

2001 Risk Behaviors of Nashville's Youth



Unintentional Injury

Intentional Injury

Tobacco Use

Alcohol & Other Drug Use

Sexual Behavior

Dietary Behavior & Physical Activity



About the Youth Risk Behavior Survey

The health of young people — and the adults they will become — is critically linked to health-related behavior choices. A limited number of behaviors contribute markedly to disability or premature death. These behaviors are often established during adolescence.

In the spring of 2001, the Metropolitan Health Department surveyed a sample of adolescent students (grades 9 through 12) about their behaviors relating to their health and safety. All questionnaire responses were anonymous and participation was voluntary. Parents were notified about the time and nature of the survey.

The survey instrument, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, and the standardized survey administration protocol were developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The survey is updated and given nationally every two years to high school students.

In Nashville and Davidson County, 15 public high schools and 7 private high schools participated in the survey process with a sample of 2,063 students. The demographic profile of students who responded to the survey were: 53% female, 47% male; 50% White, 42% Black or African-American, and 8% of other ethnic or racial origin; 32% were in ninth grade, 30% tenth grade, 18% eleventh grade, and 19% twelfth grade. The demographics of this sample closely resemble the demographic profile of students attending high schools in Davidson County.

The pages that follow describe what our youth reported about their own behaviors.

Major Findings

Risk-taking behaviors of the Nashville students surveyed are similar to those of students in Tennessee and the United States with a few notable exceptions. Many behaviors were reported to be lower, suggesting the county is protected in some way from the risk. Other behaviors are higher, suggesting the county is at excess risk.

Highlights of Differences between Local, State, and National Data

Lower Risk

Nashville has **lower** percentages of students who carry weapons, who are heavy smokers, who use smokeless tobacco, who engage in binge drinking, and who drink and drive and a **higher** percentage of students who take physical education classes daily compared to the state and the nation. In addition, Nashville students reported lower percentages for drug use including: cocaine, inhalants, heroin, methamphetamines, steroids, and injectable drugs, compared to the state in 2001 and the nation in 1999. The percentages of drug use reported at 6% or greater are shown below. All other results are shown on pages 6-7.

	Q. #**	Nashville 2001	Tennessee 2001	Nation 1999
<input type="checkbox"/> Carried weapon on one or more days (past 30 day)	Q.6	16%	20%	17%*
<input type="checkbox"/> Smoked a whole cigarette for first time before age 13	Q.22	20%	26%	25%
<input type="checkbox"/> Smoked cigarettes on 20 or more days (past 30 days)	Q.24	11%	16%	17%
<input type="checkbox"/> Used chewing tobacco or snuff (past 30 days)	Q.30	5%	12%	8%
<input type="checkbox"/> Had driven a vehicle one or more times after drinking alcohol (past 30 days)	Q.5	10%	14%	13%*
<input type="checkbox"/> Had five or more drinks in a row (past 30 days)	Q.36	20%	27%	32%
<input type="checkbox"/> Used any form of cocaine one or more times during their life	Q.42	6%	9%	10%
<input type="checkbox"/> Ever sniffed glue, breathed aerosol cans, inhaled paint/spray to get high	Q.44	9%	14%	15%
<input type="checkbox"/> Attends PE classes daily	Q.79	37%	26%	29%*

* Does not differ substantively from local data **Results for all questions are shown on pages 6-7

