

ARLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL
2016 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Introduction

On January 27, 2016, the Arlington Public Schools and the Arlington Youth Health and Safety Coalition administered the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) to Arlington High School (AHS) students. In total, 1051 AHS students completed the survey. The survey contained 120 questions, and covered a broad range of health topics. Selected results from the various topic areas are summarized below.

Reliability of survey responses

Often, students (and adults) will question the credibility of YRBS data, believing their peers provide false information on the survey. However, research has found that, because participation in the survey is voluntary and anonymous, students are predisposed to be truthful. In addition, there are internal checks in the survey to identify inconsistencies among individual student's responses. Over the years, YRBS data have been consistent with other survey data, as well as with national health outcomes. Likewise, YRBS findings are often consistent with community expectations of youth behavior patterns. For example, sexual activity and substance use are more prevalent among 12th graders than 9th graders.

Personal Safety & Violence

In the previous 30 days

- 13% of students report riding in a car with someone who had been drinking alcohol. (16% in 2013, 20% in 2011)
- 5% report driving a car or other vehicle when they had been drinking. (no change since 2011)

In the previous 12 months:

- 12% of students report having engaged in a physical fight. (15% in 2013, 16% in 2011)
- 9% report having property stolen or deliberately damaged by others during the school day. (11% in 2013, 19% in 2011)

Being bullied in the previous 12 months

- 9% of students report being bullied on their way to/from school. (8% in 2013, 12% in 2011)
- 13% report being bullied during the school day. (14% in 2013, 18% in 2011)
- 14% report being bullied through electronic communication. (no change since 2013, 18% in 2011)

Bullying others in the previous 12 months

- 4% of students report bullying others on their way to/from school. (no change since 2013, 6% in 2011)
- 6% report bullying others during the school day. (7% in 2013, 9% in 2011)
- 6% report bullying others through electronic communication. (no change since 2013, 9% in 2011)

Dating Violence

- 14% of students report having ever been verbally or emotionally abused by someone they dated. (15% in 2013, 19% in 2011)
- 5% report having been physically assaulted by someone they dated. (no change since 2013, 8% in 2011)

Social & Emotional Health

Stress, Pressure & Support

- 59% of students maintain a course load of "honors and AP" or "mostly honors".
- 41% of students report feeling they are under too much stress "most of the time or always". (36% in 2013, 38% in 2011)
 - ~ 58% report homework or the academic school day is the greatest source of stress.
 - ~ 26% report high parental expectations are also a source of stress.
- 52% of students report using exercise or relaxation activities (reading, TV, music, etc.) most to deal with stress.
- 10% of students report feeling hopeless or discouraged about the future "most of the time or always".

Self-Esteem & Fitting in

- 16% of students worry they are not good at anything "most of the time or always". (12% in 2013, 10% in 2011)

Self-Harm

- 19% of students report hurting themselves on purpose (cuts, burns) in the past year. (17% in 2013, 19% in 2011)

Suicide

Suicide in the previous 12 months

- 14% of students report having seriously considered attempting suicide. (12% in 2013, 14% in 2011)
- 13% report having made a plan about how they would attempt suicide. (11% in 2013, 12% in 2011)
- 8% report attempting suicide at least once within the past 12 months. (7% in 2013, 7% in 2011)

Substance Use

Tobacco Use

- 87% of students report having never tried a cigarette (not even a puff). (80% in 2013, 74% in 2011)
- 92% report having not smoked a cigarette during the previous 30 days. (93% in 2013, 88% in 2011)
- 83% report having never used an electronic cigarette (e-cig or vape).
- 91% report having never used an e-cig during the previous 30 days.

Alcohol Use

- 42% of students report having never had more than a sip of alcohol (other than for religious purposes). (47% in 2013, 41% in 2011)
- 64% report having not had a drink of alcohol during the previous 30 days. (70% in 2013, 65% in 2011)
- 83% report having not had 5 or more drinks in a row (within a couple hours) during the previous 30 days. (84% in 2013, 79% in 2011)

Marijuana Use

- 68% of students report having never used marijuana. (71% in 2013, 66% in 2011)
- 79% report having not used marijuana in the previous 30 days. (84% in 2013, 78% in 2011)

Misuse of Prescription Drugs

- 93% report having not used prescription drugs not prescribed to them in the previous 30 days. (90% in 2013)
- 93% report having never taken an over the counter drug (i.e. cough medicine) to get high. (no change since 2011)

Other Drug Use

- 97% of students report having never used heroin. (no change since 2011)
- 97% report having never used any form of cocaine. (95% in 2013, 93% in 2011)
- 96% report having never used a hallucinogen. (93% in 2013, 93% in 2011)

Sexuality

- 13% of students report being gay/lesbian, bisexual, or uncertain about their sexuality.
- 21% report ever having sexual intercourse. (22% in 2013, 25% in 2011)
- 30% report having ever engaged in oral sex. (31% in 2013, 34% in 2011)
- 10% report having had 2 or more sexual partners in their lifetime. (no change since 2013, 15% in 2011)
- 25% report engaging in sexting in the past 12 months. (22% in 2013, 22% in 2011)
- 13% report having experienced sexual intercourse or sexual touching against their will. (no change since 2013)

Physical Fitness & Nutrition

Nutrition

- 74% of students report caring about eating in a healthy way "most of the time or always". (75% in 2013)
- 41% report AHS food options "rarely" or "never" enable them to eat healthy during school. (37% in 2013, 47% in 2011)

Body Image

- 17% of students report being concerned about their weight "most of the time or always". (no change since 2013)
- 9% report having gone without eating for 24 hours or more to lose weight. (6% in 2013)

Physical Activity

- 58% of students report participating in a school-sponsored athletic team in the past 12 months.
- 49% report spending 3 or more hours a day in front of a screen (i.e. TV, internet), not including homework. (42% in 2013)