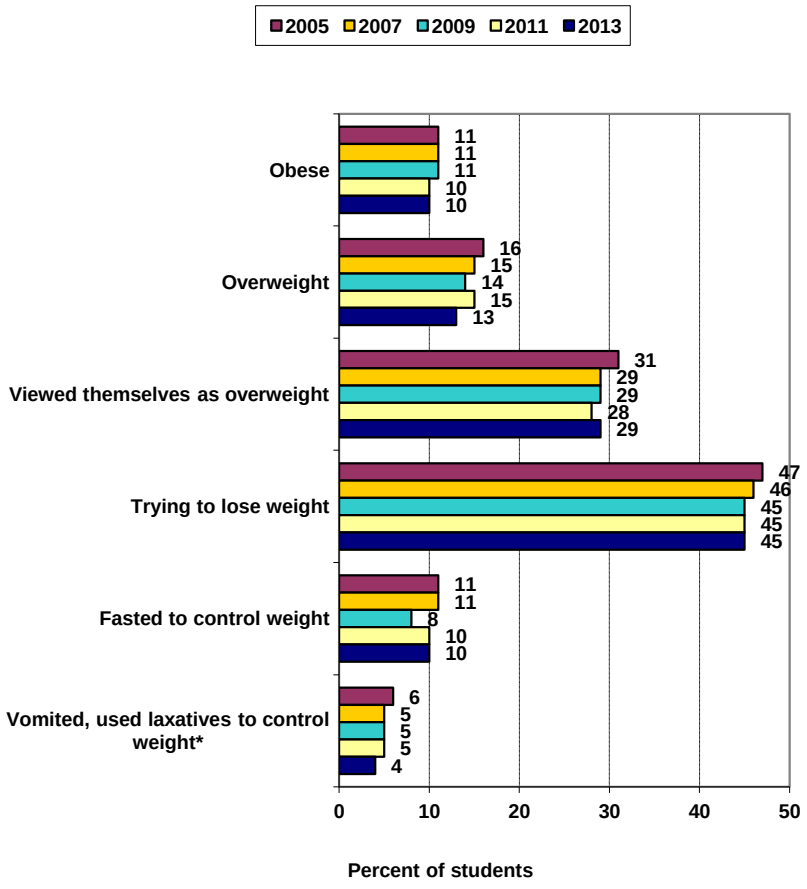
According to their Body Mass Index (BMI), calculated on the basis of self-reported height and weight, 13% of students were overweight (i.e., greater than or equal to 85th percentile but less than 95th percentile for BMI, by age and sex, based on reference data) and 10% were obese (i.e., greater than or equal to 95th percentile for BMI, by age and sex, based on reference data).

Male students were more likely than female students to be obese (13% vs. 7%, respectively); however, they were less likely to perceive themselves as overweight (24% vs. 35%) and less likely to report that they were trying to lose weight (28% vs. 61%).

Some students reported using unhealthy methods to control their weight. For example, 10% reported trying to control their weight by fasting or going without eating for 24 hours or more, 3% indicated that they used diet pills, powders, or liquids without a doctor's prescription to try to control their weight, and 4% indicated using laxatives or vomiting to control their weight.

Female students were more likely than male students to indicate using laxatives or vomiting to control their weight (5% vs. 2%).

Figure 18: Weight Perception and Weight Control Among High School Students, 2005-2013 (MYRBS)

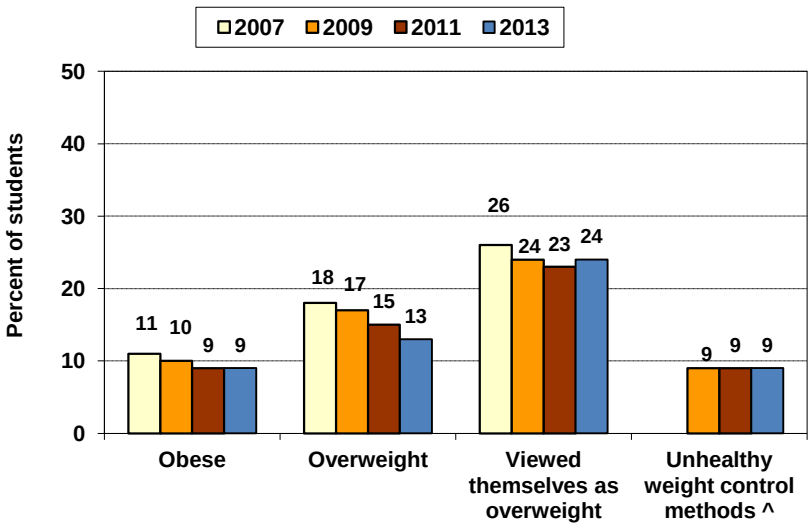


MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

In 2013, 13% of middle school students were overweight, based on self-reported height and weight, compared to 15% in 2011. Nine percent (9%) of middle school students were obese in 2013, which remained the same as 2011.

In 2013, 24% of middle school students perceived themselves to be slightly or very overweight. In 2013, 9% of middle school students reported unhealthy weight control methods (fasting, vomiting, taking pills, or taking laxatives).

Figure 19: Weight and Weight Control Among MA Middle School Students, 2007 - 2013 (MYHS)



* Statistically significant difference comparing 2011 and 2013 ^ Not asked in 2007