Higher Risk

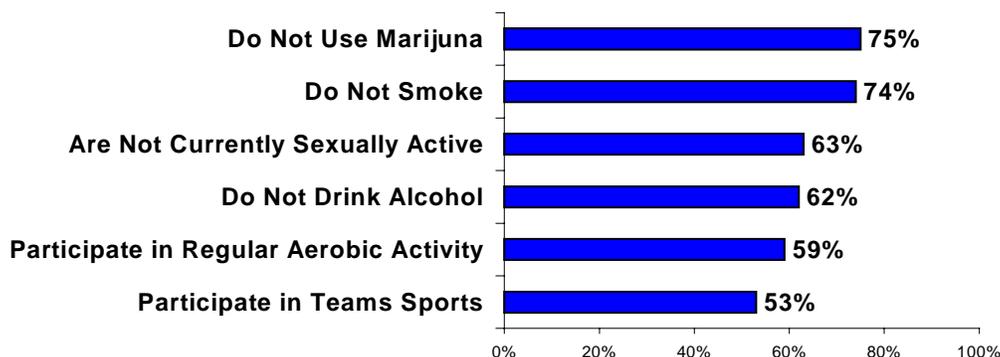
Nashville has a **higher** percentage of students who had been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant and has a **higher** percentage of students who are at risk of becoming overweight.

	Q. #**	Nashville 2001	Tennessee 2001	Nation 1999
<input type="checkbox"/> Had been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant one or more times	Q.58	9%	6%	6%
<input type="checkbox"/> At risk of becoming overweight	Q.73	17%	14%	16%*

* Does not differ substantively from local data **Results for all questions are shown on pages 6-7

High School Students Who Make Healthy Choices

The following chart depicts the percentage of students in the survey who engage in positive health practices.

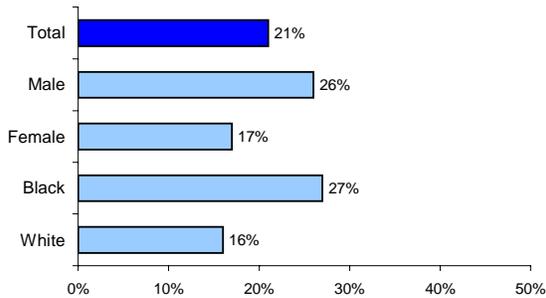


Unintentional Injuries

Twenty-one percent of high school students surveyed in Nashville rarely or never wear a seatbelt.

- Nashville youth reported rarely or never wearing a seatbelt compared to 2001 results for the state (18%) and national results (16%) in 1999.
- Eighty-three percent of females reported seatbelt use compared to males (74%). Eighty-four percent of White students reported seatbelt use compared to 73% of Black students.

Rarely or Never Wore a Seatbelt



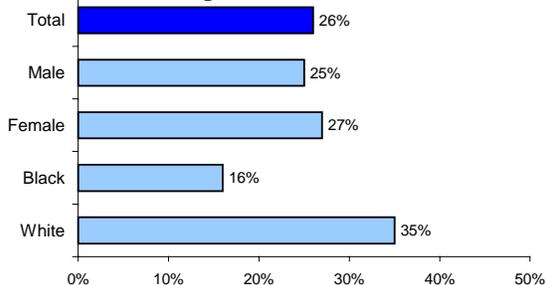
- Twenty-seven percent of Nashville students reported having ridden one or more times with a driver who had been drinking alcohol compared to 32% for the state in 2001 and 33% for the nation in 1999.
- When riding a bicycle during the past 12 months, 86% of high school students (who rode bikes) reported rarely or never using a helmet.

Tobacco Use

Twenty-six percent of high school students surveyed in Nashville currently smokes cigarettes (smoking on one or more days during the 30 days prior to the survey).

- Twenty-nine percent of students sampled across the state in 2001 reported smoking cigarettes compared to 35% of students in the U.S. in 1999. It is important to note that the smoking rate for Tennessee declined 8% during the past 2 years.
- White students (35%) were more than twice as likely to report smoking compared to Black students (16%); the percentage of males who reported smoking (25%) was similar to the percentage reported by females (27%).

