

YOUTH DRUG SURVEY 2020: STANLY COUNTY

SUMMARY REPORT OF SURVEY RESULTS

Report prepared Spring 2020 for the Center for Prevention Services by Common Good Data Consulting, LLC.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 1972, The Center for Prevention Services (CPS) (Formerly Substance Abuse Prevention Services and The Charlotte Drug Education Center) has implemented a countywide youth drug survey every two to three years, mostly in Mecklenburg County, NC. These data are collected to determine the current level of incidence and prevalence of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and other drug use among middle and high school age youth. Due to the longitudinal nature of the research, changes in local patterns and trends can be observed. During the Spring of 2020, CPS, in collaboration with Common Good Data Consulting and Stanly County Schools, administered the self-report Youth Drug Survey instrument in Stanly County for the first time to 1,226 youth in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 across 11 schools.

Below are some of the key findings from this research:

- **E-cigarettes emerged as the primary substance used by youth**, with 10.9% of youth in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 reporting using e-cigarettes in the past 30 days.
- Gender emerged as an important predictor in alcohol use and type used. Male youth were more likely to choose beer while female youth were more likely to choose liquor/mixed drinks. Of all the alcohol types, liquor/mixed drinks were the main type of alcohol used by youth.
- 30-day use of traditional cigarettes is low (2.7%), though **the rate of e-cigarette use (10.9%) is alarming**, particularly among Latino high school youth (15.5%).
- In general, rates for cigarette use, alcohol use, pain prescriptions without a prescription, marijuana, and e-cigarette use were all lower in comparison to Mecklenburg County, state, and national averages. However, these results should be interpreted with caution due to the small sample size in seniors at Stanly County which likely affected 30-day use rates.
- When comparing racial and ethnic differences in substance use patterns, **Latino high school youth were particularly at risk for e-cigarette use, while white high school youth were at higher risk for alcohol use, and black middle school youth were higher risk for the use of prescription medications without a prescription** in comparison to their peers.
- When comparing gender differences in substance use patterns, **male high school youth were at a higher risk for binge drinking followed by female middle school youth. Female youth were at a higher risk for the use of prescription pain medications without a prescription** while male youth were at a higher risk for the use of prescription ADD/ADHD medications without a prescription.
- 30-day use for prescription drug use without a prescription decreased from middle to high school grade levels, suggesting use decreases with age. However, this finding should be interpreted with caution given the small sample of high school seniors.

We believe the findings of the 2020 Youth Drug Survey will provide Stanly County critical data to understand youth substance use and focus prevention efforts. We hope that the results in this report contribute to the work of professionals across disciplines and fields to engage in reducing youth substance use behaviors across the county.

METHODOLOGY

The 2020 Youth Drug Survey (YDS) is a school-based survey of youth substance use behaviors. The target sample for the study was 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders enrolled in Stanly County Schools. The sample was obtained by surveying middle and high school students across 11 Stanly County schools. Most surveys were administered during health class with a few exceptions where surveys were administered in homeroom or enrichment classes. To protect student participants, all surveys were anonymous. The 2020 YDS was collected using an online survey tool. The survey was available in both English and Spanish. The data collection and survey design was reviewed by Solutions IRB Institutional Review Board to ensure the study met standards for ethical conduct of research, and was approved by The Stanly County Schools School Board.

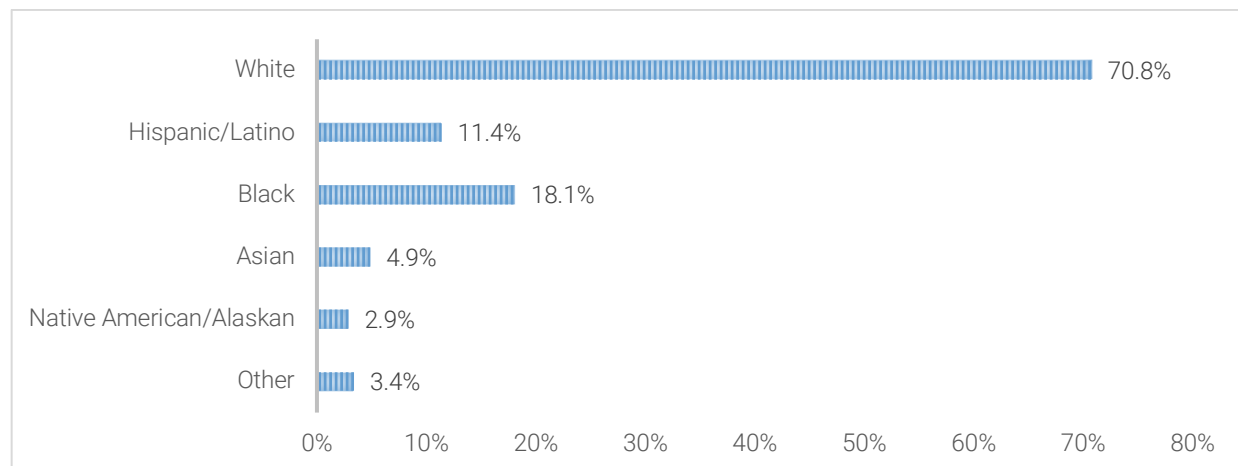
SAMPLE

The data shared in this report includes responses from 1,226 students in Stanly County Schools (49.5% female, 48.5% male, 2.0% who preferred not to answer).

The sample included 33.5% 6th grade students, 37.2% 8th grade students, 25.1% 10th grade students, and 4.3% 12th grade students. It is worth noting that the sample size for seniors is very low, limiting conclusions that can be drawn from results related to substance use in seniors and high school students in general. Due to the small sample size, it is likely that seniors are highly underrepresented in this report and consequently, substance use of seniors is under-reported. Keeping this in mind, results presented here should be interpreted with caution.

Figure 1 presents students' self-reported race and ethnicity (not exclusive), with youth having the option to select more than one group.

Figure 1: Sample race and ethnicity for 2020 Youth Drug Survey (n=1,226)



3.3% First generation immigrants

In the 2020 Youth Drug Survey, sub-samples within Asian and Latino race/ethnicities were also obtained to further examine racial and ethnic sub-groups. However, due to small sample sizes we were not able to report all the sub-groups. For students who reported Latino ethnicity, 71.4% were Mexican, 13.6% were

Puerto Rican, and 8.6% were El Salvadoran. Other Latino and Asian subgroups were represented but not reported due to small sample sizes.

The majority of students reported living with both their mother and father (55.6%), followed by those living with their mother only (15.0%), living with parent and step-parent (13.8%), and living with other family structures (grandparents, father only, parents and siblings, aunts and uncles, or child welfare) (7.4%).

12.4% of respondents indicated that the highest education level reached by an adult in their home was less than a high school degree, 25.3% reported a high school degree or GED, and 62.3% reported some vocational school, college, or a college degree or higher.

10.5% of students reported that they receive “none” or “a little bit” of parental supervision at home. Average student grades were reported as follows: A=41.8%, B=41.3%, C=15.3%, D=1.3%, F=9.21% of students reported missing more than 11 days of school in the prior year.

LIMITATIONS

While the results presented here inform the prevalence of youth substance use in Stanly County, it is recommended that they be interpreted with caution for several reasons. First, the sample of high school seniors was small (n=52) in comparison to other grade levels, leading to potential sample bias. The sophomore sample was also smaller than expected (n=306) relative to the 6th and 8th grade samples. It is possible – and indeed likely – that this sample bias may impact the findings of this study. For example, students who completed the survey may engage in risky behaviors and substance use differently when compared to students who did not complete the survey, who may be more likely to engage in substance use and may be underrepresented in the current sample. For example, at age 18, 0% of students in the sample reported the use of marijuana in the last 30 days. When comparing with high school seniors in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, 25% of high school seniors report the use of marijuana in the last 30 days, suggesting that the data captured in the survey may not have accurately reflect use rates among Stanly high school seniors in Stanly County high schools.

To address this limitation, we artificially expanded the sample of the sophomore and senior classes by drawing from the existing sophomore and senior data and using statistical techniques to estimate responses from non-respondents. Though this approach is limited by not being able to draw actual responses from the missing sample respondents, it provides an opportunity to correct for potential sample bias and provides some estimates of key substance use measures across all four grade levels. Because the sample we drew from was a likely more pro-social sample of students, we believe that the results in this study may still underestimate the actual use of substances in the true population of Stanly County youth even with this statistical correction.

Another limitation is the small sample size of minority racial and ethnic groups including Asian, Native American/Alaskan, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and other racial groups. Responses from questions where specific racial/ethnic groups had 10 or less respondents are not reported in this report to preserve the confidentiality and anonymity of students. For example, if there were only 2 Native American students who answered a question about substance use, those two students may be easily identifiable in the survey report. To protect student privacy and confidentiality, all groups with fewer than 10 responses were omitted from the report.