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

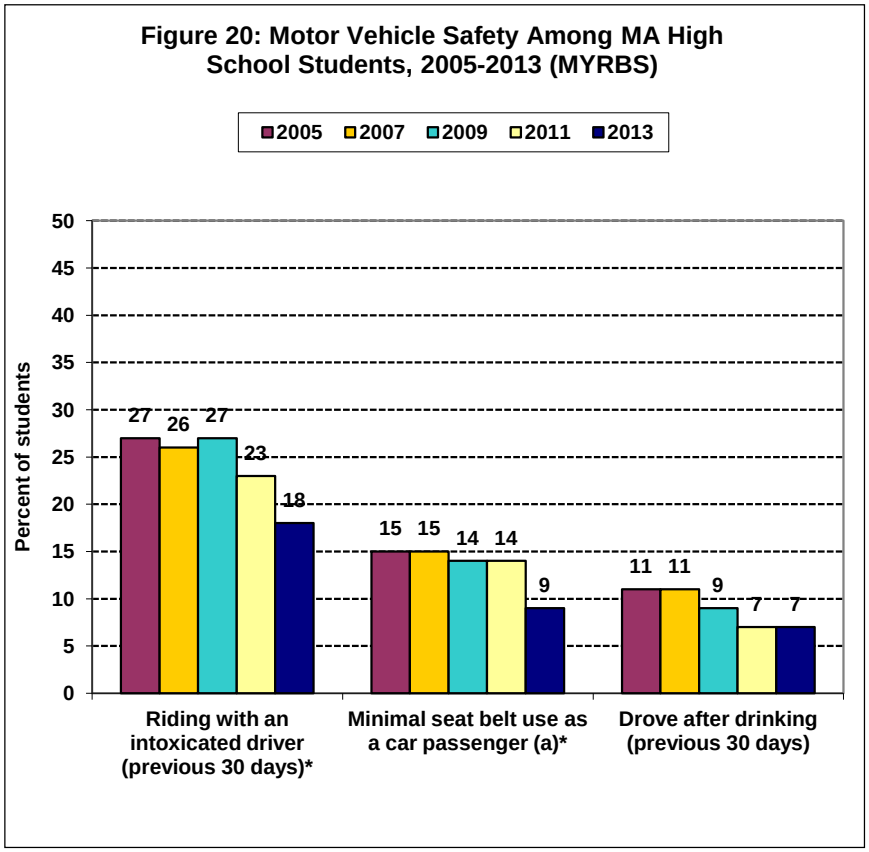
Indicators of personal safety are showing some significant improvements. Fewer students are riding with an intoxicated driver in the past 30 days and never or rarely wearing a seat belt (minimal use) while a passenger in a car.

In 2013, 7% of student drivers reported driving after drinking during the past month.

Of high school students who reported driving a car during the past 30 days,

- Thirty-two percent (32%) reported sending a text message or email while driving.
- Thirty-nine percent (39%) reported talking on a cell phone while driving.

Of the high school students who played on a sports team in the past year, 16% reported having experienced symptoms of a traumatic brain injury after a blow or jolt to the head while playing (MYHS 2013). Among students who experienced these symptoms, 35% stopped playing sports that day and got checked by a doctor, 16% stopped playing sports that day but did not get checked by a doctor, and 49% continued playing sports that day.

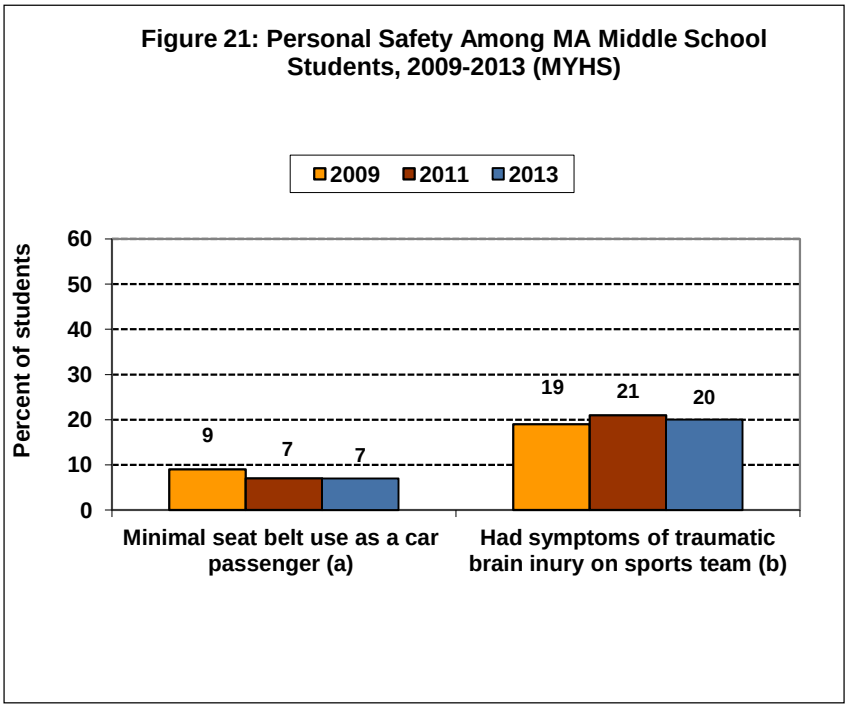


MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

In 2013, of the middle school students who played on a sports team in the past year, 20% reported having experienced symptoms of a traumatic brain injury after a blow or jolt to the head while playing. Among students who experienced these symptoms, 35% stopped playing sports that day and got checked by a doctor, 18% stopped playing sports that day but did not get checked by a doctor, and 47% continued playing sports that day.

Indicators of personal safety when riding in a motor vehicle reported by middle school students were as follows:

- 7% reported minimal seat belt use (reported never or rarely wearing a seatbelt) while a passenger in a car.
- 10% rode in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol in the past 30 days
- 5% rode in a car driven by someone who had been smoking marijuana in the past 30 days



*Statistically significant difference comparing 2011 and 2013 (a) Never or rarely using a seatbelt (b) of students who played on sports teams