Current Cigarette Use



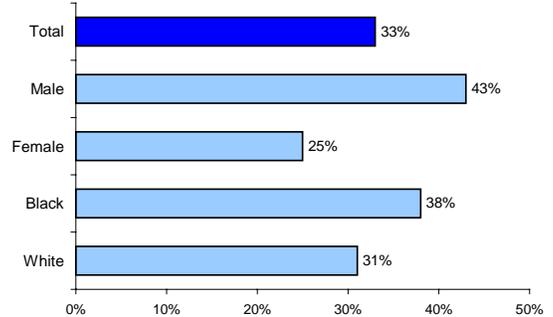
- In Nashville, 9% reported having smoked cigarettes on school property during the 30 days prior to the survey. This is substantively different from the 1999 nationwide results (14%) however consistent with statewide 2001 results (10%).
- The use of smokeless tobacco on school property was substantively lower locally at 3% compared to the state rate of 7%.

Intentional Injuries

Thirty-three percent of high school students surveyed in Nashville were in a physical fight during the past twelve months.

- The state results were 30% and the national results in 1999 were 36%.
- Sixteen percent reported carrying a weapon during the 30 days prior to the survey compared to 20% statewide and 17% nationally in 1999.

Fighting



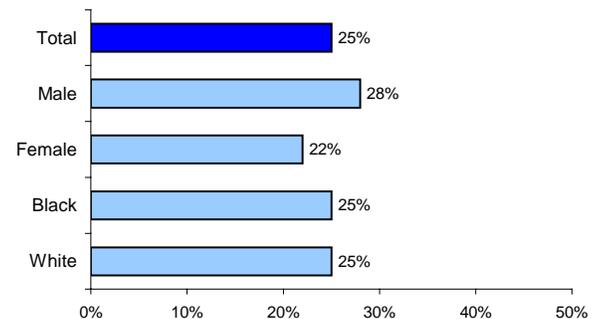
- Twenty percent reported being threatened, injured with a weapon, or fighting during the past 12 months on school property.
- Eight percent reported being forced to have sexual intercourse compared to 9% statewide in 2001 and 9% nationwide in 1999.
- Fewer Nashville students reported having been hit, slapped, or physically hurt by boy/girlfriend during the past year (7%) compared to the state (9%) in 2001 and the nation (9%) in 1999.

Marijuana Use

Twenty-five percent of high school students surveyed in Nashville used marijuana during the 30 days prior to the survey.

- Nashville's percentage is similar to the 2001 results for the state (24%) and the U.S. in 1999 (27%).
- 12% of Nashville youth reported trying marijuana for the first time before age 13, equivalent to the 2001 results for the state (12%).

Marijuana Use



- Twenty-five percent reported being offered, sold, or given illegal drugs on school property in the past 12 months, compared to the 2001 results for Tennessee (28%) and the national results in 1999 (30%).

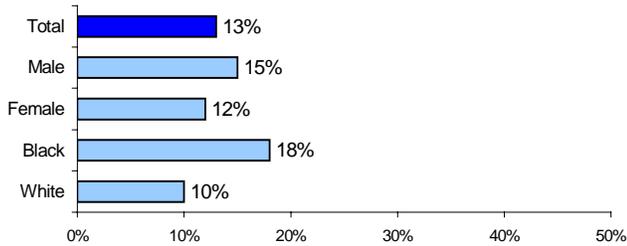
Youth in Nashville reported less use (past 30 days) of several compared to the state in 2001 and the nation in 1999. Cocaine use was reported at 3% compared to 4% statewide and 4% nationally. Use of inhalants was reported at (2%) compared to the state (4%) and the nation (4%). Use of methamphetamines (at any time during their life) was reported at 5% compared to 11% statewide and 9% nationally in 1999.

Weight, Dietary, and Physical Activity

Thirteen percent of high school students surveyed in Nashville are overweight.

- This finding is consistent with the state (13%) and nation in 1999 (10%).
- Eighteen percent of Nashville's Black youth are overweight compared to 10% of White youth.
- An additional 17% of the youth surveyed are at risk of becoming overweight based on their reported weight and height.

