



Risk Behaviors of Nashville’s Youth

About the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)

The link between the health-related behavior choices made by today’s youth and the adults that they will become remains critical. Some of these choices contribute significantly to death, disability, and social problems.

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) was introduced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 1990. It was designed to 1) determine the prevalence of health risk behaviors among youth, 2) assess whether health risk behaviors increase, decrease, or stay the same over time, 3) examine the co-occurrence of health risk behaviors, 4) provide comparable national, state, local data, 5) provide comparable data among subpopulations of youth, and 6) monitor progress toward achieving the Healthy People 2010 objectives and other program indicators (1).

Topics addressed in the survey included safety, violence-related behaviors, suicidal ideation, tobacco use, alcohol use, marijuana use, other drug use, sexual behavior, body weight, dietary habits, physical activity, and other health-related topics (HIV/AIDS and asthma). The survey is administered across the nation every two years using the standard 87-question survey and administration protocol developed by the CDC.

During the spring of 2007, the Metro Public Health Department in collaboration with Metro Nashville Public Schools and

participating private schools, surveyed a sample of high school students (grades 9-12) about their health and safety behaviors. All responses were anonymous and participation was voluntary. Parents were notified about the time and nature of the survey.

In Nashville and Davidson County, 15 public high schools and 6 private high schools participated in the survey process yielding a sample of 1,660 students. The demographic profile of students participating in the survey was

- 54.8% female, 45.2% male
- 46.6% White, 43.9% Black or African-American, 6.5% other race or ethnic group, and 3.0% multi-racial
- 24.1% ninth grade, 22.4% tenth grade, 27.5% eleventh grade, and 25.5% twelfth grade
- 9.4% Hispanic or Latino origin.

What follows are highlights from each section of the 2007 YRBS survey. For complete demographic analysis with all acceptable responses of each survey question, visit the Metro Public Health Department website at http://healthweb.nashville.gov/Health_d/health_d_survey_main.htm. On this website, you can also access data from the two previous YRBS surveys. Comparable data at the state level can be found on the Tennessee Department of Education website at <http://www.k-12.state.tn.us/yrbs/>.

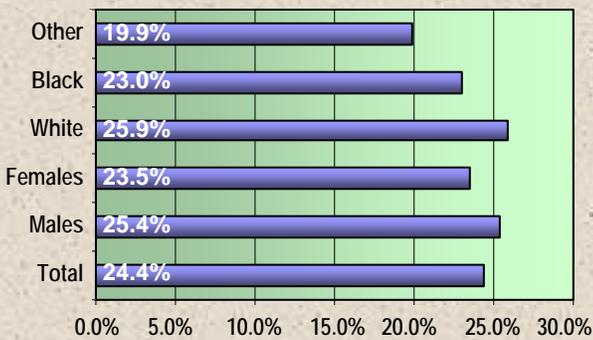
It is important to understand that the sample size can potentially vary from one question to the next. This may result from students not responding to a given question or from the application of a logical consistency algorithm (i.e., if a student reports never having sexual intercourse, but later indicates that he/she has had 1 or more sexual partners, both responses were deleted).

NOTE: While the majority of the percentages presented in this report are obtainable either directly from the tables on the website or by performing minor calculations, a few were obtained through more extensive analysis and cannot be reproduced with what is provided in the posted tables.

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Rode with Driver Drinking Alcohol in Past Month



Safety

Davidson County students report more bicycle helmet and seatbelt use than students in all of Tennessee.

59.2% of students rode a bicycle in the past year, but 84.1% of those rarely or never wore a helmet

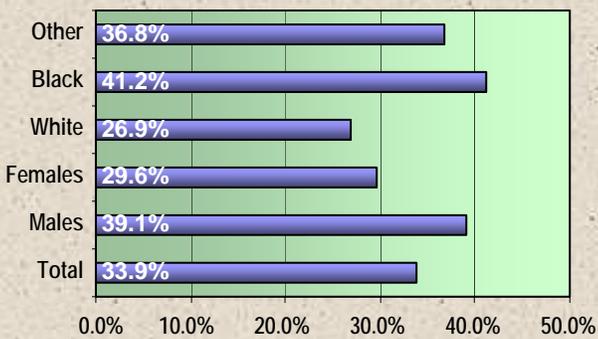
Females and White students are more likely to wear seatbelts

Males and White students are more likely to drive a car or ride in a car driven by someone who has been drinking alcohol

24.4% have ridden with someone who had been drinking alcohol in the past month

9.5% have driven a car after drinking alcohol in the past month

Were in a Fight in the Past Year



Violence

Davidson County students are less likely to carry a weapon than students across the state and they feel safer at school. More Davidson County students reported being in a fight and being injured in a fight in the past year than students statewide. Being forced to have sexual intercourse was more commonly reported in Davidson County than in all of Tennessee.