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

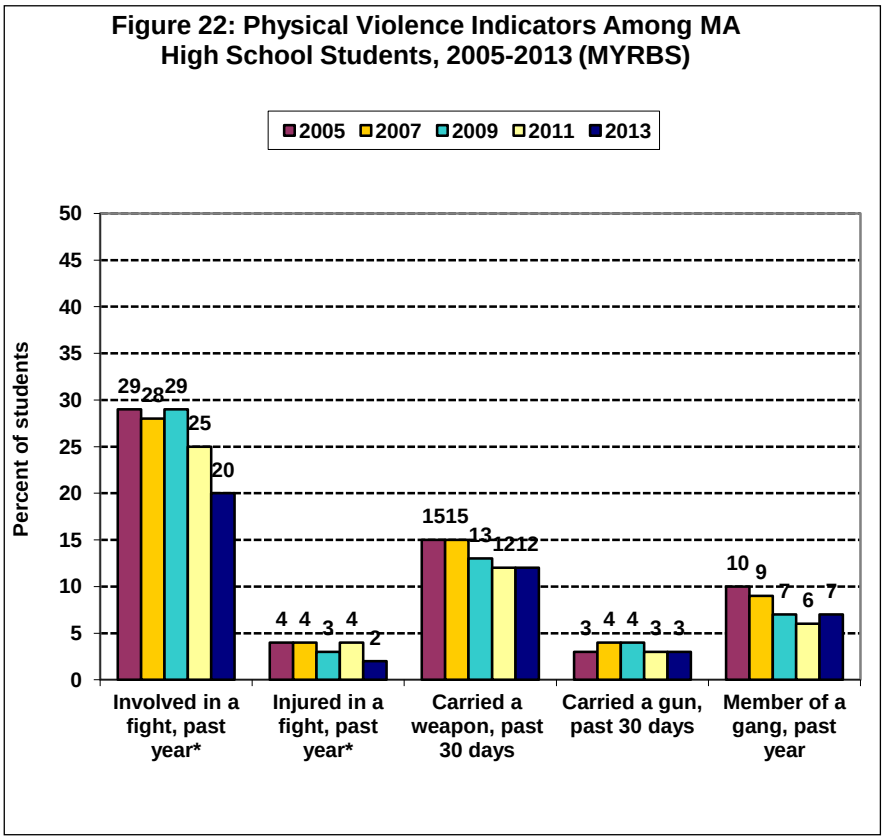
All indicators of physical fighting have declined significantly since 2011. Having been injured in a fight which required medical treatment has dropped in half (from 4% in 2011 to 2% in 2013) and having been involved in a physical fight has declined from 25% in 2011 to 20% in 2013.

In 2013, 12% of high school students reported having carried a weapon in the previous 30 days, 3% carried a gun in the past 30 days and 7% were members of a gang in the past year.

Male students were significantly more likely than female students to report physical violence-related behaviors and experiences:

- Carried a weapon, past 30 days (18% vs. 5%)
- Carried a gun, past 30 days (5% vs. 1%)
- Involved in a fight, past year (27% vs. 14%)

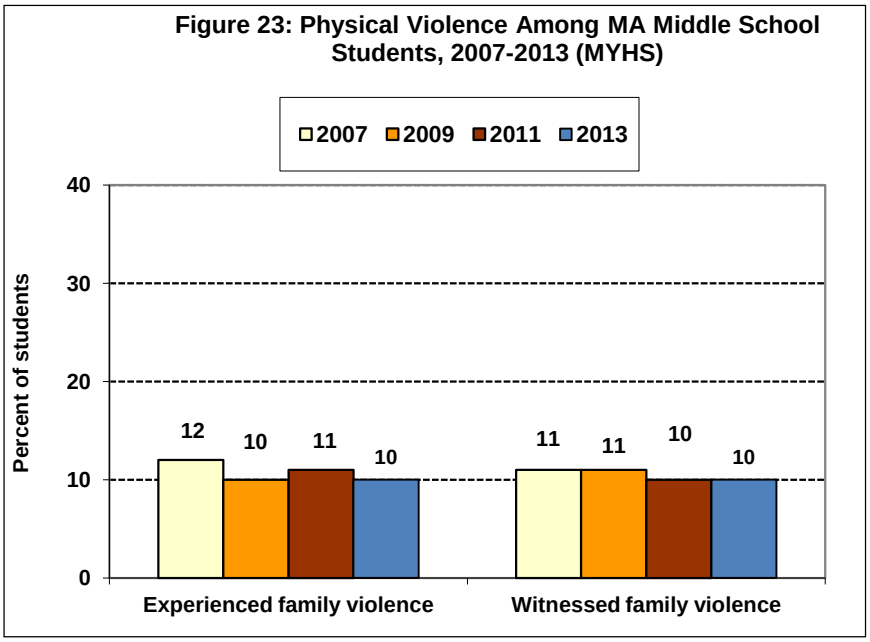
Some forms of violence-related behavior decrease with grade level. Ninth grade students were significantly more likely to report having been in a physical fight in the past year (25%) than twelfth grade students (15%).



MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

In 2013, 10% of middle school students reported being physically hurt by a family member in the previous 12 months.

Ten percent (10%) reported witnessing violence in their family in the previous 12 months.



* Statistically significant difference comparing 2011 and 2013

VIOLENCE-RELATED BEHAVIORS AND EXPERIENCES AT SCHOOL

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

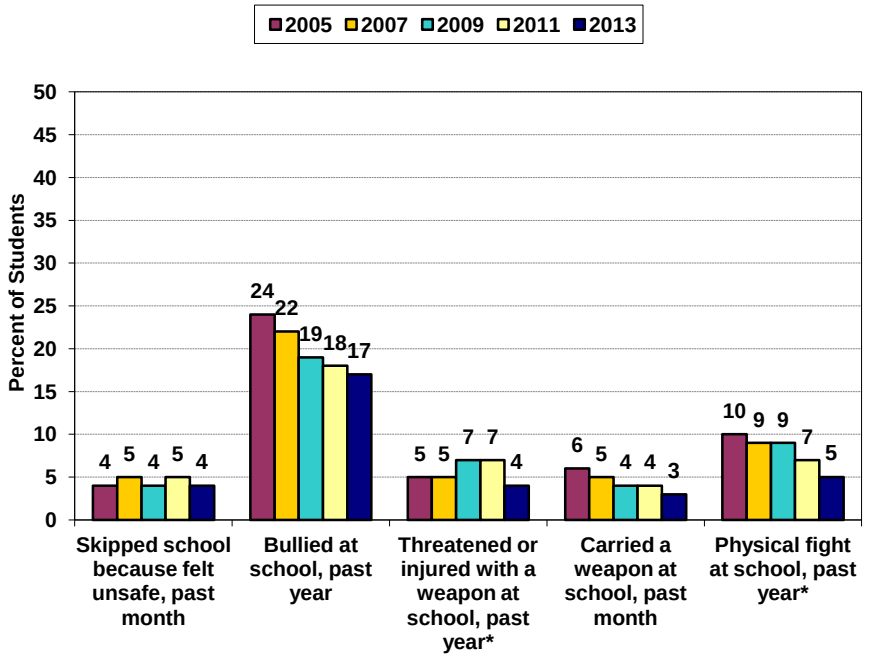
Some measures of school violence-related behaviors and experiences have shown significant declines since 2011, in particular, being involved in a physical fight in the past year and being threatened or injured with a weapon in the past year. In 2013, 5% of students reported being in a physical fight at school in the past year and 4% reported being threatened or injured with a weapon at school in the past year.