Overweight



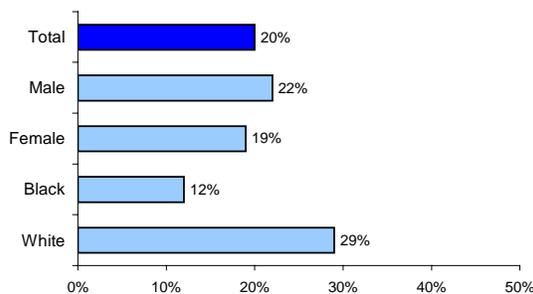
- Eighteen percent of high school students reported using unhealthy methods (e.g. fasting, diet pills, purging) to control weight. Twenty two percent of females reported using unhealthy methods compared to 12% males.
- Approximately half (51%) reported watching TV for 3 hours or more on an average school day. The 2001 state results revealed 45% of youth reported watching TV for 3 hours or more.

Alcohol Use

Twenty percent of high school students surveyed in Nashville have engaged in heavy drinking (5 or more drinks in a row) during the 30 days prior to the survey.

- Nashville's percentage (20%) was less than the 2001 results for Tennessee (27%) and the 1999 national results (32%).
- Twelve percent of Black students reported binge drinking compared to 29% of White students.

Binge Drinking



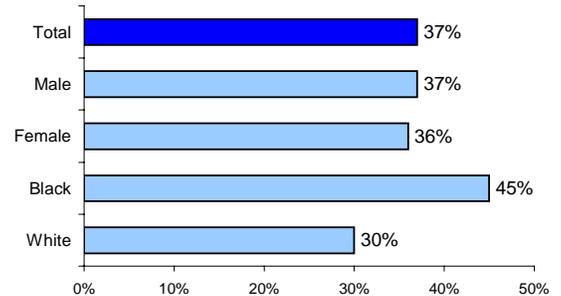
- Twenty-five percent of high school students reported drinking their first alcohol (not for religious purposes) before age 13. This result is consistent with the state (29%) and considerably lower than the national percentage in 1999 (32%).
- Fewer Nashville students had at least 1 drink of alcohol on school property during the past 30 days (3%) compared to the state results (4%) and the national results in 1999 (5%).

Sexual Behavior

Thirty-seven percent of high school students surveyed in Nashville are sexually active (sexual intercourse in the past three months).

- Nashville's percentage is similar to the 2001 results for Tennessee (36%) and the U.S. (36%) in 1999.
- The percentage for females is 36% compared to males at 37%.
- Forty-five percent of Black youth reported being sexually active compared to 30% of White youth.

Sexually Active



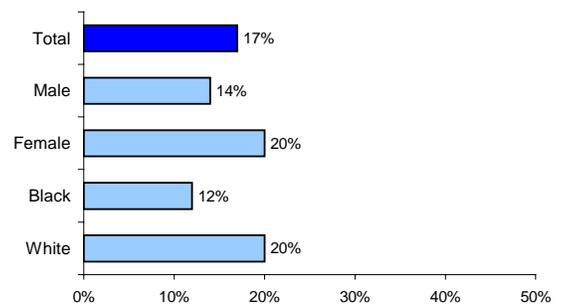
- More than half (62%) of the sexually active high school students used a condom during the last sexual intercourse (past 3 months) compared to the state in 2001 (57%).

Suicide

Seventeen percent of youth reported seriously considering suicide during the past 12 months.

- Nashville's percentage is similar to 19% for Tennessee in 2001 and 19% for the nation in 1999.
- Twenty percent of females reported considering suicide compared to 14% of males. Twenty percent of White youth considered suicide compared to 12% of Black youth.

