

# Herkimer County Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey

2021-2022 School Year



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# Overview and Methodology

## Acknowledgements

The creation, administration, and analysis of this survey is a collaborative effort among organizations, agencies, and school districts across Herkimer County.

- ❖ **Herkimer County System of Care and SAMHSA**  
Sandra Bellasai, Project Director  
Christina Cain, Primary Investigator
- ❖ **Herkimer County Youth Bureau**  
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- ❖ **Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES**  
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- ❖ **Herkimer-Oneida Collaborative County Planning**  
James Genovese, Dana Crisino, Jeff Rehler, and Alex Turner
- ❖ **Herkimer County Integrated County Planning**  
Bonita Gibb, Strategic Planning Coordinator
- ❖ **Herkimer County School Districts**

# Overview and Methodology

The Herkimer County System of Care, in collaboration with the Herkimer County Youth Bureau, and Herkimer County Integrated County Planning, administered the Youth Risk Behavior Survey to 8 of the 11 school districts including BOCES Pathways in Herkimer County. Poland School District declined to participate as they use a different instrument in their district. Dolgeville Central School, Richfield Springs Central School, and Town of Webb Union Free School District declined to participate due to a lack of capacity to administer the survey in that school year. The Survey was administered during the first two weeks of January via Survey Monkey to students in grades 9-12. This link was distributed as a virtual homework assignment for PE and Health teachers. Students were offered the choice of “prefer not to answer” as a way to opt out and still get class credit for the assignment. A total of 1,550 students across the county participated, which is a 69% response rate.

While every effort was made to include all students in participating districts, students who receive alternative education, such as homeschooling or are enrolled in a private school, were not included in this survey.

For this survey, we used a modified version of the CDC’s Youth Risk Behavior Survey that was created by the state of Vermont and is recognized as a validated instrument by the CDC. The decision to use this survey, rather than the official CDC version, was due to the inclusion of several questions related to protective factors and perceptions of risk that are normally not included in the official CDC version of the survey. We also included questions about youth COVID experiences, Adverse Childhood Experiences, and expanded questions about mental health and bullying. The COVID related questions are intended to provide a snapshot of how youth perceive the pandemic and its impact on them and their families. These questions are only asked on the 2021-2022 survey.

Parents were notified prior to the survey and were given the option to opt their child out of the survey. Students were offered the option of “prefer not to answer” on the survey as a way of opting out of a particular question or the survey as a whole while still receiving credit for participating in the homework assignment.

Whenever possible, we report on genders and grades in the narrative as well as the graphs.

In order to maintain student anonymity, all data indicators that report 5 or less individuals are suppressed.

Comparisons between the two genders are completed using a chi-square test for significance.

Survey data was analyzed by Herkimer-Oneida Collaborative County Planning.

A weighted sample is not needed because the participation rate is sufficient to provide a representative sample of the county. The results of this survey are generalizable to the youth population of Herkimer County and allow for inferences to be drawn about the current high school population of Herkimer County.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, and the intermittent virtual learning environment, this survey was administered virtually via Survey Monkey. Whenever possible, we will provide trends related to the 2020 survey. Trend data is not applicable to all questions on this survey. Some questions are new to the survey, some have newly expanded response options, and others have changed their wording to include emerging issues.

Upon the recommendation of the statistician, we decided not to provide NY State Comparisons. The NY State Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) was conducted in 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown, quarantines, and virtual learning

# Overview and Methodology

environments. It can reasonably be argued that the social-emotional environments between the two survey years are so vastly different that any comparisons would be conjecture rather than statistically sound. A much deeper analysis than was conducted here would be needed to draw accurate comparisons.

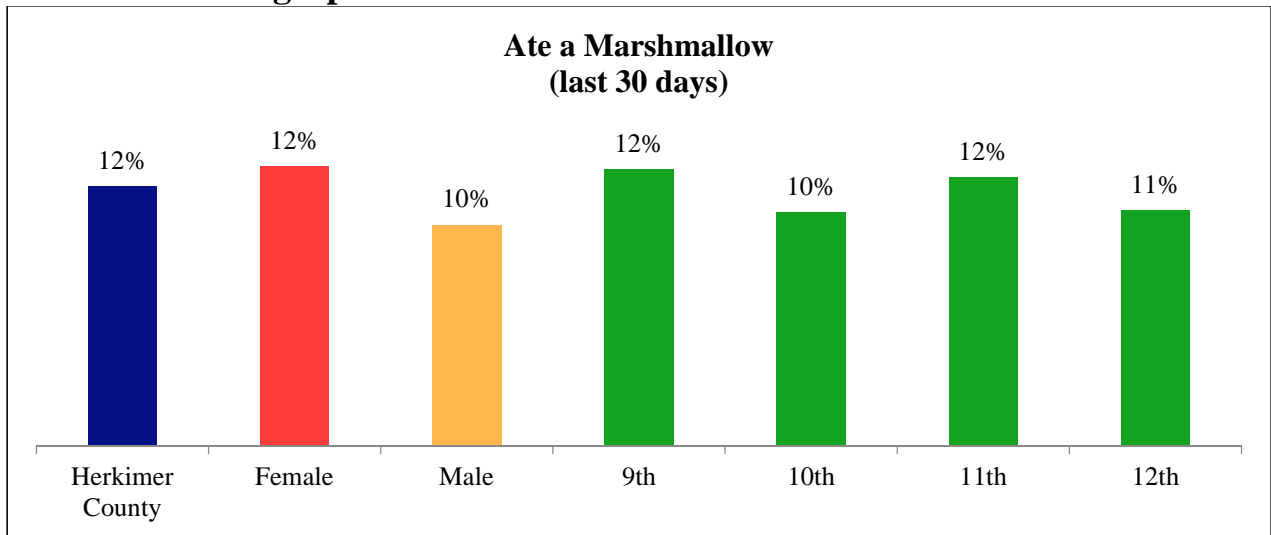
NYS conducted the state level YRBS in 2021. We anticipate being able to add state comparisons on the next Herkimer County YRBS report.

When possible, each district will receive a district level data report. The evaluation team and the Integrated County Planning office highly discourage districts from comparing results. The purpose of this survey is to describe what risk behaviors students are participating in. This survey does not answer the question of why the behavior occurs. Each district has its own unique strengths and challenges and therefore comparisons of outcomes at the individual district level would not provide meaningful information.

We encourage districts to reach out to youth, especially disenfranchised and unconnected youth, to help understand the why behind risk behaviors.

All analyses are completed using SPSS software.

## How to read the graphs



- All values are percentages that indicate participation in the behavior listed in the title. In this example, the title indicates that the values represent the percentage of youth who had eaten a marshmallow in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Statistical comparisons are offered for genders only. The red bar indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between males and females. In this example, more females than males had eaten a marshmallow in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Not all graphs will display grade or gender data due to low reporting rates.

## Participating school districts

All districts in the county were invited to participate. District participation rate was 67%, a reduction in previous participation. Poland Central School District typically declines to participate due to their utilization of a similar internal analysis they conduct independently. Dolgeville Central School District, Richfield Springs Central School District, and the Town of Webb Union Free School District all declined to participate in this year's survey, but will consider future participation.

Student participation rates varied among the schools, but overall 1,550 students participated in the survey which accounts for approximately 69% of the enrolled youth. Despite having less district participation, individual student participation increased from 64% in the 2020-2021 survey. Only one district had a response rate of less than 50%.

Thank you to all the district superintendents, building principals, and classroom teachers who worked to bring this survey to the students.

Central Valley Central School District

Mount Markham Central School District

Herkimer Central School District

Little Falls City School District

West Canada Central School District

BOCES Pathways

Owen D. Young Central School District

Frankfor-Schuyler Central School District

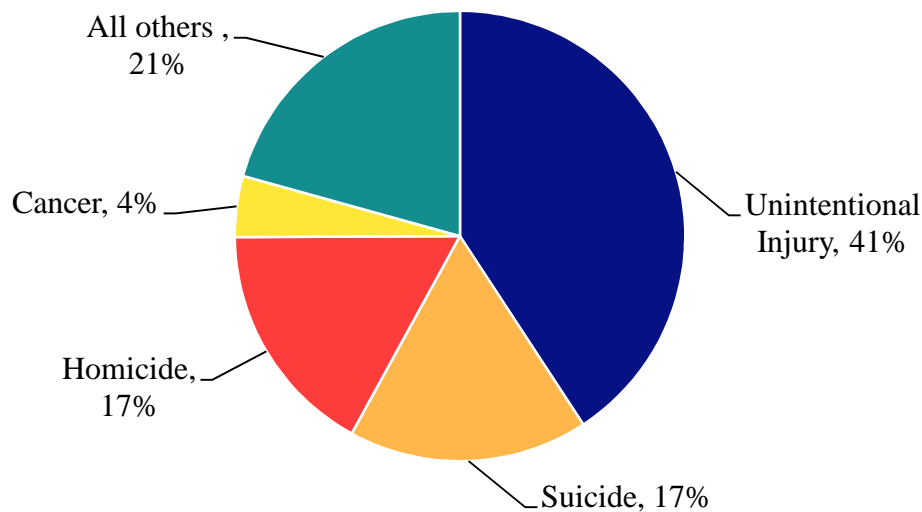
# Leading Cause of Death among Persons Aged 10-24 years

The chart below represents the leading causes of death among persons aged 10 – 24 years in the United States in 2020. The top three leading causes of death among youth account for 75% of death among youth ages 10-24. These causes are related to risky behaviors they, or their peers, engage in.

The top three leading causes of death among persons aged 10-24 are unintentional injury (41%), suicide (17%), and homicide (17%). These causes can be directly attributed to risk behaviors such as untreated mental health issues, violence, and bullying.

The top two causes of unintentional injuries among youth account for 87% of unintentional injury deaths. These are caused by are motor vehicle accidents and poisoning. Ninety-two percent of all youth homicides are firearm related. Youth completed suicides are predominately firearm-related (51%) and suffocation (34%).

**Leading cause of death among youth aged 10-24, 2020**

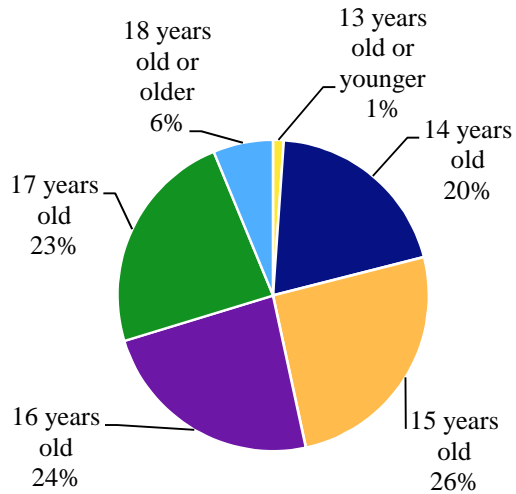


Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. National Vital Statistics System, Mortality 1999-2020 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released in 2021. Data are from the Multiple Cause of Death Files, 1999-2020, as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html> on Jul 11, 2022 3:32:12 PM

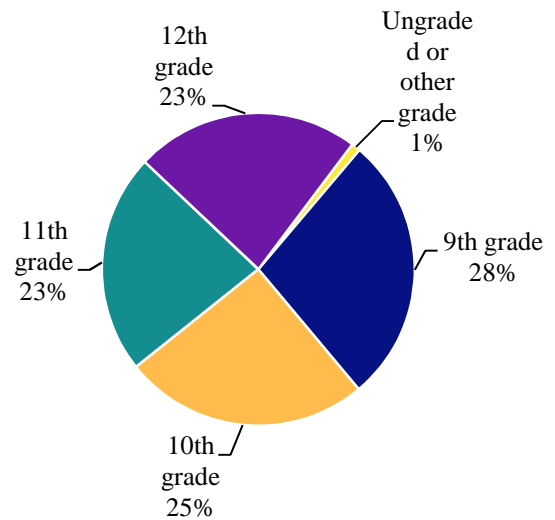
# Demographics

The following tables reflect the distribution of students by demographics. These tables demonstrate a generally equal distribution of respondents among ages, grades, and sexes. To protect anonymity, those who reported identifying as something other than male or female were grouped into a single “other” category. This is not to diminish their voice, but rather to protect their anonymity.

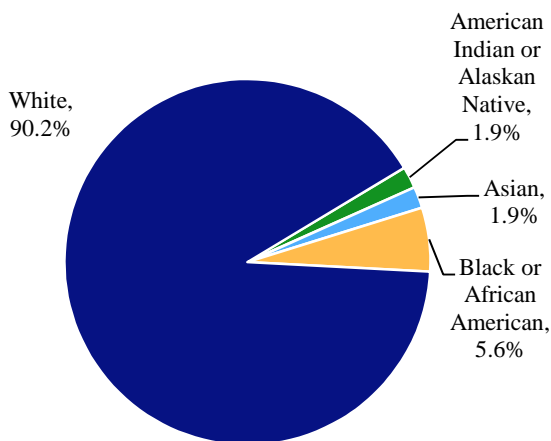
### Age



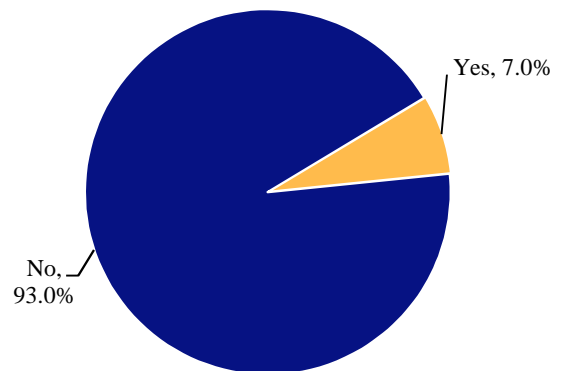
### Grade



### Race



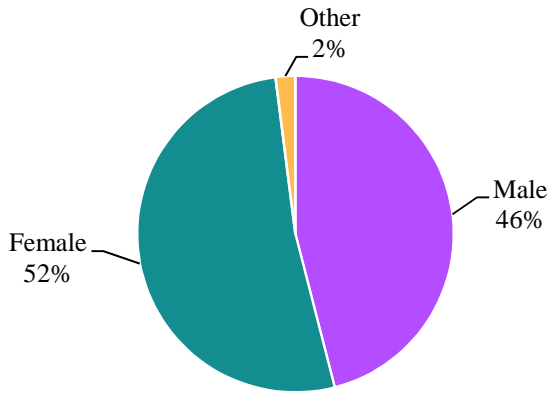
### Hispanic or Latinx



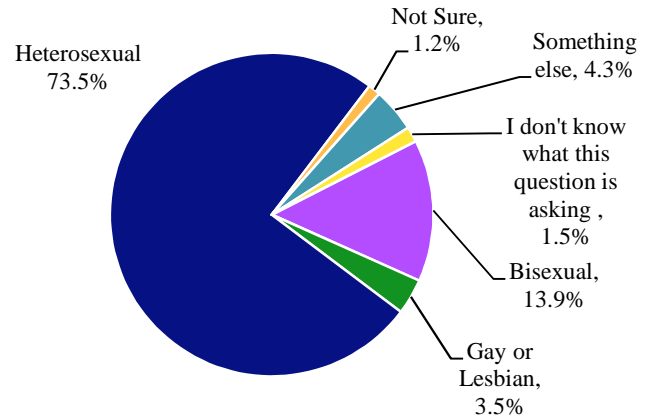


# Demographics

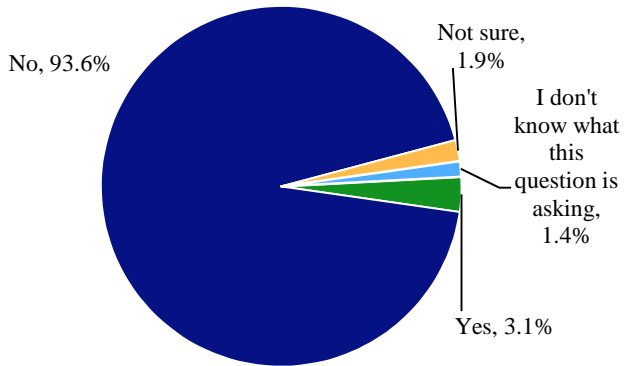
### Sex assigned at birth



### Sexual identity



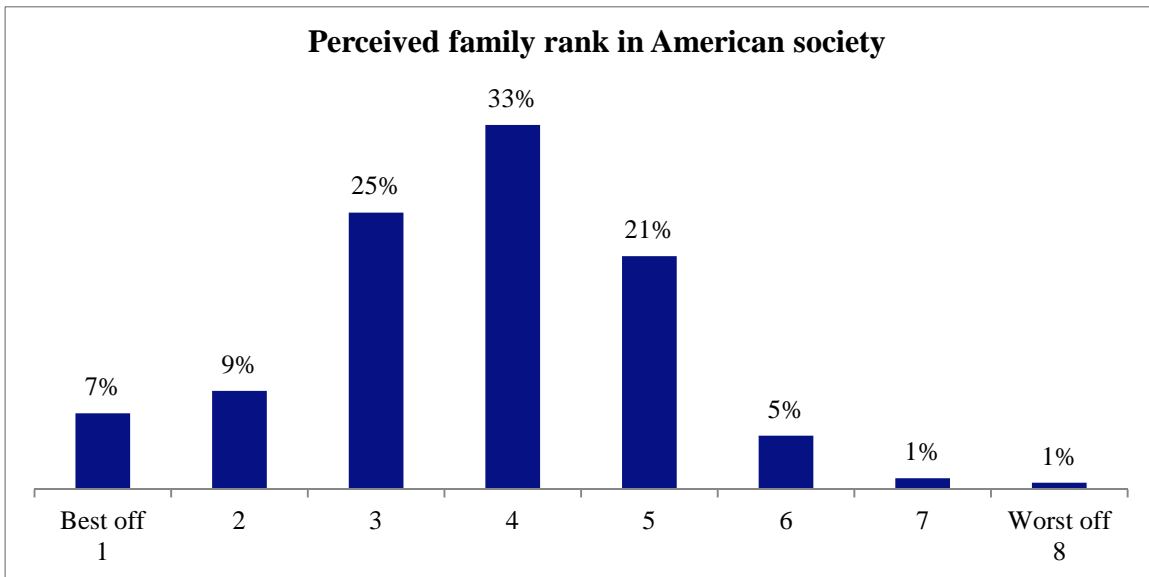
### Transgender



# Demographics

A new question on the survey uses the MacArthur Scale of Subjective Status to capture the youth's sense of where they fall on the socio-economic spectrum. A family's socio-economic status can influence a variety of health behaviors. There is a growing number of literature and studies that demonstrate a correlation between subjective socio-economic status and physical and emotional health outcomes.

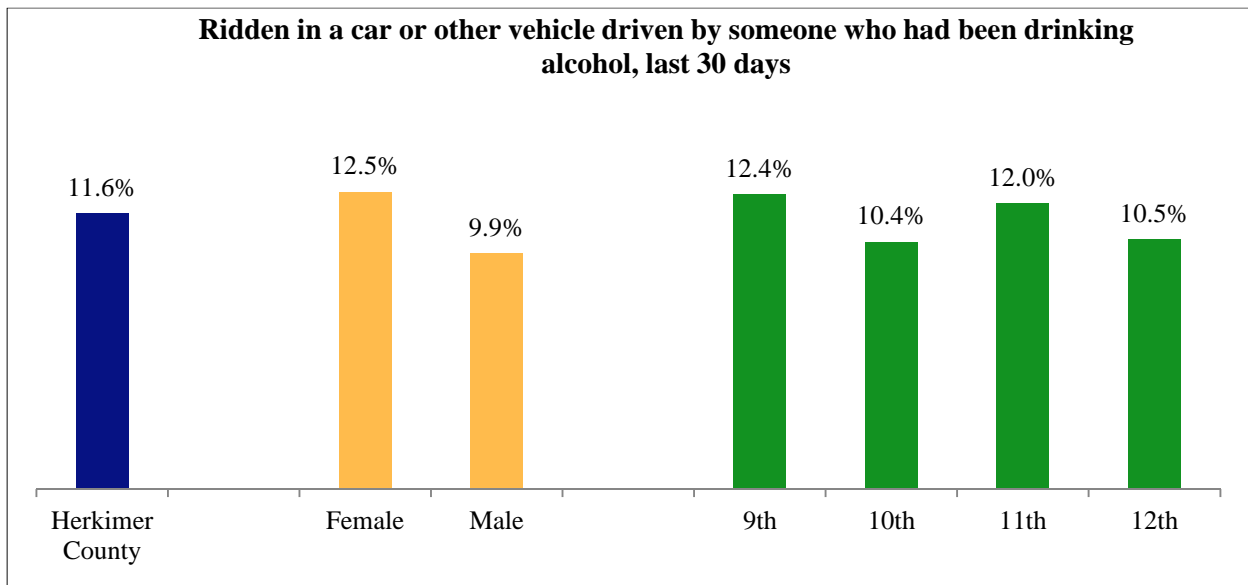
Additionally, research indicates that some youth do not know their families' financial status, education levels, or have concerns about reporting this information. The MacArthur Scale provides a reliable measure that is responsive to these needs, but still offers a way for researchers to measure socio-economic status. As with national trends, Herkimer County youth predominately see themselves as in the middle socio-economic status (79%).



# Motor Vehicle Safety

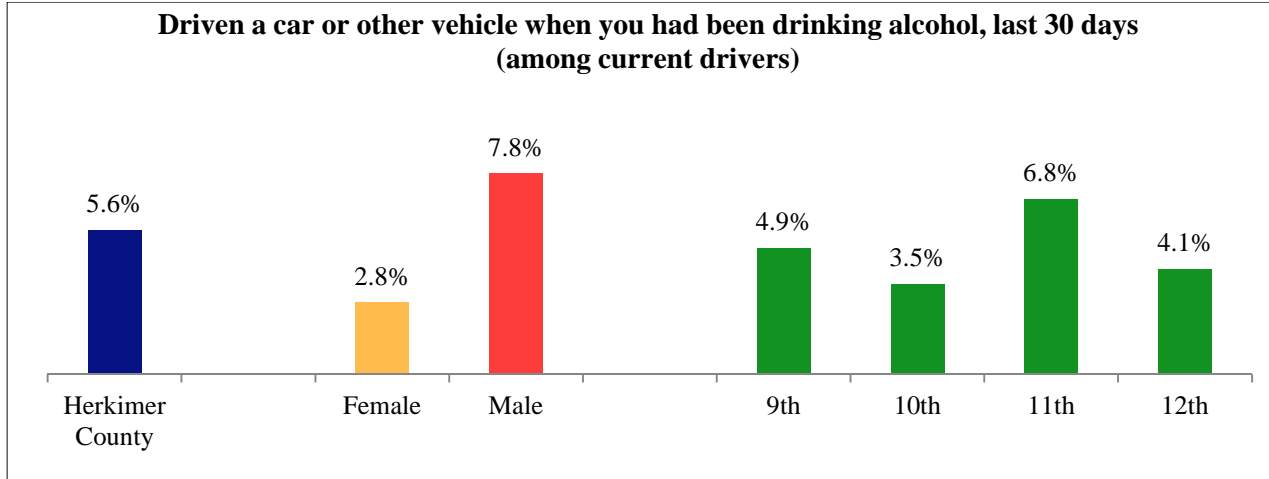
According to the CDC, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for US teens with an average of 6 teenagers dying every day from injuries related to motor vehicle crashes. Motor vehicle accidents are preventable and understanding teen behaviors related to driving or riding in vehicles is the first step in implementing effective interventions.

The following tables examine youth responses to questions about their behavior related to driving or riding in a car. For each question that asked about driving behaviors, the youth had an option to choose they had not driven in the last 30 days. Only those youth who chose a response indicating they had driven are considered current drivers.

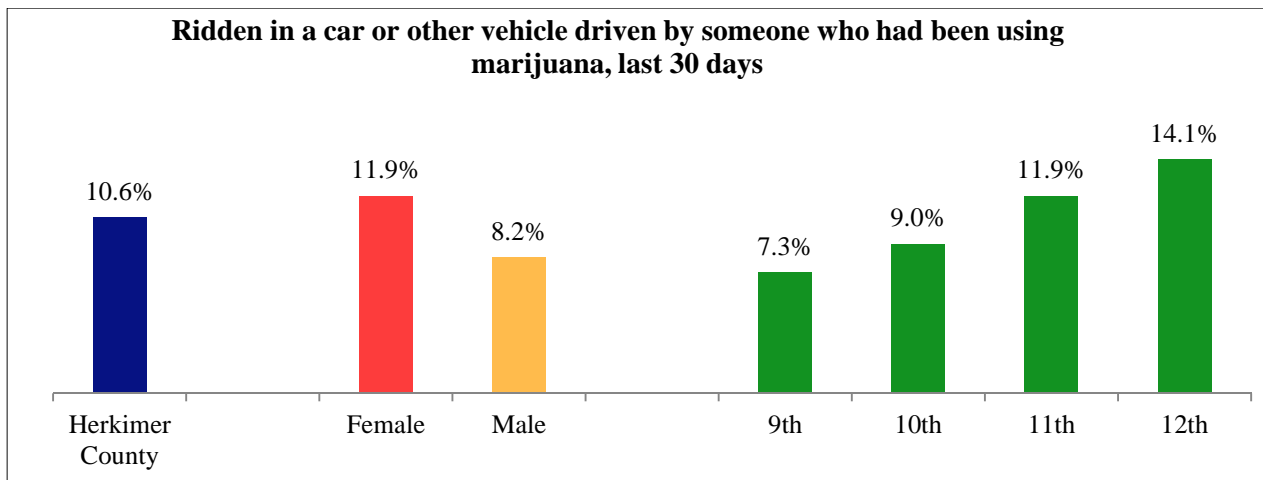


- 11.6% of Herkimer County youth report having ridden in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol.
- No statistically significant differences were noted between the sexes.

# Motor Vehicle Safety

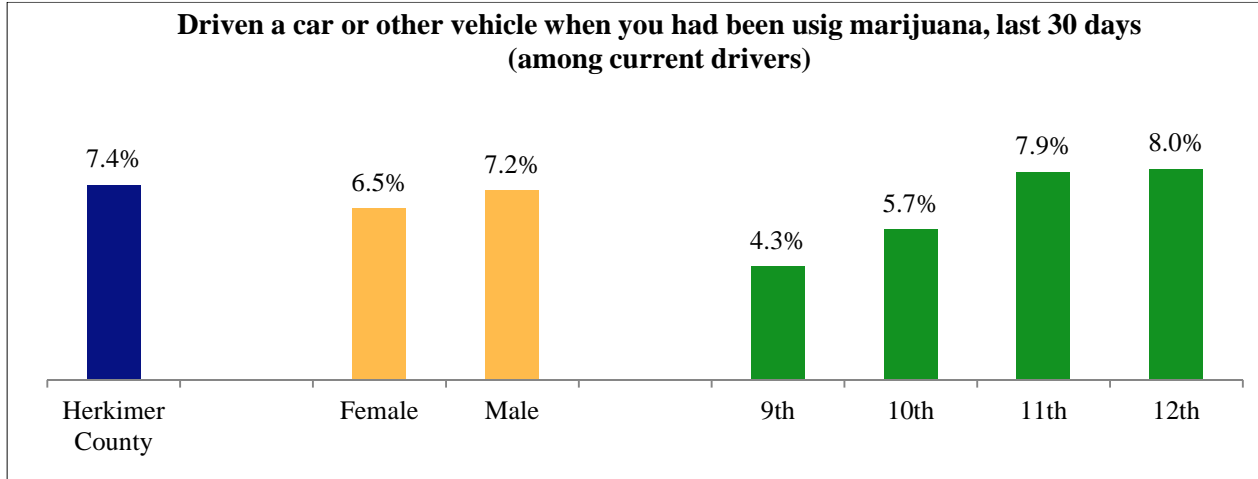


- Among those Herkimer County youth who reported having driven a car or other vehicle in the 30 days prior to the survey, 5.6% report having driven a car or other vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol.
- Males were statistically more likely than females to report having driven a car or other vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol.