17.6% of students have carried a weapon (gun, knife, club) in the past 30 days

6% of students have carried a weapon on school property in the past 30 days

Males are more likely than females to carry a weapon

Students of other racial groups are more likely to carry a gun than Black or White students

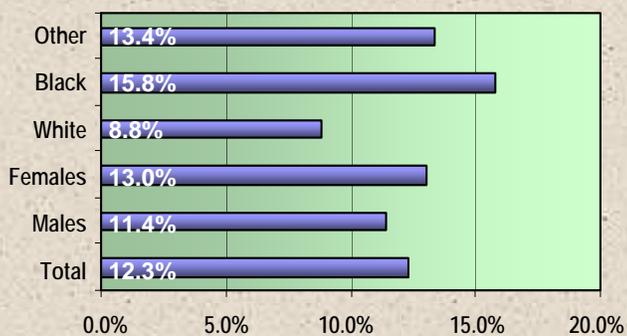
6.5% of students felt unsafe going to school in the past 30 days

One-third (33.9%) of students have been in a physical fight in the past year

41.2% of Black students have been in a physical fight in the past year

Being forced to have sexual intercourse is more common among Hispanic students

Attempted Suicide One or More Times in Past Year



Suicide

More Davidson County students have attempted suicide and required medical attention resulting from an attempt than was reported by students across Tennessee.

12.0% of students have considered suicide within the past year

More females have considered suicide than males

A higher proportion of Black students and students of other racial groups have considered suicide than White students

6.2% of all students surveyed required medical attention as the result of a suicide attempt

Tobacco

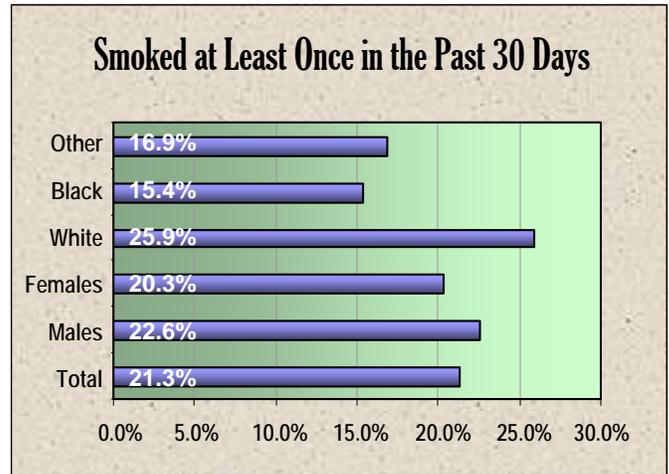
Fewer students reported being current smokers in Davidson County compared to those participating in the state survey. More Davidson County students also reported that they have tried to quit than across the state.

Over half of all Davidson County students have tried smoking a cigarette some time in their life.

21.3% of Davidson County students are current smokers

14.3% of the students surveyed reported smoking a whole cigarette before age 13

Less than 5% of Davidson County students reported using a form of smokeless tobacco.



Alcohol

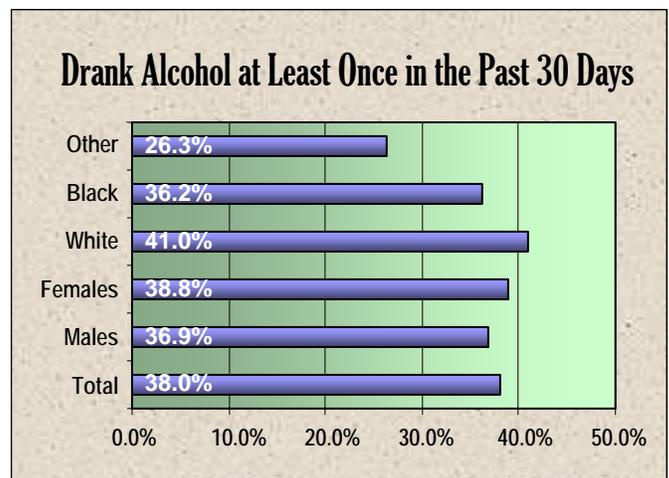
More Davidson County students reported consuming alcohol during the past month than students throughout Tennessee, but fewer Davidson County students reported having 5 or more drinks at a single time than across the state.