Considered Suicide

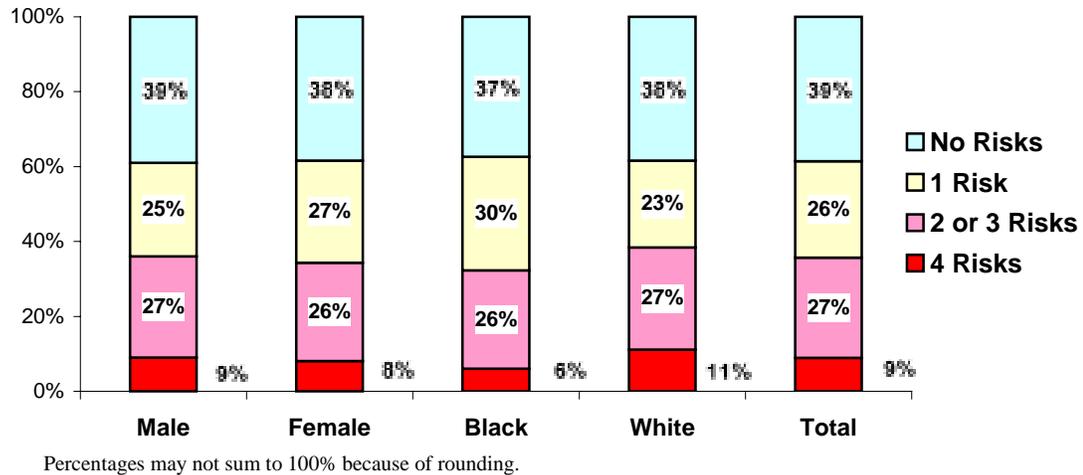


- Eight percent of high school students surveyed in Nashville attempted suicide within the past 12 months. Nashville's percentage is similar to the 2001 results for Tennessee (9%) and the nation (8%) in 1999. The national trend has remained constant at 7% - 8% since 1991.
- Twenty-eight percent of high school students reported feeling so sad every day for 2 weeks that they stopped usual activities. Thirty-four percent of females and 22% of males gave this response.

Extreme, Multiple, and Minimal Risk Takers

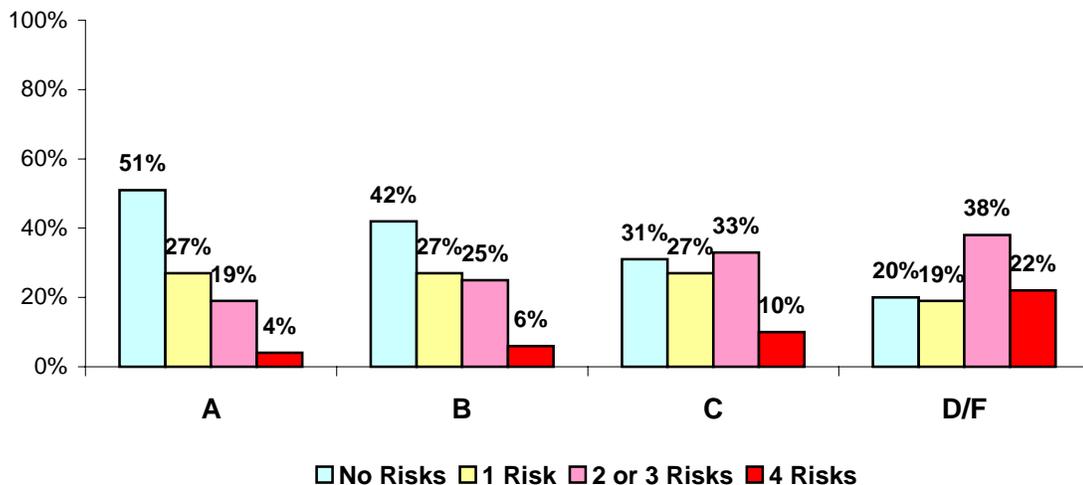
The chart below describes four distinct groups of students: those who are extreme risk takers (4 risks), those who are multiple risk takers (2-3 risks), those who engage in one risk behavior, and those who do not engage in risk behaviors. The extreme risk takers (9%) are heavily involved in unhealthy behaviors: smoking cigarettes, using marijuana, drinking alcohol, and sexual intercourse. The multiple risk takers (27%) engage in two to three of the risks listed above. Also shown are those who engage in one (26%) or none (39%) of the risks listed above. The types of risky behaviors that students engage in vary by race and gender.