Four percent (4%) of students skipped school at least once in the 30 days before the survey because they felt unsafe either at school or on their way to or from school.

Male students were likely than female students to report having carried a weapon at school in the past year (4% vs. 2%), and having been in a physical fight on school property in the past year (6% vs. 3%).

There were some significant grade level differences in the reported experience of violence-related behaviors and experiences at school by students. Ninth grade students were over twice as likely as 12th grade students to have been involved in a physical fight at school, 7% vs. 3% respectively. Students in the ninth and tenth grades also reported higher percentages of being bullied at school in the past year than 12th grade students. (22% and 18% vs. 10%).

Figure 24: Violence-Related Experiences and Behaviors at School Among High School Students, 2005-2013 (MYRBS)



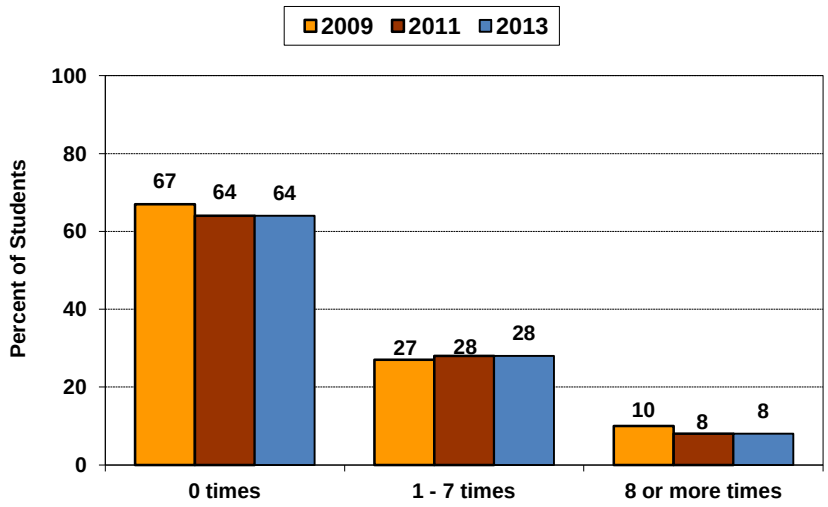
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

In 2013, 36% of middle school students reported being bullied at school within the past year.

Eight percent (8%) reported they were bullied frequently (8 or more times in the past year), and 64% reported that they were not bullied at all.

Female students were more likely than male students to report being bullied 1-7 times in the past year (33% vs. 24%) and 8 or more times in the past year (9% vs. 7%).

Figure 25: Bullied at School Among Middle School Students, 2009-2013 (MYHS)^



* Statistically significant difference comparing 2011 and 2013

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

In 2013, 9% of high school students reported initiating bullying and 6% reported initiating cyber-bullying. Males (13%) were more likely than females (6%) to report initiating bullying. (MYHS)

One percent (1%) of high school students reported initiating dating violence and 0.5% of high school students reported initiating sexual assault. (MYHS)

Seventeen percent (17%) of students reported being victims of bullying at school while 14% reported being victims of cyber-bullying in the past year. Female students (19%) were more likely than male students (9%) to report having been a victim of cyber-bullying. (MYRBS)

In 2013, 8% of high school students reported being a victim of dating violence and 9% a victim of sexual assault. Female students were three times more likely to report being victims of dating violence than male students (12% vs. 4%) and being victims of sexual assault (13% vs. 4%). (MYRBS)

In 2013, the Massachusetts Youth Health Survey assessed experiences of sexual victimization while impaired. One percent (1%) of high school students reported having sex with someone in the past 12 months because they were drunk, high, passed out, or asleep. (MYHS)

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Overall, 8% of middle school students reported initiating bullying and 4% of students reported initiating cyber-bullying. One percent (1%) of middle school students reported initiating dating violence.

Eighth grade students were more likely than sixth grade students to report that they had initiated bullying (11% vs. 6%) and cyber bullying (7% vs. 2%).

Overall, 36% of middle school students reporting being a victim of bullying, 14% reported being a victim of cyber bullying and 5% reported being a victim of dating violence.

Figure 26: Violence Initiation Across MA High School Grades, 2009 -2013 (MYHS)

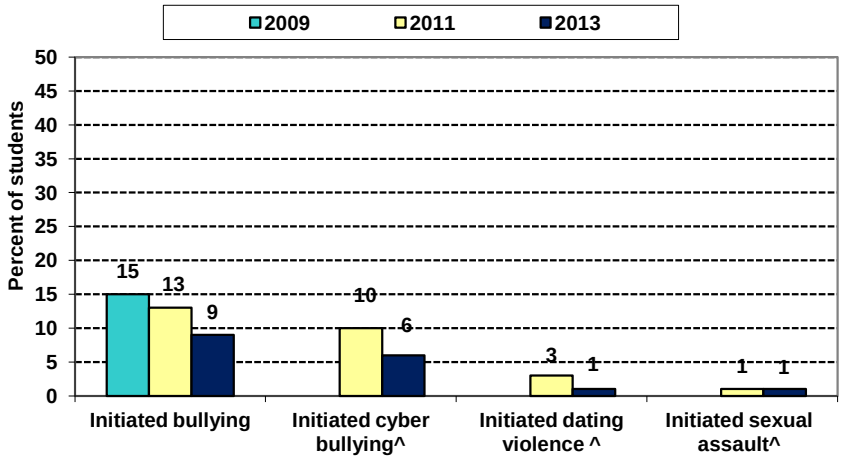


Figure 27: Victimization Across MA High School Grades, 2009 - 2013 (MYRBS)