SURVEY RESULTS

COMPARISON WITH STATE AND NATIONAL DATA

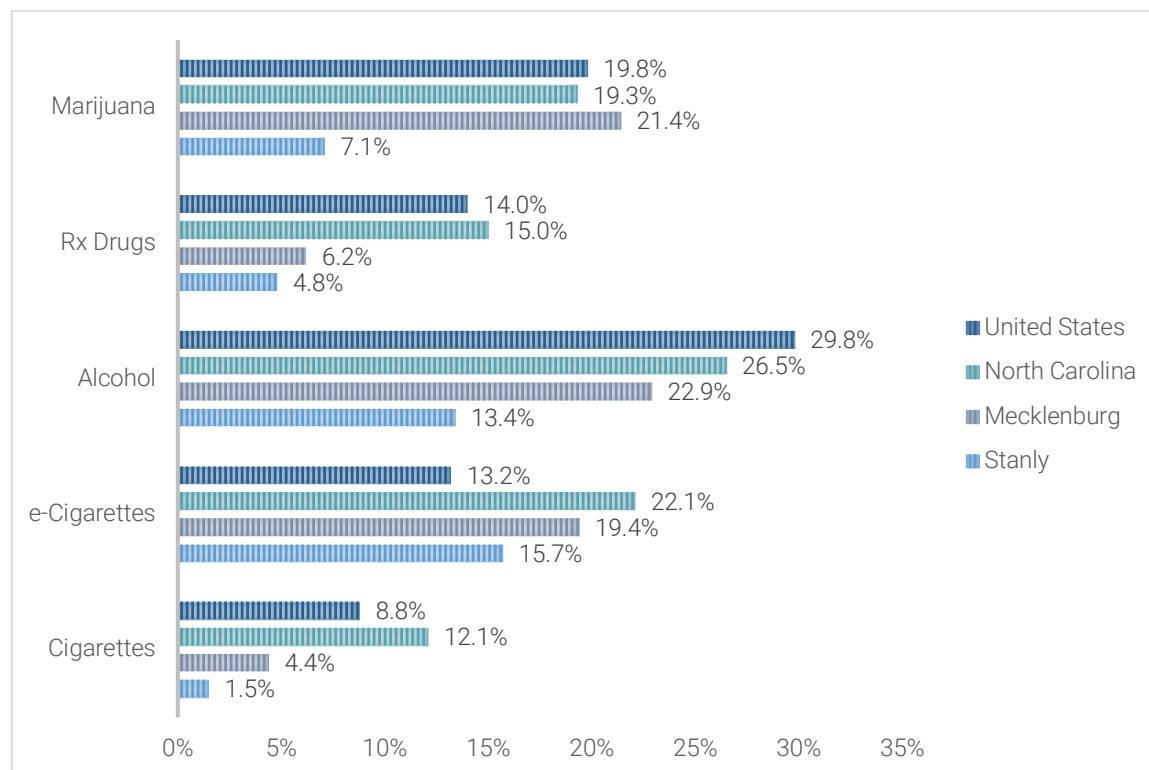
In 2020, e-cigarettes were the primary substance used in middle and high school students (10.9%), followed by alcohol (9.9%), and prescription drugs without a prescription (6.6%) in Stanly County youth. Use of combustible cigarettes is low (2.0%). Data from the 2020 Youth Drug Survey in Stanly County suggest that usage rates locally differ from Mecklenburg county, state, and national levels.

Rates for 30-day use in high school students in Stanly County using data from the 2020 Youth Drug Survey were compared against the 2020 Youth Drug Survey in Mecklenburg County, state (North Carolina), and national benchmarks using data from the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, a national survey of youth risk behaviors administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (see Figure 2). Aggregate data from the 2017 YRBS are available online and accessible to the public¹.

In general, rates for cigarette use, alcohol use, marijuana use, and prescription drug use without a prescription were lower in Stanly in comparison to these benchmarks.

Results should be interpreted with caution, as data at state and national levels were from three years (2017) prior to the 2020 YDS. A number of contextual factors, including changing laws, cultures, and norms across these three years may also account for some of these differences. In addition, a low sample size of Stanly County seniors may have impacted these results.

Figure 2: Stanly, Mecklenburg, North Carolina, and US 30-day use rates for high school (10th & 12th grade) students

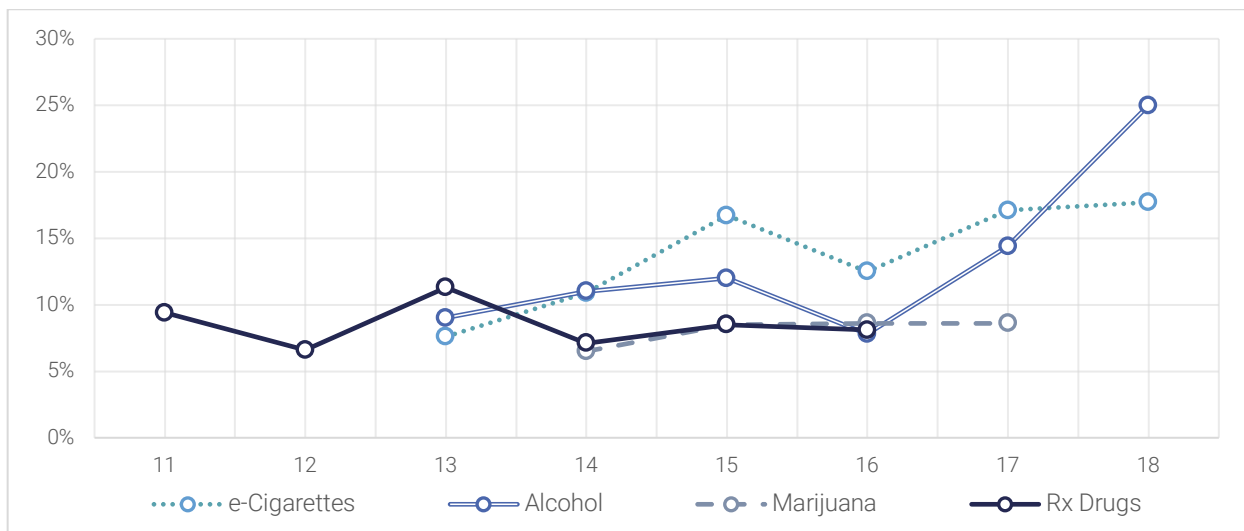


¹ Access is available to YRBS data at <https://nccd.cdc.gov/Youthonline>

30-DAY SUBSTANCE USE BY AGE AND GENDER

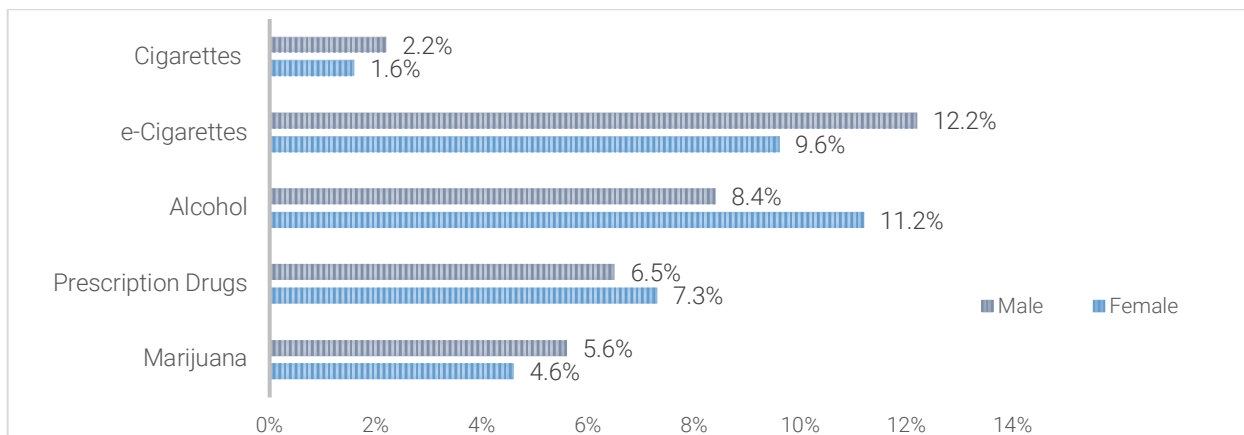
In general, youth substance use tends to increase with age across all substances except for cigarettes which are not included here due to small sample sizes. The average age of onset for most substances appears to be 13 years of age, except for prescription drugs which youth report using at age 11. Figure 4 shows that by age 15, 16.7% of youth are using e-cigarettes, 12% are using alcohol, 8.5% are using marijuana, and 8.5% are using prescription drugs. By age 18, this number increases to 25% for alcohol and to 17.1% for e-cigarettes. Cigarette use, though low across all age groups, is highest at age 15 at 4.2% and declines with age. Similarly, the use of prescription drugs without a prescription reaches its peak at age 13 (11.3%) and appears to decline from there. However, these results should be interpreted with caution given the small sample size of students in the senior class.

Figure 3: 30-Day Substance Use by Age



There were also some notable differences in substance use by gender though none of these were statistically significant (Figure 4). Female youth were more likely to use alcohol and prescription drugs compared to male while male youth were more likely to use e-cigarettes and marijuana. Note that results for students who preferred not to provide their gender are not included due to small sample size.

Figure 4: Gender differences in substance use



TOBACCO

The following section shares YDS results for youth use of tobacco. Of note, on December 20, 2019, the US congress passed a law raising the legal age to purchase tobacco products to 21 through a federal year-end legislative package. Because the YDS asks about use over the past 30 days, it is possible, but not likely, that these results were affected by the passage of the legislation.

30-DAY TOBACCO USE

Table 1 presents the overall results for past 30-day use for five separate tobacco products. Following recent national trends, e-cigarettes emerged as the preferred method for tobacco consumption among youth in the sample.

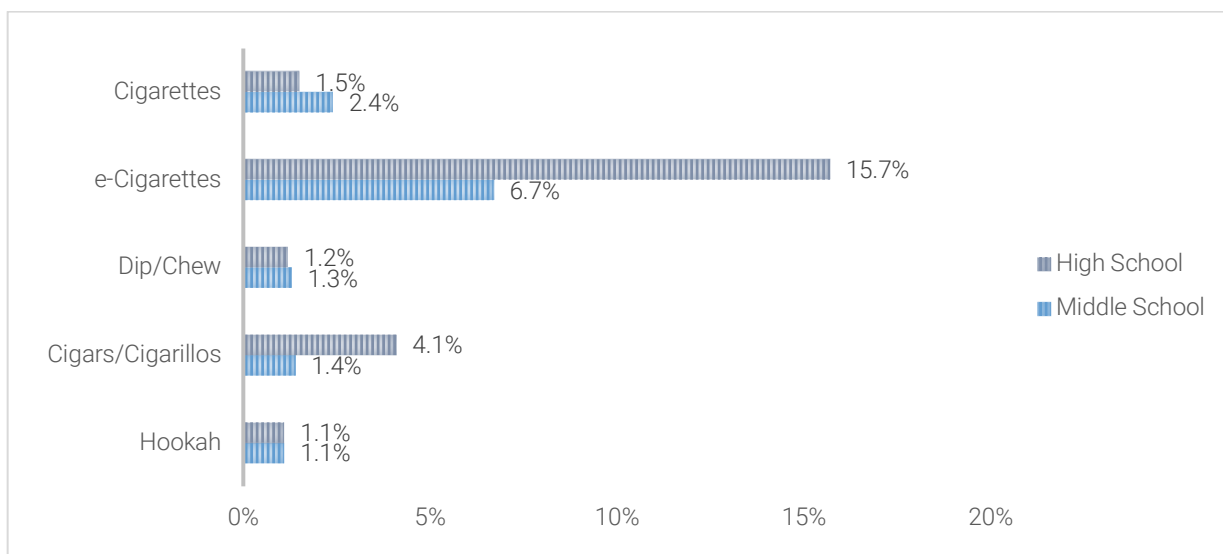
Table 1: Tobacco 30-day use, 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th grade youth

Question: How often in the past 30 days have you used the following?			
	Never Used	Used, but not in the past 30 days	Used in the past 30 days
Cigarettes	93.7%	4.3%	2.0%
e-cigarettes	78.8%	10.4%	10.9%
Dip/chew	96.5%	2.3%	1.3%
Cigars/Cigarillos	94.1%	3.1%	2.7%
Hookah	96.8%	2.1%	1.1%

30-DAY TOBACCO USE BY SCHOOL LEVEL

Another notable finding is the rate of e-cigarette use among high school youth. One in 6 high school youth reported using e-cigarettes in the past 30 days.