Risk Taking by Demographic Characteristics



Risk Taking by Self-Reported Grades

In the 2001 YRBS students were asked to describe their grades in school (A's, B's, C's, D's, F's). The following chart shows the relationship between reported risk involvement and reported grades earned. As the grades go up, the risk involvement decreases. According to a study conducted by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in 1995 and '96 ("Beyond Race, Income, and Family Structure"¹), being at academic risk was a more powerful predictor of health risk behaviors than race, income, or family structure. What does this mean for parents and educators? The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation report suggests that health and education are closely intertwined and that school failure can be viewed as both a health and education crisis.



Percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding.

¹www.peds.umn.edu/peds-adol/PDFs/10764%20ethnicity.pdf

Results of 2001 High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Unintentional Injuries		Total	Male	Female	White	Black	TN '01	US '99
1.	Rarely or never wore motorcycle helmet (past 12 months)	30%	34%	22%	22%	40%	33%	38%
2.	Rarely or never wore bicycle helmet (past 12 months)	86%	87%	85%	80%	92%	89%	85%
3.	Rarely or never wear a seat belt	21%	26%	17%	16%	27%	18%	16%*
4.	Rode one or more times with a driver who had been drinking alcohol (past 30 days)l	27%	28%	27%	30%	25%	32%	33%
5.	Had driven a vehicle one or more times after drinking alcohol (past 30 days)	10%	13%	8%	13%	7%	14%*	13%

Intentional Injuries		Total	Male	Female	White	Black	TN '01	US '99
6.	Carried weapon (gun, knife, club) on one or more days (past 30 days)	16%	26%	7%	17%	15%	20%*	17%
7.	Carried gun on one or more days (past 30 days)	7%	13%	2%	5%	9%	6%	4%
8.	Carried weapon on school property on one or more days (past 30 days)	4%	5%	3%	3%	5%	7%	7%
9.	Felt too unsafe to go to school on one or more days (past 30 days)	8%	8%	9%	7%	10%	7%	5%*
10.	Threatened or injured with a weapon on school property (past 12 months)	8%	11%	5%	6%	8%	9%	8%
11.	In a physical fight in past twelve months	33%	43%	25%	30%	37%	30%	36%
12.	Injured in a physical fight & needed medical treatment (past 12 months)	3%	4%	2%	2%	4%	4%*	4%*
13.	Was in a physical fight on school property (past 12 months)	12%	16%	9%	9%	16%	12%	14%
14.	Hit, slapped, or physically hurt by boy/girlfriend (past 12 months)	7%	7%	8%	7%	7%	9%*	9%*
15.	Ever forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want	8%	6%	10%	6%	9%	9%	9%

Suicidal Ideation (during past twelve months)		Total	Male	Female	White	Black	TN '01	US '99
16.	Felt so sad every day for 2 weeks that stopped usual activities	28%	22%	34%	29%	26%	30%	28%
17.	Seriously considered suicide	17%	14%	20%	20%	12%	19%	19%
18.	Made a specific plan to attempt suicide	12%	10%	14%	14%	9%	14%	15%*
19.	Attempted suicide one or more times	8%	6%	9%	8%	6%	9%	8%
20.	Suicide attempt resulted in a condition that had to be treated by doctor	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%*	3%*

Tobacco Use		Total	Male	Female	White	Black	TN '01	US '99
21.	Ever tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs	62%	62%	62%	68%	56%	67%	70%
22.	Smoked a whole cigarette for first time before age 13	20%	22%	18%	26%	12%	26%*	25%*
23.	Smoked cigarettes one or more days (past 30 days)	26%	25%	27%	35%	16%	29%	35%*
24.	Smoked cigarettes on 20 or more days (past 30 days)	11%	11%	10%	17%	4%	16%*	17%*
25.	Bought cigarettes in a store or gas station during (past 30 days/< age 18)	18%	24%	13%	18%	22%	22%	24%*
26.	Not asked for proof of age when buying cigarettes (past 30 days/< age 18)	67%	60%	75%	63%	71%	NA	70%
27.	Smoked cigarettes on school property on one or more days (past 30 days)	9%	11%	8%	12%	5%	10%	14%*
28.	Smoked cigarettes regularly (at least one cigarette every day for 30 days)	17%	17%	18%	25%	9%	22%	25%
29.	Ever tried to quit smoking cigarettes (smoked in past 12 months)	58%	53%	63%	59%	52%	54%	NA
30.	Used chewing tobacco or snuff (1 or more days during the past 30 days)	5%	10%	1%	9%	2%	12%*	8%*
31.	Used chewing tobacco or snuff on school property (1 or more days of past 30 days)	3%	6%	0%	5%	1%	7%*	4%*
32.	Smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars (1 or more days of past 30 days)	16%	22%	11%	18%	13%	17%	18%