65.6% of males reported ever drinking alcohol compared to 70.8% of females

White students (41.0%) are more likely to be current drinkers compared to Black students (36.2%) and students of other racial groups (26.3%)

Binge drinking was slightly more common among males than females, and more common among White students than among Black students or students of other racial groups

Someone giving alcohol to a student was the most common way that it was obtained



Marijuana

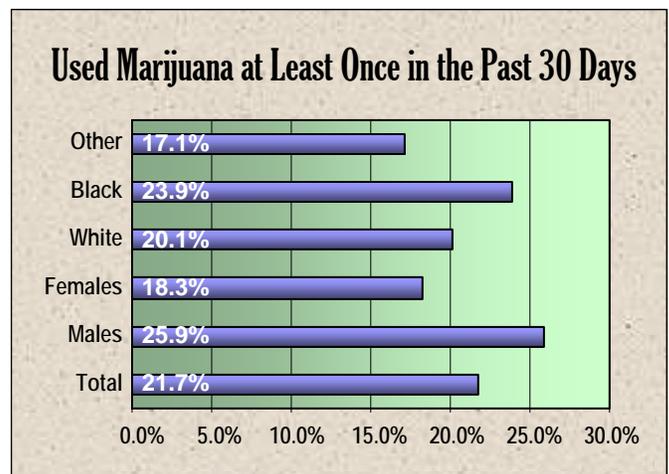
Ever having tried marijuana is slightly more common among Davidson County students than seen across Tennessee. Davidson County students reported trying marijuana before age 13 more often than seen in the state survey.

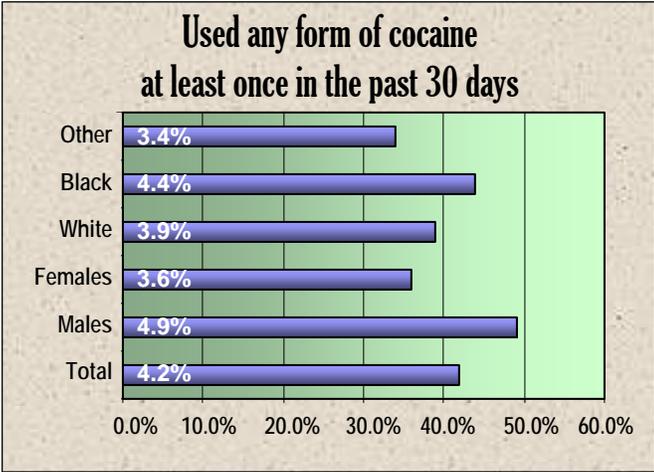
Nearly 40% of all Davidson County students reported having used marijuana at some point in their life

21.7% of all Davidson County students reported using marijuana within the 30 days prior to this survey

More males report marijuana use than females

A larger percentage of Black students reported current marijuana use than White students or students of other racial groups.

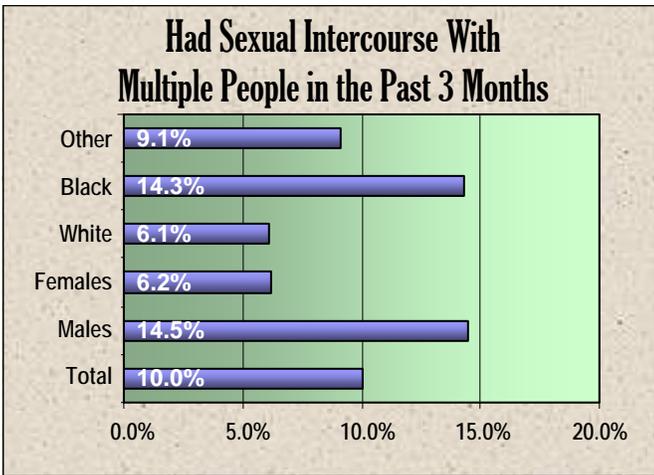




Other Drugs

More Davidson County students reported using cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines, and ecstasy than students across Tennessee. Fewer Davidson County students reported sniffing glue and taking steroid pills.