Figure 5: 30-day tobacco use by school level (middle and high school)

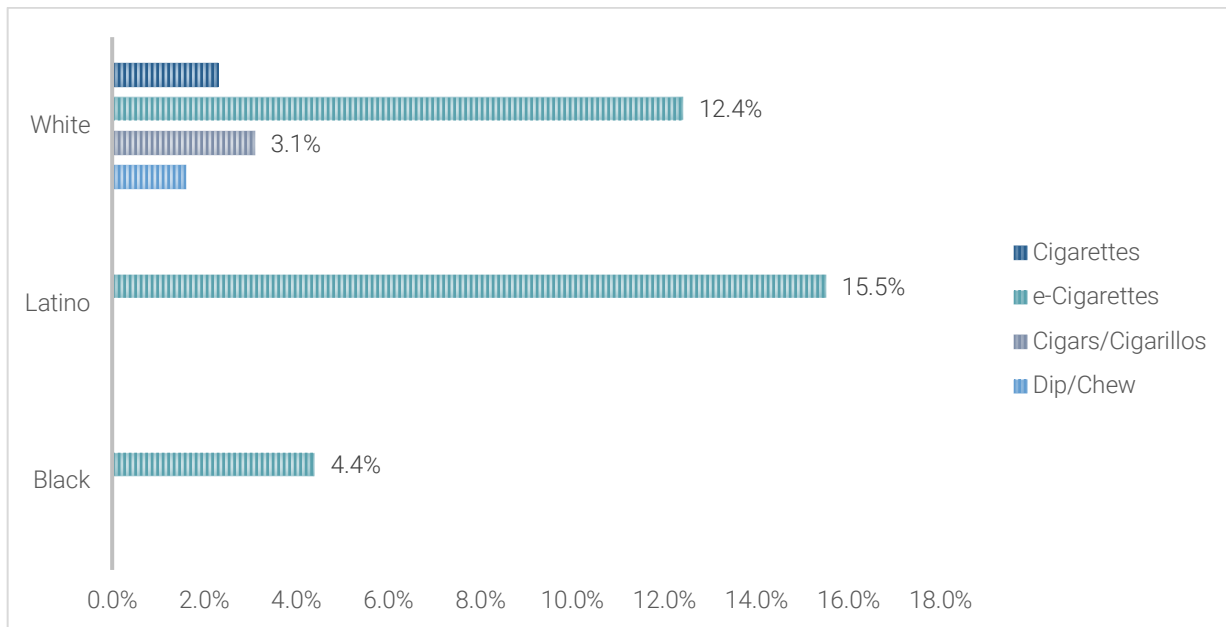


30-DAY TOBACCO USE BY RACE/ETHNICITY

There were also differences in tobacco use by race and ethnicity. Note that results for all substances are not included for Asian, Native American/Alaskan, Middle Eastern, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, or Other race/ethnicity due to small sample size. Figure 6 presents differences between white, black, and Latino youth in the sample for e-cigarette use only. **Latino youth were at a higher risk of e-cigarette use compared to White and Black youth.**

A consistent finding is that youth are using traditional cigarettes, dip, and chewing tobacco at lower rates in comparison to e-cigarettes.

Figure 6: 30-day tobacco use by race/ethnicity*



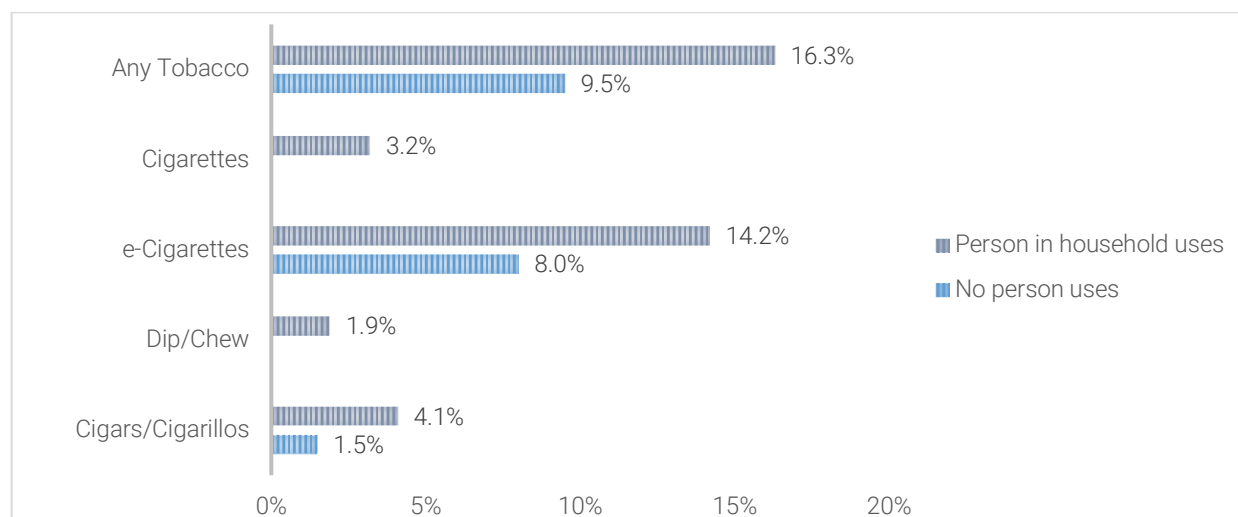
* Cell sizes n <10 omitted

TOBACCO USE IN THE HOME

Results of the study also indicated a correlation between the use of tobacco in the home by others and an individual youth's use of tobacco. Figure 7 presents this relationship across all forms of tobacco, including use of all tobacco products combined. Note that use of hookah is not provided due to small sample size.

Results indicate that having another person in the home using tobacco is strongly correlated with a youth's decision to use. In the case of e-cigarettes, 14.2% of youth report using e-cigarettes if someone else is using in the household, compared to 8.0% for those who report that no one else uses. **Of youth who reported that someone else in the household uses tobacco, 16.3% report using tobacco in some form themselves. Youth who reported that someone else in the household uses tobacco were significantly more likely to use tobacco than those who reported not having someone else in the household who uses tobacco ($p < 0.001$).**

Figure 7: Home tobacco use (any) and youth use by substance



ACCESS TO TOBACCO AND USE LOCATIONS FOR YOUTH UNDER 18

YDS data captured information on youth tobacco access as well as locations for use. Youth under 18 years old reported access to tobacco primarily through friendship networks and direct or indirect purchase.

- 39.4% Got it from a friend
- 17.9% Someone purchased it for them
- 12.4% Got it from a party
- 9.6% Bought it at a store themselves

Most youth reported using tobacco in informal social settings and with friends. Of youth tobacco users, 20.4% reported using tobacco at a friend's house, 15.2% at some other place, 14.5% at home alone, and 10.6% at home with friends. Some youth also reported using tobacco in a car (7.8%), at a party (5.9%), at a park or outside (5.1%), or at home with parents (4.7%).

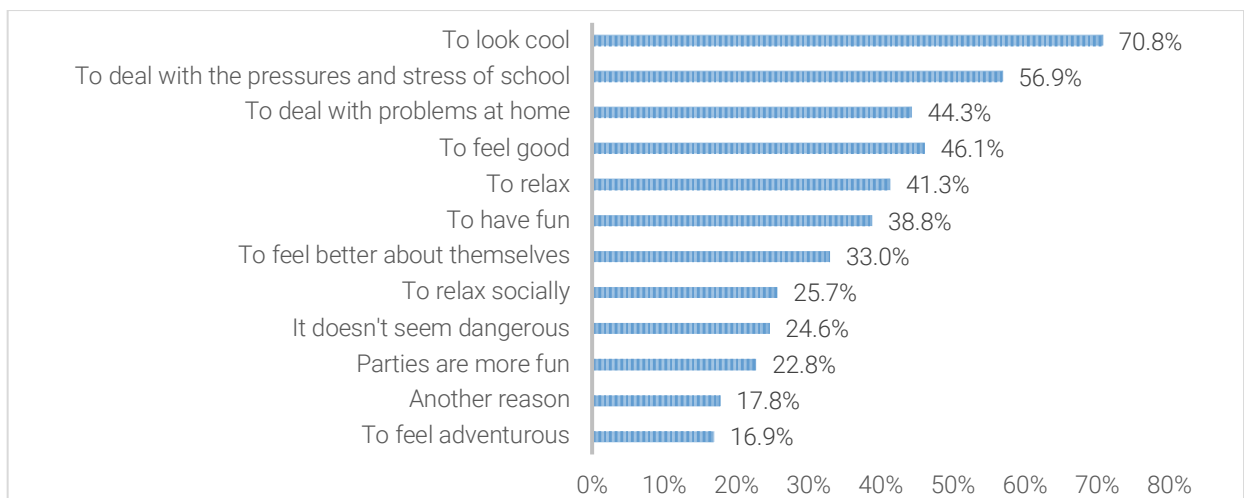
PARENT RULES AND TOBACCO USE

The YDS asked youth whether their parents had clear rules about the use of tobacco in their homes, and 77.4% of youth reported that they did. However, there was no statistically significant difference in tobacco use among youth who had parents with clear parental rules on tobacco use versus those who did not. These results should be interpreted with caution – it is possible that rules are used primarily as a response, rather than a precursor to, youth tobacco use.