Alcohol Use		Total	Male	Female	White	Black	TN '01	US '99
33.	Had at least 1 drink of alcohol on one or more days of their life	73%	72%	75%	80%	67%	75%	81%
34.	Had first drink of alcohol before age 13	25%	29%	22%	24%	26%	29%	32%*
35.	Had at least 1 drink of alcohol (one or more days of past 30 days)	38%	38%	38%	46%	31%	44%	50%*
36.	Had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row (1 or more of past 30 days)	20%	22%	19%	29%	12%	27%*	32%*
37.	Had at least 1 drink of alcohol on school property (1 or more of past 30 days)	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	4%*	5%*

Marijuana, Cocaine, and Other Drug Use		Total	Male	Female	White	Black	TN '01	US '99
38.	Used marijuana one or more times during their life	47%	51%	43%	48%	47%	47%	47%
39.	Tried marijuana for the first time before age 13	12%	16%	8%	12%	12%	12%	11%
40.	Used marijuana one or more times (past 30 days)	25%	28%	22%	26%	25%	24%	27%
41.	Used marijuana on school property one or more times (past 30 days)	4%	7%	3%	4%	5%	4%	7%*

*Indicates difference between local data is of substantive importance

Results of 2001 High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Marijuana, Cocaine, and Other Drug Use Continued		Total	Male	Female	White	Black	TN '01	US '99
42. Used any form of cocaine one or more times during their life	6%	7%	5%	7%	3%	9%*	10%*	
43. Used any form of cocaine one or more times (past 30 days)	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%	4%*	4%*	
44. Ever sniffed glue, breathed aerosol cans, inhaled paint/spray to get high	9%	10%	9%	13%	4%	14%*	15%*	
45. Sniffed glue, breathed aerosol cans, inhaled paint/spray to get high (past 30 days)	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	4%*	4%*	
46. Used heroin during their life	2%	3%	1%	1%	1%	3%*	2%	
47. Used methamphetamines during their life	5%	6%	4%	7%	2%	11%*	9%*	
48. Took steroid pills or shots without a prescription	4%	6%	3%	6%	2%	7%*	4%	
49. Ever used needle to inject any illegal drug into their body	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%*	2%*	
50. Had someone offer, sell, or give them illegal drugs on school property (past 12 months)	25%	32%	19%	30%	19%	28%	30%	

Sexual Behavior		Total	Male	Female	White	Black	TN '01	US '99
51. Ever had sexual intercourse	50%	54%	47%	42%	62%	51%	50%	
52. Had sexual intercourse for the first time before age 13	9%	15%	5%	5%	15%	9%	8%	
53. Had sexual intercourse with 4 or more people during their life	17%	22%	12%	11%	24%	16%	16%	
54. Had sexual intercourse during the past three months	37%	37%	36%	30%	45%	36%	36%	
55. Drank alcohol or used drugs before last sexual intercourse(past 3 months)	19%	22%	16%	24%	14%	22%	NA	
56. Used condom or partner used condom during last sexual intercourse (past 3 months)	62%	68%	57%	60%	63%	57%	NA	
57. Used birth control pills or partner used during last sexual intercourse (past 3 months)	13%	11%	15%	19%	8%	17%*	NA	
58. Had been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant one or more times	9%	10%	9%	6%	14%	6%*	6%*	