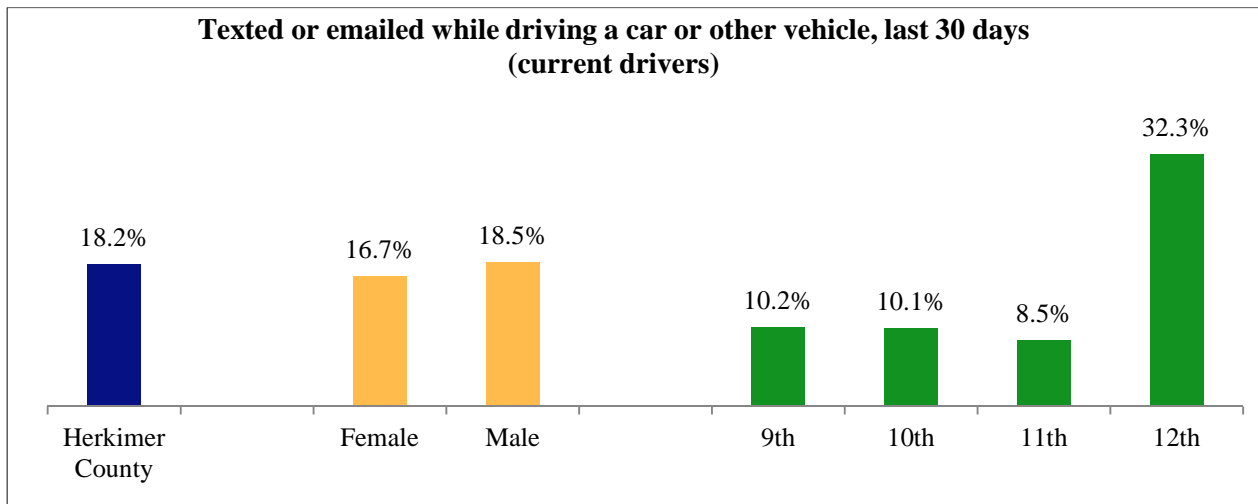


- 10.6% of Herkimer County youth report having ridden in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been using marijuana in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report having ridden in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been using marijuana.

# Motor Vehicle Safety



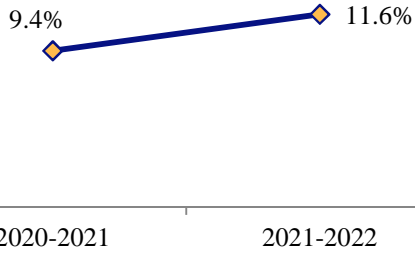
- Among those Herkimer County youth who reported having driven a car or other vehicle in the 30 days prior to the survey, 7.4% report having driven a car or other vehicle when they had been using marijuana.
- No statistically significant differences were noted between the sexes.



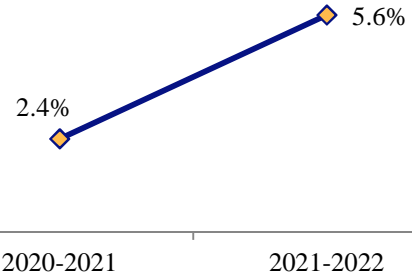
- Among those Herkimer County youth who reported having driven a car or other vehicle in the 30 days prior to the survey, 18.2% report having texted or emailed while driving.
- No statistically significant differences were noted between the sexes.

# Motor Vehicle Safety Trends

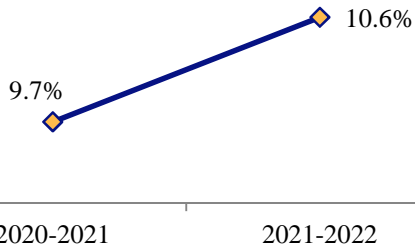
**Ridden in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol, last 30 days**



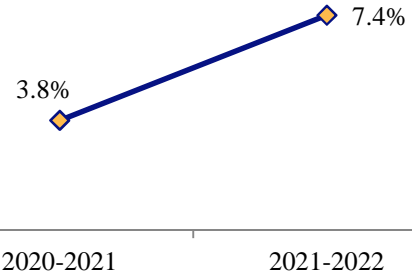
**Driven a car or other vehicle when you had been drinking alcohol, last 30 days (among current drivers)**



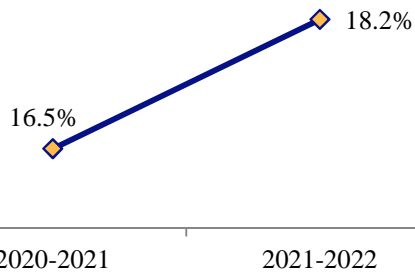
**Ridden in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been using marijuana, last 30 days**



**Driven a car or other vehicle when you had been using marijuana, last 30 days (among current drivers)**



**Texted or emailed while driving a car or other vehicle, last 30 days (current drivers)**

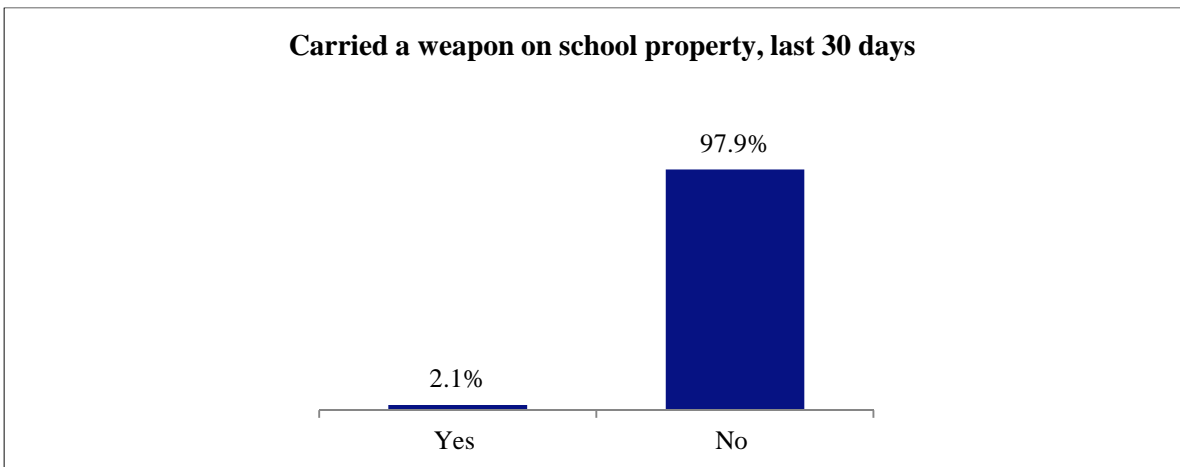


## Violence-related Behaviors

Violence is completely preventable. The effects of exposure to violence, whether it is through witnessing, being a victim of, or engaging in violent behaviors, can have life-long consequences in all domains of life. These consequences include health outcomes, economic outcomes, mental health outcomes, and even length of life. Violence can also negatively impact school attendance, academic scores, substance use, suicidal ideation, youth mental health concerns, and obesity.

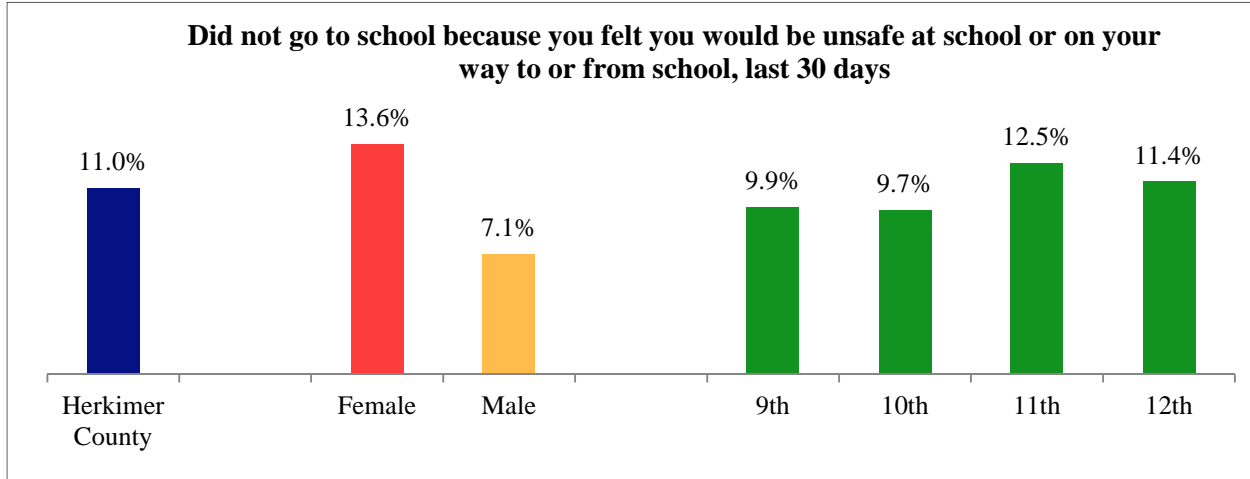
Teenagers are often exposed to more than one type of violence such as bullying, sexual violence, dating violence, or physical fighting. Female and sexual minority teens are more likely to experience three or more types of violence.

The following tables examine youth responses to questions about their exposure to violence. These questions ask about engaging in risk behaviors as well as risk avoidance behaviors.

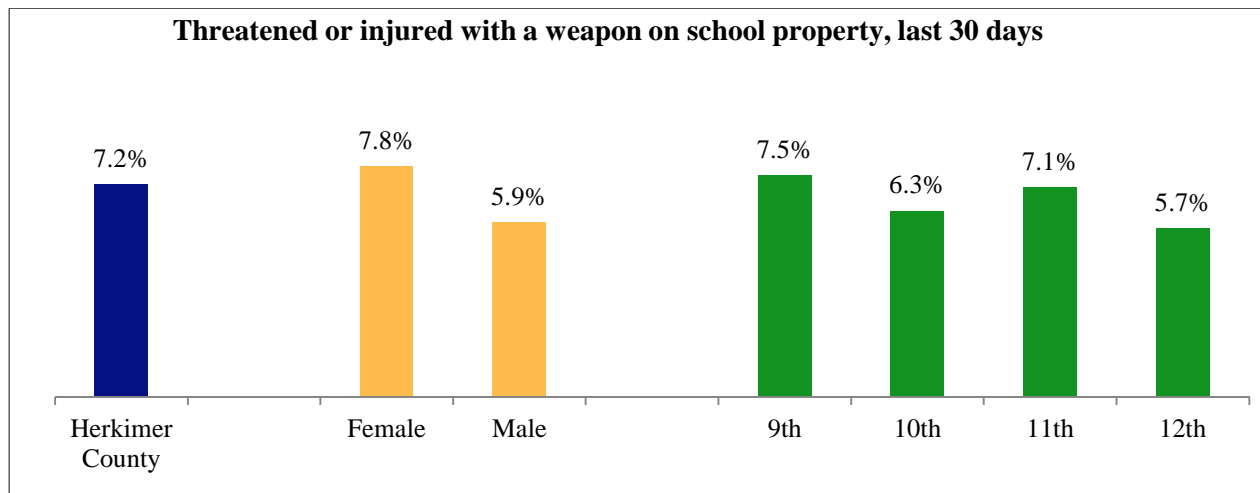


- 2.1% of Herkimer County youth report having carried a weapon to school in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- The majority of Herkimer County youth (97.9%) report they did not carry a weapon to school in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Weapons were defined as a gun, knife, or club.

# Violence-related Behaviors



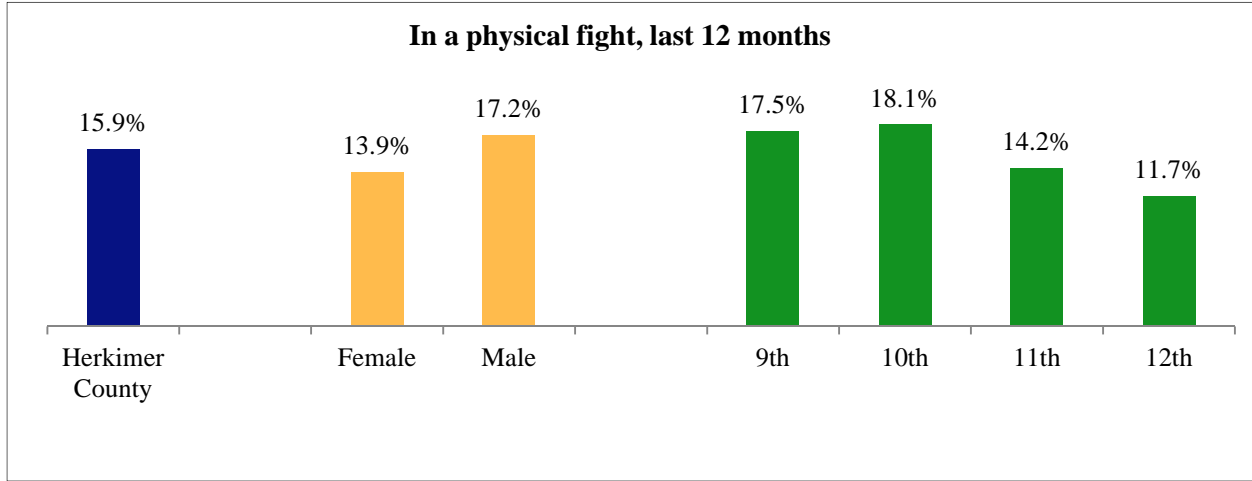
- 11.0% of Herkimer County youth reported not going to school because they felt they would be unsafe either at school or on their way to/from school at least once on the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report this behavior.



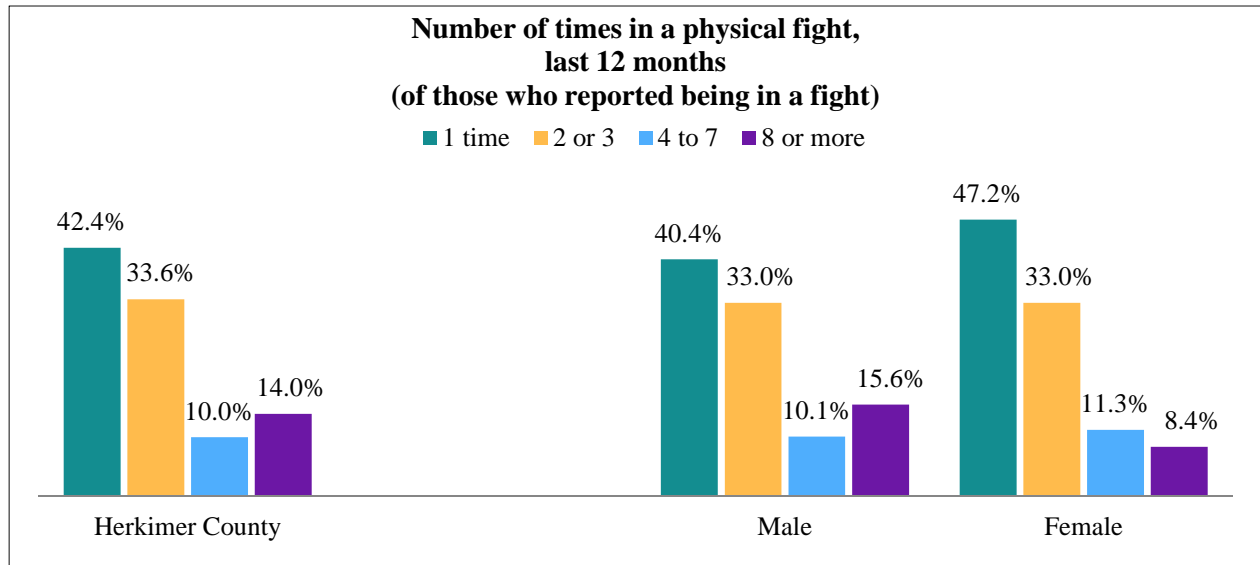
- 7.2% of Herkimer County youth report being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- No statistically significant difference was noted between the sexes.



# Violence-related Behaviors

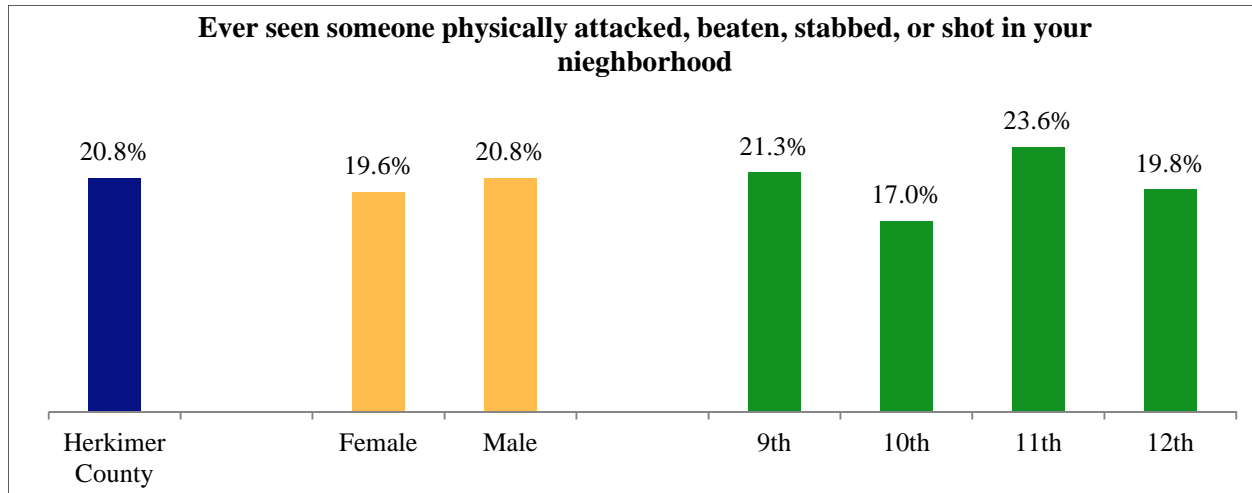


- 15.9% of Herkimer County youth reported being in a physical fight at least once in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- No statistically significant difference was noted between the sexes.



- Of those students who reported being in a fight, 14% reported being in 8 or more fights in the last 12 months.
- Of those students who reported being in a fight, 42.4% reported being in only 1 fight in the last 12 months.

## Violence-related Behaviors



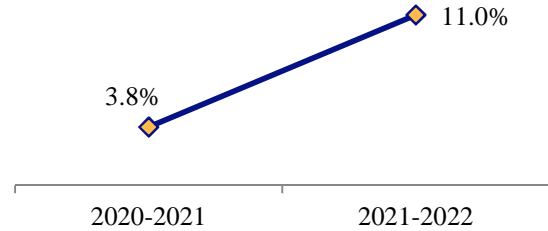
- 20.8% of Herkimer County youth report having ever seen someone physically attacked, beaten, stabbed, or shot in their neighborhood.
- No statistically significant difference was noted between the sexes.

# Violence-related Behavior Trends

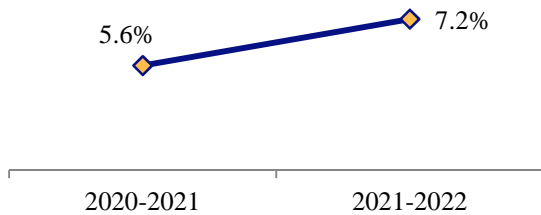
**Carried a weapon on school property, last 30 days**



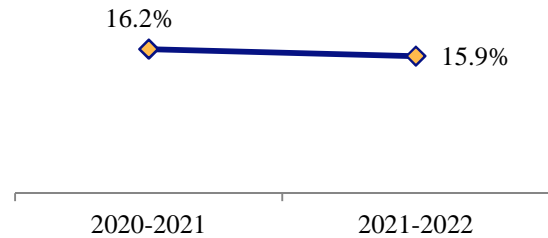
**Did not go to school because you felt you would be unsafe at school or on your way to or from school, last 30 days**



**Threatened or injured with a weapon on school property, last 30 days**



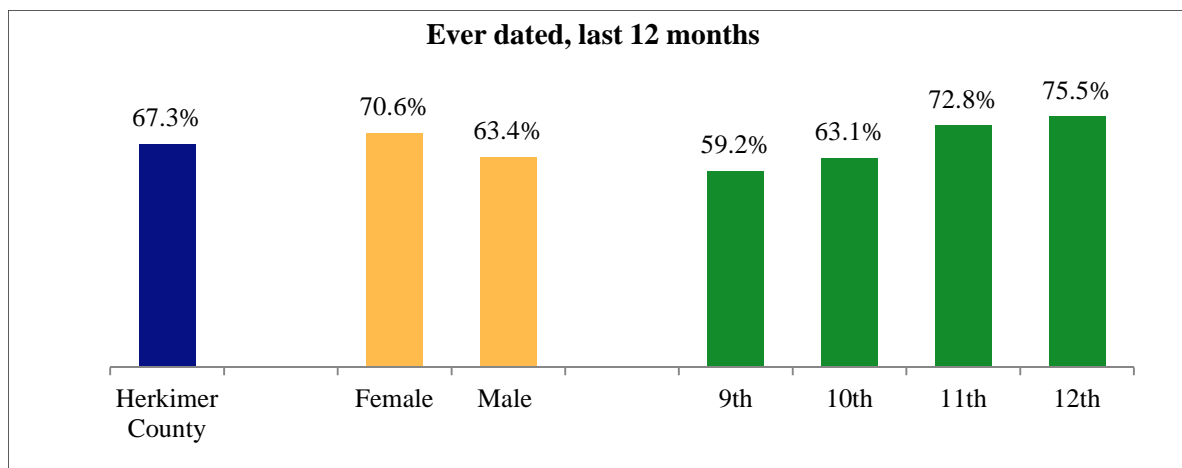
**In a physical fight, last 12 months**



## Sexual and Dating Violence

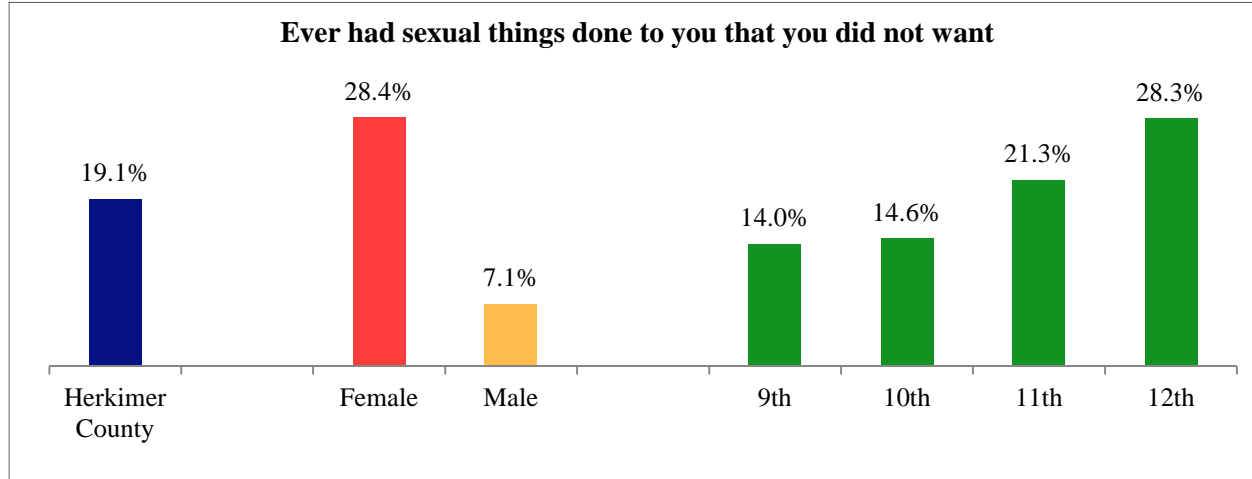
The CDC states that dating and sexual violence are adverse childhood experiences that can have profound impacts on health, both physical and mental, and can have lifelong consequences. Nearly 1 in 11 female and 1 in 14 male US youths report experiencing dating violence annually.

Sexual violence is defined as any sexual activity when consent is not obtained or freely given. It has serious and lifelong implications for physical, emotional, social, and economic health. Sexual violence impacts all communities regardless of race, age, socioeconomic status, or gender. Anyone can experience or perpetrate sexual violence. Sexual violence can occur in person, online, or through other forms of technology such as a cell phone.

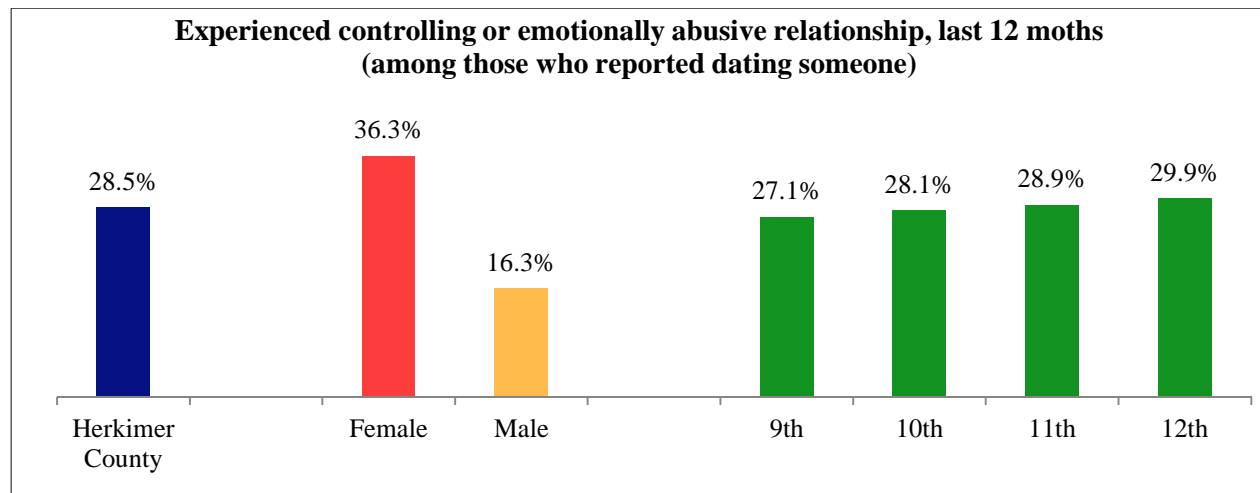


- 67.3% of Herkimer County youth report dating someone in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- No statistically significant difference was noted between the sexes.

# Sexual and Dating Violence

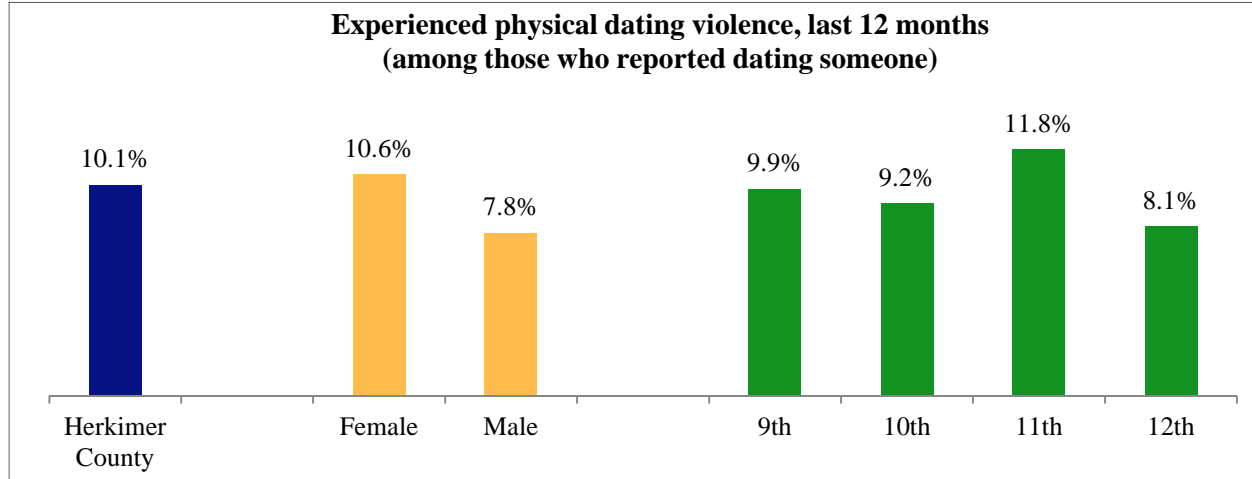


- 19.1% of Herkimer County youth reported ever having sexual things done to them that they did not want.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report this behavior.
- Sexual things were defined as kissing, touching, or sexual intercourse.