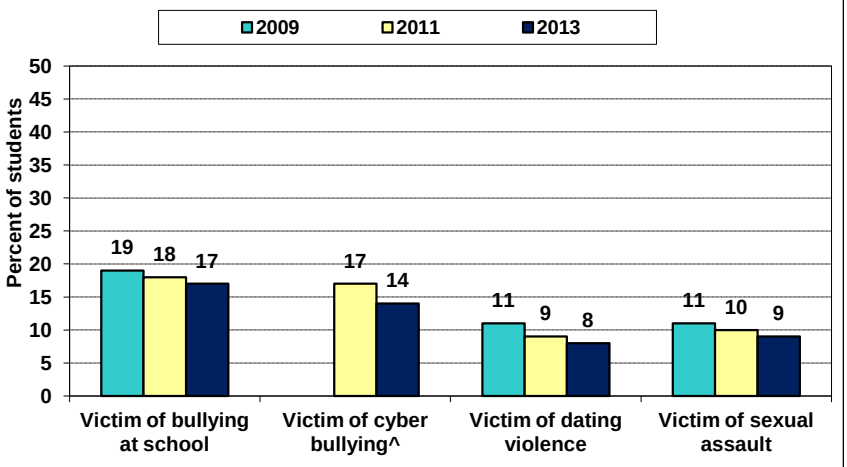
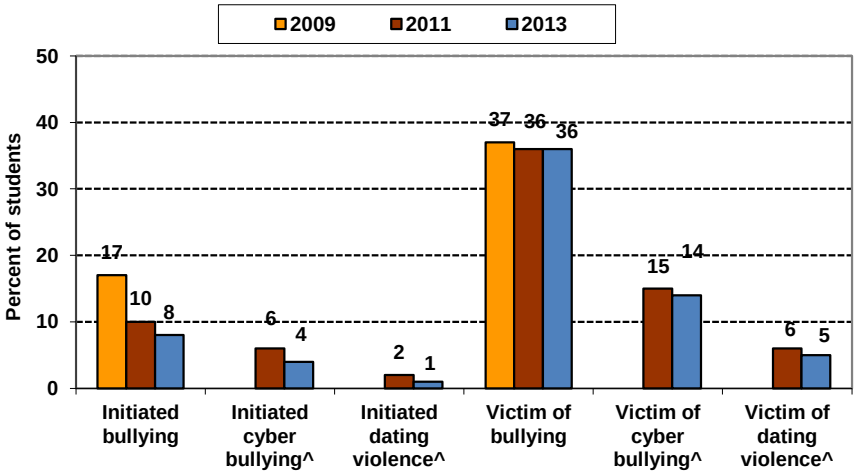


Figure 28: Violence Initiation and Victimization Across MA Middle School Grades, 2009-2013 (MYHS)



^ Question not asked in 2009

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

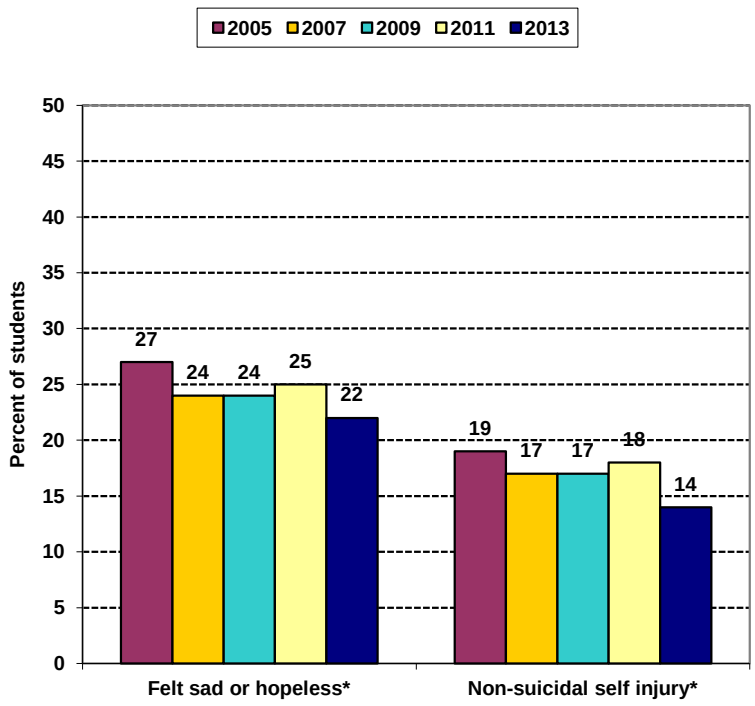
Overall, 22% of students reported feeling so sad or hopeless daily for at least two weeks during the previous year that they discontinued their usual activities and 14% reported non-suicidal self-injury during the past year, both significant declines since 2011.

Female students were more likely than male students to report feeling sad or hopeless daily for at least two weeks during the previous year that they discontinued their usual activities (29% vs. 14%) and to report hurting themselves on purpose without wanting to die (20% vs. 8%).

Students in the ninth and tenth grades were significantly more likely than students in the twelfth grade to report intentional non-suicidal self injury (18% and 15% vs. 9%, respectively).