PERCEPTIONS ON WHY YOUTH USE TOBACCO

Youth were invited to suggest why they thought others used tobacco products. “To look cool” was the primary reason cited by survey respondents. Youth were allowed to choose more than one response. However, the second and third reasons were dealing with the pressures and stress of school as well as to deal with problems at home, suggesting that **many youth see tobacco as a coping mechanism for the challenges they may be experiencing in their lives.**

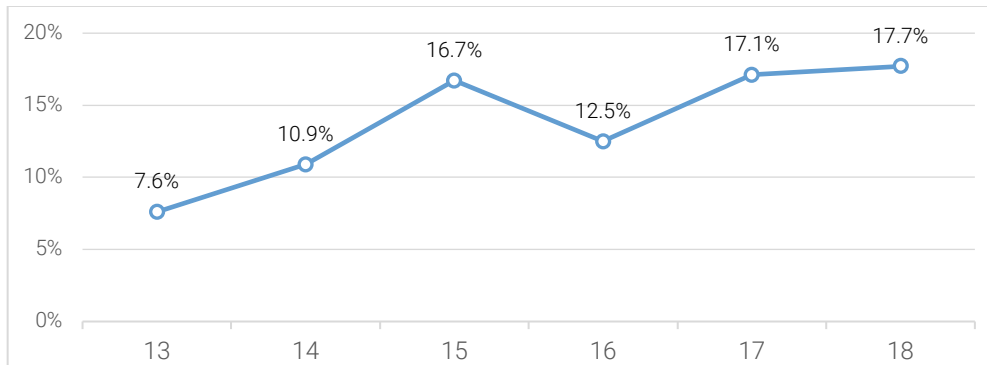
Figure 8: Reasons youth provided for others using tobacco



E-CIGARETTES

Data from the 2020 YDS are consistent with a the national trend of increasing e-cigarette use by youth as they get older. Figure 9 plots e-cigarette use by age. **By age 18, roughly 1 in 6 youth are using e-cigarettes.** The average age of onset for e-cigarette use is age 14.

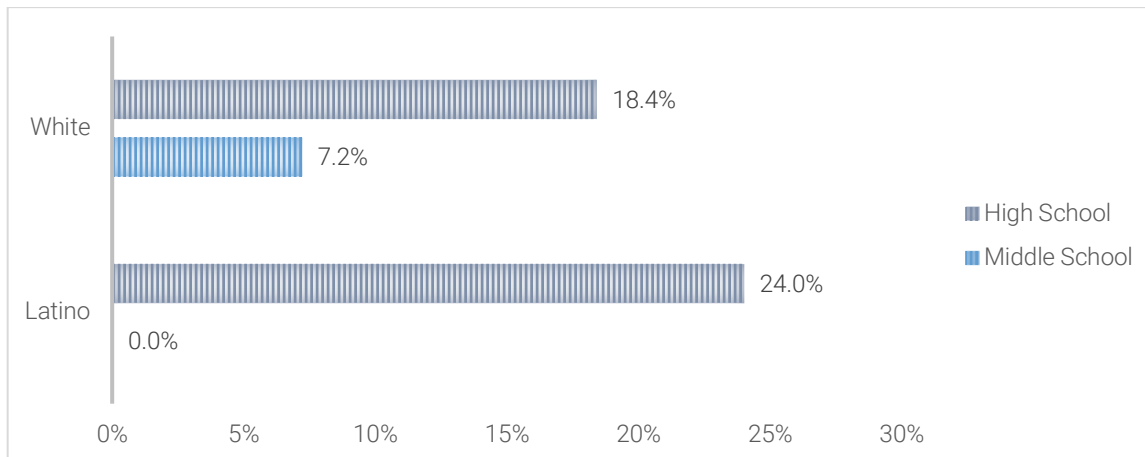
Figure 9: e-cigarette use by age



E-CIGARETTE USE BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND SCHOOL LEVEL

There are also differences in e-cigarette use and school type. Figure 10 presents these differences. Overall, Latino high-school aged youth are more at risk for e-cigarette use at 24% compared to 18.4% of White high-school aged youth. Among middle school youth, white youth use at 7.2%. Sample size numbers were too small to provide use data on Black, Asian, Native American/Alaskan, Middle Eastern, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Other.

Figure 10: 30-day e-cigarette use by race/ethnicity and school type



ALCOHOL

30-DAY ALCOHOL USE

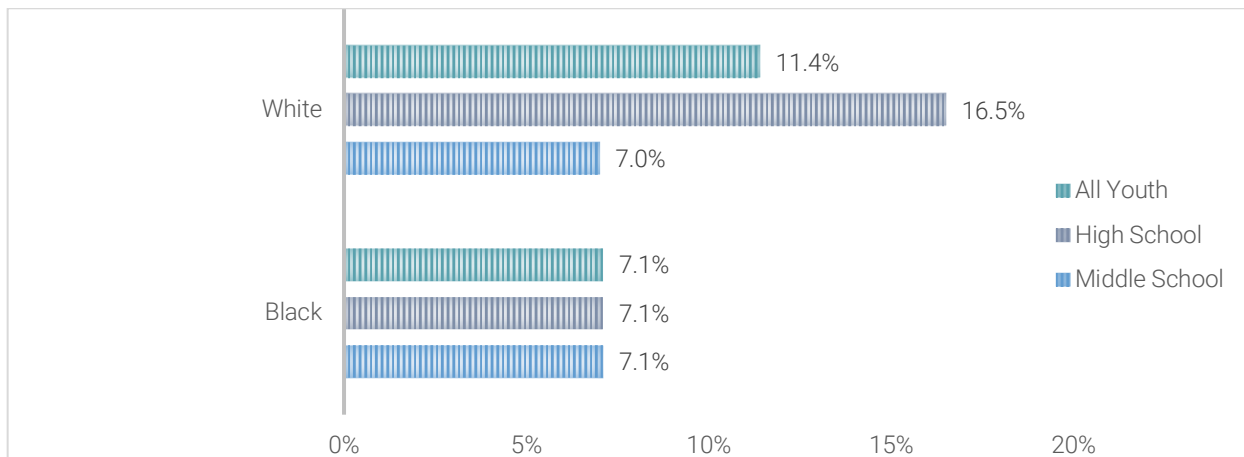
Table 2 presents the overall results for past 30-day alcohol use, defined as having one or more drinks of an alcoholic beverage (beer, wine, wine coolers, liquor).

Table 2: 30-day alcohol use, by school type

Question: How often in the past 30 days have you had one or more drinks of an alcoholic beverage (beer, wine, wine coolers, liquor)?			
	Never Used	Used, but not in the past 30 days	Used in the past 30 days
Middle School	84.4%	8.8%	6.8%
High School	62.5%	24.1%	13.4%
All Respondents	74.3%	15.9%	9.9%

In addition to differences between high school and middle school youth, there were also differences across racial and ethnic lines (see Figure 11). White high school youth were at greater risk for 30-day alcohol use compared to Black High School youth. Alcohol use for all other races are not included due to small sample size.

Figure 11: 30-day alcohol use by race/ethnicity and school type

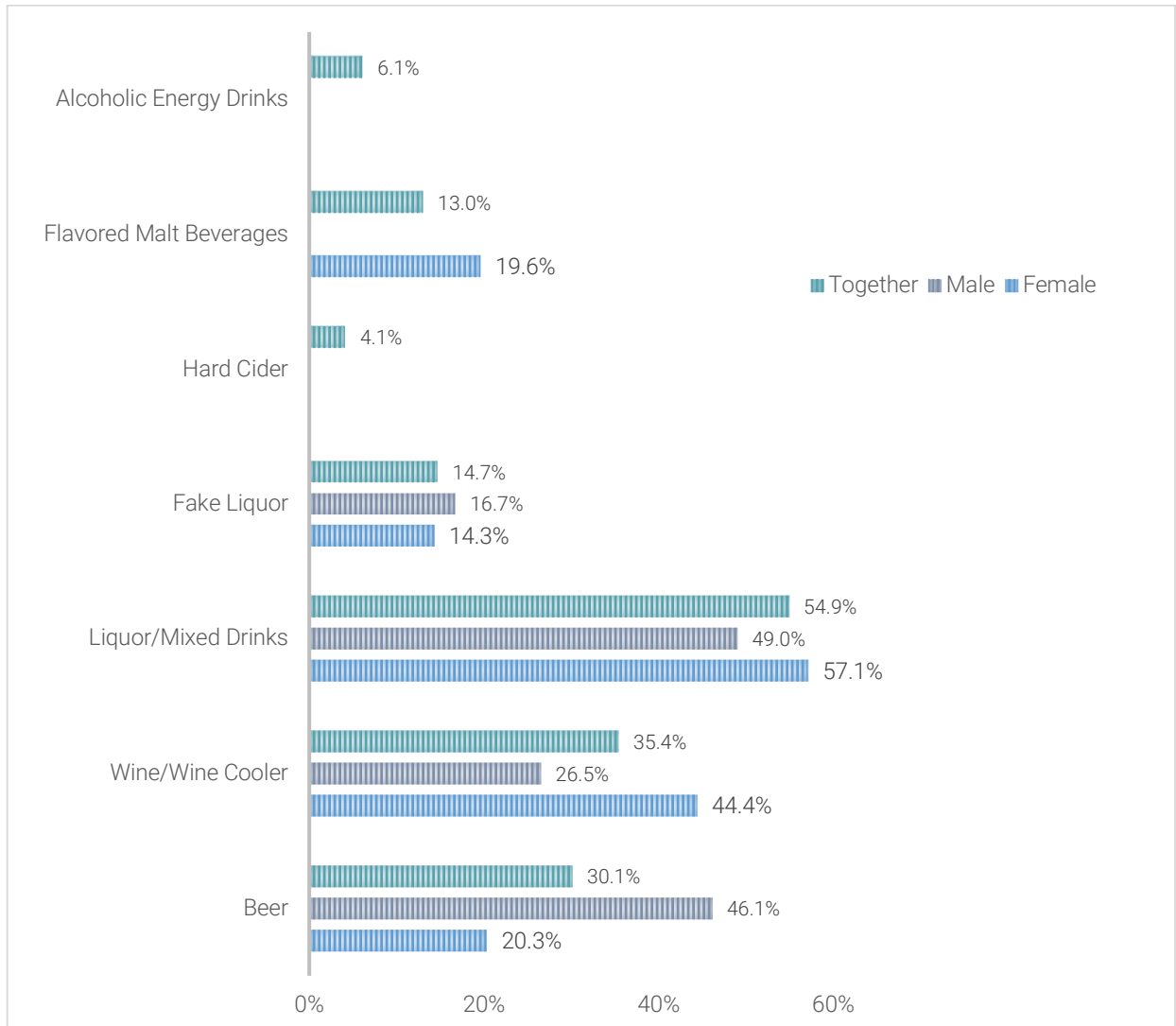


Note: *Cell sizes n < 10 omitted

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN DRINK TYPE

The survey asked youth who used alcohol to report on the type of alcohol they used. Figure 12 reports the results of these drink choices together and by gender (male, female, and other). **Male youth were more likely to choose beer while female youth were more likely to choose wine/wine coolers and flavored malt beverages.** Of all the alcohol types, liquor/mixed drinks were the main type of alcohol used by youth. Note that youth who preferred not to respond to the gender question were not included due to small sample size.