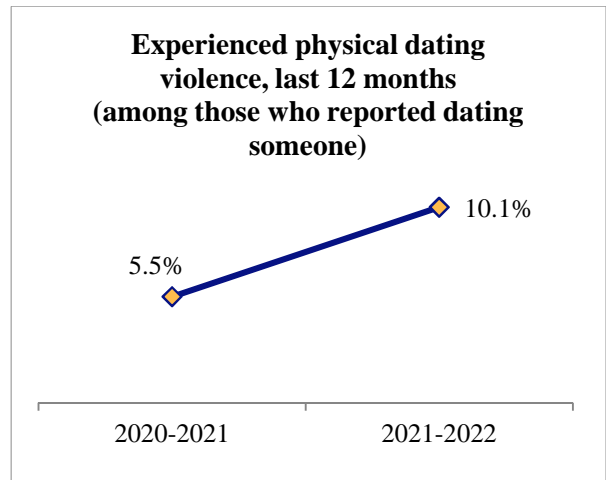
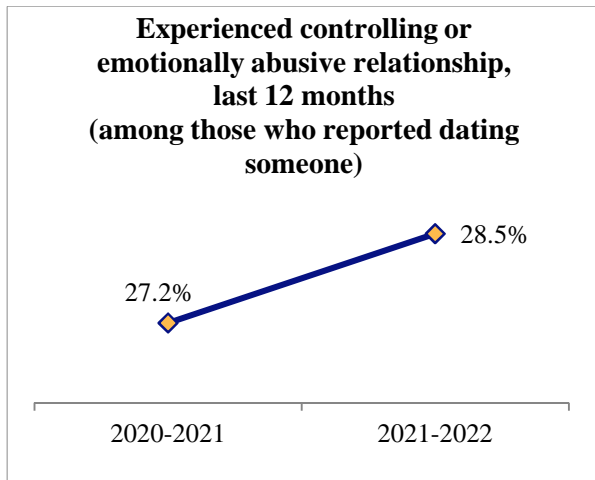
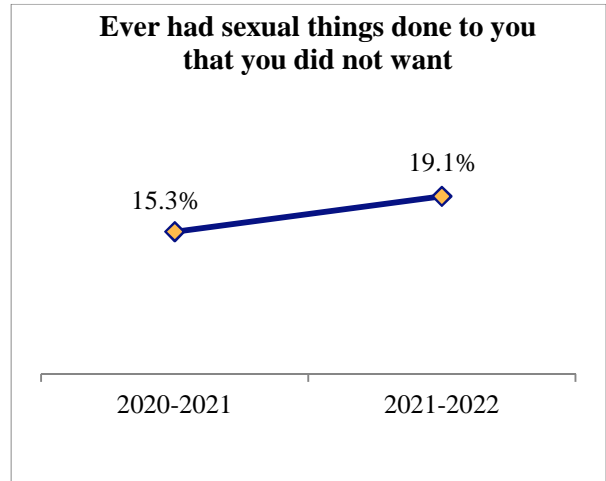
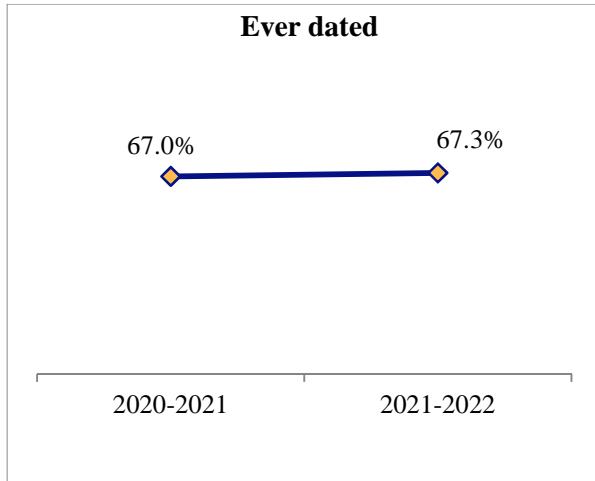
- 28.5% of Herkimer County youth who reported dating someone report experiencing controlling or emotionally abusive relationship in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- Females were more likely than males to report this behavior.

## Sexual and Dating Violence



- 10.1% of Herkimer County youth who reported dating someone report experiencing dating violence in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- No statistically significant difference was noted between the sexes.
- Dating violence was defined as being hit, slammed into something, or injured with an object or weapon.

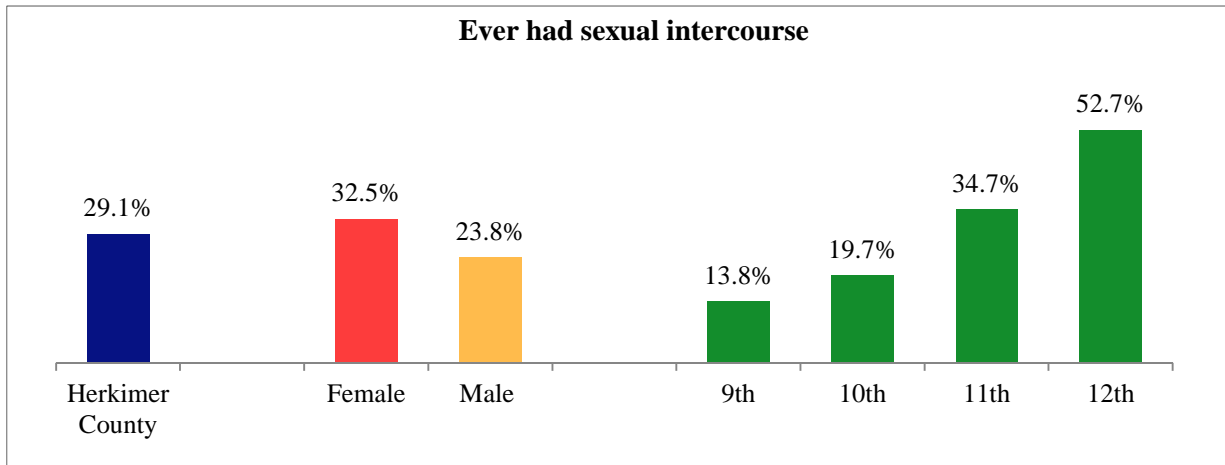
# Sexual and Dating Violence Trends



# Sexual Activity

Sexual activity has the potential for negative outcomes in youth. These outcomes include, STD's, HIV, pregnancy, exposure to sexual violence, and can contribute to mental health concerns. Youth who identify as a sexual minority such as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender are at substantial risk for serious physical and mental health outcomes.

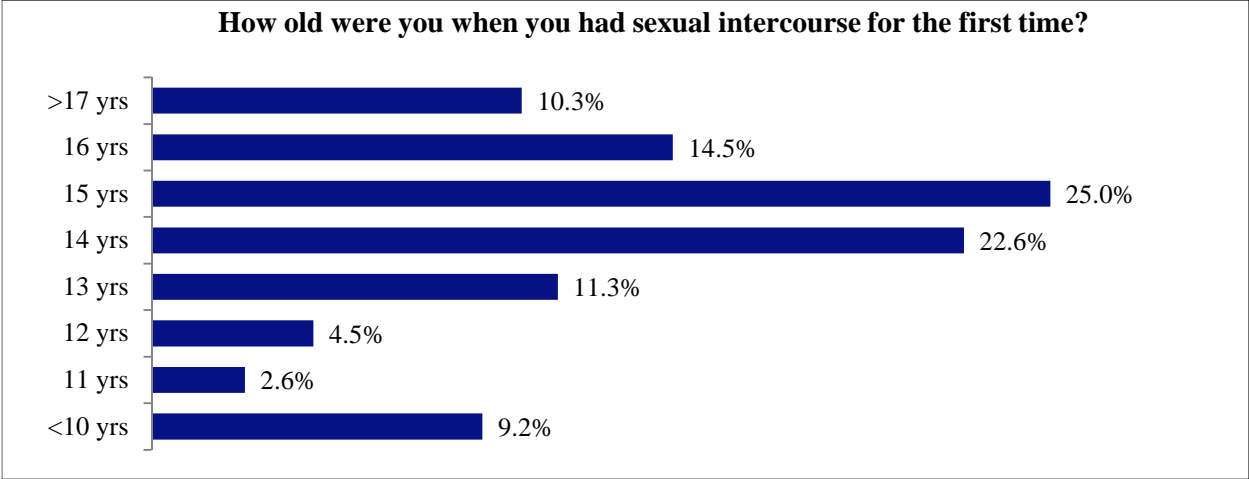
The following tables examine youth responses to questions about their sexual behaviors. We made every attempt to be sensitive to the diversity of sexual orientations, gender expressions, and preferences.



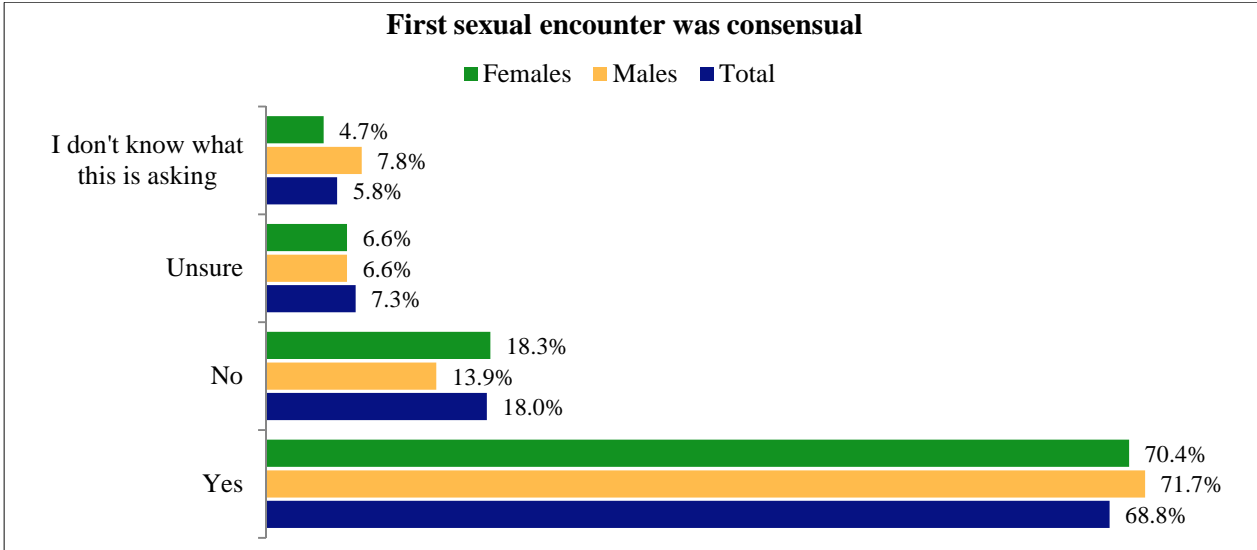
- 29.1% of Herkimer County youth report ever having sexual intercourse.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report being ever having sexual intercourse.



# Sexual Activity

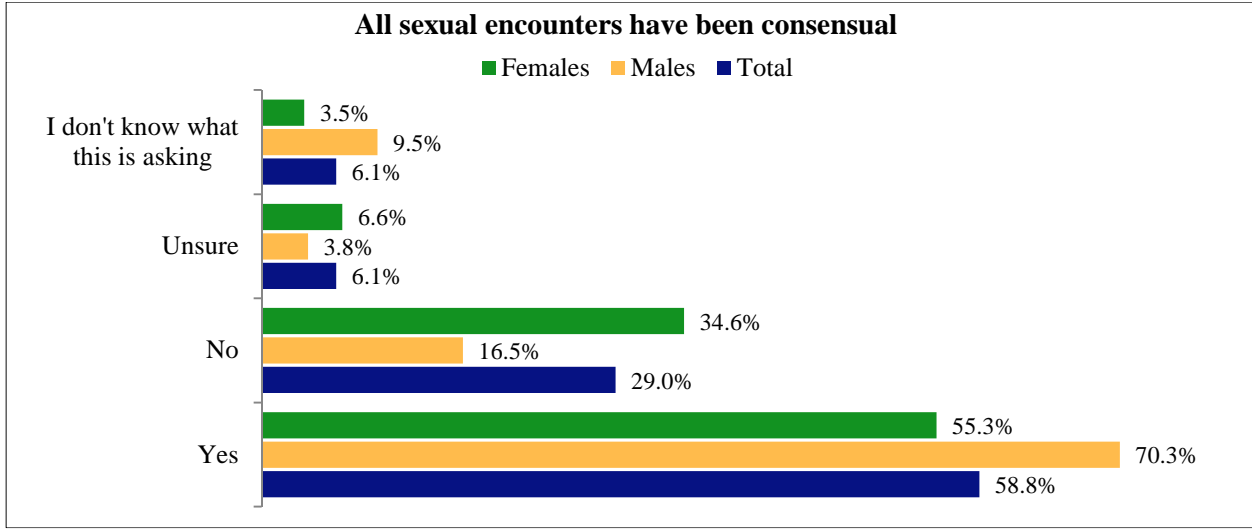


- 27.6% of Herkimer County youth reported having sexual intercourse for the first time before the age of 13 years.
- 9.2% reported being younger than 10 years.
- 62.1% report being between the ages of 14 and 16 years.

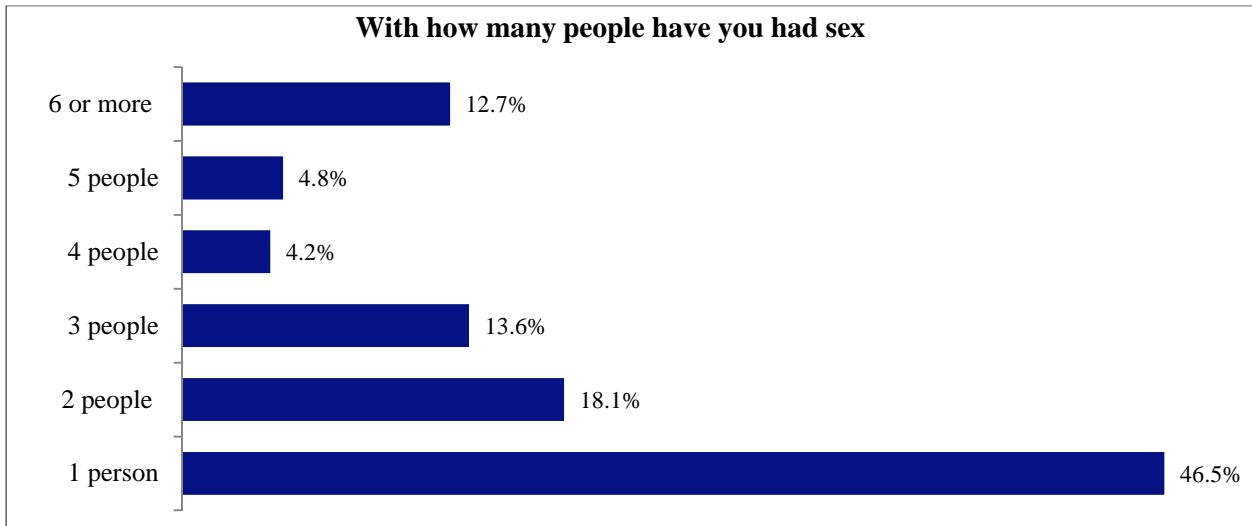


- The majority (68.8%) of Herkimer County youth reported their first sexual encounter was consensual.

# Sexual Activity

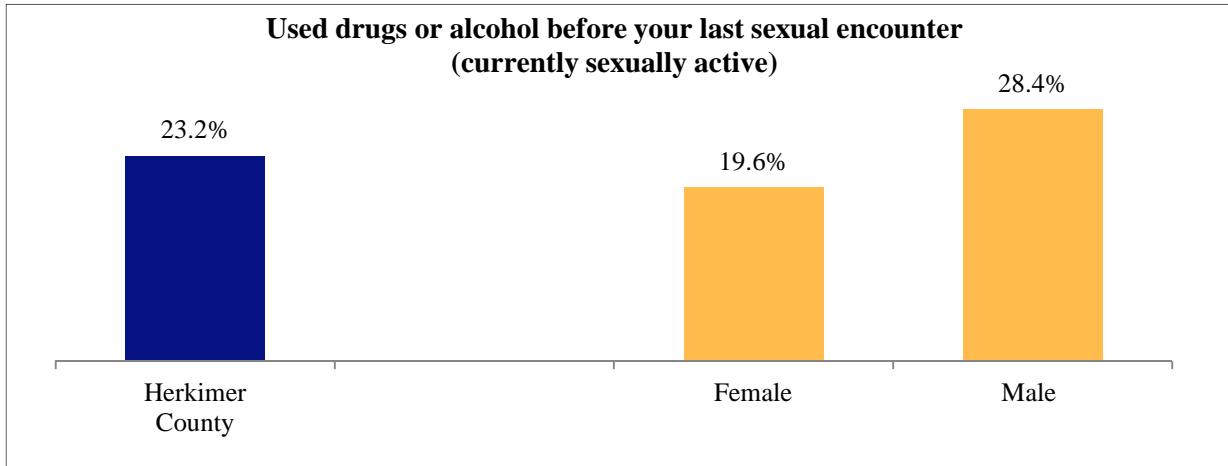


- Overall, a little over half (58.8%) of Herkimer County youth who reported ever having sex also report that all their sexual encounters were consensual.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report having a non-consensual sexual encounter.
- Over a third of females (34.6%) report having a non-consensual sexual encounter.

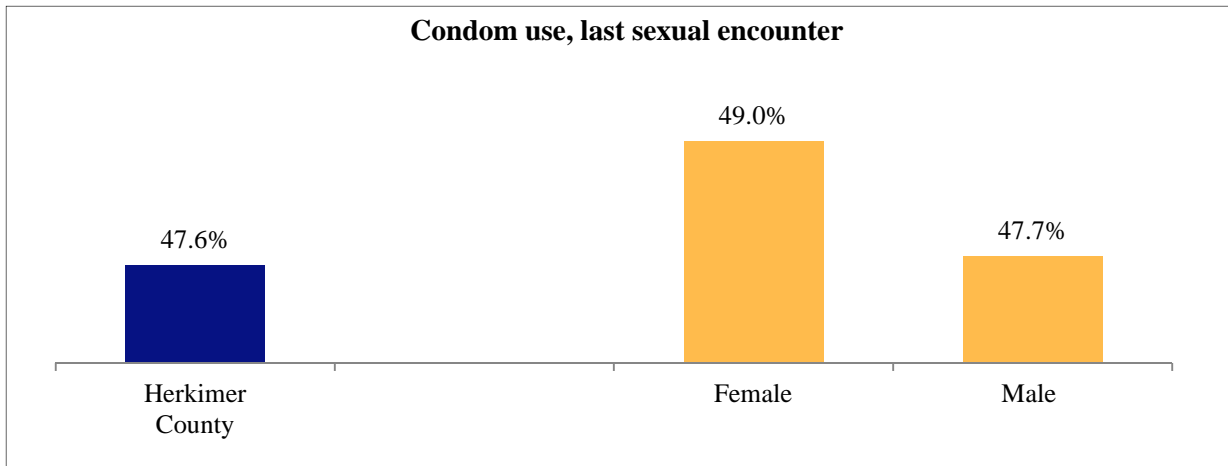


- 46.5% of Herkimer County youth who reported ever having sex also report having only one sexual partner.

# Sexual Activity

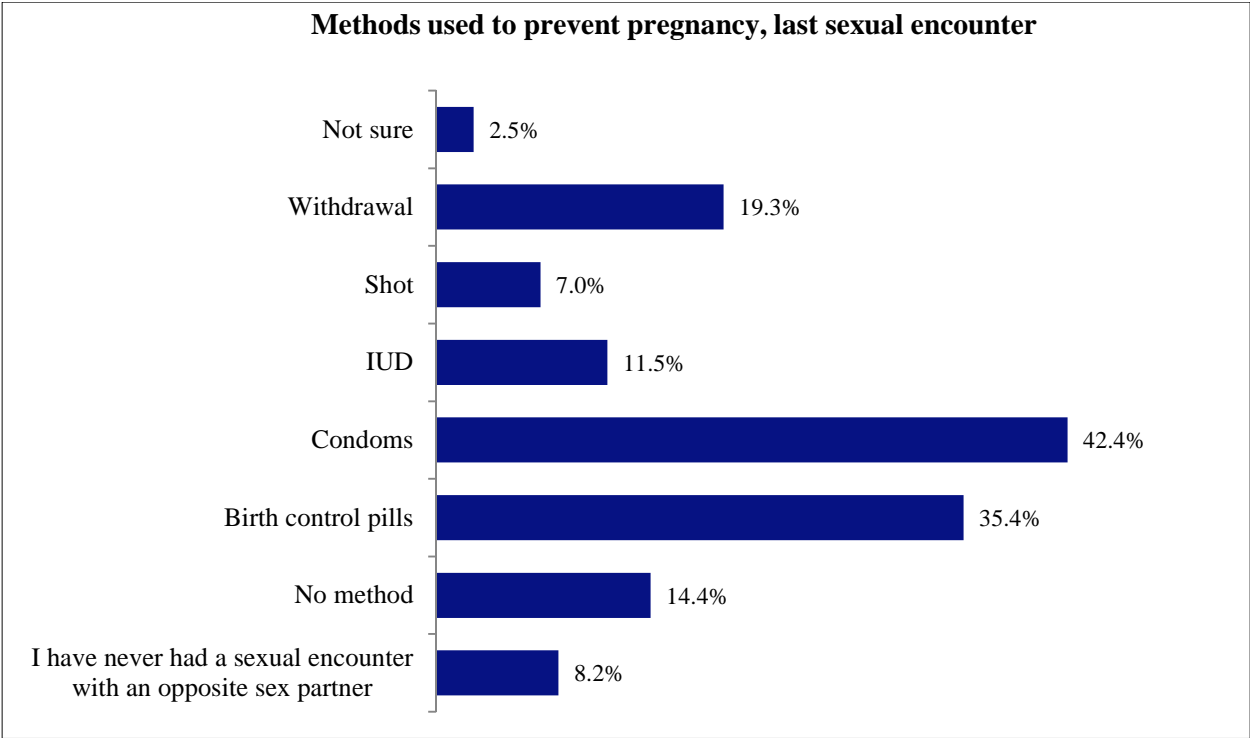


- 23.2% of Herkimer County youth who report having a sexual encounter also report using drugs or consuming alcohol before their last encounter.
- No statistically significant difference was noted between the sexes.

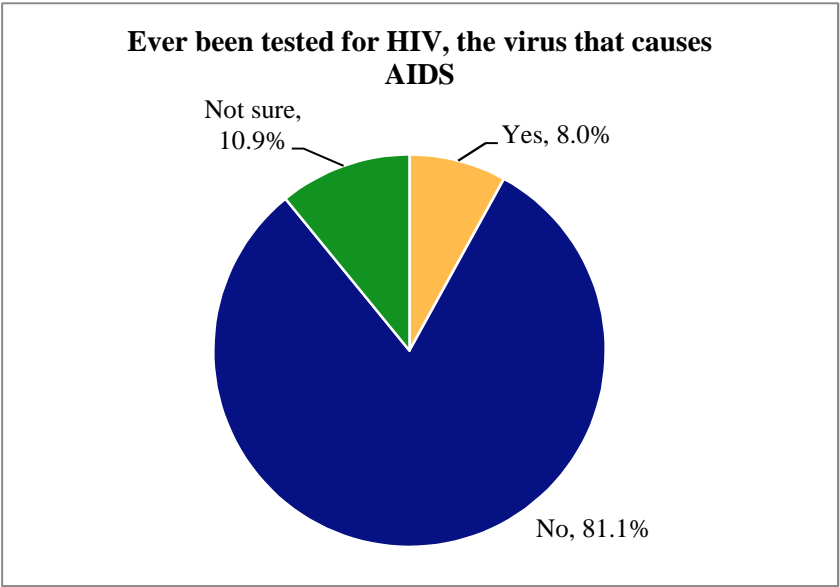


- 47.6% of Herkimer County youth who report having a sexual encounter also report using a condom during their last encounter.
- No statistically significant difference was noted between the sexes.

# Sexual Activity

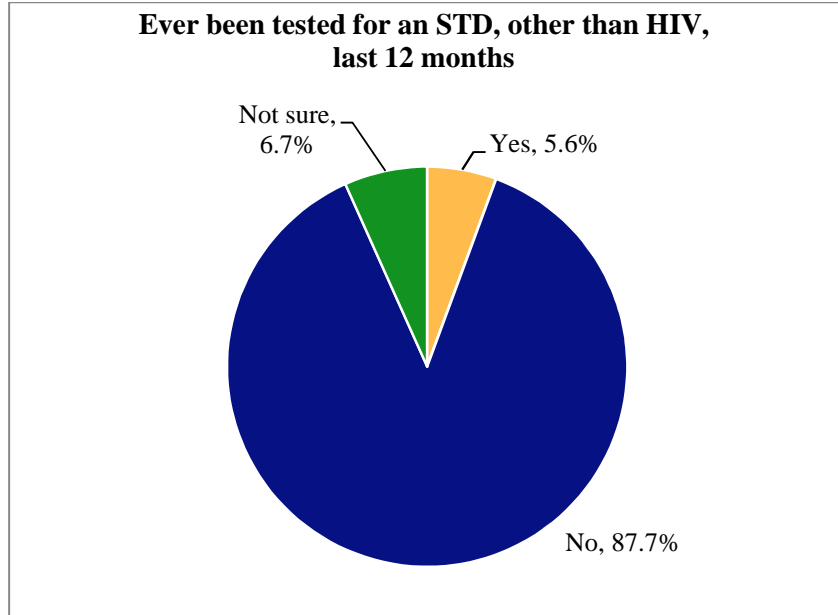


- The most commonly used methods used to prevent pregnancy among Herkimer County youth were Condoms (42.4%), birth control pills (35.4%), and withdrawal (19.3%).



- 81.1% of Herkimer County youth report never being tested for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

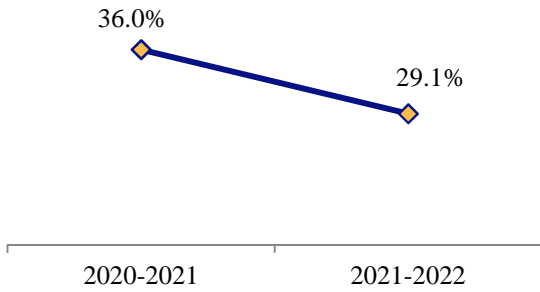
## Sexual Activity



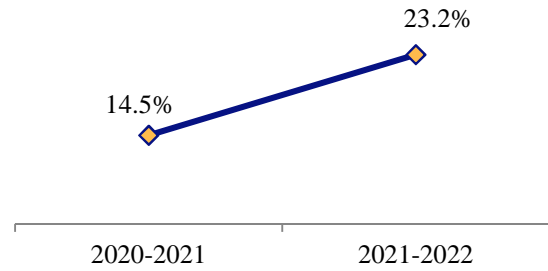
- 87.7% of Herkimer County youth report never being tested for an STD other than HIV.