Weight and Dietary Behaviors		Total	Male	Female	White	Black	TN '01	US '99
59. Perceive themselves to be overweight	29%	22%	36%	32%	26%	30%	30%	
60. Are trying to lose weight	44%	29%	58%	48%	39%	44%	43%	
61. Exercised to lose weight or keep from gaining weight (past 30 days)	56%	51%	61%	60%	52%	57%	58%	
62. Ate less food, fewer calories, or low fat foods to lose weight (past 30 days)	41%	27%	53%	45%	36%	42%	40%	
63. Went without eating for 24 hours or more to lose weight (past 30 days)	12%	8%	15%	12%	11%	14%	13%	
64. Took diet pills, powders, or liquids to lose weight (past 30 days)	7%	4%	10%	9%	5%	11%*	8%	
65. Vomited or took laxatives to lose weight (past 30 days)	4%	2%	5%	4%	3%	6%*	5%*	
66. Drank 100% fruit juices at least once (past 30 days)	83%	86%	80%	82%	84%	81%	NA	
67. Ate fruit at least once during the past seven days	78%	78%	79%	82%	72%	82%	NA	
68. Ate green salad at least once during the past seven days	59%	55%	63%	65%	52%	59%	NA	
69. Ate potatoes at least once during the past seven days	70%	72%	69%	77%	64%	74%	NA	
70. Ate carrots at least once during the past seven days	38%	38%	38%	47%	23%	42%	NA	
71. Ate other vegetables at least once during past seven days	85%	84%	86%	89%	80%	84%	NA	
72. Drank three or more glasses of milk per day during past seven days	12%	17%	8%	15%	8%	15%*	18%*	
73. At risk of becoming overweight	17%	17%	17%	15%	20%	14%*	16%	
74. Overweight	13%	15%	12%	10%	18%	13%	10%*	

Physical Activity		Total	Male	Female	White	Black	TN '01	US '99
75. Exercised or physical activity that made them sweat on 3 or more of past 7 days	59%	73%	48%	62%	57%	61%	65%	
76. Had physical activity that did not make them sweat on 5 of past 7 days	21%	24%	18%	22%	18%	25%	27%*	
77. Did exercise to strengthen or tone muscles on 3 or more of past 7 days	48%	59%	38%	52%	44%	51%	54%	
78. Watch TV for 3 or hours or more on an average school day	51%	53%	48%	35%	68%	45%	NA	
79. Attend PE classes daily	37%	39%	36%	34%	41%	26%*	29%*	
80. Exercise 20 or more minutes in an average PE class	71%	82%	61%	72%	72%	84%	76%	
81. Played on one or more sports teams during past 12 months	53%	59%	47%	54%	54%	51%	55%	

HIV Education		Total	Male	Female	White	Black	TN '01	US '99
82. Have been taught about AIDS or HIV infection in school	87%	86%	87%	86%	88%	88%	91%	

*Indicates difference between local data is of substantive importance.

Comparisons between Nashville's 1999 and 2001 YRBS Results

The administration of the 2001 YRBS incorporated several changes to improve the measurement process and to provide the community with a more thorough picture of youth behavior. Private schools were included to provide a more comprehensive picture of Nashville's youth and methodological changes were implemented to standardize Nashville's data collection process to correspond with state and federal guidelines. Thus, it is not known if changes in results are because of actual changes in behavior, changes in sampling and administration, or a combination of these or other factors. The reader should consider these factors in interpreting differences between the 1999 and 2001 results.

The most striking reported declines in risk behaviors reported in 2001 compared to 1999 were the following:

- Rarely or never wore motorcycle helmet.
- Hit, slapped, or physically hurt by a boy/girlfriend.
- Attempted suicide one or more times.
- Smoked cigarettes regularly.
- Had someone offer, sell, or give them illegal drugs on school property.
- Ever had sexual intercourse.

Acknowledgements

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Metropolitan Health Department

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