

Greater Worcester 2015 Middle School Regional Youth Health Survey: Overall Prevalence



Greater Worcester Regional Youth Health Survey (RYHS)

The purpose of the Greater Worcester RYHS is to learn about youth health by surveying youth about safety, violence, substance use, nutrition, physical activity, mental health, and other health related topics. Every two years, the Greater Worcester RYHS is administered to middle and high school students in the City of Worcester, Massachusetts and surrounding towns by the Worcester Division of Public Health and the UMass Worcester Prevention Research Center.

The **2015 Middle School Regional Youth Health Survey** was conducted with youth from the following towns of the Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA):

- Grafton
- Millbury
- Leicester
- Shrewsbury
- Worcester

This report summarizes the responses of 3,760 middle school youth who answered survey questions by presenting prevalence for the following areas:

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|--|------------------------------------|
| A. Demographics | I. Other Drug Use |
| B. Driving Behaviors that Contribute to Unintentional Injuries | J. Dietary or Nutritional Behavior |
| C. Violence Related Behavior or Physical Violence | K. Food Insecurity |
| D. Depression Symptoms and Suicide Attempts | L. Physical Activity |
| E. Tobacco Use | M. Other Health Related Behaviors |
| F. Electronic Vapor Products Use | N. Youth Development |
| G. Alcohol Use | O. Self-Image |
| H. Marijuana Use | P. Sexual Health |
| | Q. Honesty |



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A. Demographics

Behavior	%
How old are you?	
• 10 years old or younger	0.08%
• 11 years old	2.59%
• 12 years old	33.79%
• 13 years old	48.00%
• 14 years old	14.59%
• 15 years old	0.83%
• 16 years old or older	0.13%
What is your sex?	
• Female	48.58%
• Male	51.42%
In what grade are you?	
• 6 th grade	3.10%
• 7 th grade	46.86%
• 8 th grade	49.93%
• Ungraded or other grade	0.11%
What is the language you use most often at home?	
• English	81.57%
• Spanish	8.43%
• Another language	10.00%

What do you consider yourself to be?	
• African American/Black	8.73%
• American Indian/Native American, Eskimo or Aleut	1.91%
• Asian or Pacific Islander	8.65%
• Spanish/Hispanic/Latino	15.04%
• White	47.80%
• Other	6.06%
• Multiple races	11.80%

B. Driving Behaviors that Contribute to Unintentional Injuries

Behavior	%
When you rode a bicycle, how often do you wear a helmet?	
• I do not ride a bicycle	18.23%
• Never wear a helmet	23.30%
• Rarely wear a helmet	12.48%
• Sometimes wear a helmet	11.25%
• Most of the time wear a helmet	16.16%
• Always wear a helmet	18.58%

When you rollerblade or ride a skateboard, how often do you wear a helmet?	
• I do not rollerblade or ride a skateboard	61.58%
• Never wear a helmet	17.00%
• Rarely wear a helmet	5.95%
• Sometimes wear a helmet	3.60%
• Most of the time wear a helmet	4.67%
• Always wear a helmet	7.20%
How often do you wear a seat belt while riding in a car?	
• Never	1.12%
• Rarely	2.29%
• Sometimes	6.61%
• Most of the time	19.03%
• Always	70.95%
Have you ever ridden in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol?	
• Yes	14.49%
• No	66.82%
• Not sure	18.69%

C. Violence Related Behavior or Physical Violence

Behavior	%
Have you ever carried a weapon, such as a gun, knife, or club?	
• Yes	20.03%
• No	79.97%

Have you ever been in a physical fight? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	36.51%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	63.49%
Have you ever been in a physical fight in which you were hurt and had to be treated by a doctor or nurse? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	3.67%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	96.33%
Have you ever been bullied on school property? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	38.24%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	61.76%
Have you ever been electronically bullied? (Count being bullied through e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, websites, or texting.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	21.00%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	79.00%

D. Depression Symptoms and Suicide Attempts

Behavior	%
During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	25.08%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	74.92%

E. Tobacco Use

Behavior	%
Have you ever tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs?	
• Yes	17.94%
• No	82.06%
How old were you when you smoked a whole cigarette for the first time?	
• I have never smoked a whole cigarette	97.33%
• 8 years old or younger	0.52%
• 9 years old	0.14%
• 10 years old	0.25%
• 11 years old	0.25%
• 12 years old	0.63%
• 13 years old or older	0.90%
Have you ever tried any of the following? Regular cigarette (for example, Marlboro, Newport, Camel – menthols included)	
• Yes	2.93%
• No	97.07%
Have you ever tried Non-flavored cigar (for example, cigarillo, blunt, Swisher Sweet, Black and Mild)	
• Yes	1.49%
• No	98.51%
Have you ever tried flavored cigar (for example, grape, apple, cherry, bubblegum, chocolate, etc. – does NOT include menthol)	
• Yes	1.60%
• No	98.40%