# Sexual Activity Trends

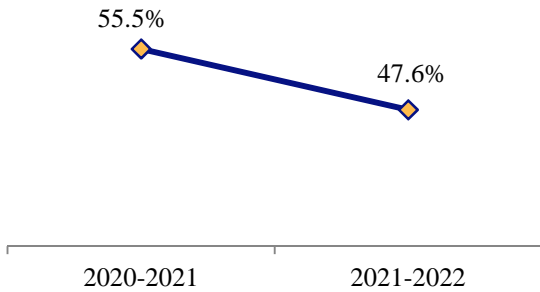
**Ever had sexual intercourse**



**Used drugs or alcohol before your last sexual encounter (sexually active youth)**



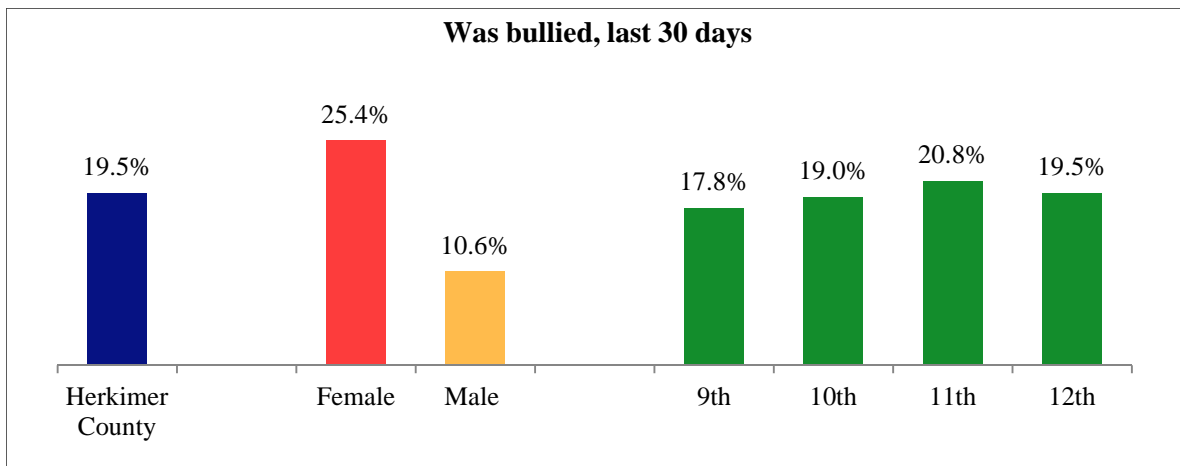
**Condom use, last sexual encounter (sexually active youth)**



# Bullying

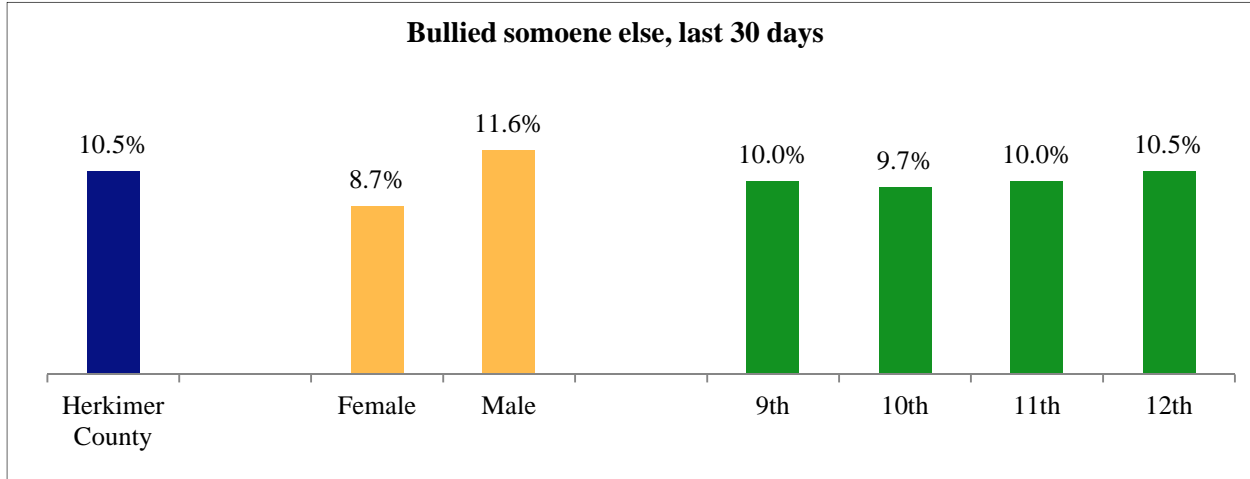
The CDC defines bullying as unwanted aggressive behavior by another youth who is not a sibling or a dating partner. Bullying involves a power imbalance, either observed or perceived. This behavior is often highly repeated, or likely to be repeated. Bullying increases the risk for depression, suicidal ideation, poor academic achievement, and substance use in affected youth.

In the survey, bullying is described as when one or more students tease, threaten, spread rumors about, hit, shove, or hurt another student over and over again. According to the survey instructions, it is not bullying when two students of about the same strength or power argue or fight or tease each other in a friendly way.

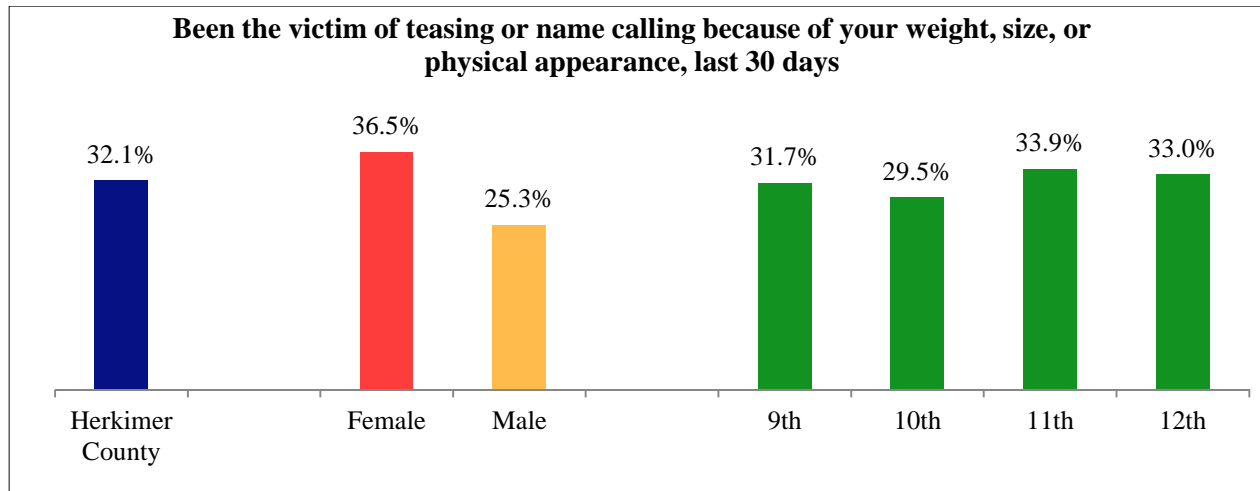


- 19.5% of Herkimer County youth report being bullied at least one during the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report being bullied.

# Bullying



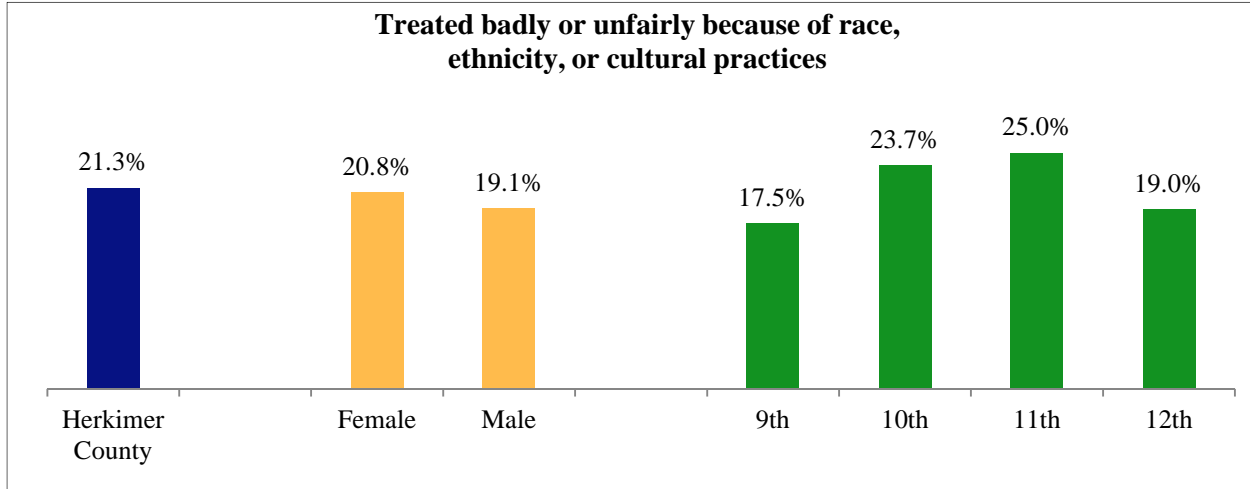
- 10.5% of Herkimer County youth reported having bullied someone else at least once during 30 days prior to the survey.
- No statistically significant difference was noted between the sexes.



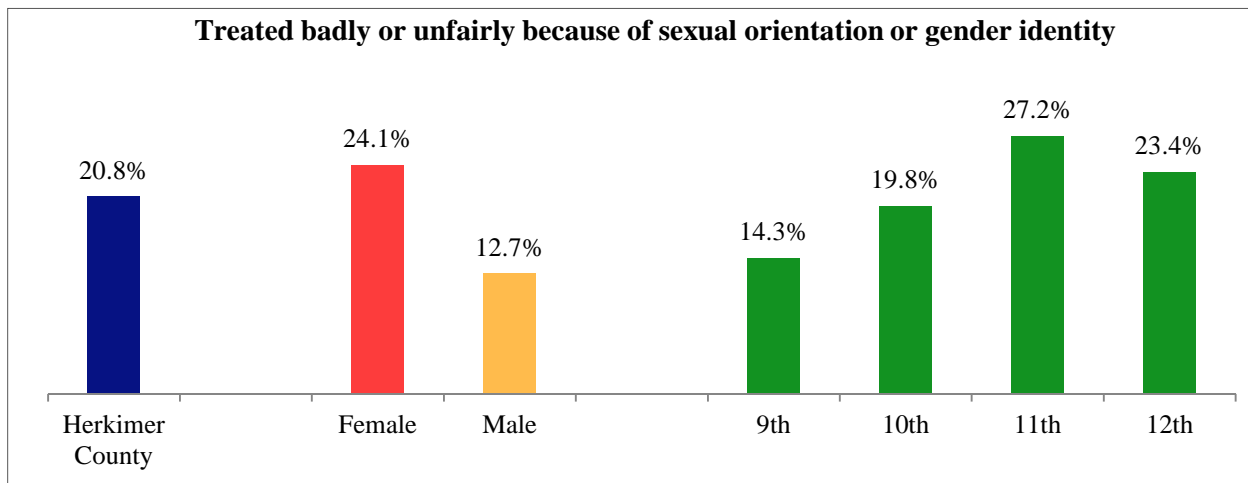
- 32.1% of Herkimer County youth reported being the victim of teasing or name calling because of their weight, size, or physical appearance at least once during the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report being a victim of this behavior.



# Bullying

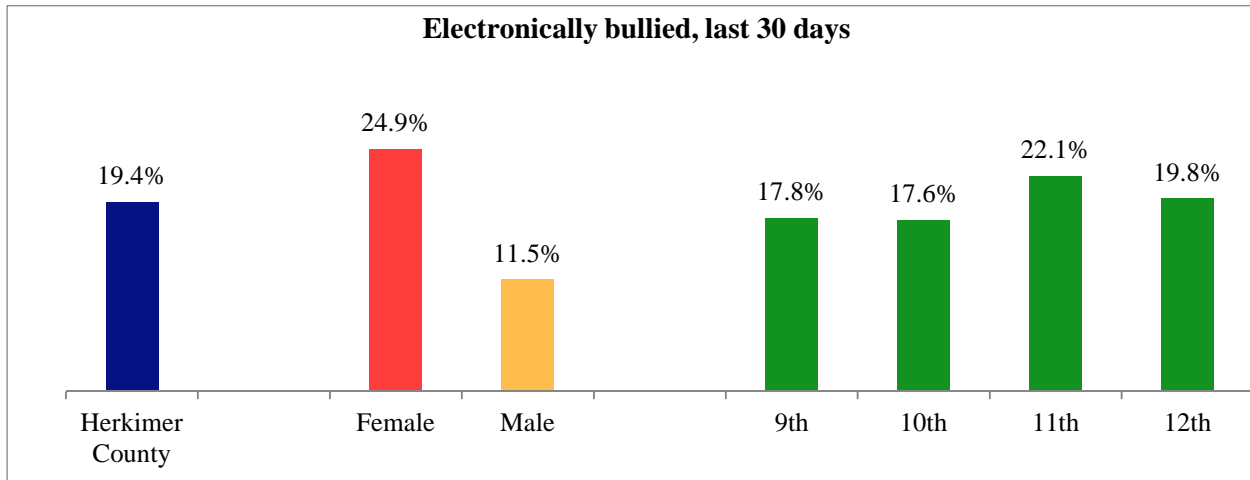


- 21.3% of Herkimer County youth reported feeling as if they were treated badly or unfairly based on their race, ethnicity, or cultural practices.
- No statistically significant differences were noted between the sexes.



- 20.8% of Herkimer County youth reported being treated badly or unfairly because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report these experiences.

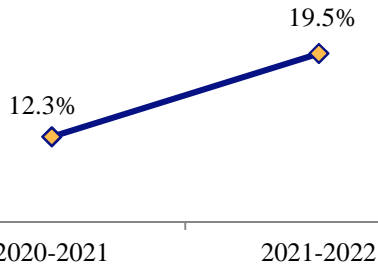
# Bullying



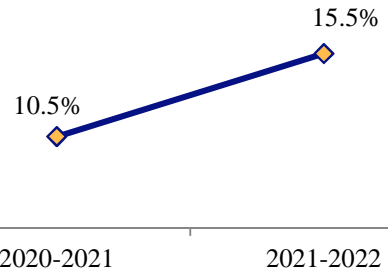
- 19.4% of Herkimer County youth reported being electronically bullied during the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report being a victim of electronic bullying.
- Electronic bullying was defined as bullying through texting, Instagram, Facebook, or other social media platform.

# Bullying Trends

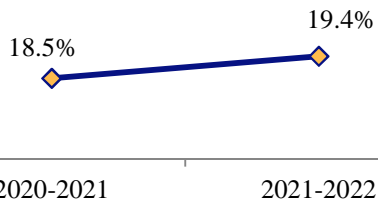
**Was bullied, last 30 days**



**Bullied someone else, last 30 days**



**Electronically bullied, last 30 days**

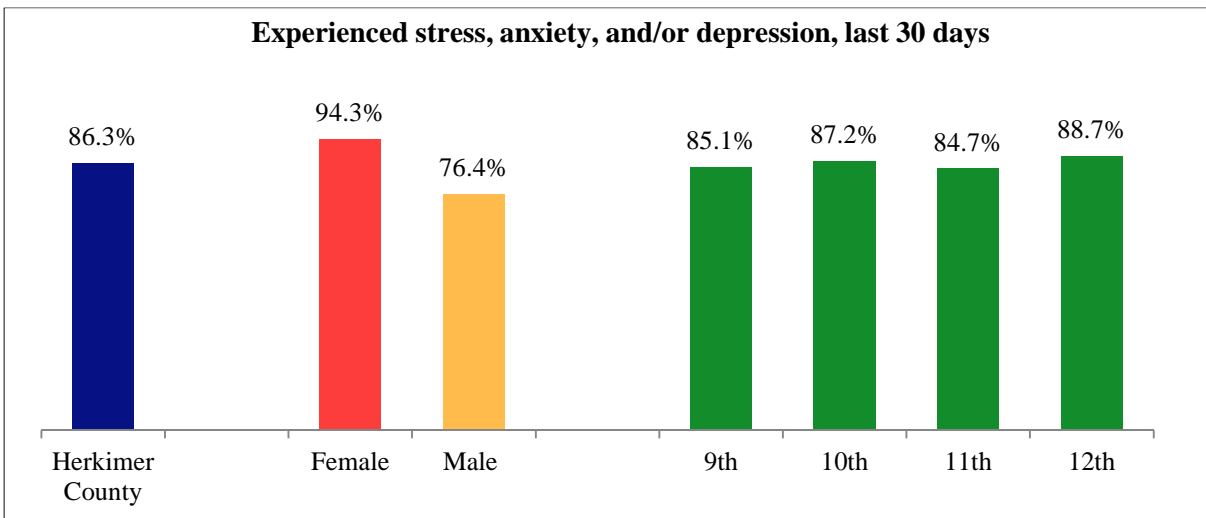


# Mental and Behavioral Health

It is important to discuss mental health as a continuum rather than a static state of being. This is especially true in children and youth.

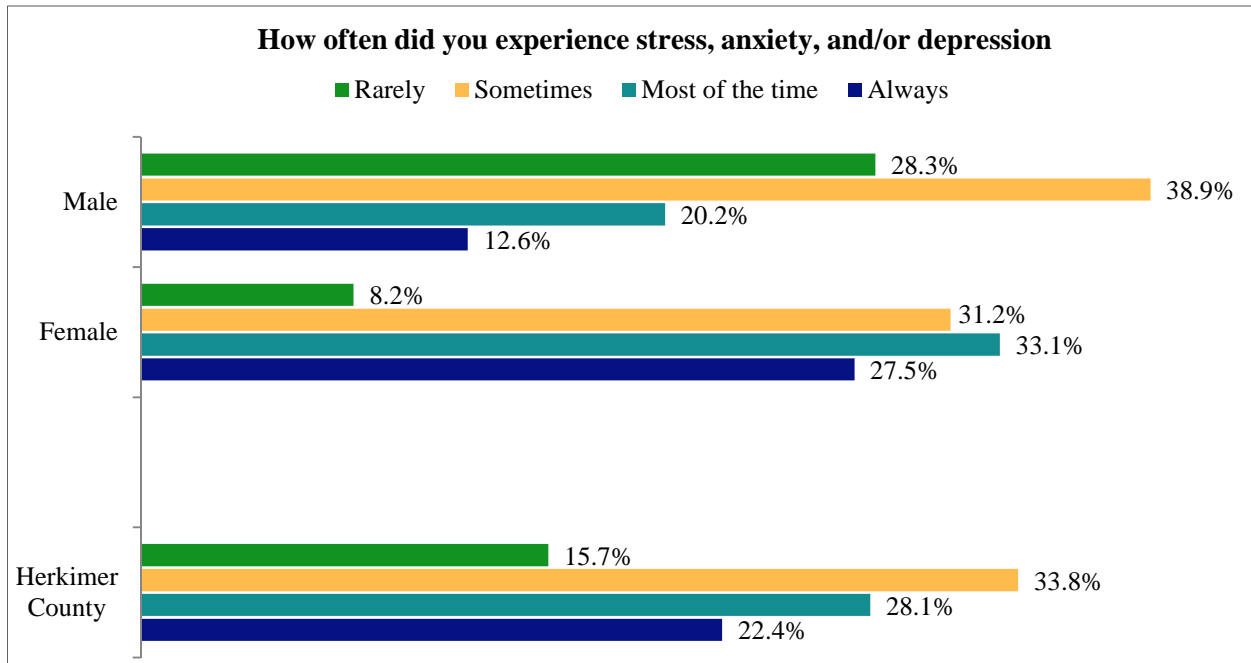
It is easy to think of mental health as being the absence of mental disorder. However, children and youth who do not have a mental disorder can experience difficulties reaching developmental and emotional milestones that impact their ability to cope with problems, learn healthy social skills, and learn resilience.

Poor mental health can impact education, physical health, social health, and decision making skills. Poor mental health is also linked to substance use, risky sexual behaviors, and exposure to violence. Many health behaviors and habits are formed in adolescence, including mental health. It is important to promote and support good mental health habits in adolescence which can carry over into adulthood.



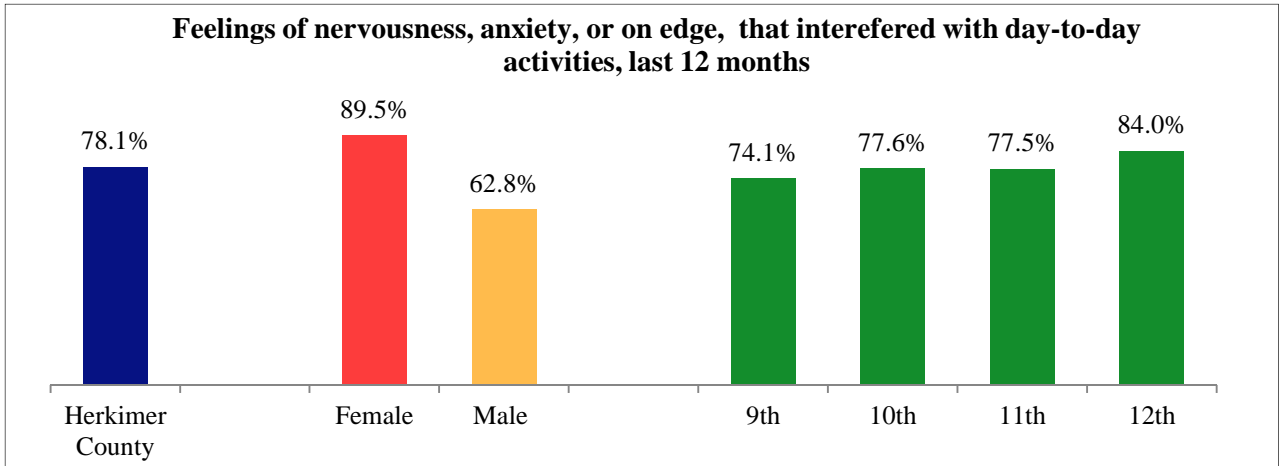
- 86.3% of Herkimer County youth report experiencing stress, anxiety, and/or depression in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report these experiences.

# Mental and Behavioral Health

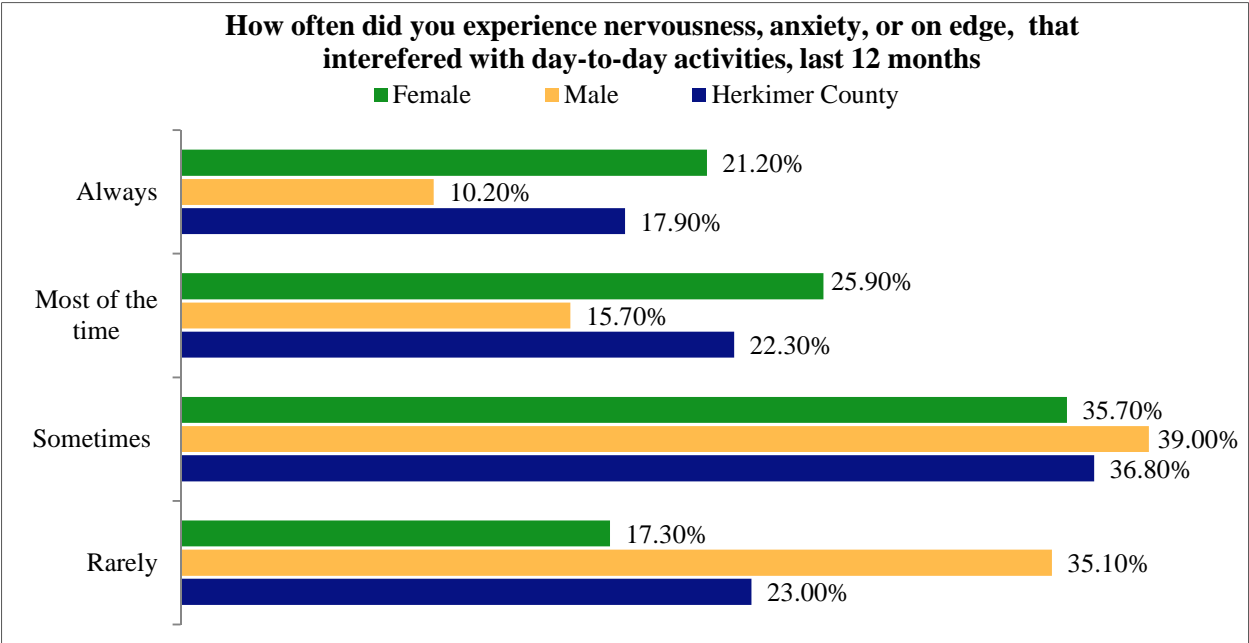


- Females were statistically more likely to report a higher frequency of experiencing stress, anxiety, and/or depression than males.
- Overall, roughly half (50.5%) of Herkimer County youth reported experiencing stress, anxiety, and/or depression most of the time or always during the 30 days prior to the survey.

# Mental and Behavioral Health

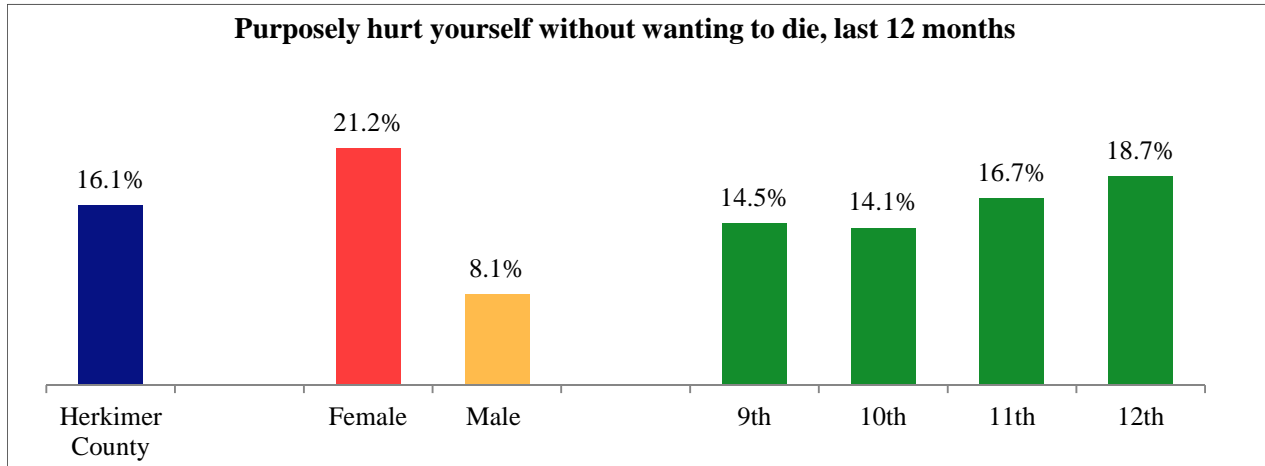


- 78.1% of Herkimer County youth report experiencing feelings of nervousness, anxiety, or feeling on edge such that these feelings interfered with their day-to-day activities.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report these experiences.

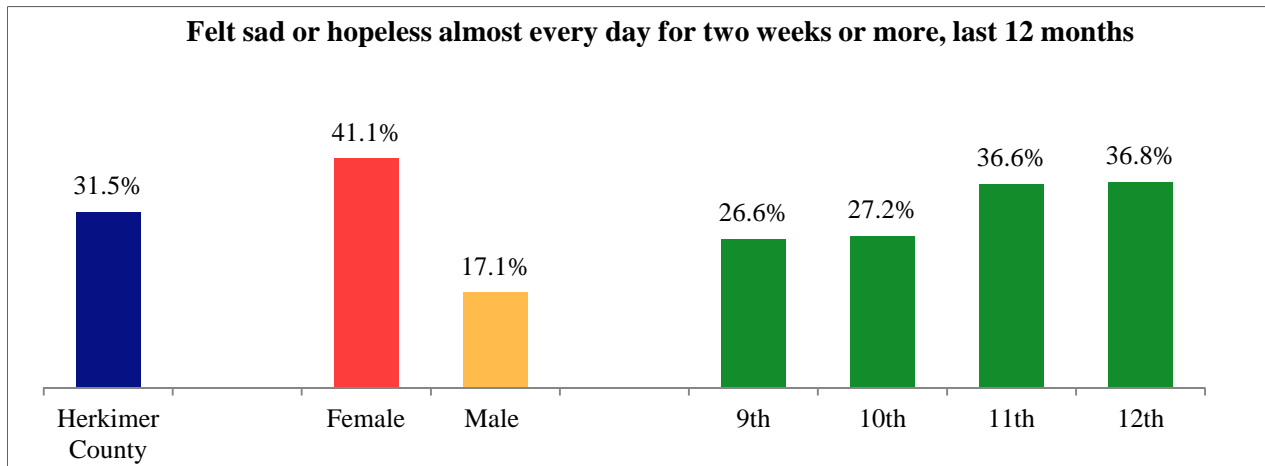


- Overall, roughly 40% of Herkimer County youth reported experiencing nervousness, anxiety, or felt on edge so much that it interfered with their daily activities most of the time or always during the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Females were statistically more likely to report a higher frequency of experiencing stress, anxiety, and/or depression than males.

# Mental and Behavioral Health

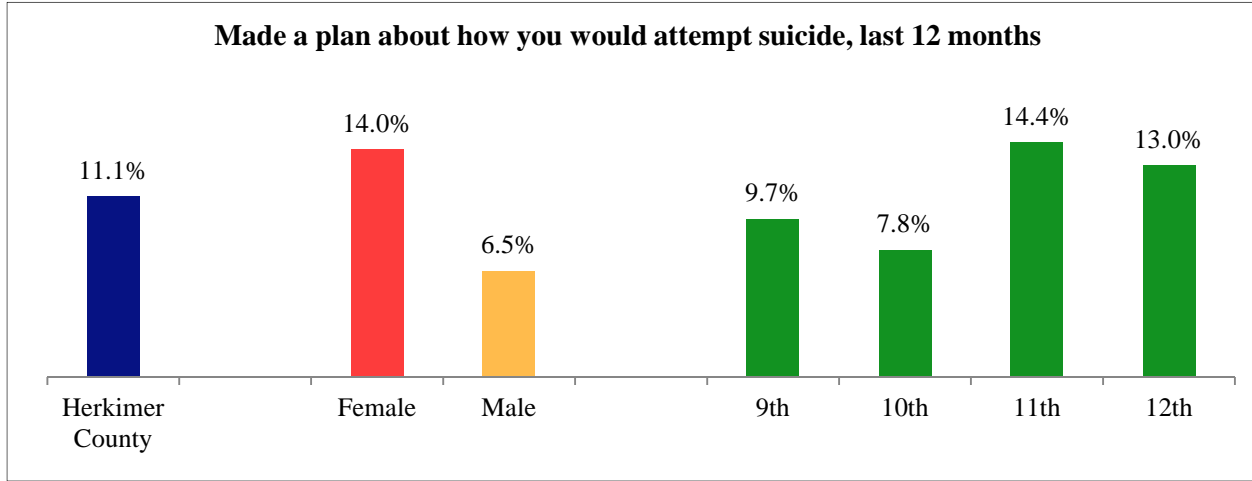


- 16.1% of Herkimer County youth report purposefully hurting themselves, such as cutting or burning, without wanting to die in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report these experiences.