Figure 12: Gender differences in drink type



*Cell sizes n < 10 omitted

AGE OF ONSET

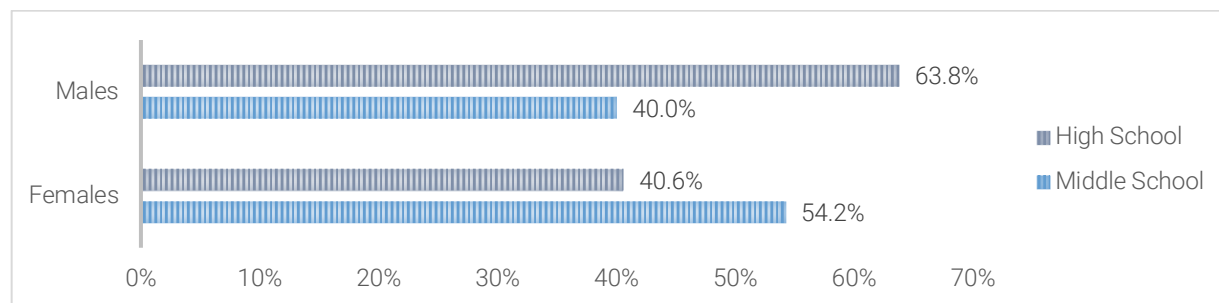
Youth reported on the age they first tried alcohol. The average age of onset for users was 14 years old. **Of those who reported starting alcohol use before age 14, 41% reported using alcohol in the past 30 days.**

30-DAY ALCOHOL USE: BINGE DRINKING

Survey respondents described binge-drinking behaviors, defined as having 4 or more drinks of alcohol for females or 5 or more drinks of alcohol for males, on a single occasion. On average, 5.1% of middle and high school females and 5.0% of middle and high school males reported binge drinking in the past 30 days.

Female binge drinking rates continue to rise. Figure 13 presents binge-drinking rates among youth who reported using alcohol in the past 30 days. Among middle and high school youth, between 1 in 3 and 1 in 2 youth who report using alcohol also report engaging in binge drinking behaviors. Of youth who binge drink, most reported binge drinking 1-5 days a month.

Figure 13: Binge drinking rates among middle and high school males and females who reported using alcohol in the past 30 days

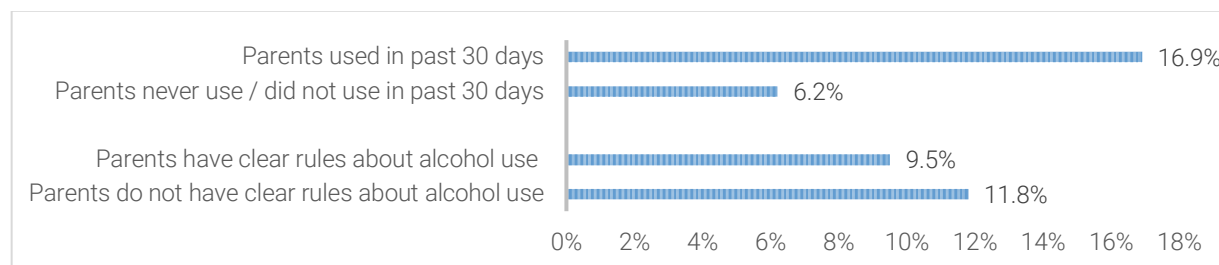


*Cell sizes for nongender conforming youth were omitted due to small sample size.

PARENTAL INFLUENCE

A trend in the data suggests that both parental rules about alcohol use and parental use of alcohol in front of their children are related to a youth's 30-day alcohol use. Figure 14 presents these results. Middle and high school youth who reported their parents using alcohol in front of them were almost three times as likely to use alcohol themselves in comparison to youth who reported their parents have never used alcohol or have not used alcohol in the past 30 days. There were no statistically significant differences between youth who reported their parents had specific rules about alcohol than those who did not, though we interpret these data with caution as it is possible that parents are more likely to be explicit with rules around child alcohol use after their child begins using.

Figure 14: Parent influence and 30-day youth alcohol use



ACCESS TO ALCOHOL AND USE LOCATIONS

Youth in the YDS sample further indicated that parents were a primary source of alcohol access, and that at home with parent supervision was the primary location where youth consumed alcohol. Figure 15 presents where youth accessed alcohol the last time they got it, for those youth who used alcohol in the past 30 days. **Over a third of the sample reported that they either got alcohol from their parents or from their home**, while others accessed alcohol at a party or via peer friendships.

Figure 15: Reported location of access to alcohol during last use

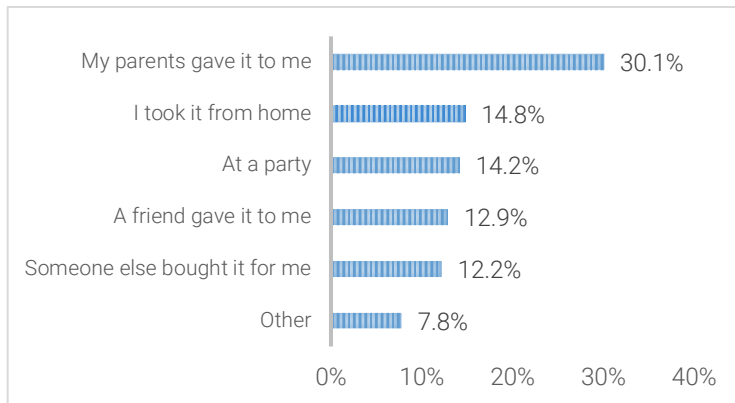
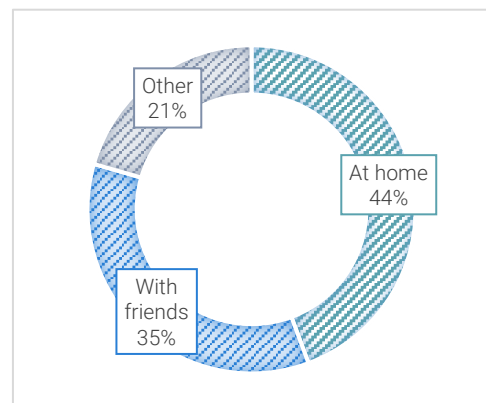


Figure 16: Alcohol use by location

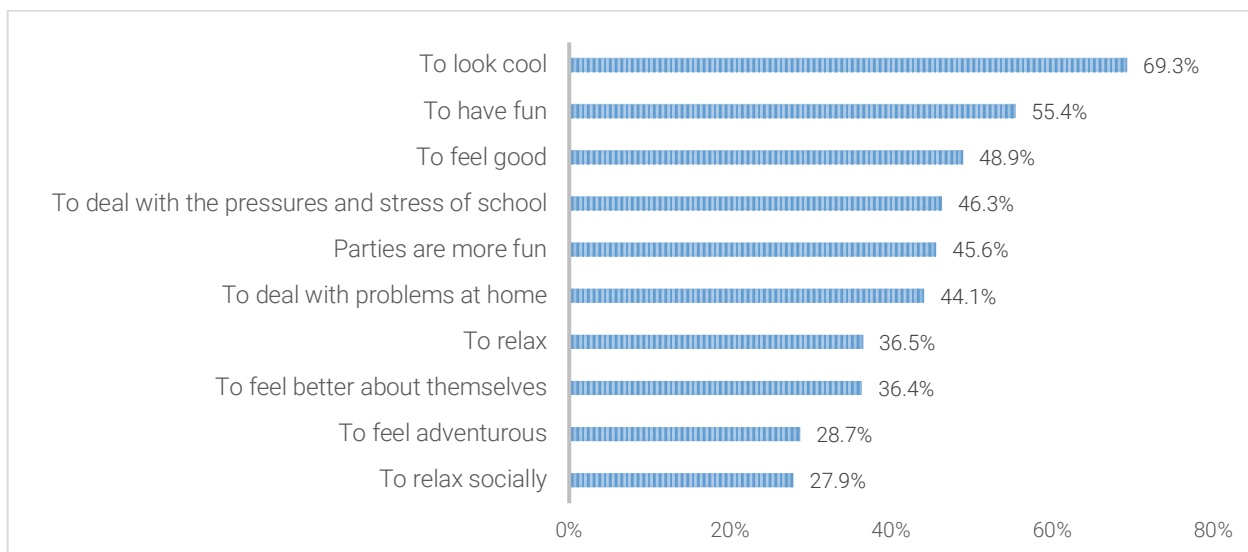


Parallel results are observed when asking youth where they used alcohol the last time they drank it (Figure 16). **The majority of youth (44%) reported that they used alcohol at home, whether with parents, with friends, or alone**, while 35% used it with friends, and 21% selected other locations, including parks, restaurants, in a car, concerts and events, or other locations. Among those who reported using alcohol at home, the majority reported using alcohol with their parents.

PERCEPTIONS ON WHY YOUTH USE ALCOHOL

Figure 17 present results of why youth thought others used alcohol, with “to look cool” as the #1 choice.

Figure 17: Reasons youth provided for others using alcohol



ALCOHOL AT PUBLIC EVENTS

The YDS asked youth specifically about use of alcohol at concerts or festivals as well as at sporting events. Of youth who reported using alcohol in the past 30 days, 29.9% had used alcohol at a concert or festival sometime in the past and 6.5% had used alcohol at a professional sporting event sometime in the past. These rates indicate that **access through public events, particularly concerts or festivals may be a concern.**

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Increasing attention has been given to the rise of prescription drug use and its relationship to the opioid epidemic. The YDS asked youth to report their own use as well as attitudes and behaviors toward prescription drug misuse. Results indicate that roughly 1 in 4 youth have a medication prescription, while 6.5% report using a prescription drug without a prescription.