10.4% of Davidson County students have sniffed glue. Nearly one-third (30.6%) of Davidson County students reported that they have had someone offer, sell, or give them illegal drugs on school property in the past 12 months.



Sexual Behavior

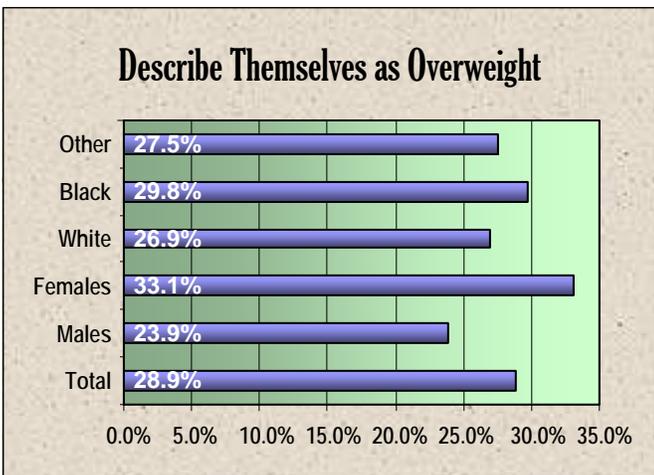
Fewer Davidson County students have ever had sexual intercourse than students statewide. However, more Davidson County students initiated sexual intercourse before age 13 than seen in the Tennessee survey.

Over half of all male students reported having had sexual intercourse. Black students (61.0%) were the most likely to report having had sexual intercourse followed by White students (37.9%) and students of other racial groups (35.3%).

21.4% of all males and 23.3% of all Black students reported having had 4 or more sexual partners during their lifetime.

Among sexually active students, 60.3% reported using a condom at last intercourse.

16.9% of sexually active students reported birth control pill use at last intercourse.



Body Weight

In Davidson County, 28.9% of high school students perceived themselves to be overweight compared to 30.2% across Tennessee. More Davidson County students (44.7%) reported that they are trying to lose weight compared to students statewide (43.6%).

Females are more likely to take measures to lose weight than men (exercise: 62.9% v 55.5%, eat less: 51.3% v 28.4%, fasting: 14.1% v 8.0%, pills 6.6% v 6.4%, vomiting or taking laxatives: 4.8% v 3.3%)

With the exception of exercising, Hispanic students are more likely to be taking measures to maintain or lose weight than non-Hispanic students.



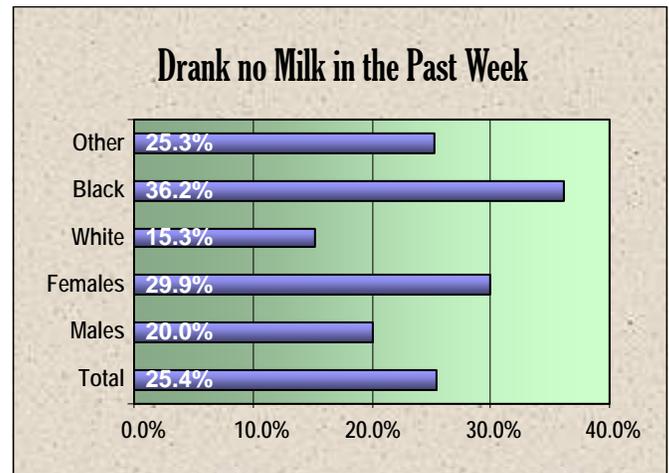
Food & Drink

Davidson County students reported higher consumption of 100% fruit juice, fruit, green salads, carrots, other vegetables and soda than students who participated in the state survey, but less potato and milk consumption.

Over one-quarter (**25.4%**) of Davidson County students did not have any milk in the week prior to the survey.

81.7% of the students surveyed reported eating fruit at least once a week and more than a quarter (**26.2%**) said they eat fruit at least once per day.