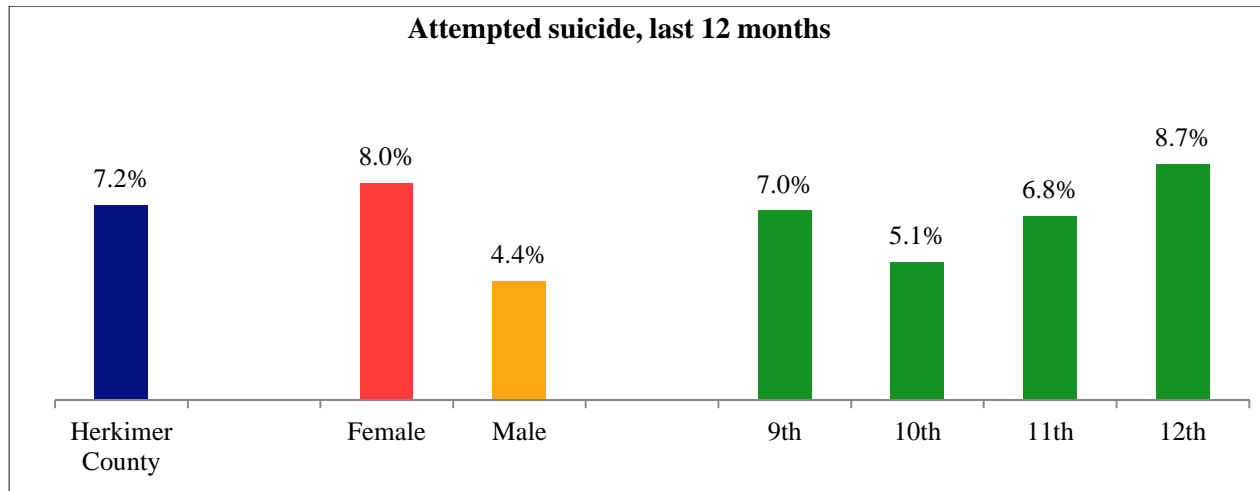


- 31.5% of Herkimer County youth report feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row, such that they stopped doing their usual activities in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report these experiences.

# Mental and Behavioral Health



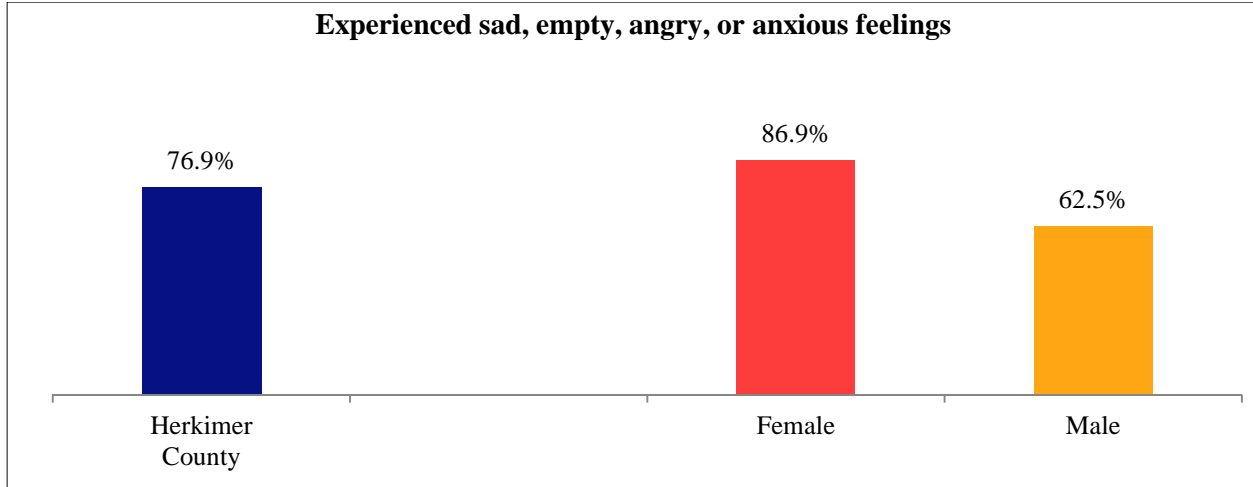
- 11.1% of Herkimer County youth made a plan about how they would attempt to complete suicide in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report this behavior.



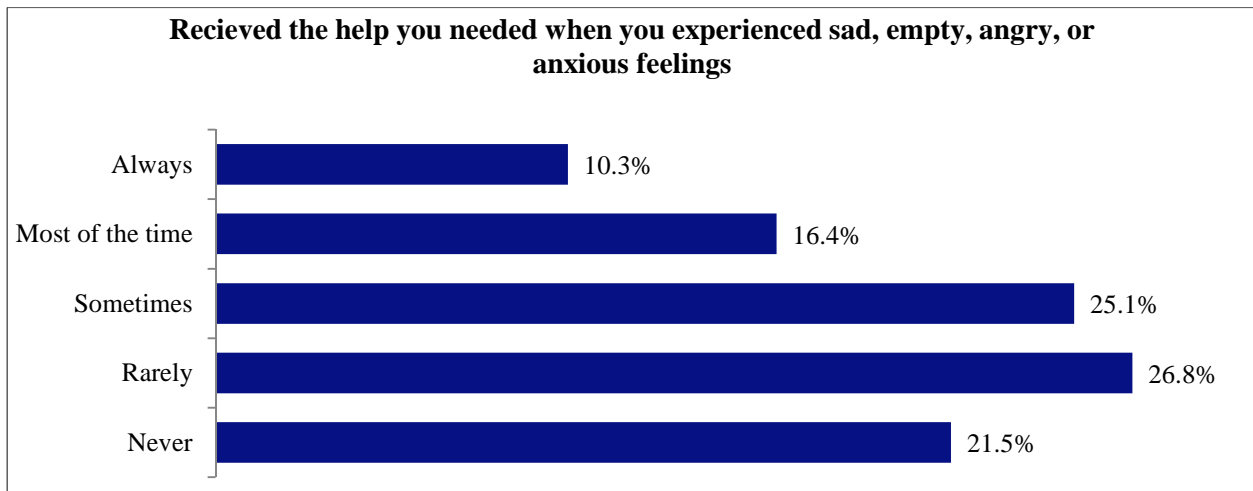
- 7.2% of Herkimer County youth report attempting to complete suicide in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report this behavior.



# Mental and Behavioral Health



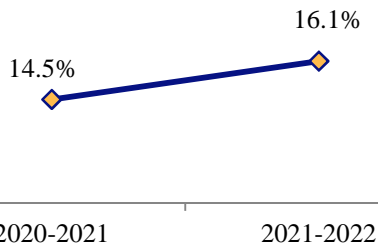
- 76.9% of Herkimer County youth report experiencing sad, empty, angry, or anxious feelings.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report these feelings.



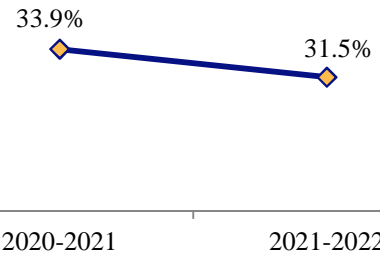
- Nearly half (48.3%) of Herkimer County youth report they never or rarely received help when they were experiencing sad, empty, angry, or anxious feelings.
- One quarter (25.1%) report sometimes receiving help when they were experiencing sad, empty, angry, or anxious feelings.
- Approximately one-quarter (26.7%) report most of the time or always receiving help when they were experiencing sad, empty, angry, or anxious feelings.

# Mental and Behavioral Health Trends

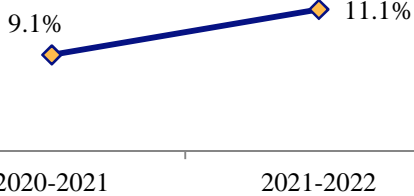
**Purposely hurt yourself without wanting to die, last 12 months**



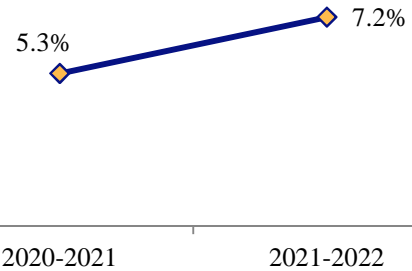
**Felt sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more, last 12 months**



**Made a plan about how you would attempt suicide, last 12 months**



**Attempted suicide, last 12 months**

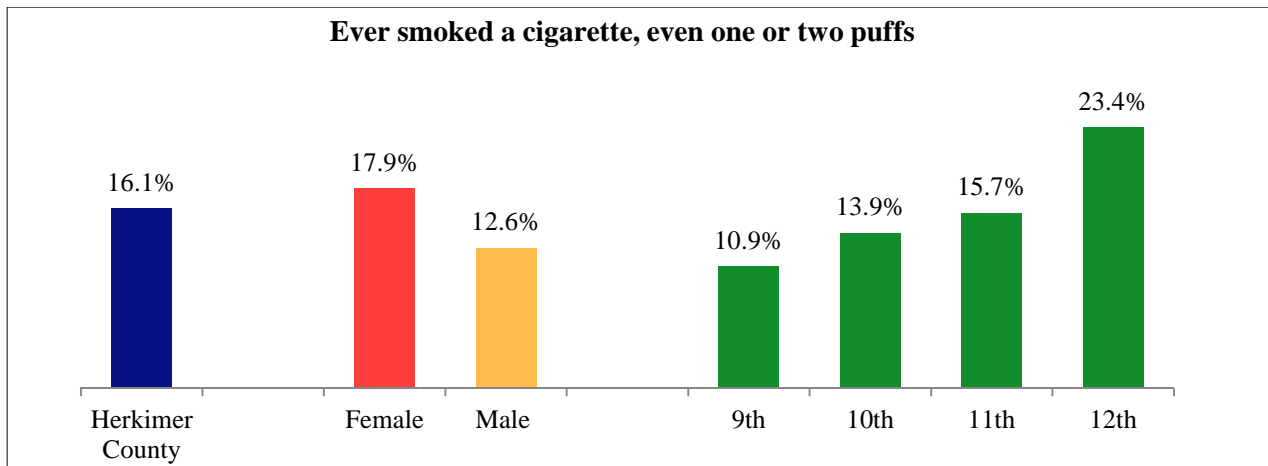


# Tobacco

The harmful effects of smoking and tobacco use are well established but it is important to continue to work to educate teens and young adults on the dangers of tobacco. Even infrequent tobacco use causes long-term or permanent damage to your body. In addition to the commonly known health effects of tobacco use such as lung problems, asthma, high blood pressure, bad breath, and more, adolescent brain structure is in its development stage during the teen years. Tobacco use during this critical developmental time leaves teens vulnerable to nicotine addiction such that the occasional cigarette can easily lead to life-long addiction. This is why it is crucial to prevent teens from initiating tobacco use during these important developmental years.

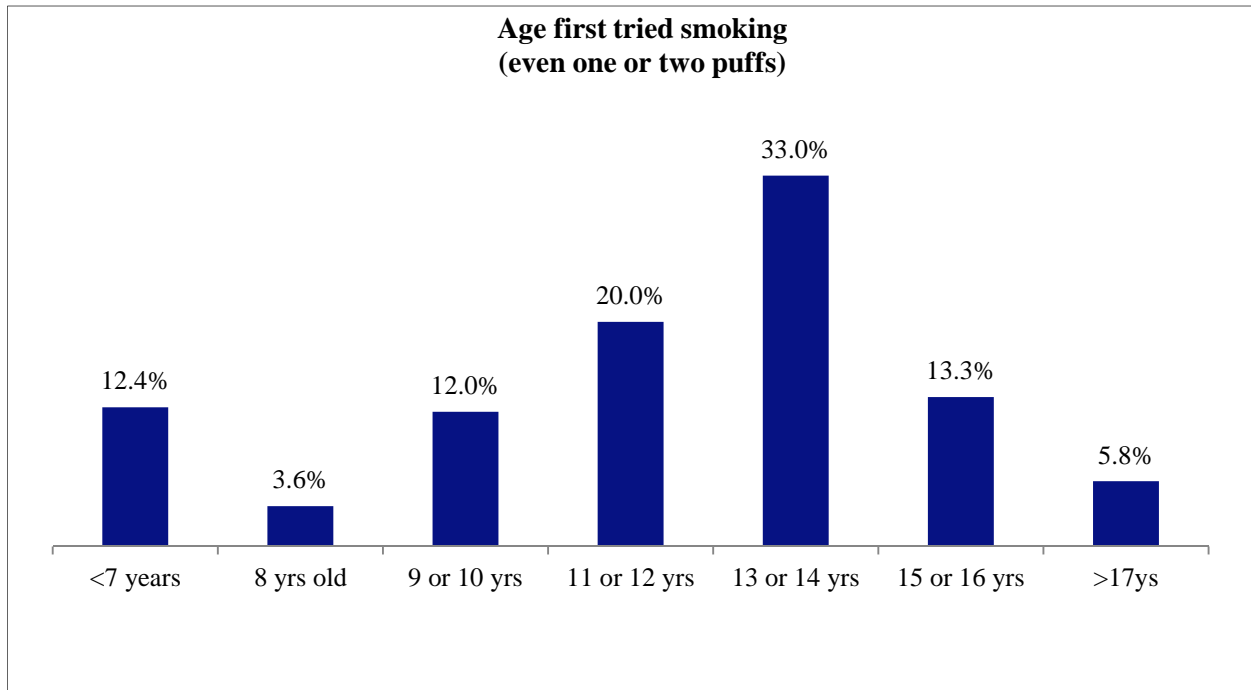
Herkimer County youth are reporting drastic declines in tobacco use. For the purposes of this report, current smokers are defined as those youth who have smoked a cigarette in the 30 days prior to the survey.

While some of the tobacco-related questions included e-cigarette use, this section will focus on cigarette and other tobacco products. A section examining e-cigarettes and vaping follows this section.



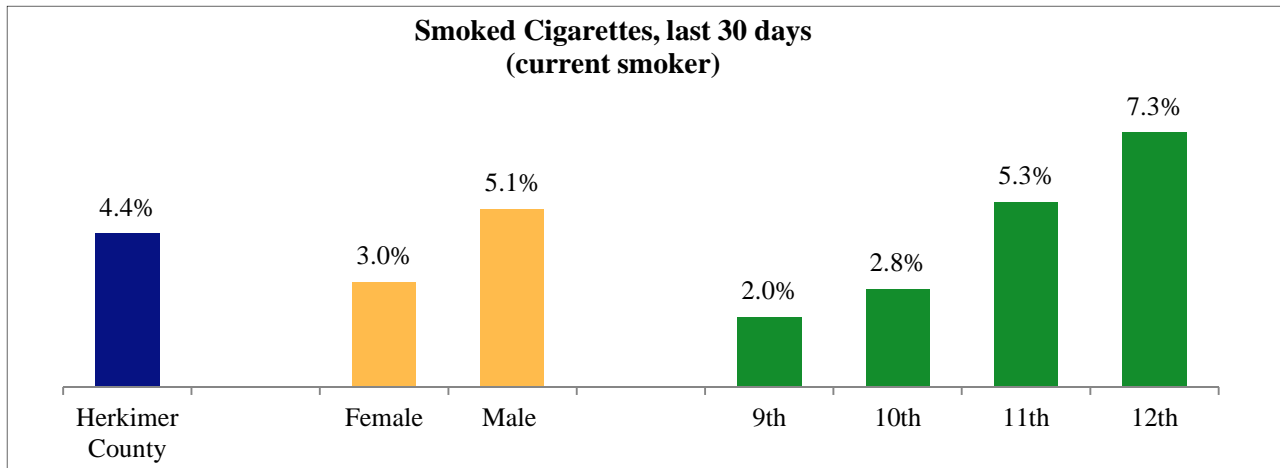
- 16.1% of Herkimer County youth report ever smoking a cigarette, even one or two puffs.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report these experiences.

# Tobacco

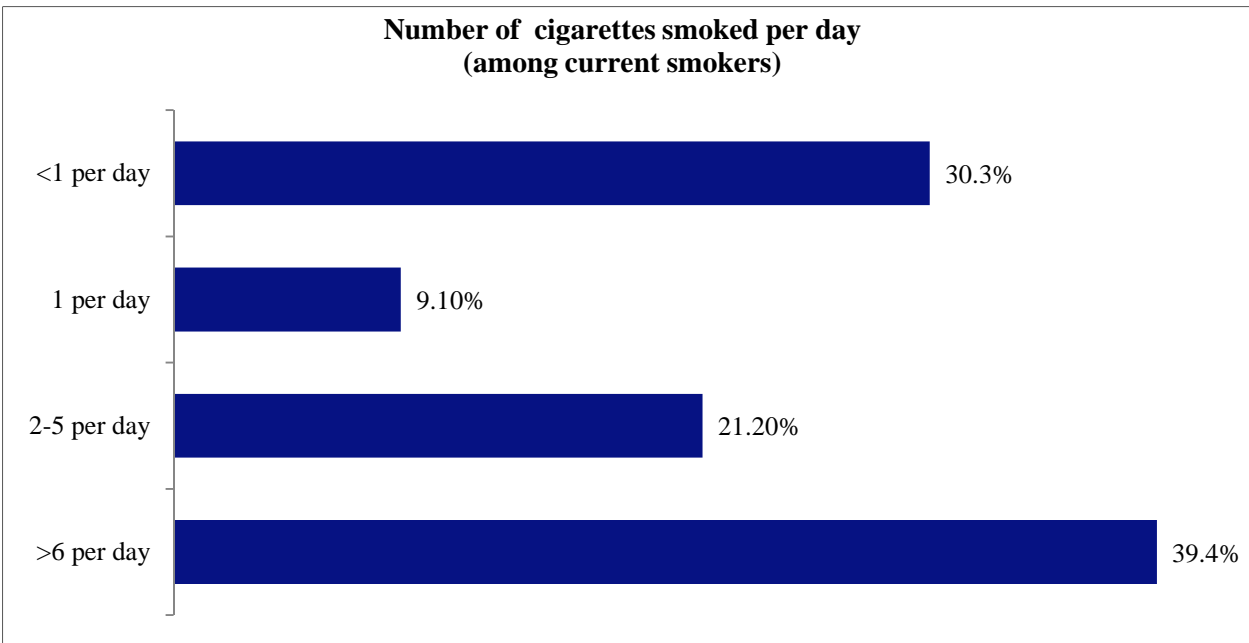


- Of those Herkimer County youth who reported ever trying a cigarette, even one or two puffs, 12.4% report being 7 years old or younger with they had first smoked.
- The majority of youth (53%) who report ever trying a cigarette, even one or two puffs, were between the ages of 11 and 14 years when they had first smoked.

# Tobacco

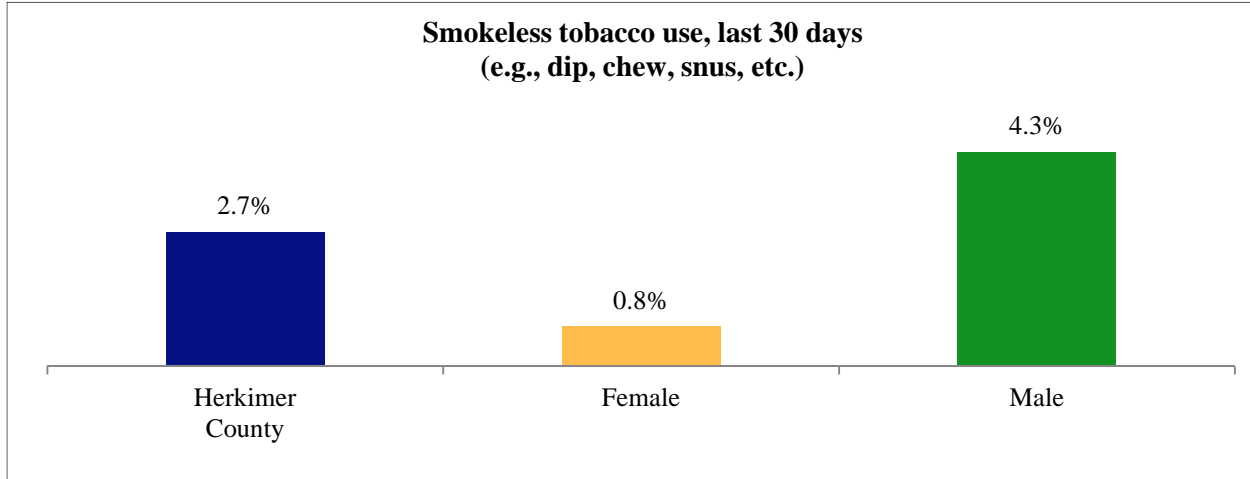


- 4.4% of Herkimer County youth report smoking a cigarette in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- These youth are considered current smokers.
- No statistically significant difference was noted between the sexes.

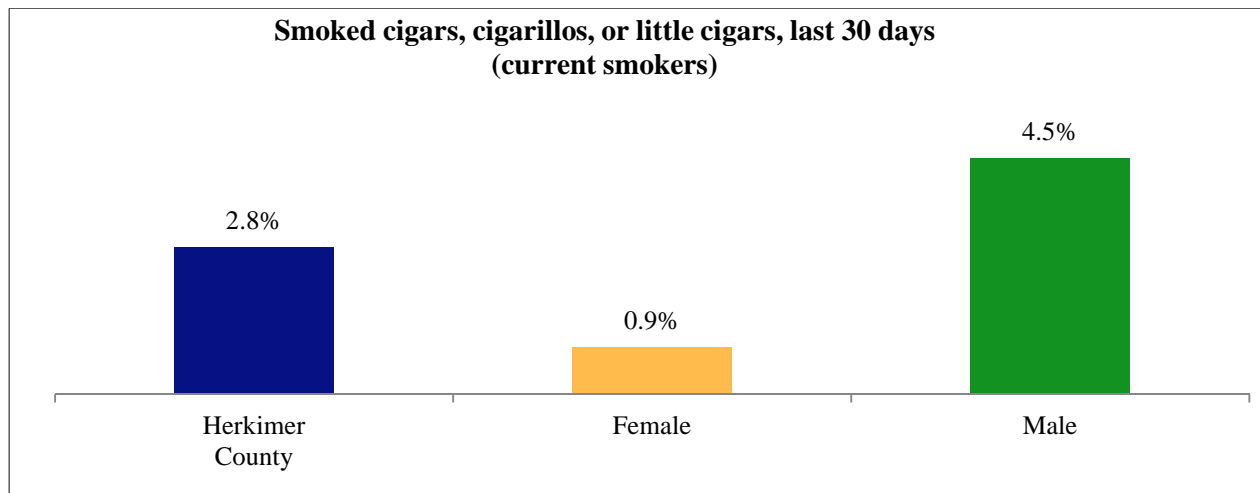


- Overall, roughly 40% of Herkimer County youth who identified as being current smokers reported smoking 6 or more cigarettes per day.
- Approximately one third (30.3%) of current smokers smoke less than one cigarette per day.

# Tobacco

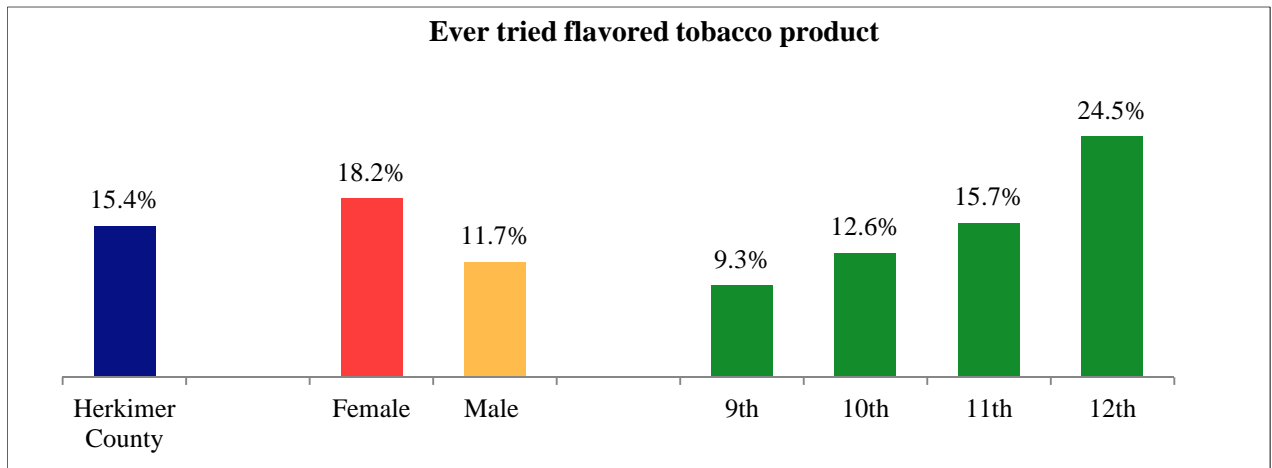


- 2.7% of Herkimer County youth reported using smokeless tobacco in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Smokeless tobacco was defined as chewing tobacco, snuff, dip, snus, or dissolvable tobacco products such as Copenhagen, Grizzly, Skoal, or Camel Snus. Youth were instructed not to count electronic vapor products.
- Males were statistically more likely than females to report having used smokeless tobacco.

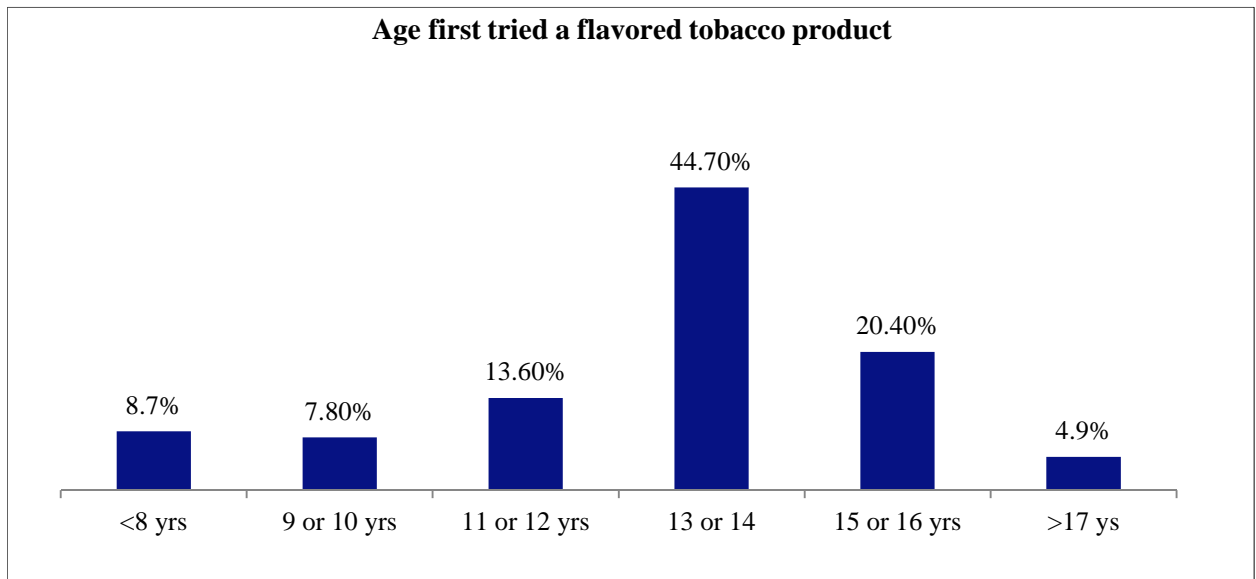


- 2.8% of Herkimer County youth report having smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars during the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Males were statistically more likely than females to report using cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars.