26.8% have a prescription
6.9% have used prescription drugs without a prescription

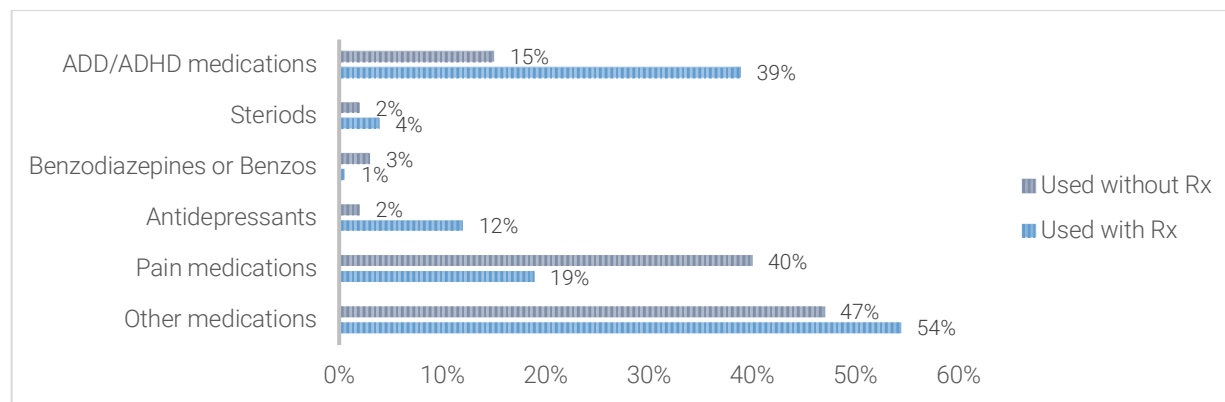
For all prescription drug questions, each category of prescription drug was defined as follows:

A prescription drug is a medicine or drug that is dispensed legally from a pharmacy. Some examples of these drugs include pain medications (e.g. Hydrocodone, OxyContin, Vicodin), ADD/ADHD medications (e.g. Adderall, Ritalin), steroids (e.g. Cortisone, Prednisolone, Androstenedione), Benzodiazepines or "Benzos" (e.g. Valium, Xanax), and antidepressants (e.g. Zoloft, Prozac, Celexa, Lexapro).

The YDS also asked both youth using prescription medications with a prescription and those using prescription medications without a prescription to report on the types of medications they use (Figure 18). Of note, **18.9% of youth using a prescription medication had a prescribed pain medication**, and 40% of youth were using prescription medications without a prescription were using prescription pain medications. These results indicate that youth are using prescription pain medications without a prescription at higher rates relative to other medications.

A slightly different pattern emerged with ADD/ADHD medications and antidepressants. 39% of youth had a prescription for an ADD/ADHD medication, and 15% of youth who used prescription drugs without a prescription were using an ADD/ADHD medication. These results indicate that ADD/ADHD medications are prescribed to youth at higher rates relative to other medications. Additionally, the pattern of 12% and 2%, respectively, emerged for antidepressants. Having a prescription for "other" prescription medications was also reported for 54.4% of youth, and 47% of youth were using "other" prescription medications without a prescription. Taken together, these results indicate that prescription drug patterns are different between users who have and users who do not have a prescription.

Figure 18: Youth self-report of drug type among youth using prescription drugs with and without a prescription



In addition to use, the survey asked questions related to misuse and sharing of prescription drugs. Of youth using these types of prescription drugs, **1.7% report having sold their medication to others and 7.6% report having taken more than prescribed.**

30-DAY USE OF RX DRUGS WITHOUT A PRESCRIPTION

Table 3 presents 30-day youth use of prescription drugs without a prescription, including pain and ADD/ADHD medications. In general, rates of misuse among middle school youth were slightly higher than those among high school youth.

Table 3: 30-day use of prescription drugs without a prescription, by school type

Question: How often in the past 30 days have you used prescription drug without a prescription?			
	Never Used	Used, but not in the past 30 days	Used in the past 30 days
Middle School	83.4%	7.9%	8.7%
High School	85.6%	9.6%	4.8%
All Respondents	84.4%	8.7%	6.9%

USE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS: REASONS, ACCESS, AND USE PATTERNS

Youth in the YDS were asked to report on the reasons they use prescription drugs without a prescription, how they access these substances, and where they use them.

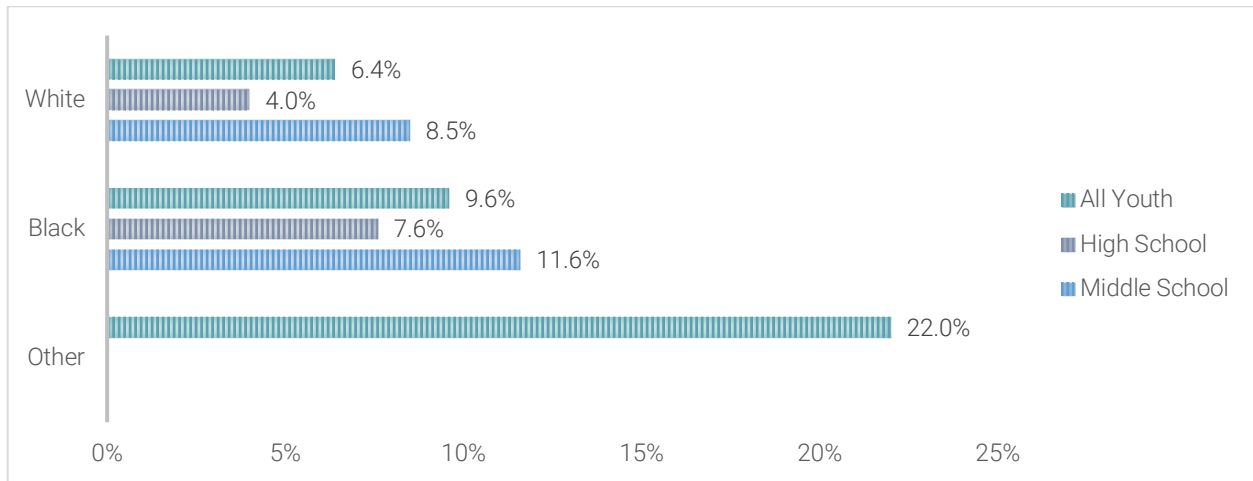
- 46.7%** To deal with the pressures and stress of school
- 45.7%** To feel good
- 44.8%** To deal with problems at home
- 44.7%** To relax
- 36.2%** To feel better about themselves

Regarding access, most youth obtained prescription drugs from their parents (70.3%), followed by receiving it from a friend (10.9%), taking it from home (7.8%) buying it from a store (6.3%), or another place (3.1%). Most youth reported using it at home with a parent (78.9%) or at home alone (6.8%).

DIFFERENCES IN PRESCRIPTION DRUG USE WITHOUT A PRESCRIPTION BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND SCHOOL TYPE

There were also modest differences by race/ethnicity and 30-day use of prescription drugs without a prescription. Figure 19 presents these differences, suggesting that **Middle Eastern, Native American/Alaskan, and Latino youth had the highest rates of use.**

Figure 19: 30-day non-prescribed Rx use by race/ethnicity and school type*

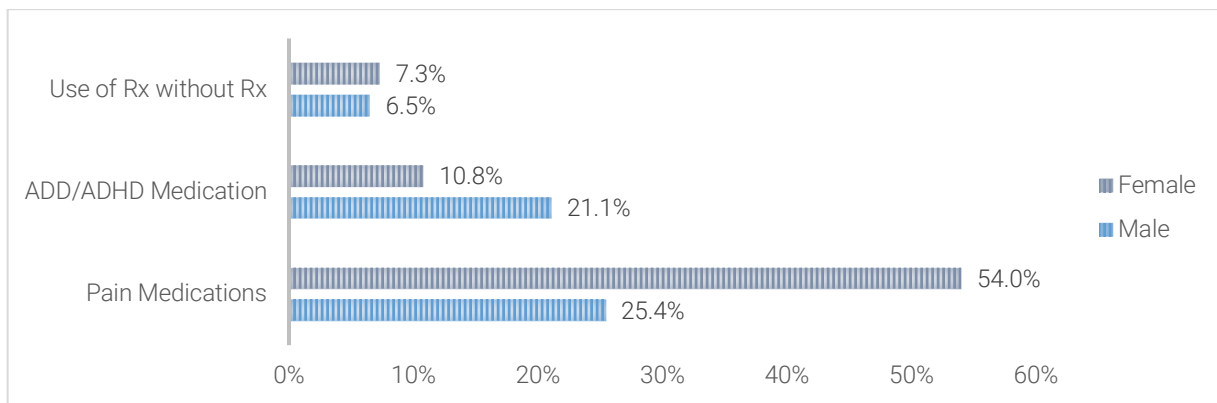


*Cell sizes n <10 omitted

AGE AND GENDER AS A PREDICTOR OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG USE

Several patterns emerged between gender and prescription drug use (see Figure 20). Among users, young women were more likely to use pain medications and young men were more likely to use ADD/ADHD medication.

Figure 20: Gender and Rx use without Rx



MARIJUANA

30-DAY MARIJUANA USE

Table 4 presents the results for past 30-day marijuana use for middle school, high school, and all youth.

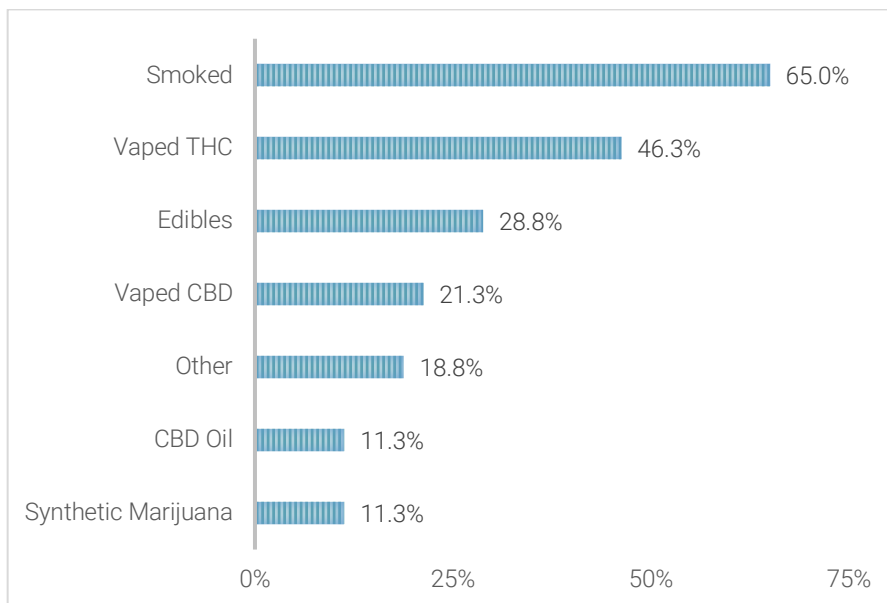
Table 4: Marijuana 30-day use, by school type

Question: How often in the past 30 days have you used marijuana (weed, pot, grass)?			
	Never Used	No times in the past 30 days	Used in the past 30 days
Middle School	92.1%	4.4%	3.6
High School	78.9%	14.0%	7.1%
All Respondents	86.0%	8.8%	5.2%

MARIJUANA USE TYPE

Youth were asked to report on the types of marijuana they used and had the option to select more than one type. Of youth who used marijuana in the past 30 days, the majority smoked it (65%), though more than half (51%) reported using more than one form of marijuana. In the 2020 YDS, questions related to vaping of THC and CBD were included for the first time, with Vaped THC emerging (46.3%) as one of the top forms of marijuana use alongside edibles (28.8%).