In 2013, 42% of high school students reported that in the previous 12 months they had felt the need to talk to an adult regarding their feelings and/or current issues in their lives. Students reported seeking counsel within the past 12 months from an adult family member (29%), school psychologist, counselor, or nurse (10%), some other adult in school (7%), a non-school psychologist, therapist, doctor, or nurse (10%), or some other adult in the community (8%). (MYHS 2013)

Figure 29: Mental Health Indicators Among MA High School Students , 2005-2013 (MYRBS)



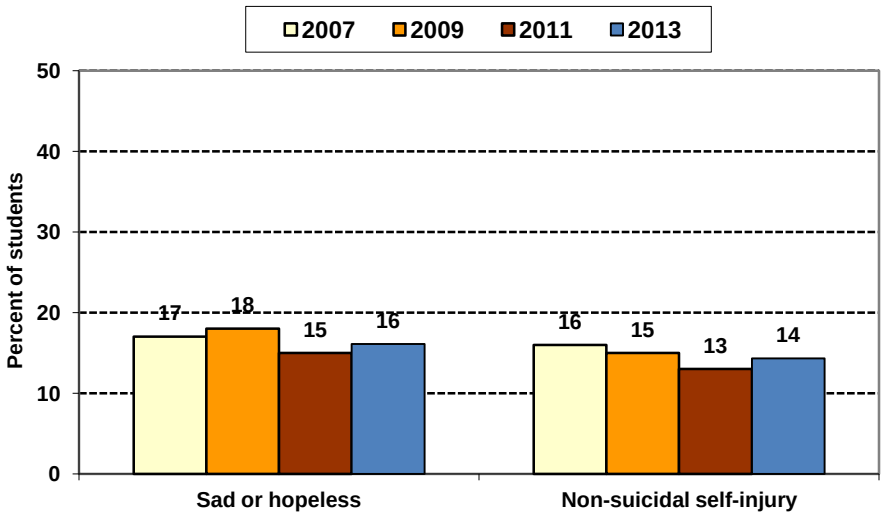
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

In 2013, 36% of middle school students reported that during the past year they felt a need to talk to an adult about how they were feeling or problems they had. Students reported seeking counsel in the past 12 months from an adult family member (27%), a school psychologist, counselor, or nurse (8%), some other adult in school (4%), a non-school psychologist, therapist, doctor, or nurse (7%), and another adult in the community (5%).

In 2013, 16% of middle school students reported feeling so sad or hopeless daily for at least two weeks that they discontinued their usual activities.

Fourteen percent (14%) of middle school students in 2013 reported a non-suicidal self-injury during the previous year.

Figure 30: Mental Health Indicators Among MA Middle School Students, 2007-2013 (MYHS)



* Statistically significant difference comparing 2011 and 2013

SUICIDALITY

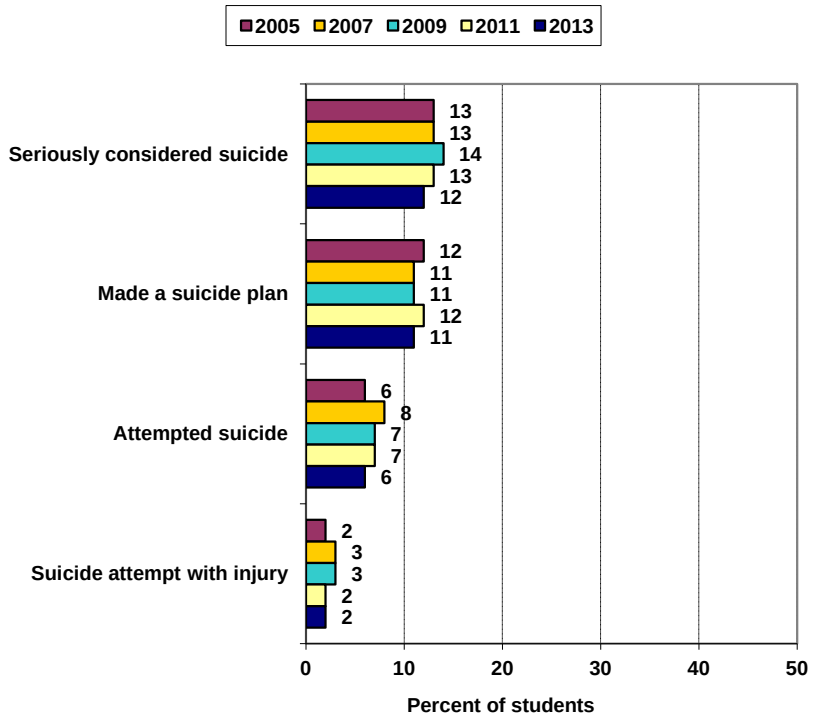
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

The 2013 MYRBS asked students several questions about suicidal thoughts and behaviors during the previous year including (1) serious considerations of suicide (2) plans to commit suicide (3) actual suicide attempts and (4) medical treatment required as the result of a suicide attempt.

Overall, 12% of students in 2013 reported they seriously considered suicide, 11% of students reported making a suicide plan, 6% reported attempting suicide, and 2% reported a suicide attempt that resulted in injury that needed medical attention.

Suicidal thoughts and behaviors were more prevalent among female than male students. Sixteen percent (16%) of female students reported they considered suicide (vs. 8% among males), 14% made a suicide plan (vs. 8% among males), 7% attempted suicide (vs. 4% among males), and 2% percent made an attempt with injury (vs. 1% among males). However, the only significantly greater differences shown were for seriously considering suicide and making a suicide plan.

Figure 31: Suicidality Among MA High School Students, 2005- 2013 (MYRBS)

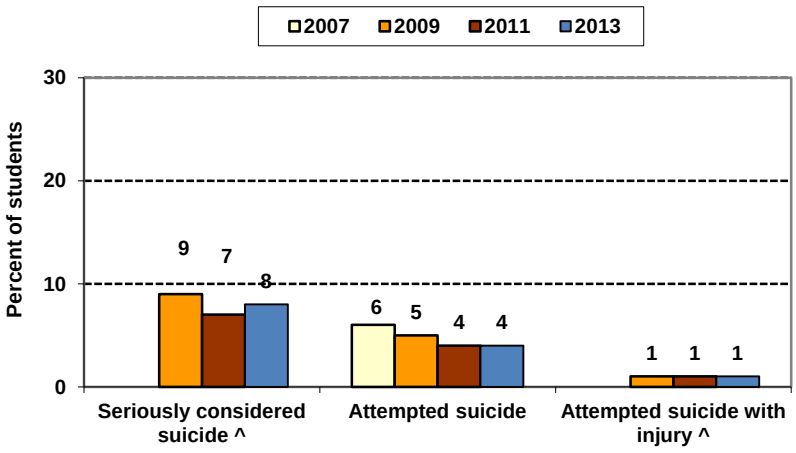


MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

In 2013, 4% of middle school students reported having attempted suicide one or more times in the past year. Females were more likely than males to report having attempted suicide (5% vs. 3%).