# Tobacco

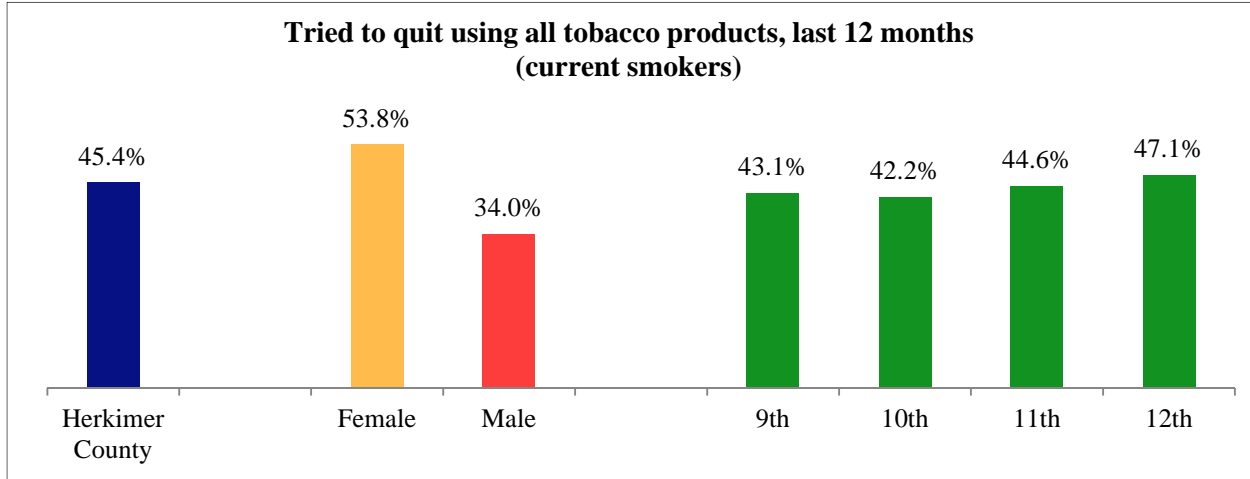


- 15.4% of Herkimer County youth report ever trying a flavored tobacco product.
- Flavored tobacco products were defined as tobacco flavored to taste like menthol (mint), clove, spice, alcohol (wine or cognac), candy, fruit, chocolate, or other sweets.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report trying a flavored tobacco product.

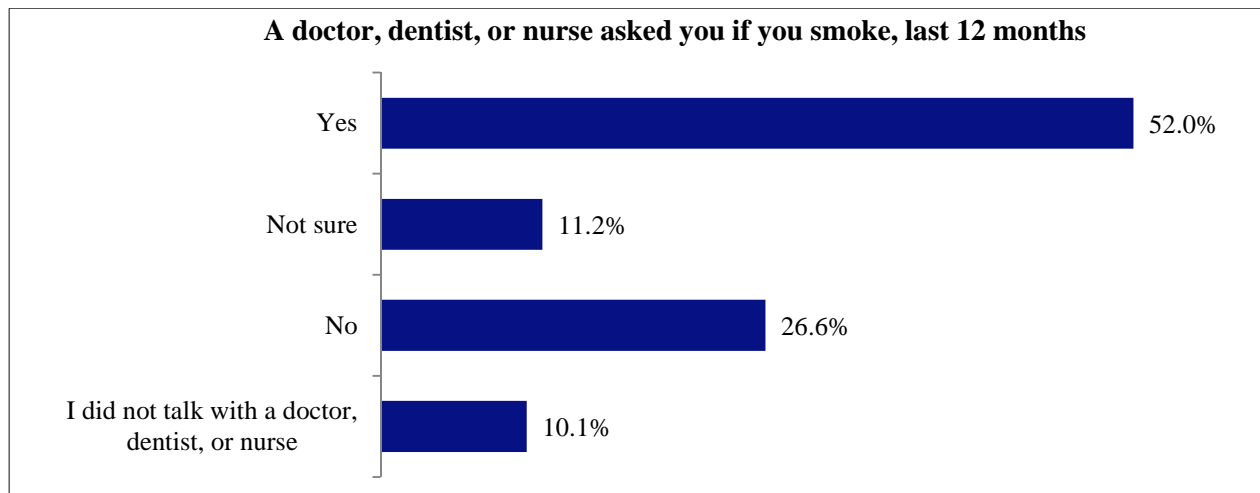


- Of those Herkimer County youth who reported ever trying a flavored tobacco product, 8.7% report being 8 years old or younger when they tried it.
- The majority of youth (44.7%) who report ever trying a flavored tobacco product were between the ages of 13 and 14 years when they tried it.

# Tobacco



- Among those Herkimer County youth who reported being a current smoker, 45.4% report having tried to quit smoking all tobacco products, including EVPs, in the 12 months prior to the surveyed tried to quit tobacco products.
- Males were statistically less likely than females to report trying to quit tobacco products.



- Approximately half (52%) of Herkimer County youth report being asked by a doctor, dentist, or nurse if they smoke.
- Slightly over a quarter (26.6%) of Herkimer County youth report that a doctor, dentist, or nurse did not ask them if they smoke.

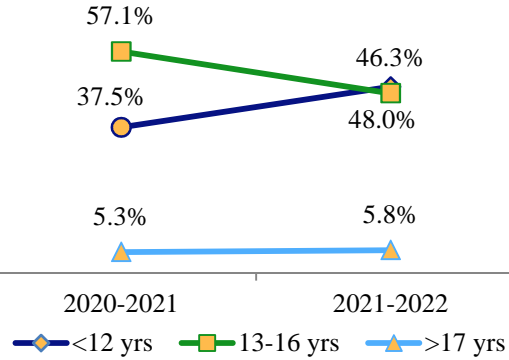


# Tobacco Trends

**Ever smoked a cigarette, even one or two puffs**



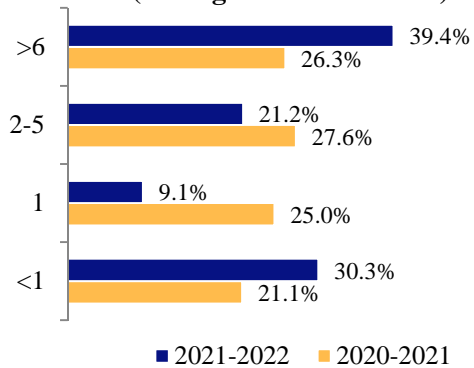
**Age first tried smoking (even one or two puffs)**



**Smoked Cigarettes, last 30 days (current smoker)**



**Number of cigarettes smoked per day (among current smokers)**



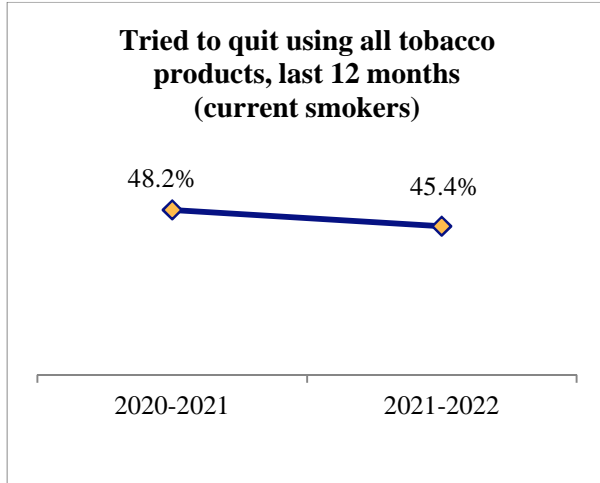
**Smokeless tobacco use, last 30 days (e.g., dip, chew, snus, etc.)**



**Smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars, last 30 days (current smokers)**



# Tobacco Trends

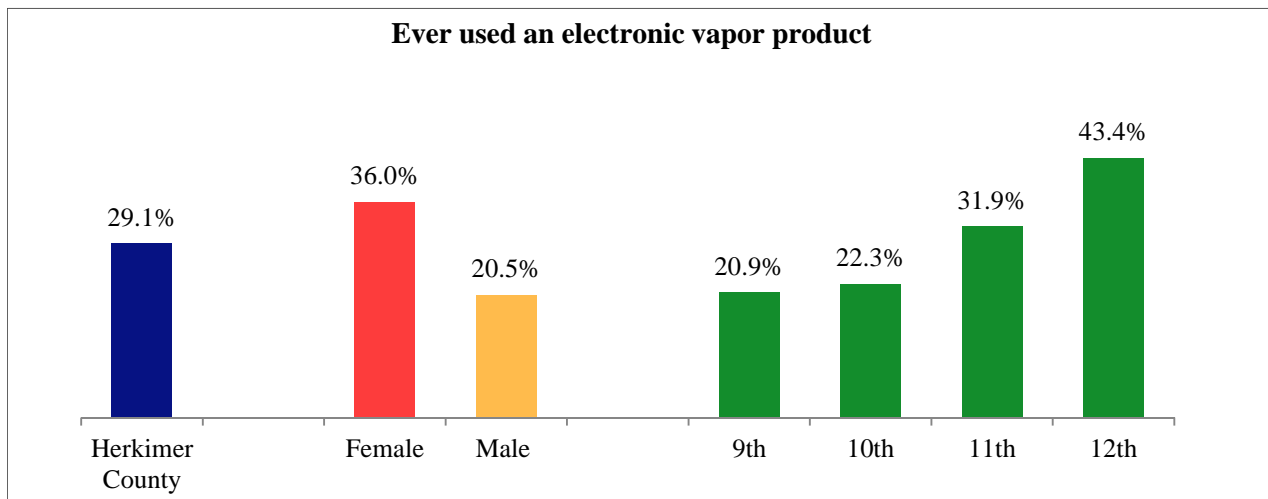


# Electronic Vapor Products

Electronic vapor product (EVP) use is a disturbing national trend among youth. They are commonly known as “e-cigs”, “vape”, “vape pens”, “tanks”, and a variety of other names. The modern and first commercially available EVP hit the US Market in 2006 where they enjoyed a relatively unrestricted sales market, even being promoted as a safe alternative to combustible cigarettes. EVP’s are now the most commonly used tobacco product among youth nationally, and Herkimer County follows these trends. In 2016, the FDA expanded its regulatory powers to EVPs and placed EVPs under the same regulations as any other tobacco product. It is important to note that EVPs are not safe alternatives to combustible cigarettes.

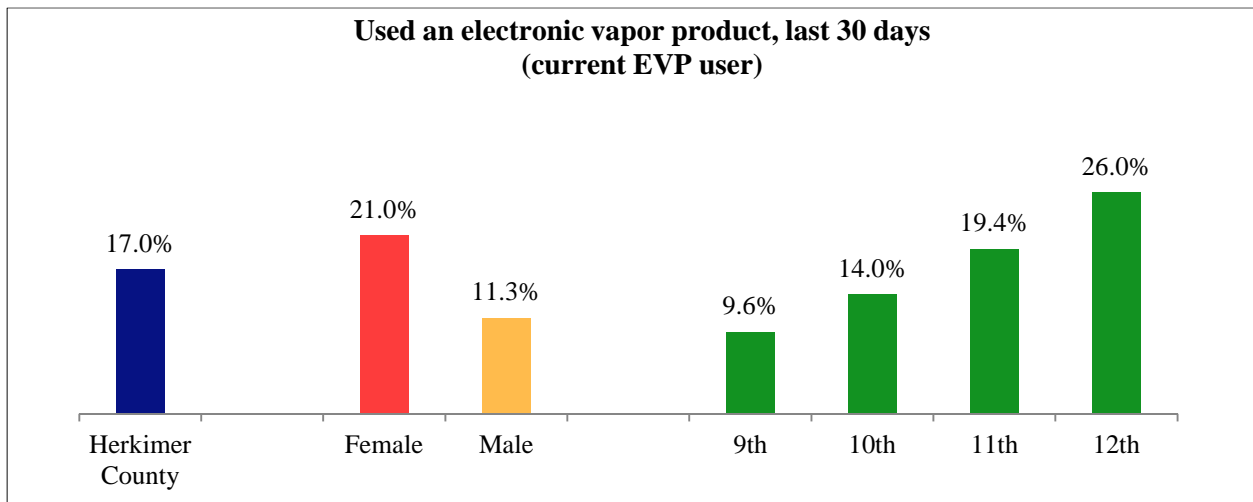
Nationally, 11.3% of high school youth report being a current user of EVPs. In NY State, 22.5% of high school students report being current users of EVPs (also known as ENDS in NYS surveys). Herkimer County youth report higher rates than national youth at 17%, but the county has lower usage rates than NYS.

The questions asked in this version of the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey were worded differently than in previous years to account for changes in NYS laws, EVP availability, and EVP type. Unfortunately, because of this, only a limited amount of trend data is available for this section.



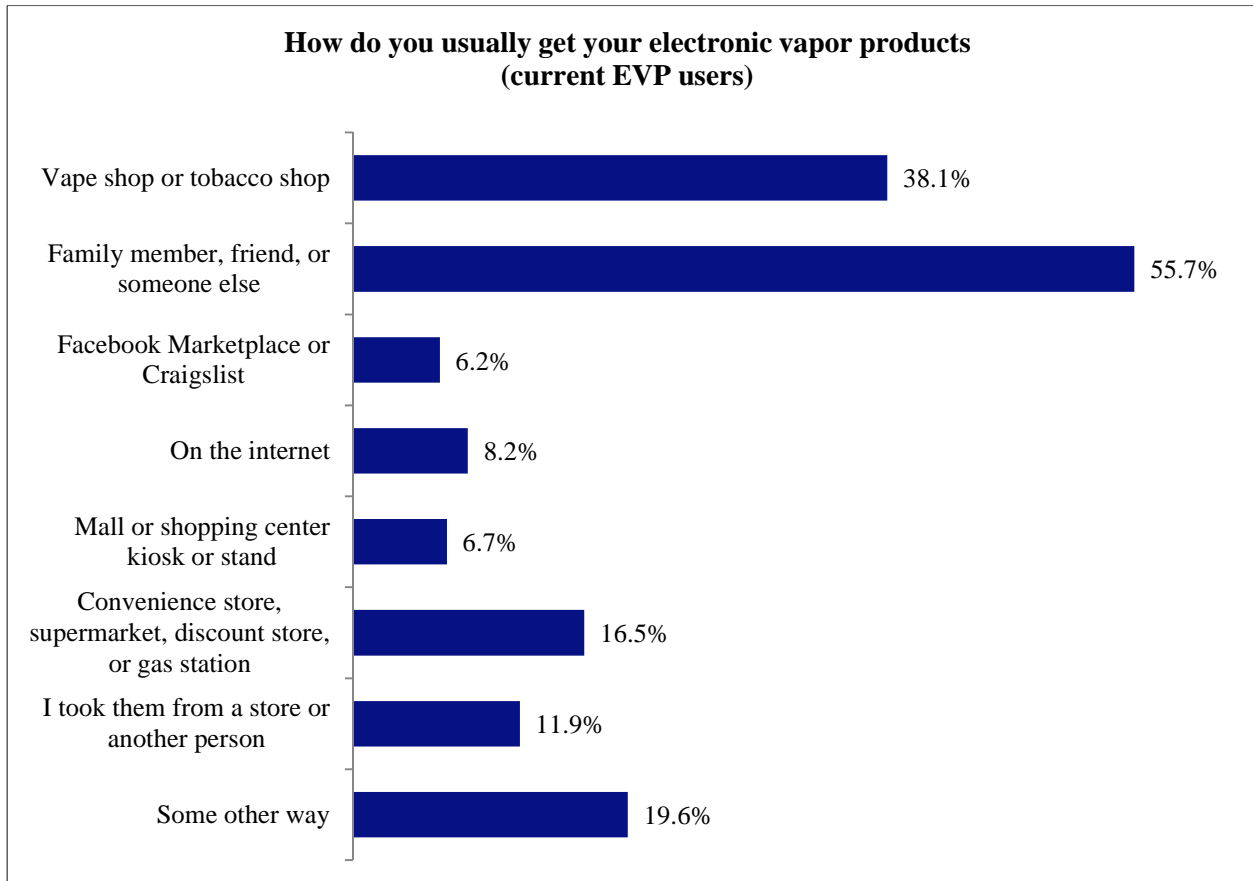
- 29.1% of Herkimer County youth report ever using an electronic vapor product.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report ever using an electronic vapor product.

# Electronic Vapor Products



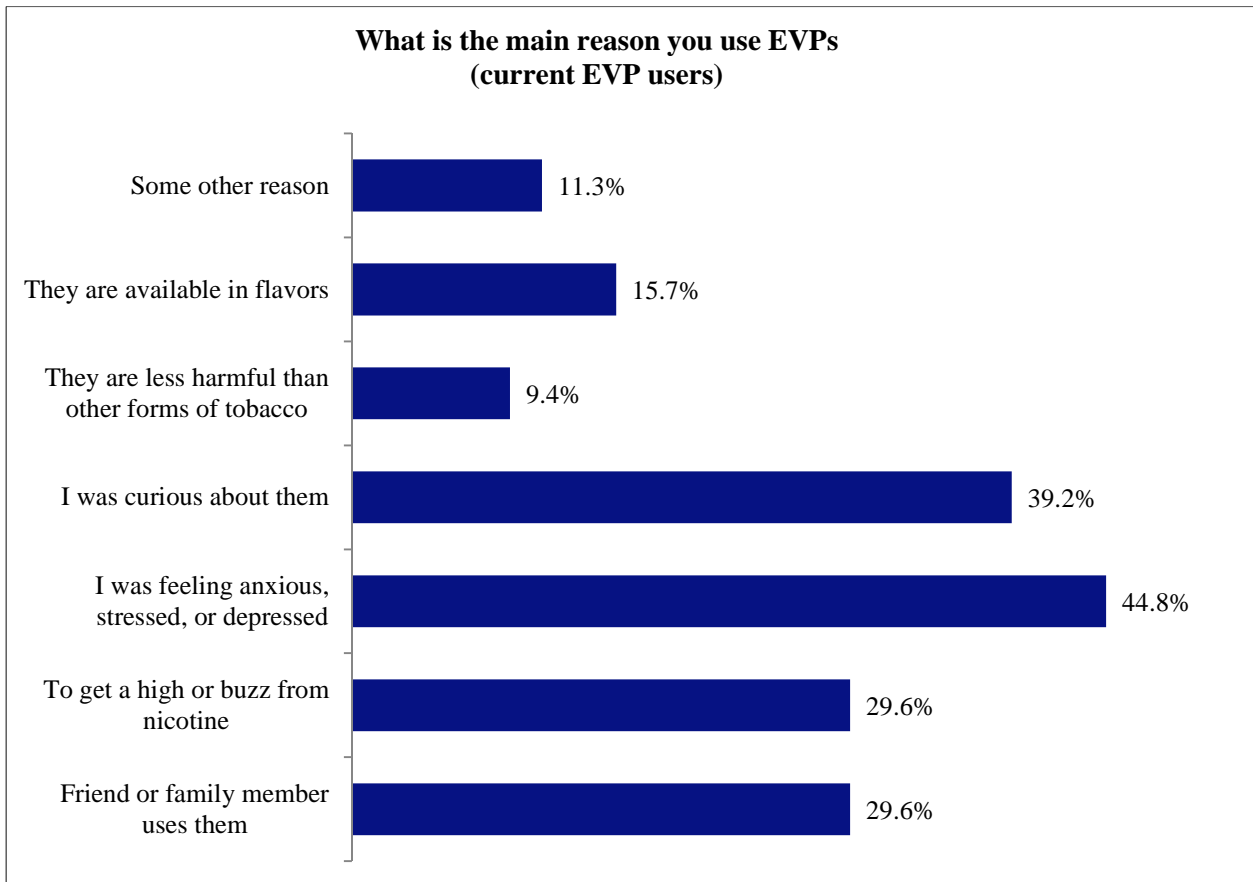
- 17.0% of Herkimer County youth report using an electronic vapor product in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- These youth are considered *current EVP users*.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report being a current user of electronic vapor products.

# Electronic Vapor Products



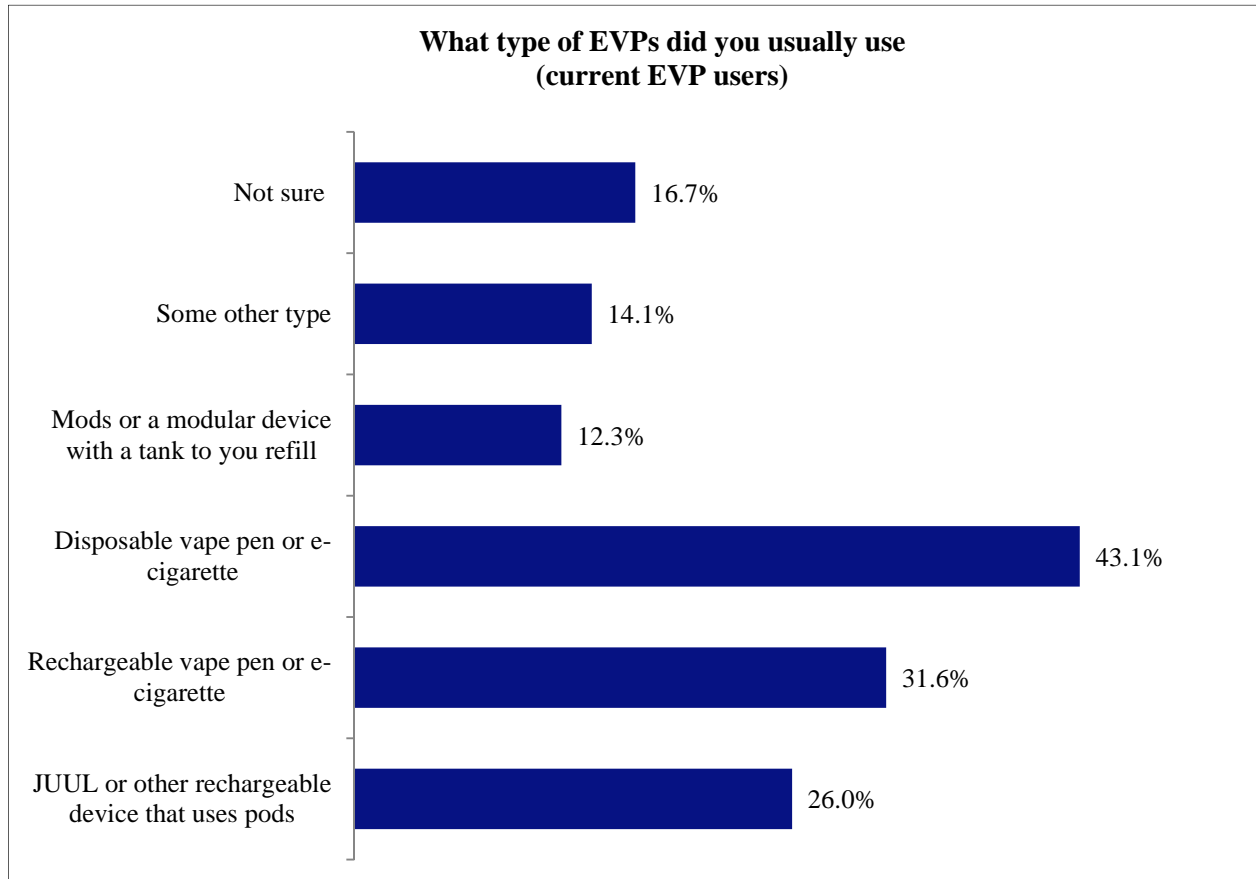
- Of the 17% of Herkimer County youth who report being a current EVP user, the majority (55.7%) get their electronic vapor products from a family member, friend, or someone else.

# Electronic Vapor Products



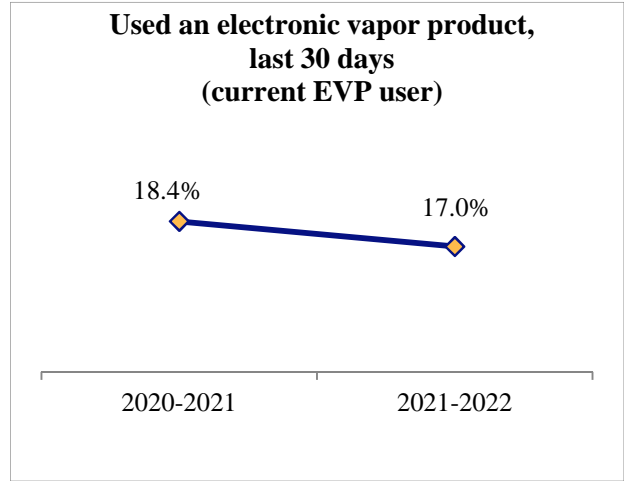
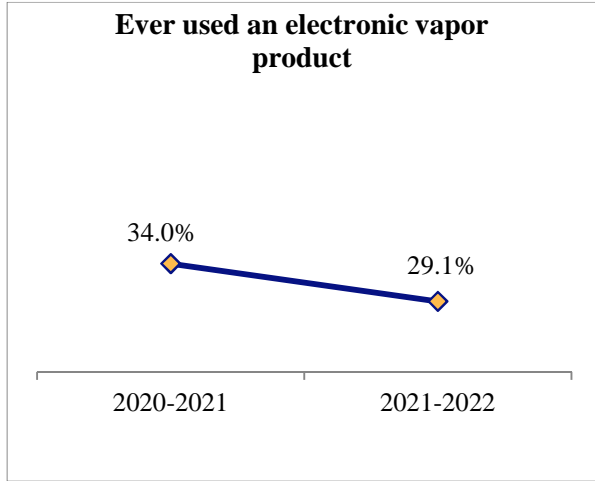
- Of the 17% of Herkimer County youth who report being a current EVP user, 44.8% report using them because they were feeling anxious, stressed, or depressed.
- The second most reported reason for EVP use was curiosity (39.2%).
- The third most reported reason for EVP use was to get a high or buzz from nicotine or because a friend or family member used them (29.6%).

# Electronic Vapor Products



- Of the 17% of Herkimer County youth who report using EVPs, 43.1% report using a disposable vape pen or e-cigarette.
- 31.6% report using a rechargeable vape pen or e-cigarette.
- 26.0% report using a JUUL or other rechargeable device that uses pods.

# Electronic Vapor Products Trends

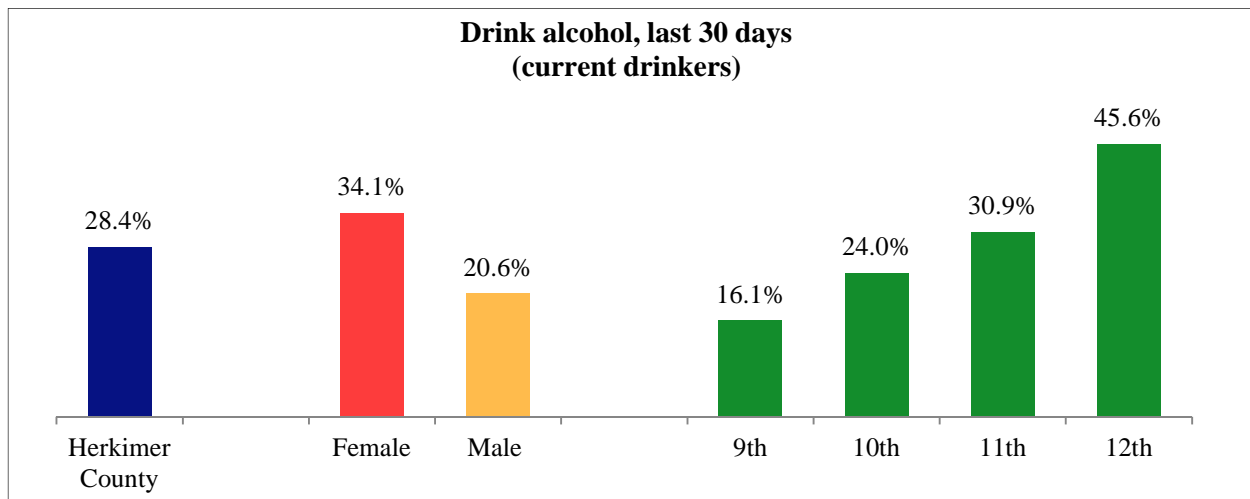




# Alcohol

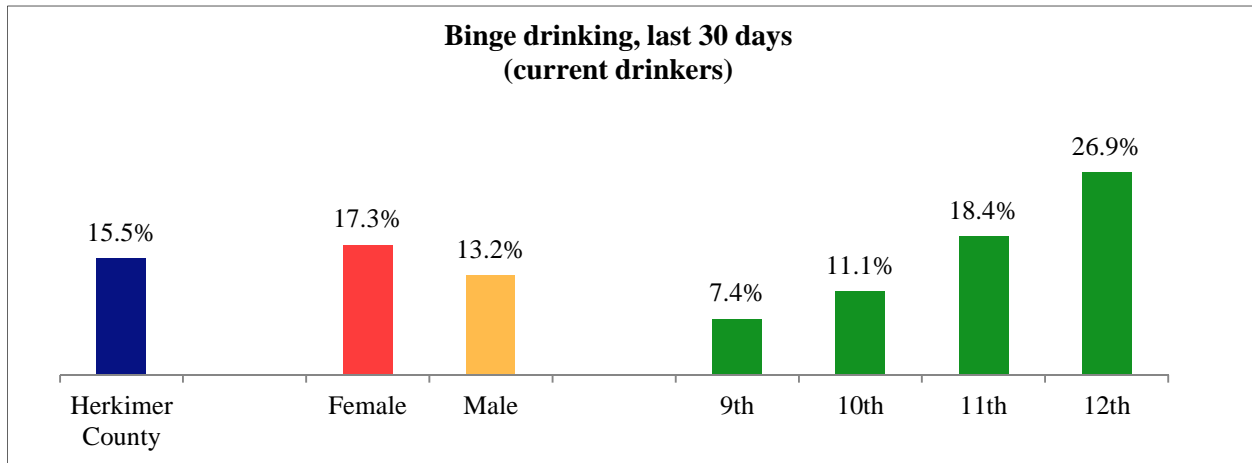
Underage drinking is a significant public health problem. Underage drinking is linked to educational problems such as high absenteeism, low grades, and memory problems. Socially, alcohol use is linked with withdrawal from youth-related activities, legal problems, unwanted or unprotected sexual activity, physical and/or sexual violence, increased risk of suicide, and increased risk of unintentional injuries from motor vehicle crashes, falls, burns, or drowning. Underage drinking is also linked to alcohol use disorder in adulthood.