Figure 21: Marijuana use by type



*Cell sizes n <10 omitted

ACCESS TO MARIJUANA AND USE LOCATIONS

Youth were asked to report how they access marijuana. Of those who reported ever using marijuana:

- 55.7% Got it from a friend
- 8.9% Got it at a party

Smaller groups of youth reported accessing marijuana through other means.

Youth also reported on where they used marijuana the last time they used it. The primary use locations included at a friend's house (21.3%), at home with friends (13.8%), in a car (10%), and at a park or outside (8.8%). Approximately 6.3% of youth also indicated that they used marijuana at a party – whether at their own, a friend, or a stranger's home.

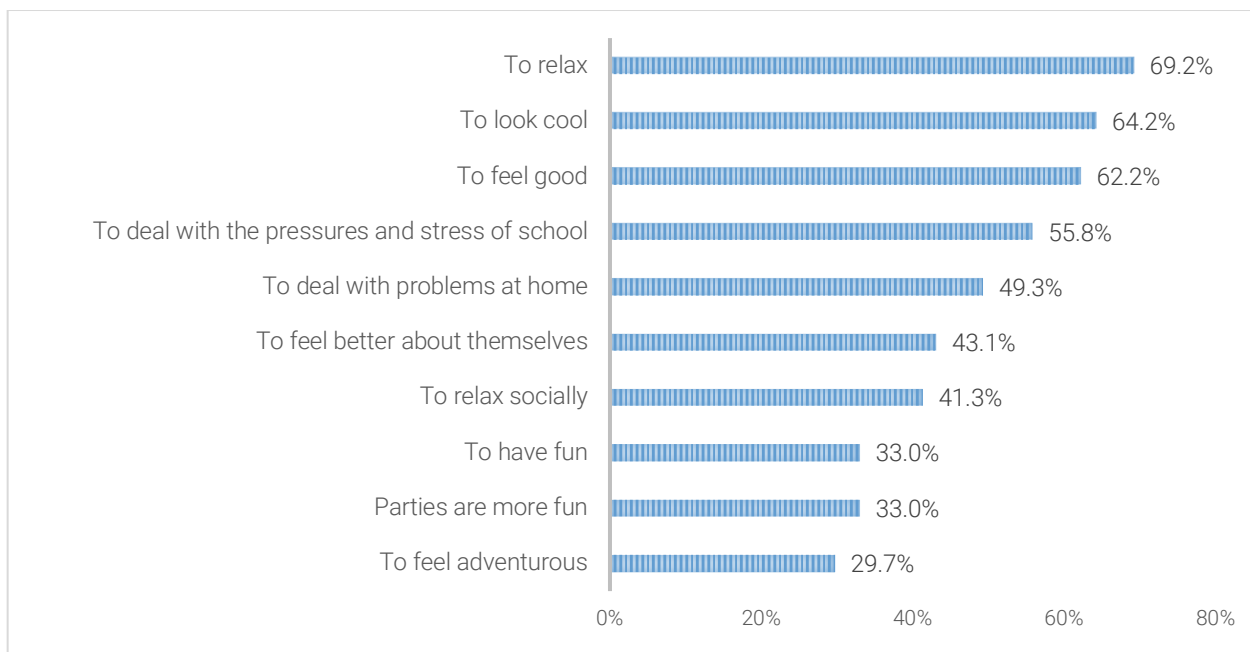
MARIJUANA USE IN THE HOME

A relationship was found between the use of marijuana in the home by others and an individual youth's use of marijuana. Of interest, when both someone over and under 18 years of age is using marijuana, on average 35.4% of youth use marijuana themselves, compared to only 8.1% of youth who do not report another user in the household. Taken together, **these findings suggest a strong relationship between home use by others (parents, siblings, and others) and a youth's decision to use marijuana.**

WHY MARIJUANA IS USED

Figure 22 presents self-reported results of youth sharing why they believe others use marijuana. "To relax," "to look cool," and "to feel good" were the top three reasons selected.

Figure 22: Reasons youth provided for others using marijuana



OTHER SUBSTANCE USE

The 2020 YDS also collected data on other drug use. Table 5 presents the results of these findings, including the use rates and the median age of onset for each substance. Alcoholic energy drinks were the most frequently used substance, with other substances used by fewer than 2.5% of youth.

Table 5: Substance use frequency

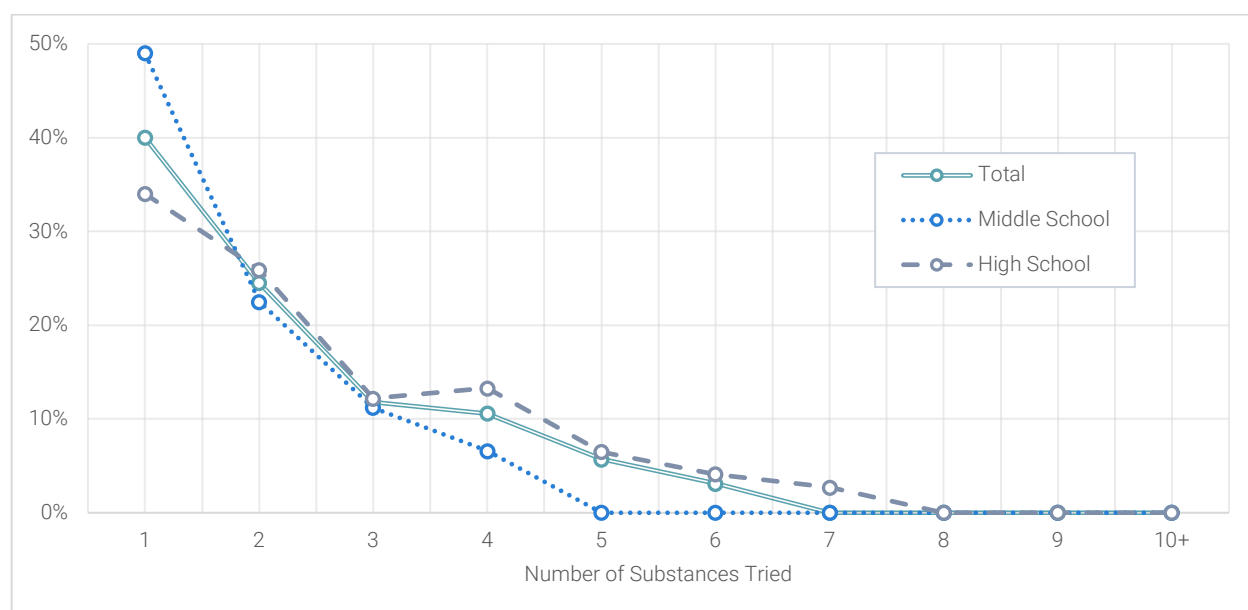
	Median age of Onset	% Used in the past 30 days
Cocaine (powder, crack, freebase)	*	*
Methamphetamines (speed, crystal, meth, crank, chalk, ice)	&	*
Synthetic Marijuana (K2, Spice, fake weed, King Kong, Yucatan Fire, Skunk, Moon rocks)	14	0.7%
Inhalants (glue, paints or sprays, aerosol spray cans)	11	2.2%
Alcoholic Energy Drinks (Four Loco, Tilt)	14	3.2
Hallucinogens (LSD, salvia, mushrooms, Acid, tabs)	15	2.2%
Heroin (smack, junk, China White)	*	*
Ecstasy (Molly, E, X, MDMA)	13	0.7%

*Cell sizes <10 omitted

TRYING MULTIPLE SUBSTANCES

Figure 23 presents data for how many substances youth who use report having tried. Each respondent was offered 15 substances to choose from, with tobacco products making up 5 different options (e.g. combustible cigarette, e-cigarette, dip/chew, etc.). The majority of all users have only tried one or two substances.

Figure 23: Number of substances tried by total, middle, and high school youth

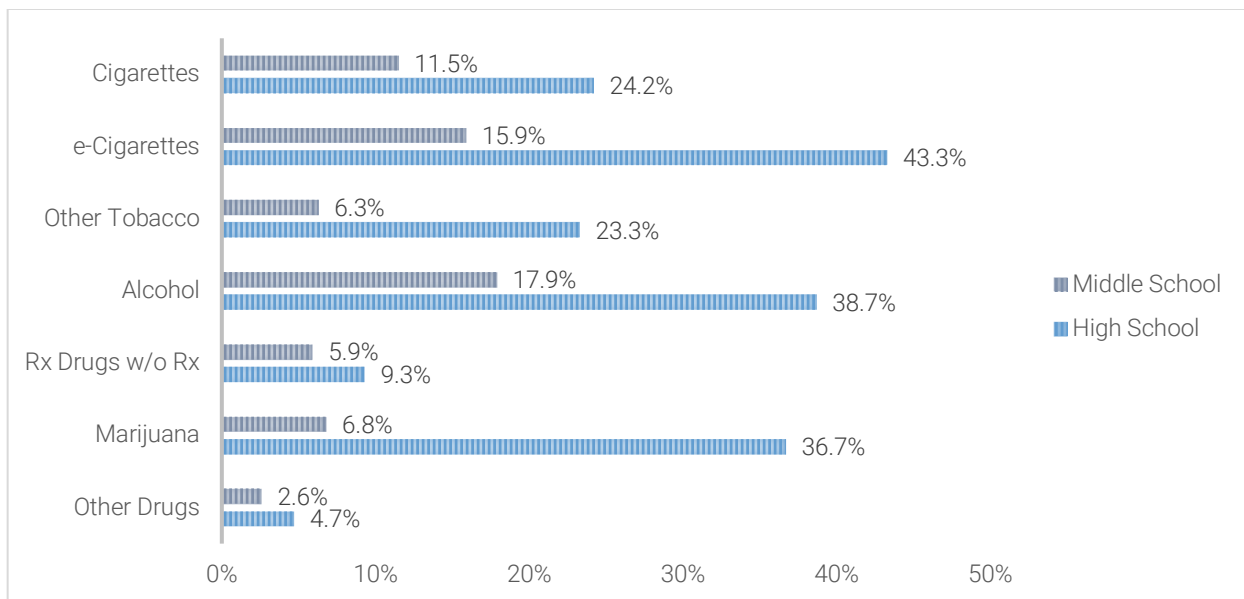


YOUTH BEHAVIOR AND PERCEPTIONS

ACCESS

Figure 24 presents how youth perceive ease of access to six substances, separated by middle and high school grade levels. For all tobacco categories, youth above 18 years of age were removed from the sample, to remove the potential effects of access through legal purchase. **E-cigarettes (43.3%), alcohol (38.7%), and marijuana (36.7%) emerged as the substances that youth report as easiest to obtain.** The next easiest to access were cigarettes and other tobacco. The more difficult substances for youth to access were prescription medications without a prescription and other drugs.