9.1% of all the students surveyed reported drinking 4 or more sodas a day.

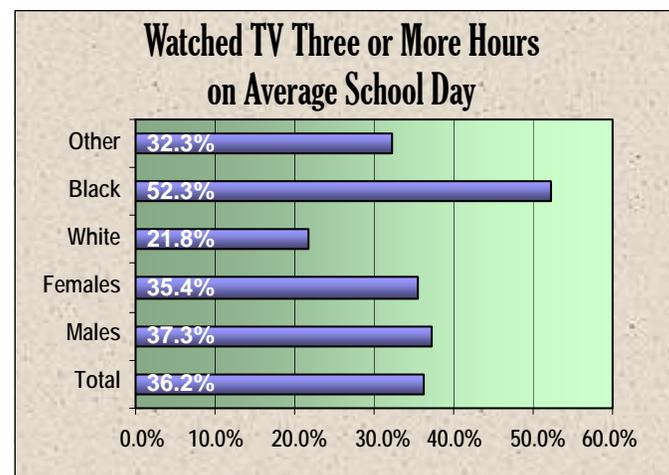


Physical Activity

In Davidson County, **44.5%** of the students surveyed reported attending a PE class at least once in an average week in school compared to **39.2%** statewide. Davidson County students were also more involved in at least one sport in the past year (**55.8%** v **51.9%**).

Nearly one-quarter (**24.0%**) of Black students reported watching 5 or more hours of TV on an average school day compared to **5.4%** among White students and **6.9%** of students of other racial groups.

62.6% males and **50.3%** of females participated in a team sport within the past year.

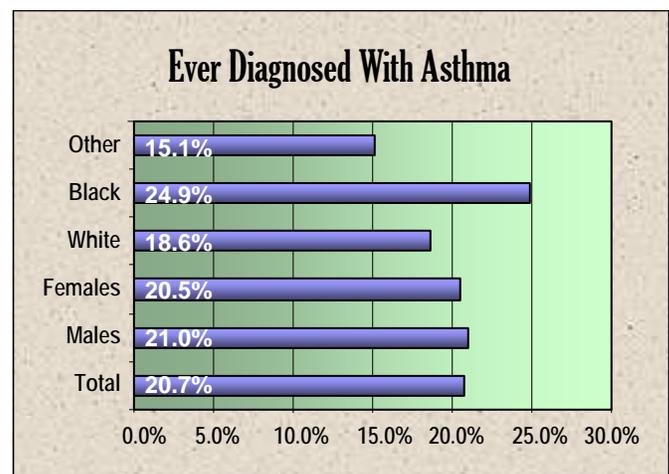


Other Health Related Topics

Over three-quarters (**76.5%**) of Davidson County students reported learning about HIV/AIDS in school compared to **88.9%** across Tennessee.

Black students (**79.2%**) reported learning about HIV/AIDS at higher rates than White students (**77.5%**) or students of other racial groups (**69.2%**).

Black students (**24.9%**) reported receiving a diagnosis of asthma more often than White students (**18.6%**) or students of other racial groups (**15.1%**).



Acknowledgements

The 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey was a joint undertaking by Metro Public Health Department, Metro Nashville Public Schools and participating private schools. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey Advisory Committee was composed of Dr. Burns Rogers, Metro Public Health Department and Dr. Pat McDonald, Metro Nashville Public Schools. These individuals were responsible for the planning, administration, and reporting of this project.

Appreciation is expressed to all principals, assistant principals, guidance counselors, teachers, and other staff members at the participating schools for their help in coordinating the administration of the survey. Appreciation is also extended to all staff members of Metro Public Health Department and students

enrolled in the Schools of Nursing at Belmont University and Tennessee State University for help administering the surveys. A special thank you is extended to Brook McKelvey and Nancy Horner for proofreading this report and to Martha Bickley for designing the report layout.

1. <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/overview.htm>

Technical Note for Logical Consistency Edits: The majority of the edit criteria compare two questions at a time to ensure logical consistency. If responses from two questions conflict logically, both variables are set to blank. (Exception – demographic variables are not set to missing in this case, only non-demographic variable(s).)

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Risk Behaviors of Nashville's Youth, 2007

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