The following tables examine youth responses to questions about their behaviors related to the alcohol consumption.

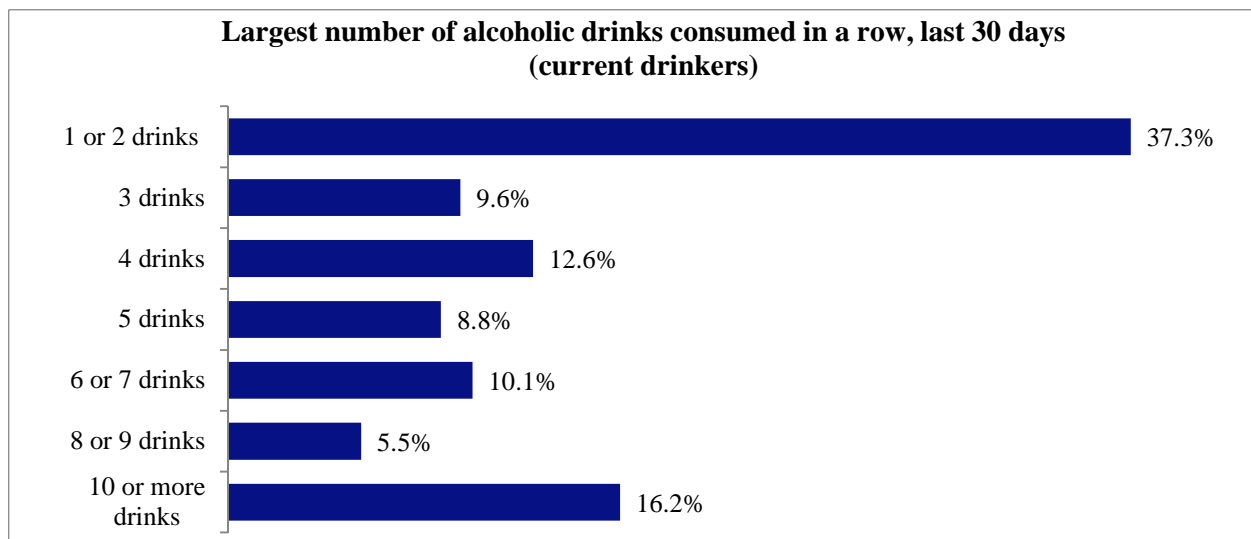


- 28.4% of Herkimer County youth report drinking alcohol in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- These youth are referred to as current drinkers.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report consuming alcohol.

# Alcohol

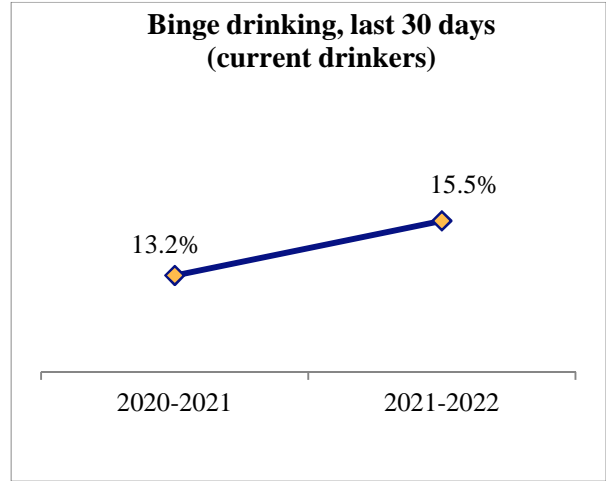
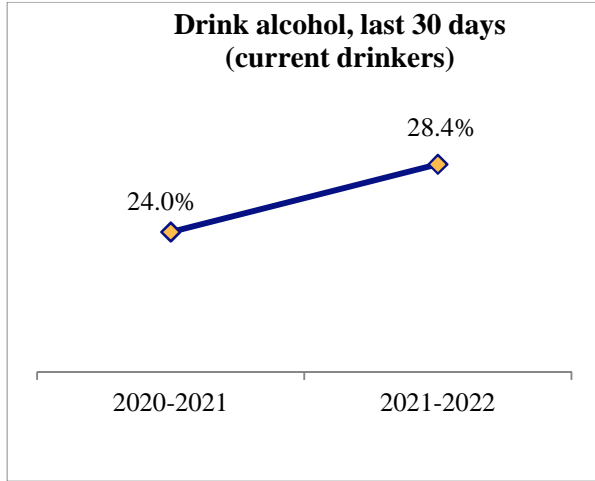


- 15.5% of Herkimer County youth who identified as being current drinkers reported binge drinking in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Binge drinking was defined as 4 or more alcoholic drinks in a row for females, and 5 or more alcoholic drinks in a row for males.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report this behavior.



- The majority of Herkimer County youth (37.3%) who report being current drinkers report that the largest number of drinks they consumed in a row in the 30 days prior to the survey was 1 or 2 drinks.
- 16.2% of youth report the largest number of drinks they consumed in a row was 10 or more.

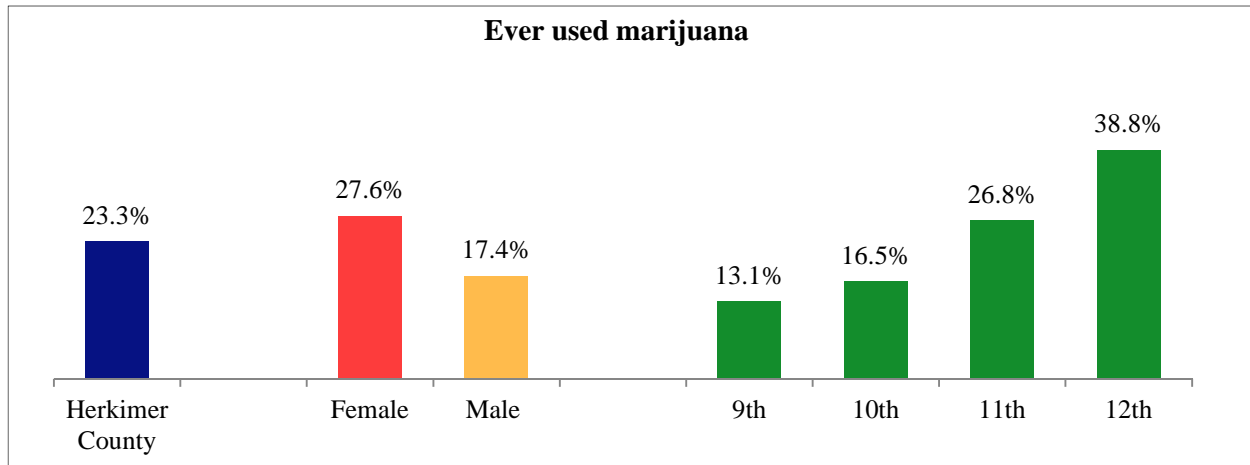
# Alcohol Trends



# Marijuana

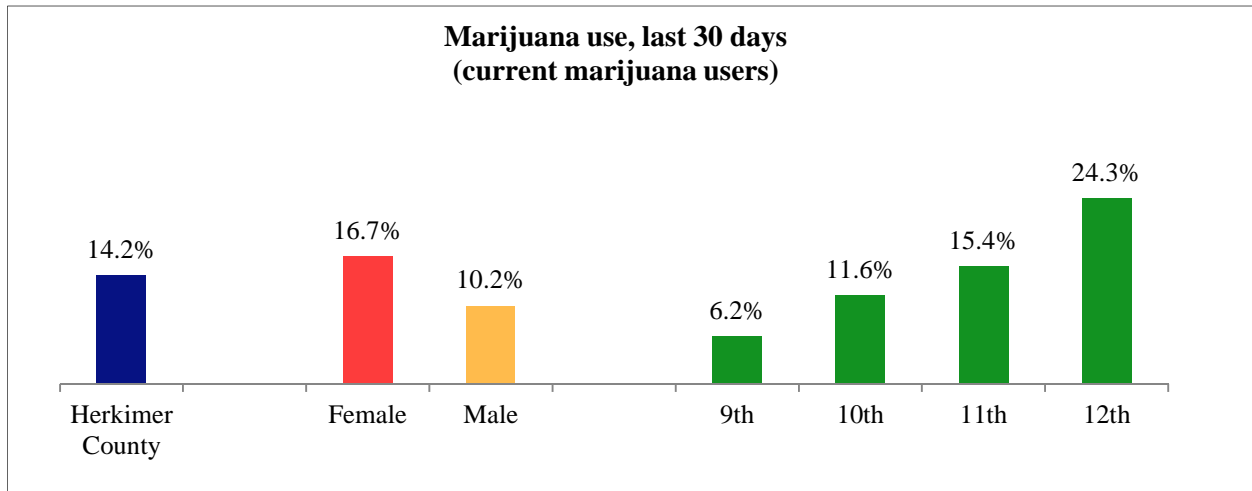
Teen marijuana use can have negative impacts their physical and emotional health, including but not limited to, school performance, social activities, addiction in later life, risky sexual behavior, and can exacerbate or initiate onset of underlying mental health conditions such as depression and increase the risk for psychosis. Marijuana use is also associated with all the same health risks as tobacco use.

The following tables examine youth responses to questions about their behaviors related to marijuana use.

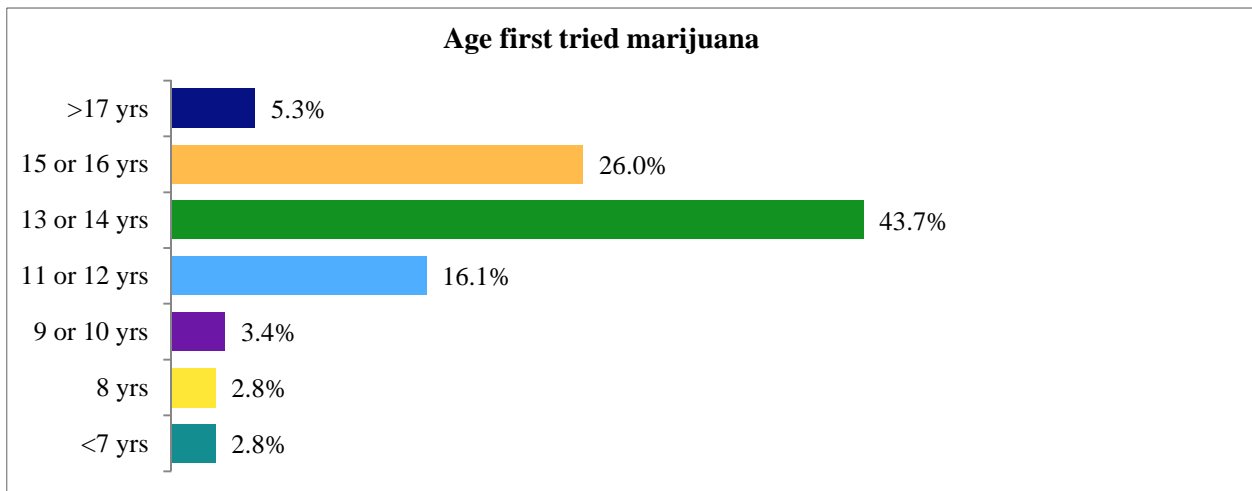


- 23.3% of Herkimer County youth report ever using marijuana.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report using marijuana.

# Marijuana

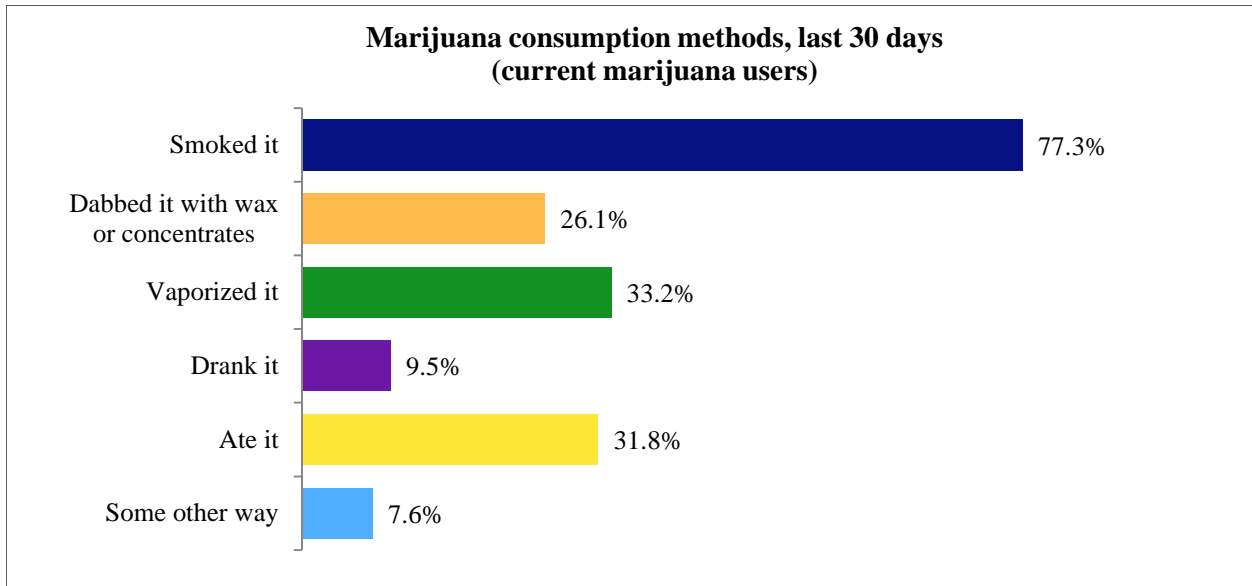


- 14.2% of Herkimer County youth report using marijuana in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report using marijuana.



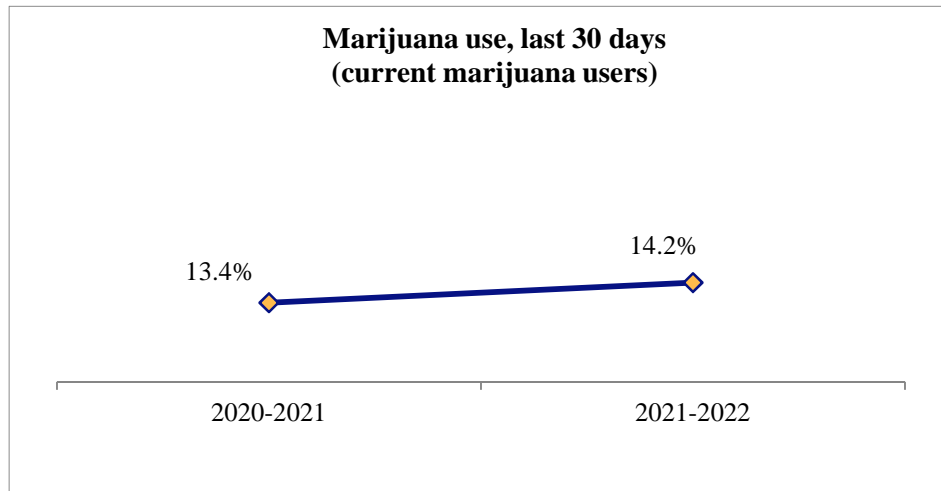
- The majority of Herkimer County youth (69.7%) who report ever using marijuana report first using marijuana between the ages of 13 and 16 years.
- 9% of youth report being younger than 10 years.

# Marijuana



- The majority of Herkimer County youth who report being current marijuana users (77.3%) report smoking it in a pipe, bong, joint, or blunt.
- 33.2% of youth vaporized it.
- 31.8% ate it in brownies, cakes, cookies, or candies.
- 26.1% dabbed it using waxes or concentrates.
- 9.5% drank it in tea, cola, alcohol, or other drinks.
- 7.6% used it some other way.

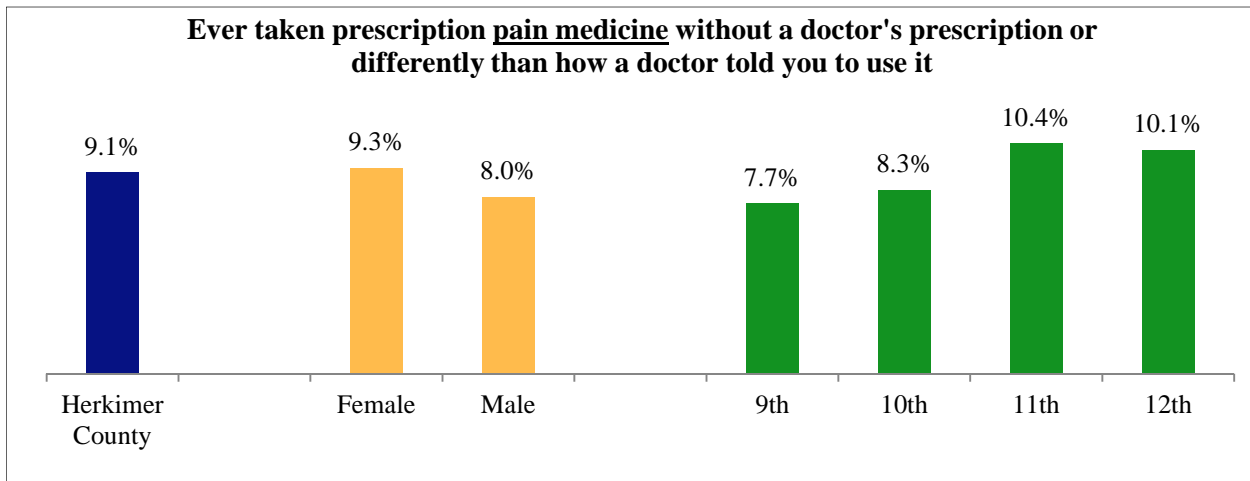
# Marijuana Trends



# Substance Use and Misuse

Teen substance use, such alcohol, marijuana, the misuse of prescription drugs, or other substance use, has a big impact on their physical and mental health. Sadly, prescription drug misuse is the fastest growing drug problem in the US and has significant repercussions on the lives of youth. One common reason youth state for this is the perception that prescription drugs are safer than illicit drugs. However, this is not the case. Harmful effects of prescription drug misuse varies with the type of drug being misused, however, they all have harmful side effects including disrupting brain development and perception.

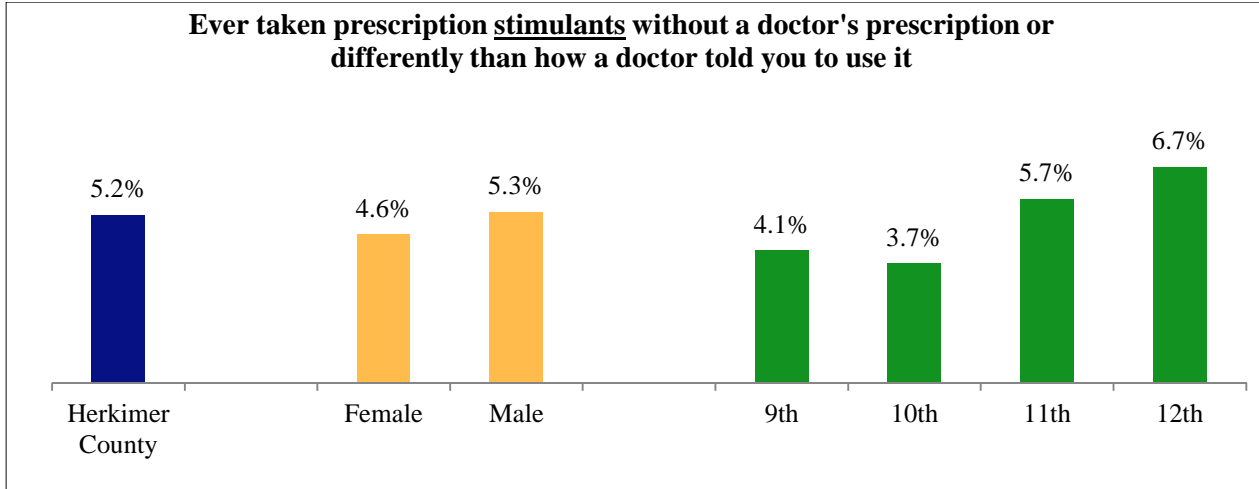
The following tables examine youth responses to questions about their behaviors related to the use of prescription medications in a way in which they were not intended. Specifically, the survey asks about pain medication and stimulants. Pain medication was defined as prescription drugs such as codeine, Vicodin, OxyContin, Hydrocodone, and Percocet. Stimulants were defined as drugs such as Adderall or Ritalin. The following tables also examine youth responses to questions about their behaviors related to the use of illicit drugs such as cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines, or inhalants such as glue or aerosols.



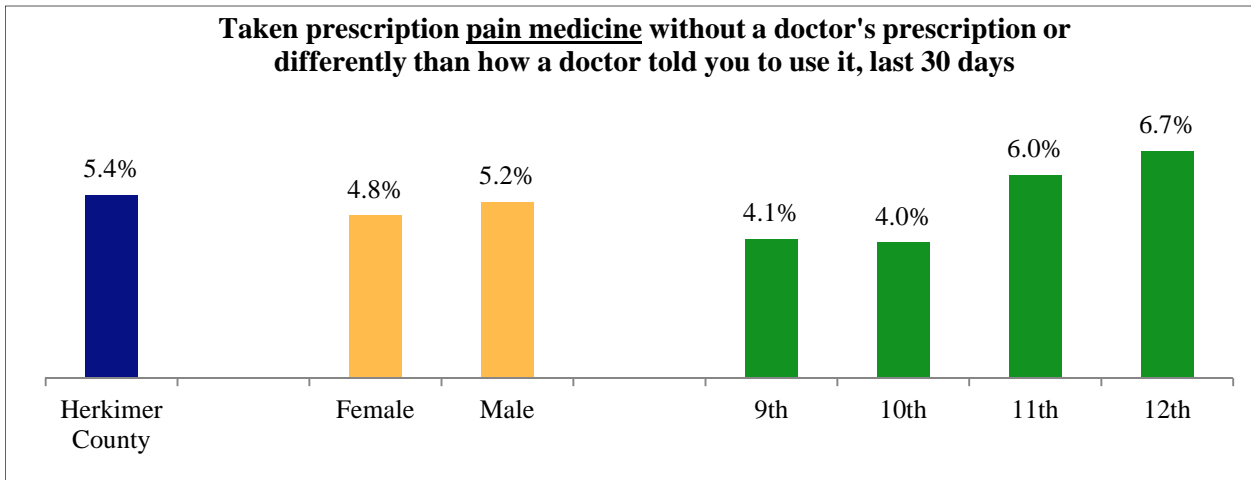
- 9.1% of Herkimer County youth reported ever using a prescription pain medication without a doctor's prescription or differently than how a doctor told you to use it.
- No statistically significant difference was noted between the sexes.
- Youth were told to count medications such as codeine, Vicodin, OxyContin, Hydrocodone, and Percocet.



# Substance Use and Misuse

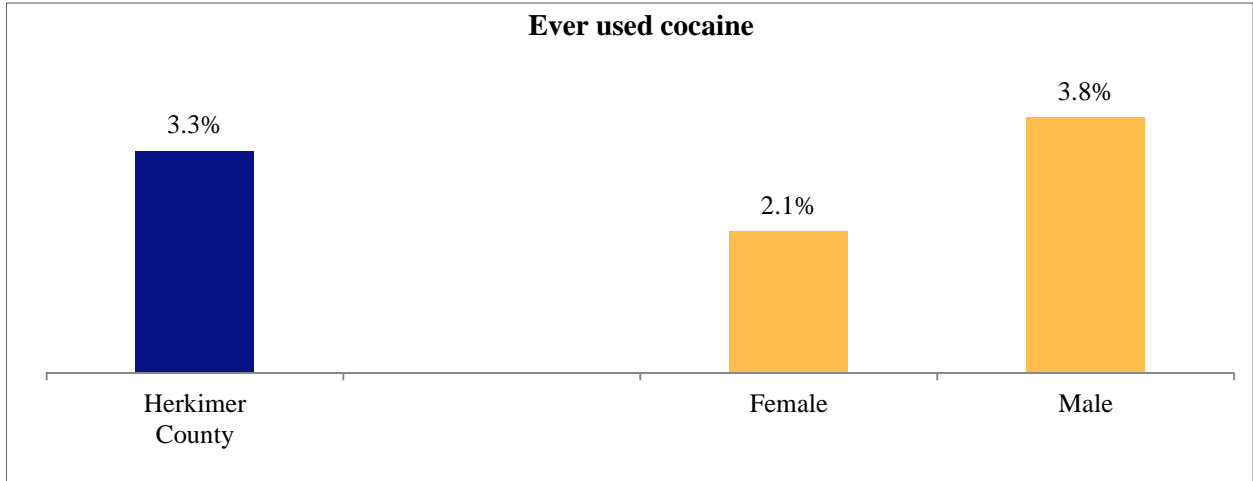


- 5.2% of Herkimer County youth report ever taking a prescription stimulant without a doctor's prescription or differently than how a doctor told you to use it.
- No statistically significant difference was noted between the sexes.
- Youth were told to count medications such as Adderall or Ritalin.

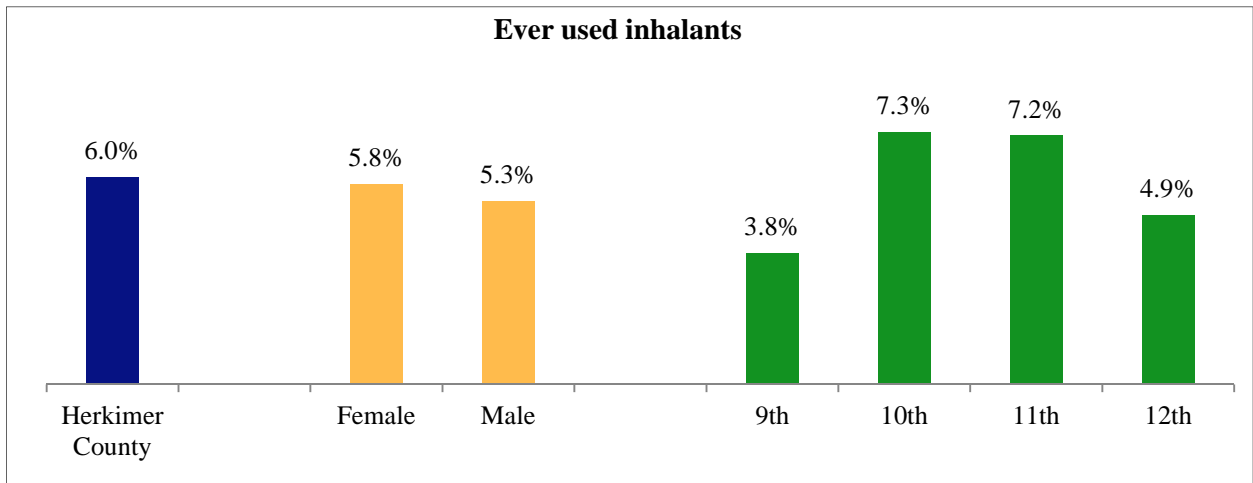


- 5.4 % of Herkimer County youth reported taking a prescription pain medication without a prescription or differently than how a doctor prescribed it in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- No statistically significant difference was noted between the sexes.

