

Greater Worcester 2017 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 **2017 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 4,417 middle school youth who answered survey questions by presenting prevalence for the following areas:

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



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A. Demographics

Behavior	%
How old are you?	
• 10 years old or younger	0.05%
• 11 years old	0.45%
• 12 years old	16.37%
• 13 years old	48.85%
• 14 years old	30.83%
• 15 years old	3.16%
• 16 years old or older	0.3%
What is your sex?	
• Female	49.4%
• Male	50.6%
In what grade are you?	
• 6 th grade	0.98%
• 7 th grade	52.55%
• 8 th grade	46.36%
• Ungraded or other grade	0.11%

What is the language you use most often at home?	
• English	71.37%
• Spanish	12.48%
• Albanian	1.35%
• Arabic	2.02%
• Chinese (Mandarin/Cantonese)	1.13%
• Polish	0.28%
• Portuguese	2.51%
• Vietnamese	1.9%
• Hindi/Tamil	1.35%
• Another language	5.61%
How do you describe your racial identity?	
• African American/Black	13.79%
• American Indian/Alaska Native/Indigenous or First Nations	3.26%
• Arab or Middle Eastern	3.28%
• Asian or Asian American	11.48%
• Hispanic/Latina/Latino	25.36%
• Multicultural or Biracial	3.53%
• Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.82%
• White/Caucasian or European American	49.13%

How long have you lived in the US?	
• Less than one year	1.57%
• 1 to 3 years	4.78%
• 4 to 6 years	3.83%
• More than 6 years but not my whole life	8.97%
• I have always lived in the US	80.85%
Were your parents born in the US?	
• Yes, both my parents were born in the US	51.86%
• No, neither of my parents were born in the US	14.55%
• No, only one of my parents was born in the US	33.59%

A. Driving Behaviors that Contribute to Unintentional Injuries

Behavior	%
Have you ever ridden in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol?	
• Yes	18.43%
• No	64.82%
• Not sure	16.75%

B. Violence Related Behavior or Physical Violence

Behavior	%
Have you ever carried a weapon, such as a gun, knife, or club?	
• Yes	18.96%
• No	81.04%

Have you ever been in a physical fight?	
• Yes	36.07%
• No	63.93%
During the past 12 months, have you ever felt pressured to join a gang?	
• Yes	2.14%
• No	97.86%
During the past 12 months, were you physically hurt by relative	
• Yes	6.63%
• No	93.37%
During the past 12 months, did you witness violence at home	
• Yes	7.56%
• No	92.44%
Have you ever been bullied on school property	
• Yes	35.61%
• No	64.39%
Have you ever been electronically bullied? (count being bullied through texting, Instagram, Facebook or other social media)	
• Yes	20.01%
• No	79.99%
Have you ever bullied electronically on school property	
• Yes	4.54%
• No	36.35%
• I have never been electronically bullied	59.11%

C. 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?	
• Yes	25.74%
• No	74.26%
Have you ever seriously thought about killing yourself?	
• Yes	16.05%
• No	83.95%
Have you ever made a plan about how you would kill yourself?	
• Yes	11.27%
• No	88.73%
Have you ever tried to kill yourself?	
• Yes	5.7%
• No	94.3%

D. Nicotine Use

Behavior	%
Have you ever tried regular cigarette? (for example, Marlboro, Newport, Camel-menthols)	
• Yes	2.92%
• No	97.08%
Have you ever tried non-flavored cigar? (for example, cigarillo, swisher sweet, black and mild)	
• Yes	0.93%
• No	99.07%

<p>Have you ever tried flavored cigar? (for example, grape, apple. Cherry. Bubblegum, chocolate etc.- does not include menthol)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	1.99%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	98.01%
<p>Have you ever tried non-flavored e-cigarette? (also called e-hookah, e-cig, hookah pen vape pen, menthols included)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	4.39%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	95.61%
<p>Have you ever tried flavored e-cigarette? (for example, grape, apple, cherry, bubblegum, chocolate etc.- does not include menthol)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	5.37%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	94.63%
<p>Have you ever tried nicotine products?</p>	89.04%
<p>What is the main reason you tried nicotine product</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was attracted to the flavor 	1.12%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was cheap 	0.21%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was easy to buy from a store (for example, convenience store, pharmacy, gas station) 	0.26%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I saw others (for example, classmate, friends, etc.) using it and was curious 	2.12%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I saw an ad for it and it looked cool 	0.16%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other reason 	4.27%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have never tried a nicotine product 	91.86%
<p>If nicotine products were NOT available in flavors (i.e. grape, apple, cherry, bubblegum, chocolate, etc.), would you use them?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	2.24%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	79%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am not sure 	18.76%