Figure 24: Percent of middle and high school youth who report access as "fairly easy" or "very easy"

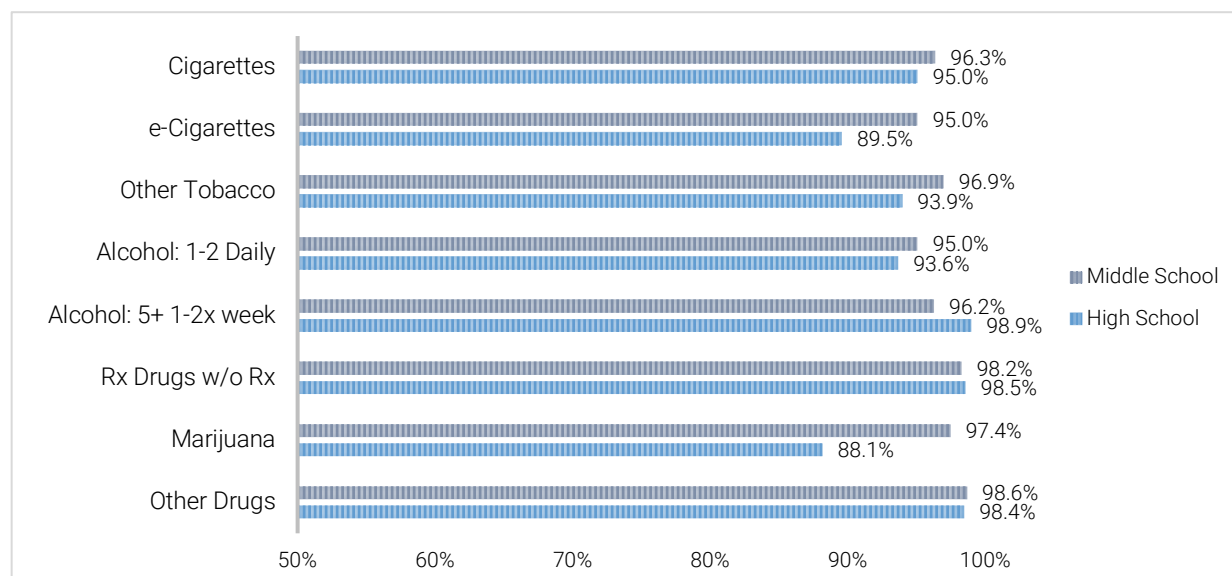


PARENT DISAPPROVAL

Youth in the survey were asked to report on their parents' level of disapproval, responding to the question "How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to use [substance]", with response choices "not at all wrong", "a little bit wrong", "wrong", or "very wrong". Figure 25 presents rates of parental disapproval for each substance, measured as those who reported that their parents would say that is "wrong" or "very wrong" to use, separated between middle and high school youth. Across substances, the majority of youth reported consistently that their parents would disapprove of their use of substances.

However, rates do vary by substance. For example, among high school youth, 88.1% reported that their parents would disapprove of their use of marijuana and 89.5% that they would disapprove of e-cigarette use, each at rates lower than other substances.

Figure 25: Percentage of middle and high school youth who say their parents would say it is "wrong" or "very wrong" to use the substance

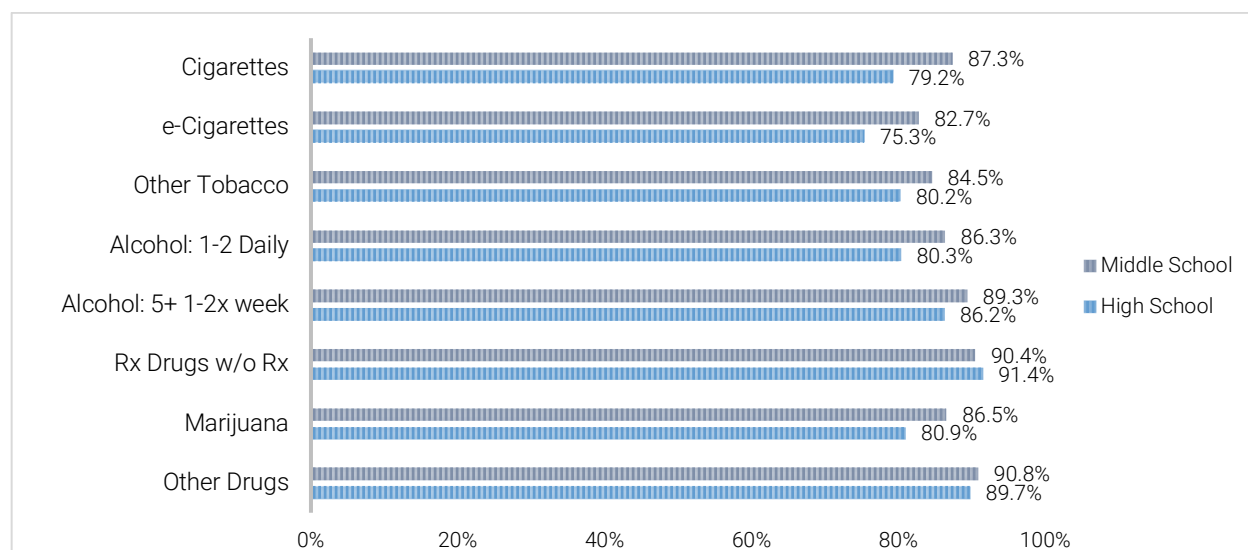


PEER DISAPPROVAL

Youth were also asked to report on how they viewed their peer's perception of their own use of various substances. Youth were asked how wrong their friends would feel it would be for them to use each substance. Figure 26 presents the percentage of youth who indicated that it would be "wrong" or "very wrong" to use the substance as described.

Between 3 of 4 and 4 of 5 middle school youth reported that their friends would have found it "wrong" or "very wrong" for them to use most substances. There was greater variance, however, among high school youth. In particular, only 75.3% of high school youth reported that their friends would think it was "wrong" or "very wrong" for them to use e-cigarettes, while 79.2% reported the same for cigarettes.

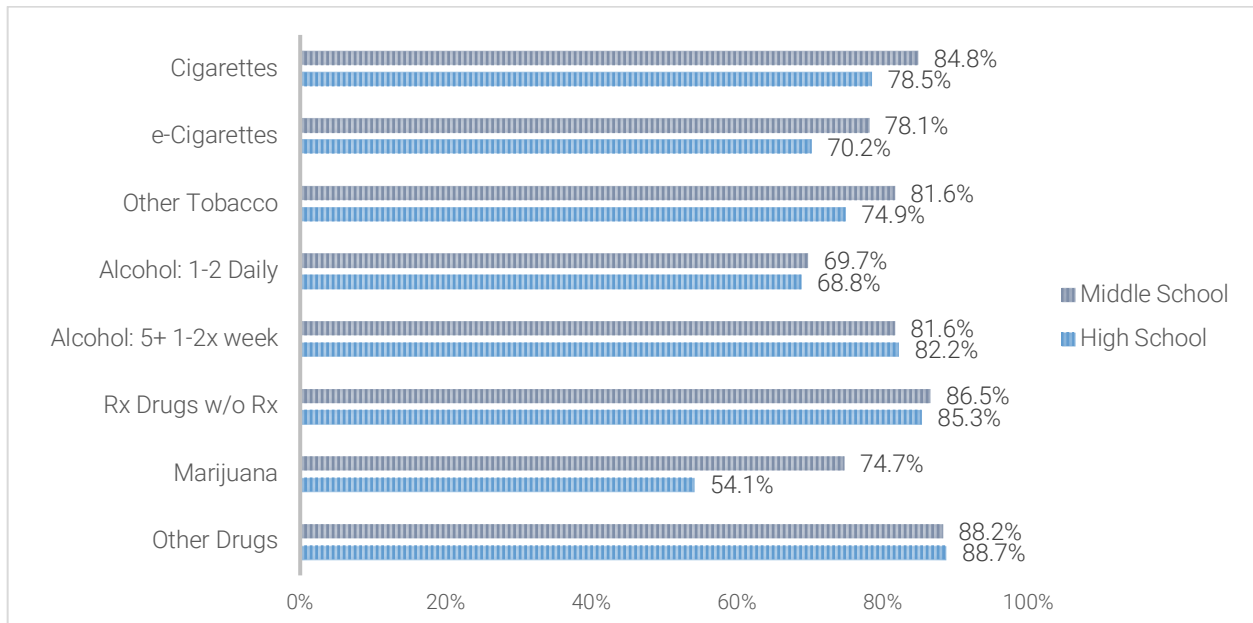
Figure 26: Peer disapproval



PERCEIVED RISK

Youth were asked to report on their own perceptions of substance use risk. Figure 27 summarizes these responses, including the percentage of youth who reported that there was “moderate” or “great” risk to using each of the substances. Perception of risk for marijuana was lower than other substances – only 54.1% of high school youth indicated that there was “moderate” or “great” risk to using marijuana.

Figure 27: Perceived Risk



PERCEPTIONS OF USE

Figure 28 presents youth perceptions of their peers’ use – the number of youth reporting that “several”, “many”, or “all of” their peers used the listed substance. High school youth perceived e-cigarettes (31.3%) and marijuana (29.6%) to be used by more of their friends in comparison to other substances.

Figure 28: Percentage of youth who say “several”, “many”, or “all of” their friends use the substance