Have you ever tried Non-flavored e-cigarette (also called e-hookah, e-cig, hookah pen, vape pen – menthols included)	4.81%
• Yes	
• No	95.19%
Have you ever tried flavored e-cigarette (for example, grape, apple, cherry, bubblegum, chocolate, etc. – does NOT include menthol)	5.61%
• Yes	
• No	94.39%
I have never tried any nicotine products	88.27%
What is the main reason you tried a flavored cigar?	
• I was attracted to the flavor	1.38%
• It was cheap	0.11%
• It was easy to buy from a store (for example, convenience store, pharmacy, gas station)	0.19%
• I saw others (for example, classmate, friends, etc.) using it and was curious	1.16%
• I saw an ad for it and it looked cool	0.14%
• Other reason	2.60%
• I have never tried a flavor cigar	94.42%
If cigars were NOT available in flavors (i.e. grape, apple, cherry, bubblegum, chocolate, etc.), would you use them?	
• Yes	1.58%
• No	86.09%
• I am not sure	12.33%

F. Electronic Vapor Products Use

Behavior	%
Have you ever used an electronic vapor product?	
• Yes	11.68%
• No	88.32%
How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they use e-cigarettes regularly?	
• No risk	7.87%
• Slight risk	18.63%
• Moderate risk	30.83%
• Great risk	42.67%
What is the main reason you tried an e-cigarette?	
• I was attracted to the flavor	1.88%
• It was cheap	0.08%
• It was easy to buy from a store	0.22%
• I saw others using it and was curious	3.54%
• I saw an ad for it and it looked cool	0.24%
• Other reason	3.51%
• I've never tried an e-cigarette	90.53%
How did you first hear about e-cigarettes (also called e-hookah, e-cig, hookah pen, vape pen)?	
• Friend(s)	17.72%
• Store ads	9.41%
• Media (for example, television, movies, the internet, radio, billboards, magazines)	31.48%
• Other	13.89%
• I've never heard of e-cigarettes	27.49%

How did you get your e-cigarette(s)?	
• I bought them from a store (for example, convenience store, pharmacy, gas station)	0.48%
• I gave save someone money to buy for me	1.20%
• I got them from a family member	1.68%
• I got them from a friend	4.02%
• I got them another way	0.02%
• I've never tried an e-cigarette	88.96%
If e-cigarettes were NOT available in flavors (i.e. grape, apple, cherry, bubblegum, chocolate, etc.), would you use them?	
• Yes	2.53%
• No	84.96%
• Not sure	12.50%

G. Alcohol Use

Behavior	%
Have you ever had a drink of alcohol, other than a few sips?	
• Yes	14.92%
• No	85.08%

How old were you when you had your first drink of alcohol other than a few sips?	
• I have never had a drink of alcohol other than a few sips	85.53%
• 8 years old or younger	2.14%
• 9 years old	0.93%
• 10 years old	1.72%
• 11 years old	2.23%
• 12 years old	3.27%
• 13 years old or older	4.17%

H. Marijuana Use

Behavior	%
Have you ever used marijuana?	
• Yes	5.57%
• No	94.43%
How old were you when you tried marijuana for the first time? (among students who had ever used marijuana)	
• I have never tried marijuana	94.61%
• 8 years old or younger	0.32%
• 9 years old	0.27%
• 10 years old	0.62%
• 11 years old	0.67%
• 12 years old	1.40%
• 13 years old or older	2.10%

When you have used marijuana, how have you used it?	
• I have never used marijuana	92.95%
• I smoked it in a joint, bong or pipe	4.04%
• I ate it in food such as brownies, cakes, cookies, or candy	0.27%
• I drank it in tea, cola, alcohol or other drinks	0.08%
• I vaporized it in a tabletop device	0.03%
• I vaporized it in a portable device such as vaping pen or e-hookah	0.11%
• I used it some other way	0.27%
How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they use marijuana?	
• No risk	8.35%
• Slight risk	10.95%
• Moderate risk	20.65%
• Great risk	60.04%

I. Other Drug Use

Behavior	%
Have you ever used any form of cocaine, including powder, crack, or freebase?	
• Yes	0.68%
• No	99.32%
Have you ever sniffed glue, breathed the contents of spray cans, or inhaled any paints or sprays to get high?	
• Yes	3.99%
• No	96.01%