In 2013, 8% of middle school students seriously considered suicide and 1% of students had a suicide attempt that resulted in injury. Females were more likely than males to report seriously considering suicide (11% vs. 6%).

Figure 32: Suicidality Among MA Middle School Students, 2007-2013 (MYHS)



^ Not asked in 2007

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

In 2013, fewer than half of all high school students (38%) reported ever having had sexual intercourse; 28% had intercourse in the previous three months (recent sexual intercourse); nearly one in ten (9%) of students reported four or more partners in their lives; and 4% reported having sexual contact with both males and females.

Male students were more likely than female students to report sexual intercourse before age 13 (4% vs. 2%), drinking alcohol before last intercourse (29% vs.18%) and condom use at last intercourse (65% vs. 51%). Female students were two times more likely to report having sexual contact with both males and females (5% vs. 2%).

In 2013, 3% of students reported having been or gotten someone pregnant, a significant decrease from 2011. Among students who had intercourse in the past 3 months, 35% reported using hormonal birth control (pills, patch, ring, implant or shot) at last intercourse,12% reported using both a condom and hormonal birth control at last intercourse and 11% did not use any form of contraception.

Six percent (6%) of students reported ever having had sexual contact with same sex partners.

The percentage of students reporting being tested for HIV and being tested for STDs were 11% and 12%, respectively. Female students were more likely to report having ever been tested for STDs (14% vs. 9%). Two percent (2%) of students reported having been diagnosed with HIV infection or any other STD during their lifetime.

Eighty-five percent (85%) of students have ever been taught about HIV/AIDS in school and 57% reported being taught in school how to use a condom.

There was a significant decline in the percentage of students who reported speaking with their parents or another adult in the family about sexuality and sexual risk prevention. Female students were more likely than male students to report this (46% vs. 37%).

Figure 33: Lifetime and Recent Sexual Behaviors Reported by High School Students, 2005-2013 (MYRBS)

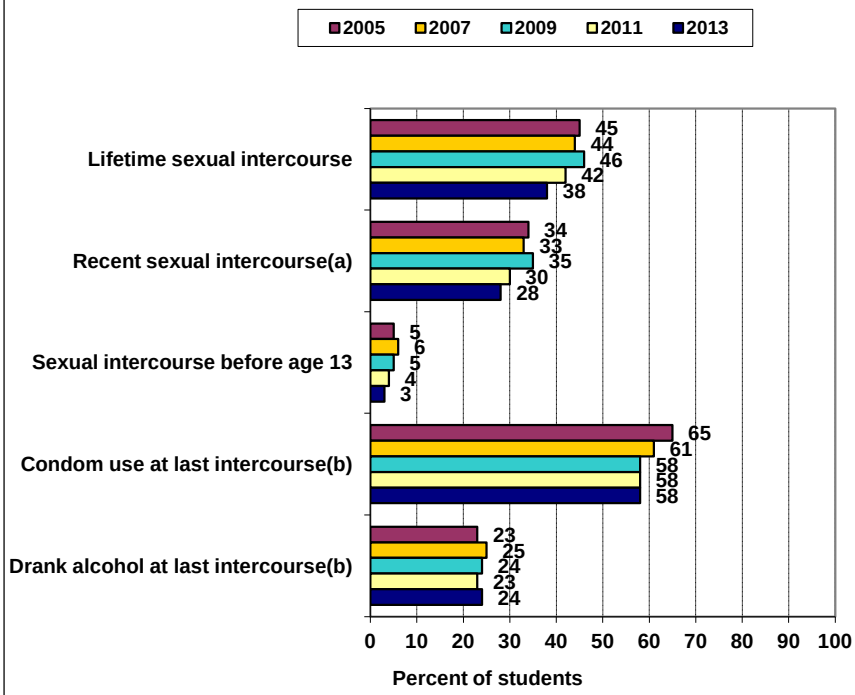
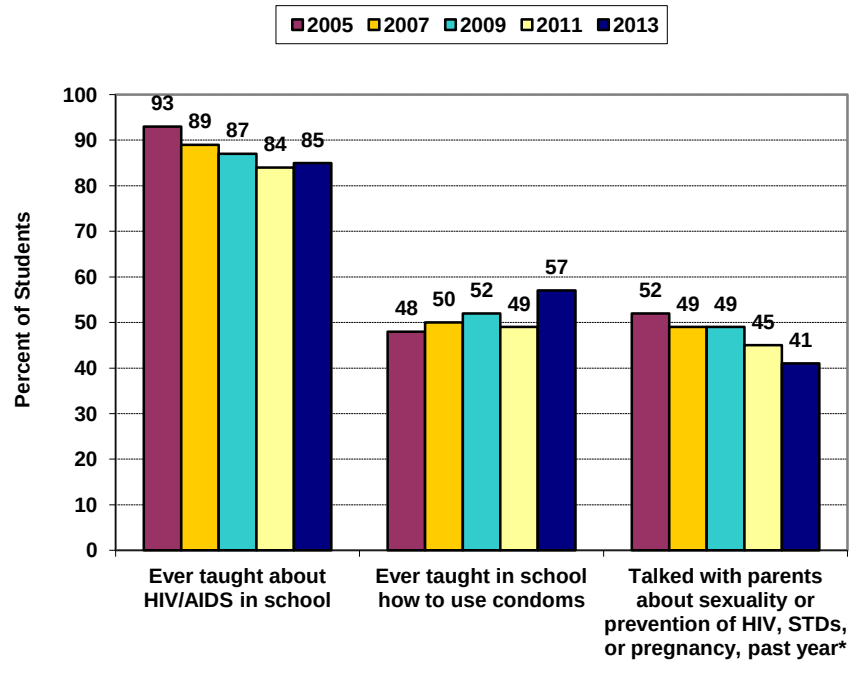


Figure 34: Sexuality Education Among High School Students, 2005-2013 (MYRBS)



(Note: Questions regarding sexual behavior are only asked of high school students) * Statistically significant difference comparing 2011 and 2013 ; (a) recent is defined as within the past three months; (b) among students reporting intercourse in the previous three months

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

The 2013 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey asked students about the presence of any physical disability or long-term health problems and any long-term learning disabilities (long-term was defined as 6 or more months). Nine percent (9%) of students reported having a physical disability or long-term health problem and 8% reported having long-term learning disabilities.