How did you first hear about e-cigarettes (also called e-hookah, e-cig, hookah pen, vape pen)?	
• Friend(s)	12.85%
• Store ads	11.73%
• Media (for example, television, movies, the Internet, radio, billboards, magazines)	35.13%
• Other	18.97%
• I've never heard of e-cigarettes	21.32%
How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they use e-cigarettes regularly?	
• No risk	7.42%
• Slight risk	16.44%
• Moderate risk	31.78%
• Great risk	44.36%
How did you get your e-cigarette(s)?	
• I bought them from a store (for example, convenience store, pharmacy, gas station)	0.42%
• I gave someone money to buy for me	0.72%
• I got them from a family member	1.72%
• I got them from a friend	2.58%
• Another way	2.23%
• I have never tried an e-cigarette	92.34%

E. Alcohol Use

Behavior	%
Have you ever had a drink of alcohol, other than a few sips?	
• Yes	15.6%
• No	84.4%
How old were you when you had your first drink of alcohol other than a few sips?	
• 8 years or younger	2.12%
• 9 years old	0.59%
• 10 years old	1.71%
• 11 years old	1.42%
• 12 years old	2.93%
• 13 years or older	6.88%

F. Marijuana Use

Behavior	%
Have you ever used marijuana?	
• Yes	8.14%
• No	91.86%
Have you ever used synthetic marijuana (also called K2, Spice, fake weed, King Kong, Yucatan Fire, Skunk, or Moon Rocks)?	
• Yes	1.39%
• No	98.61

How old were you when you tried marijuana for the first time?	
• 8 years old or younger	0.32%
• 9 years old	0.25%
• 10 years old	0.3%
• 11 years old	1.04%
• 12 years old	2.03%
• 13 years old or older	4.21%
• I have never tried marijuana	91.85%
When you have used marijuana, how have you used it?	
• I smoked it in a joint, bong or pipe	2.6%
• I ate it in food such as brownies, cakes, cookies, or candy	0.57%
• I drank it in tea, cola, alcohol, or other drinks	0.05%
• I vaporized it in a tabletop device	0.07%
• I vaporized it in a portable device	0.12%
• I smoked it in a blunt wrap such as vaping pen or e-hookah	2.25%
• I used it some other way	0.38%
How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they use marijuana?	
• No risk	9.78%
• Slight risk	16.44%
• Moderate risk	24.27%
• Great risk	49.51%

G. Other Drug Use

Behavior	%
Have you ever used any form of cocaine Including powder, crack or freebase?	
• Yes	1.03%
• No	98.97%
Have you ever sniffed, glued or breathed the contents of spray cans or inhaled any paints to get high?	
• Yes	4.04%
• No	95.96%
Have you ever taken steroid pills or shots without a doctor's prescription?	
• Yes	1.29%
• No	98.71%
Have you ever taken a prescription pain medicine without a doctor's prescription or differently than how a doctor told you to use it? (Count drugs such as OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin, codeine, Adderall, Ritalin, Ambien or Xanax)	
• Yes	3.39%
• No	96.61%
Have you ever used opioids (such as OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin, heroin, methadone, suboxone, fentanyl, opium, morphine, hydrocodone or codeine) to get high?	
• Yes	0.79%
• No	95.24%
• I am not sure	3.97%

H. Dietary or Nutritional Behavior

Behavior	%
During the past 7 days, on how many days did you eat breakfast?	
• 0 days	12.91%
• 1 day	5.86%
• 2 days	8.52%
• 3 days	7.79%
• 4 days	6.41%
• 5 days	8.57%
• 6 days	7.72%
• 7 days	42.22%
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	17.89%
• 1 to 3 times during the past 7 days	48.83%
• 4 to 6 times during the past 7 days	12.95%
• 1 time per day	6.22%
• 2 times per day	5.82%
• 3 times per day	3.27%
• 4 or more times per day	5.23%