<p>Have you ever taken steroid pills or shots without a doctor's prescription?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	0.78%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	99.22%
<p>Have you ever taken a prescription drug (such as OxyContin, Hydrocodone, Percocet, Vicodin and Codeine, Adderall, Ritalin, Ambien or Xanax) without a doctor's prescription?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	1.80%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	98.20%
<p>Have you ever used synthetic marijuana (also called K2, Spice, fake weed, King Kong, Yucatan Fire, Skunk, or Moon Rocks)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	1.21%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	98.79%
<p>Have you ever used opioids (such as OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin, heroin, methadone, suboxone, fentanyl, opium, morphine, hydrocodone or codeine) to get high?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	0.62%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	95.41%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not sure 	3.98%

J. Dietary or Nutritional Behavior

Behavior	%
During the past 7 days, on how many days did you eat breakfast?	
• 0 days	9.36%
• 1 day	5.15%
• 2 days	8.45%
• 3 days	7.16%
• 4 days	6.84%
• 5 days	8.29%
• 6 days	8.53%
• 7 days	46.20%
During the past 7 days, how many times did you drink a soda, a sports drink, sweetened lemonade or iced tea, sweetened coffee or lattes, or other sweetened drink, such as Coke, Pepsi, Mountain Dew, Gatorade, Arizona, or Monster? (Do not count diet or 0 calorie drinks)	
• I did not drink a sugar-sweetened beverage during the past 7 days	20.09%
• 1 to 3 times during the past 7 days	48.12%
• 4 to 6 times during the past 7 days	11.98%
• 1 time per day	6.31%
• 2 times per day	6.10%
• 3 times per day	2.93%
• 4 or more times per day	4.48%

K. Food Insecurity

Behavior	%
During the past 7 days, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food in your house?	
• Yes	8.17%
• No	86.55%
• Not sure	5.28%

L. Physical Activity

Behavior	%
During the past 7 days, on how many days were you physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes per day? (Add up all the time you spent in any kind of physical activity that increased your heart rate and made you breathe hard some of the time)	
• 0 days	8.79%
• 1 day	5.27%
• 2 days	7.92%
• 3 days	10.09%
• 4 days	10.71%
• 5 days	16.04%
• 6 days	10.79%
• 7 days	30.39%

<p>On an average school day, how many hours do you spend on “screen time” for something that is not school work? (Count time spent doing activities such as watching TV or movies, playing video games, internet use, and mobile apps such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, and mobile games on cell phones, tablets, and iPads)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I do not spend any time in front of a screen for something that is not school work 	4.54%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less than 1 hour 	9.73%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 hour per day 	12.52%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 hours per day 	22.15%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 hours per day 	19.01%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 hours per day 	10.49%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 or more hours per day 	21.55%
<p>In an average week when you are in school, on how many days do you walk or ride your bike to or from school when the weather allows you to do so?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 days 	62.18%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 day 	9.38%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 days 	4.42%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 days 	3.77%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 days 	2.48%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 days 	17.78%

M. Other Health Related Behaviors

Behavior	%
Over the past 12 months, did you visit your primary care physician for a routine check-up?	
• Yes	85.53%
• No	10.52%
• I do not have a primary care physician	3.95%
On an average school night, how many hours of sleep do you get?	
• 4 or less hours	4.01%
• 5 hours	5.36%
• 6 hours	9.88%
• 7 hours	21.09%
• 8 hours	31.94%
• 9 hours	19.00%
• 10 or more hours	8.72%

N. Youth Development

Behavior	%
During the past 12 months, how would you describe your grades in school?	
• Mostly A's	44.45%
• Mostly B's	32.71%
• Mostly C's	11.17%
• Mostly D's	2.13%
• Mostly F's	0.83%
• None of these grades	0.33%
• Not sure	8.38%
Have you ever been taught about mental health in school?	
• Yes	52.50%
• No	20.02%
• Not sure	27.49%

O. Self-Image

Behavior	%
How do you describe your weight?	
• Very underweight	2.19%
• Slightly underweight	15.96%
• Right weight	56.34%
• Slightly overweight	22.65%
• Very overweight	2.86%
What are you trying to do about your weight?	
• Lose weight	39.52%
• Gain weight	13.19%
• Maintain weight	20.46%
• I am not trying to do anything about my weight	26.84%

P. Sexual Health

Behavior	%
Have you ever been taught AIDS or HIV infection in school?	
• Yes	59.88%
• No	25.34%
• Not sure	14.77%
Have you ever talked about ways to prevent HIV infection, other sexually transmitted infections (STI's) or pregnancy with your parents or other adults in your family, in school, or in the community?	
• Yes	42.34%
• No	43.64%
• Not sure	14.02%

Q. Honesty

Behavior	%
Overall, how honest would you say you were in answering this questionnaire?	
• Completely honest	70.44%
• Very honest	21.60%
• Pretty honest	6.98%
• Not very honest	0.35%
• Not honest at all	0.62%

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