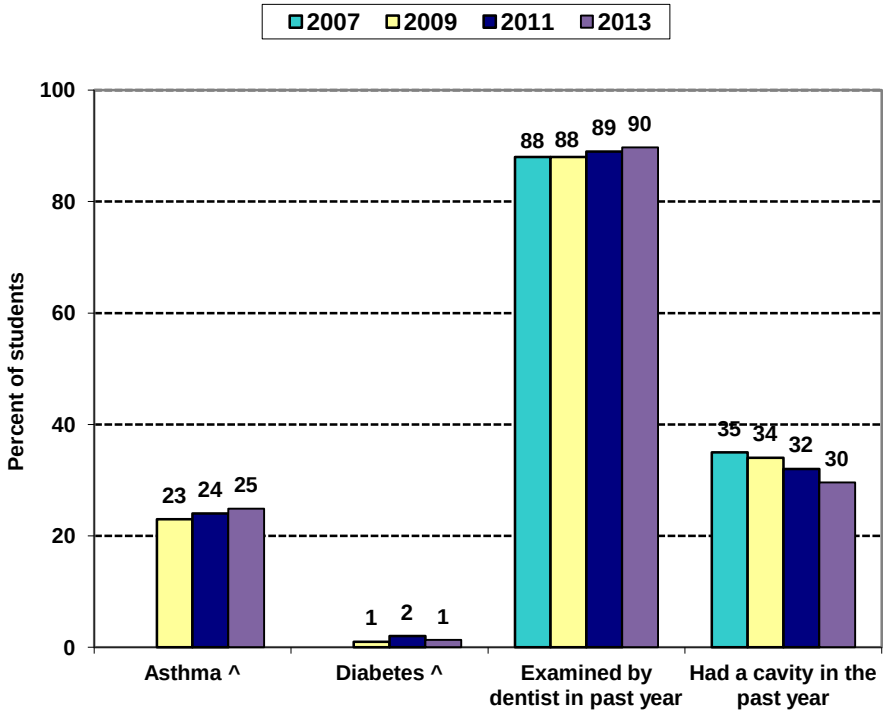
In 2013, 90% of high school students had been seen by a dentist in the past year and 6% reported receiving dental care at school in the past year (MYHS 2013).

Overall, approximately one in three (30%) high school students reported having a cavity in the previous year (MYHS 2013).

Twenty-five percent (25%) of high school students reported ever being told by a health care professional that they had asthma and 14% reported that they currently have asthma (MYHS 2013).

One percent (1%) of high school students reported ever being told by a health care professional that they had diabetes (MYHS 2013).

Figure 35: Oral Health and Chronic Conditions Among MA High School Students, 2007-2013 (MYHS)



MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

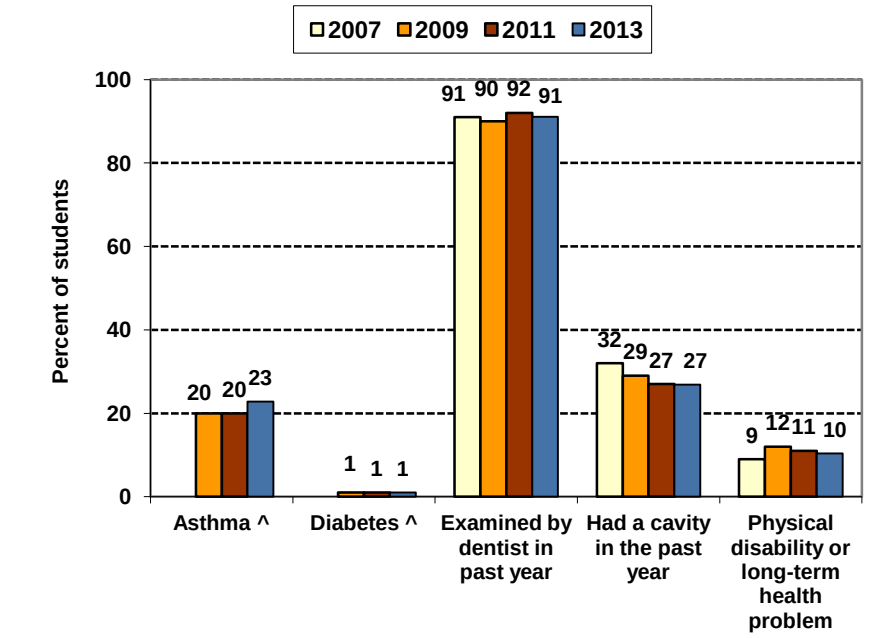
In 2013, 91% of middle school students reported having been examined by a dentist in the previous year and 8% reported receiving dental care at school. More than one quarter (27%) reported having a cavity in a tooth during the previous year.

Twenty percent (23%) of middle school students reported being told by a health care professional that they had asthma. Fourteen percent (14%) of middle school students reported that they currently have asthma.

In 2013, 10% of middle school students reported having a physical disability or long-term health problem.

Overall, one percent (1%) of middle school students reported being told by a health care professional that they had diabetes.

Figure 36: Oral Health and Chronic Conditions Among MA Middle School Students, 2007-2013 (MYHS)



^ Question asked differently in 2007

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