I. 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? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes 	6.87%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No 	87.13%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am not sure 	6%

J. 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) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 days 	8.7%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 day 	5.69%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 days 	8.31%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 days 	10.58%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 days 	12.94%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 days 	15.83%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 days 	9.05%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 days 	28.91%

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)	
• I do not spend any time in front of a screen for something that is not school work	4.66%
• Less than 1 hour	7.27%
• 1 hour per day	9.67%
• 2 hours per day	20.52%
• 3 hours per day	19.75%
• 4 hours per day	13%
• 5 or more hours per day	25.13%
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?	
• 0 days	60.2%
• 1 day	7.19%
• 2 days	5.52%
• 3 days	4.73%
• 4 days	2.3%
• 5 days	20.05%

K. Other Health Related Behaviors

Behavior	%
Over the past 12 months, did you visit your primary care physician for a routine check-up?	
• Yes	87.11%
• No	10.59%
• I do not have a primary care physician	2.3%

On an average school night, how many hours of sleep do you get?	
• 4 or less hours	4.89%
• 5 hours	6.57%
• 6 hours	13.23%
• 7 hours	23.59%
• 8 hours	30%
• 9 hours	15.29%
• 10 or more hours	6.43%

L. Youth Development

Behavior	%
During the past 12 months, how would you describe your grades in school?	
• Mostly A's	42.06%
• Mostly B's	33.35%
• Mostly C's	13.27%
• Mostly D's	2.5%
• Mostly F's	0.97%
• None of these grades	0.67%
• I am not sure	7.18%
Have you ever been taught about mental health in school?	
• Yes	59.7%
• No	20.2%
• I am not sure	20.1%

I see myself going to college or other education training programs after high school.	
• Agree	84.91%
• Disagree	2.49%
• Don't know	12.6%
There are some adults in my life who talk to me about planning my future.	
• Agree	84.24%
• Disagree	6.13%
• Don't know	9.63%
I like thinking about my future and I am hopeful about it.	
• Agree	82.24%
• Disagree	5.51%
• Don't know	12.25%
What is the top issue among youth your age?	
• Bullying (verbal or physical)	14.32%
• Family or household problems	6.45%
• Health	6.05%
• Peer pressure and relationships	13.2%
• Physical body changes	8.47%
• Romantic relations	10.67%
• Stress	36.33%
• Violence	4.51%

M. Self-Image

Behavior	%
How would you describe your weight?	2.51%
• Very underweight	
• Slightly underweight	14.13%
• Right weight	54.12%
• Slightly overweight	24.83%
• Very overweight	4.41%
What are you trying to do about your weight?	
• Lose weight	42.17%
• Gain weight	14.13%
• Maintain weight	19.05%
• I am not trying to do anything with my weight	24.65%

N. Sexual Health

Behavior	%
When a person's sex and gender do not match, they might think of themselves as transgender. Sex is what a person is born. Gender is how a person feels. Are you transgender?	
• No	85.65%
• Yes, I identify as a boy or man	4.24%
• Yes, I identify as a girl or woman	2.42%
• Yes, I identify in some other	1.03%
• I do not know what this question is asking	4.51%
• I do not know if I am transgender	2.51%

Have you ever been taught AIDS or HIV infection?	
• Yes	63.89%
• No	36.11%
Have you ever been taught sexual health?	
• Yes	65.0%
• No	34.0%
Have you ever been taught healthy relationships?	
• Yes	65.0%
• No	35.0%
Have you ever been taught about how to use a condom or ways to prevent sexually transmitted infections (STI's), including HIV?	
• Yes	42.52%
• No	57.48%
Ever talked about the ways to prevent HIV or STI's with parents or adults in school, family or community?	
• Yes	52.54%
• No	32.82%
• I am not sure	14.64%
Have you ever had sexual intercourse?	
• Yes	7.03%
• No	92.97%
The last time you had sexual intercourse, did you or your partner use a condom?	
• I have never had sexual intercourse	93.46%
• Yes	4.15%
• No	2.38%

O. Honesty

Behavior	%
Overall, how honest would you say you were in answering this questionnaire?	
• Completely honest	65.21%
• Very honest	22.47%
• Pretty honest	10.15%
• Not very honest	1.2%
• Not honest at all	0.97%

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