# Substance Use and Misuse

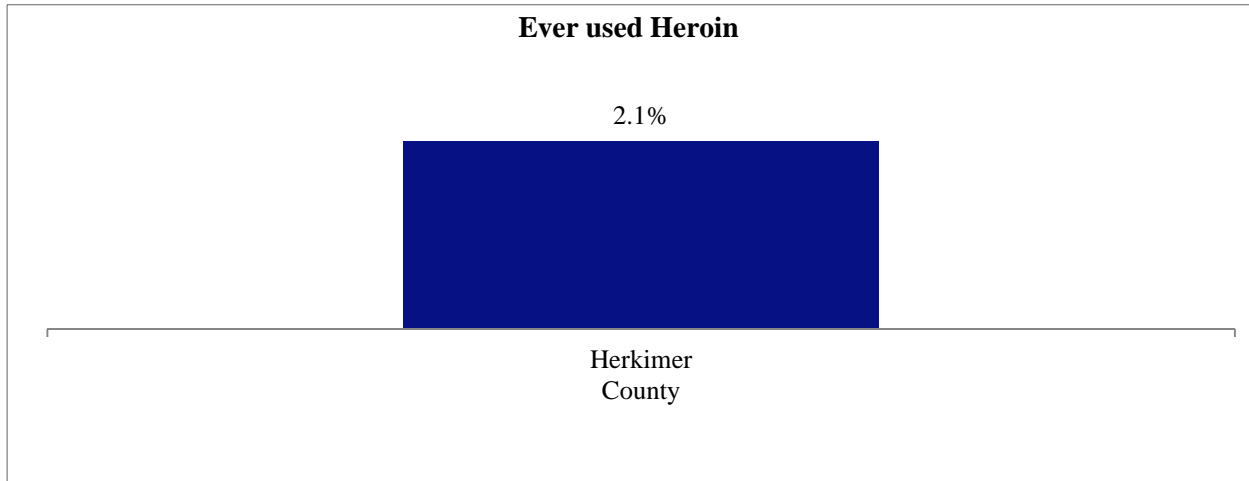


- 3.3% of Herkimer County youth reported ever using cocaine, including powder, crack, or freebase.
- No statistically significant difference was noted between the sexes.

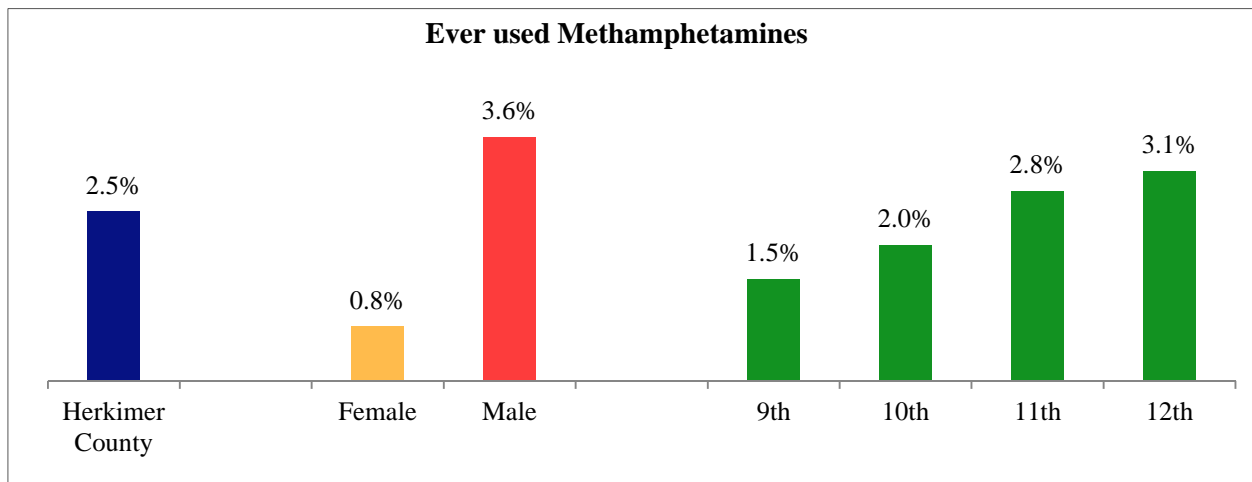


- 6.0% of Herkimer County youth report ever using inhalants such as sniffing glue, breathing in the contents of aerosol spray cans, or inhaling any other paints or sprays to get high.
- No statistically significant difference was noted between the sexes.

# Substance Use and Misuse

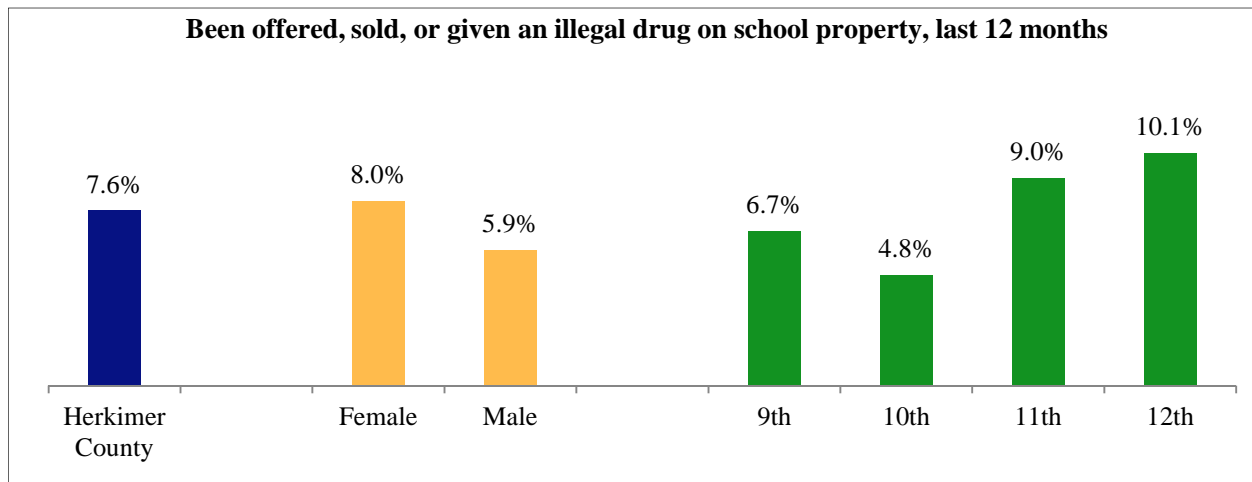


- 2.1% of Herkimer County youth report ever using heroin, also called smack, junk, or China White.

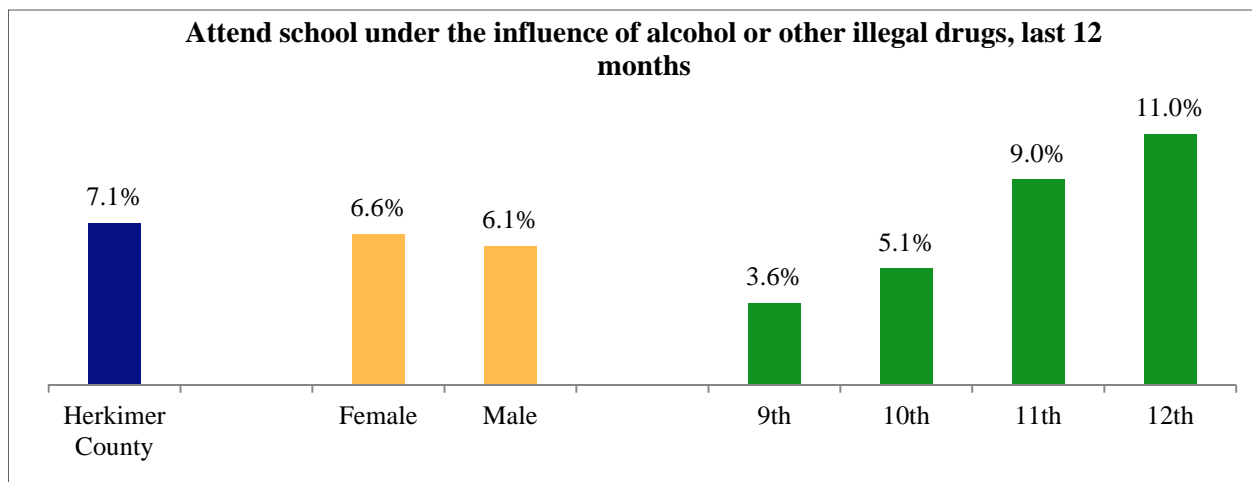


- 2.5% of Herkimer County youth report ever using methamphetamines, also called speed, crystal meth, crank, ice, or meth.
- Males were statistically more likely than females to report using methamphetamines.

## Substance Use and Misuse



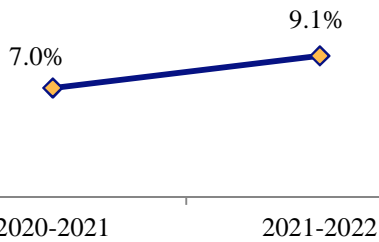
- 7.6% of Herkimer county youth reported being offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- No statistically significant differences were noted between the sexes.



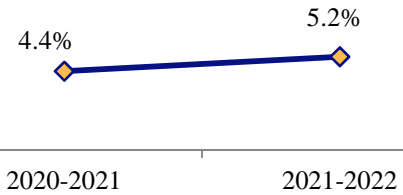
- 7.1% of Herkimer County youth report attending school while under the influence of alcohol or other illegal substances during the 12 months prior to the survey.
- No statistically significant differences were noted between the sexes.

# Substance Use and Misuse Trends

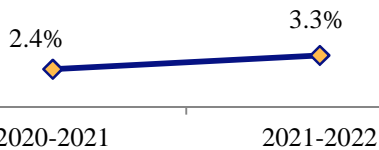
**Ever taken prescription pain medicine without a doctor's prescription or differently than how a doctor told you to use it**



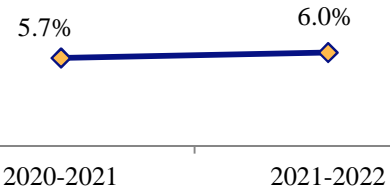
**Ever taken prescription stimulants without a doctor's prescription or differently than how a doctor told you to use it**



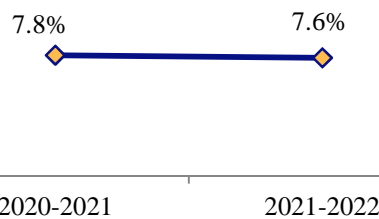
**Ever used cocaine**



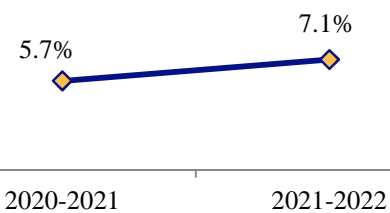
**Ever used Inhalants**



**Been offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property, last 12 months**



**Attend school under the influence of alcohol or other illegal drugs, last 12 months**

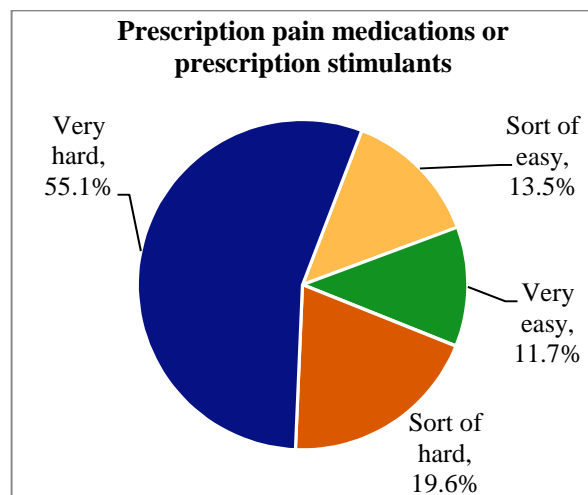
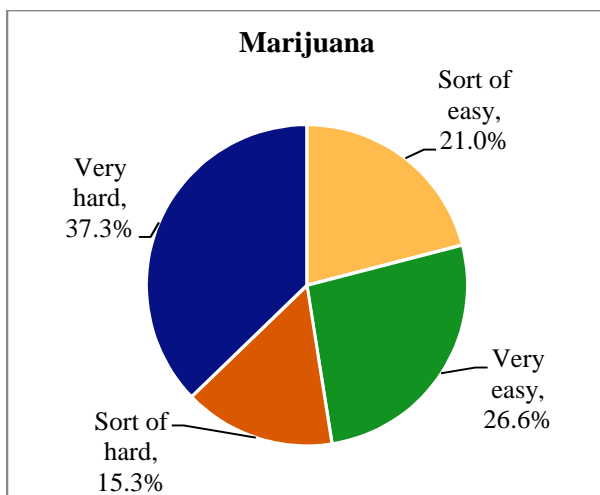
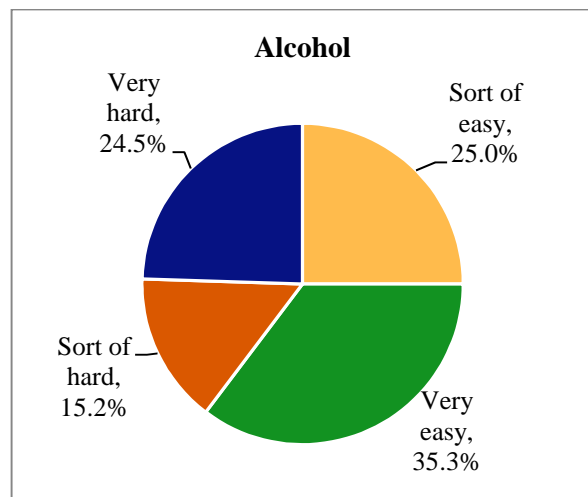
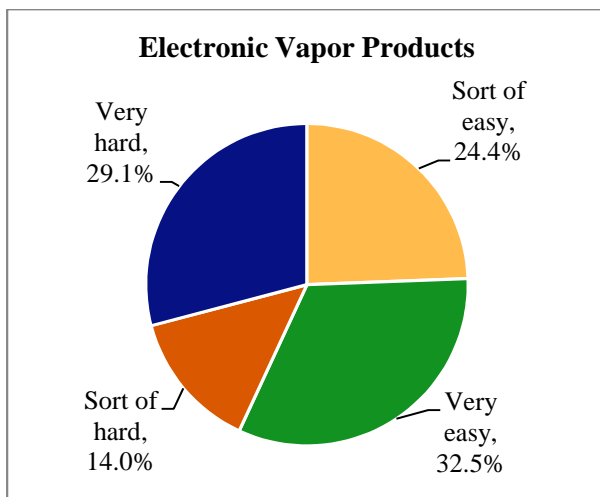


# Perceptions About Alcohol, Prescription Drugs, Vapor Products, Tobacco, and Marijuana

Research on peer pressure indicates that younger teens' perceptions of risk or harm are heavily influenced by the views (or perceived views) of older teens. One thing to note about this research is that older teens were more heavily influenced by adults while younger adolescents were more heavily influenced by older teens. This is an important nuance. If the adults do not perceive risk, the older teens will not perceive risk; subsequently the younger teens will not perceive risk. This demonstrates a very important synergy between prevention efforts, parental influence, and youth perceptions.

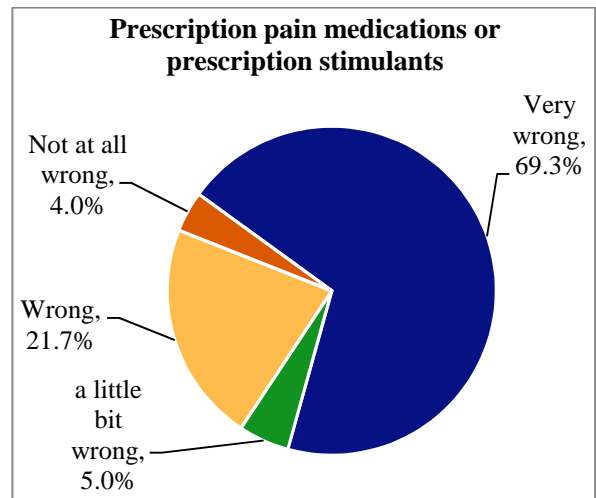
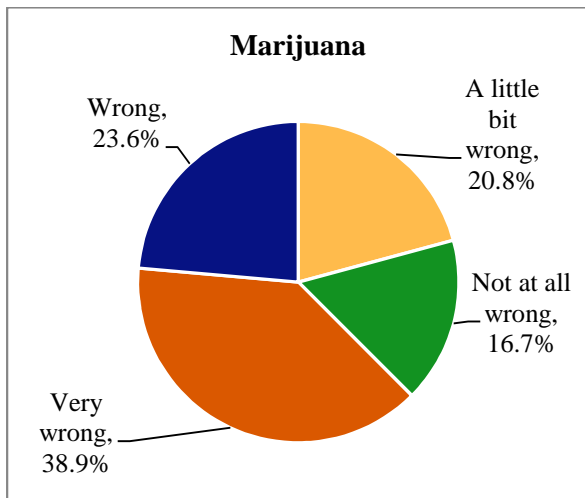
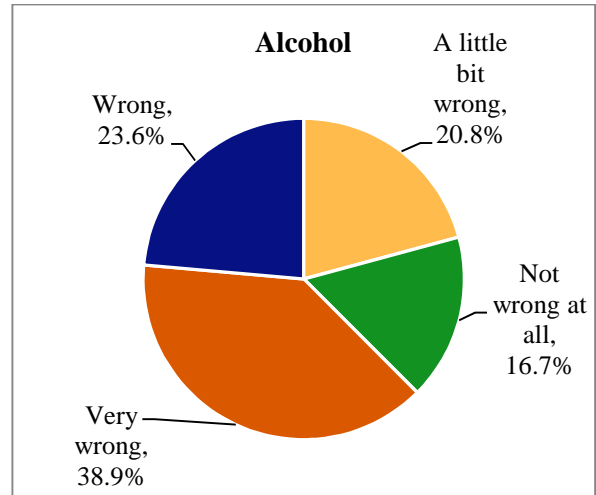
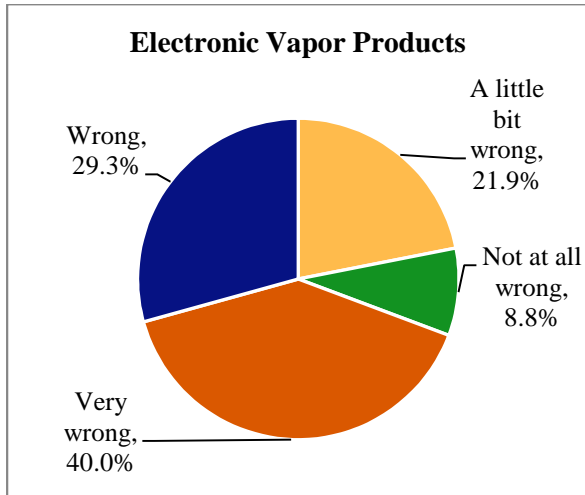
The following tables examine youth responses to questions about their perceptions about risks and harms associated with tobacco use, vaping, alcohol, marijuana, and prescription medications.

## How hard or easy do you think it would be for you to get;



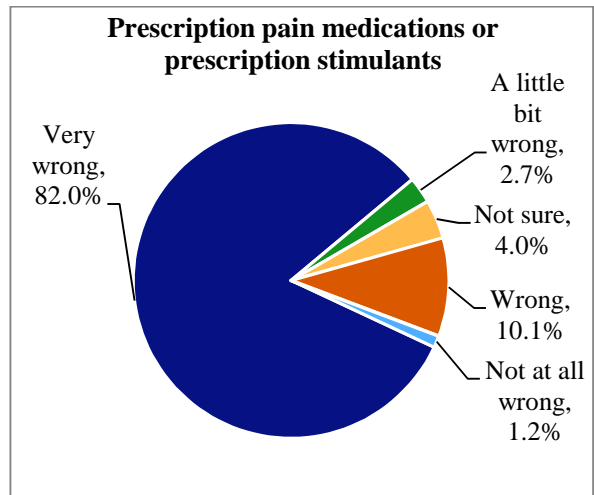
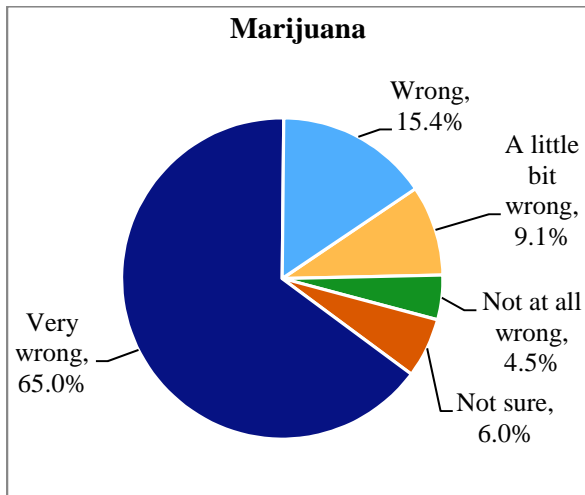
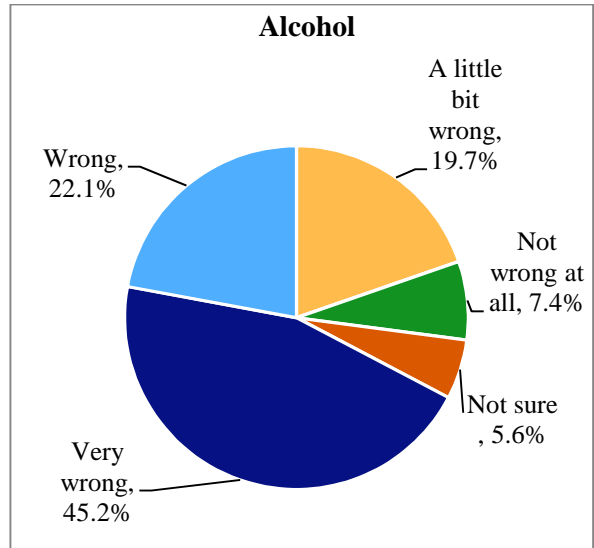
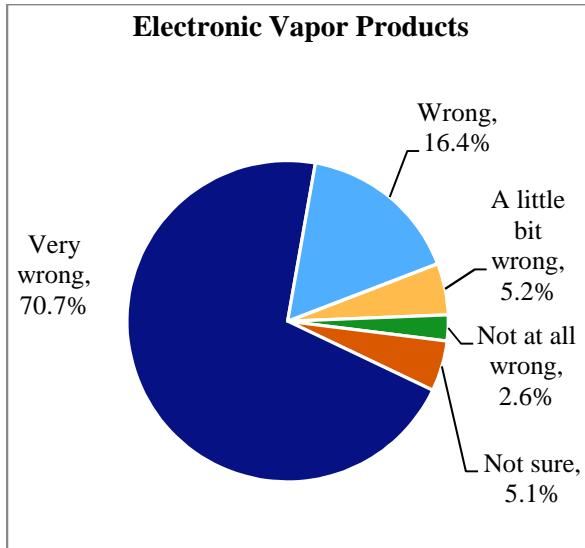
# Perceptions About Alcohol, Prescription Drugs, Vapor Products, Tobacco, and Marijuana

How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to use;



# Perceptions About Alcohol, Prescription Drugs, Vapor Products, Tobacco, and Marijuana

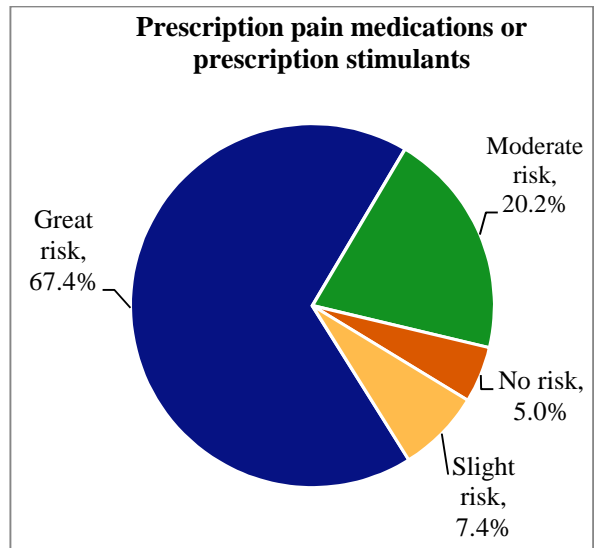
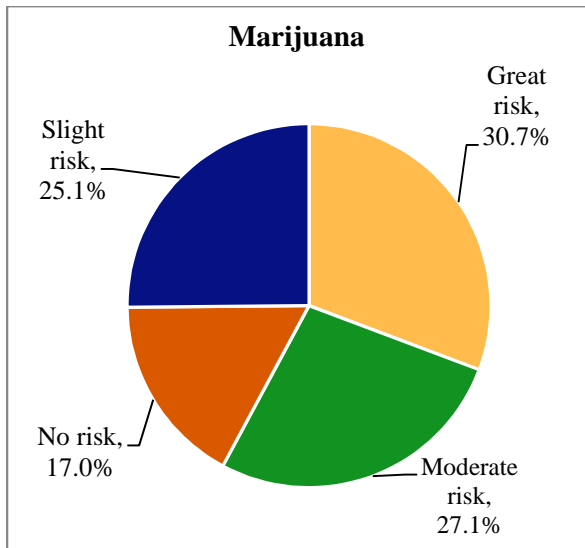
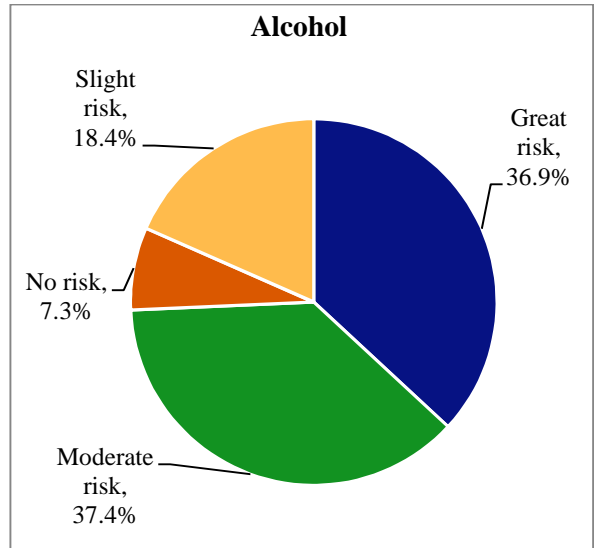
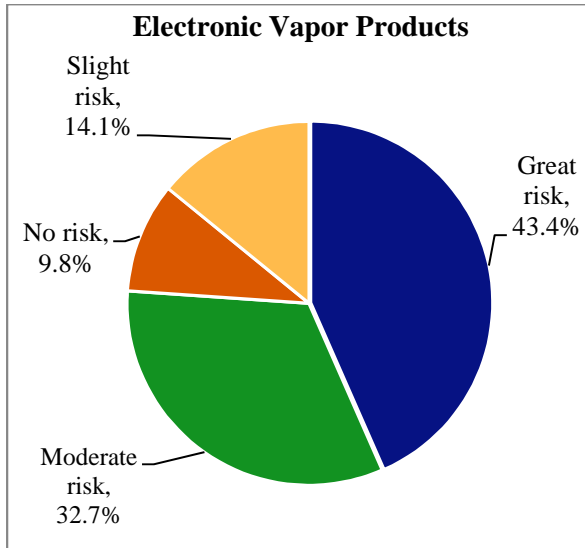
How wrong do your parents or guardians feel it would be for you to use;





# Perceptions About Alcohol, Prescription Drugs, Vapor Products, Tobacco, and Marijuana

How much do you think people risk harming themselves if they use;



# Physical Health, Injury, and Activity

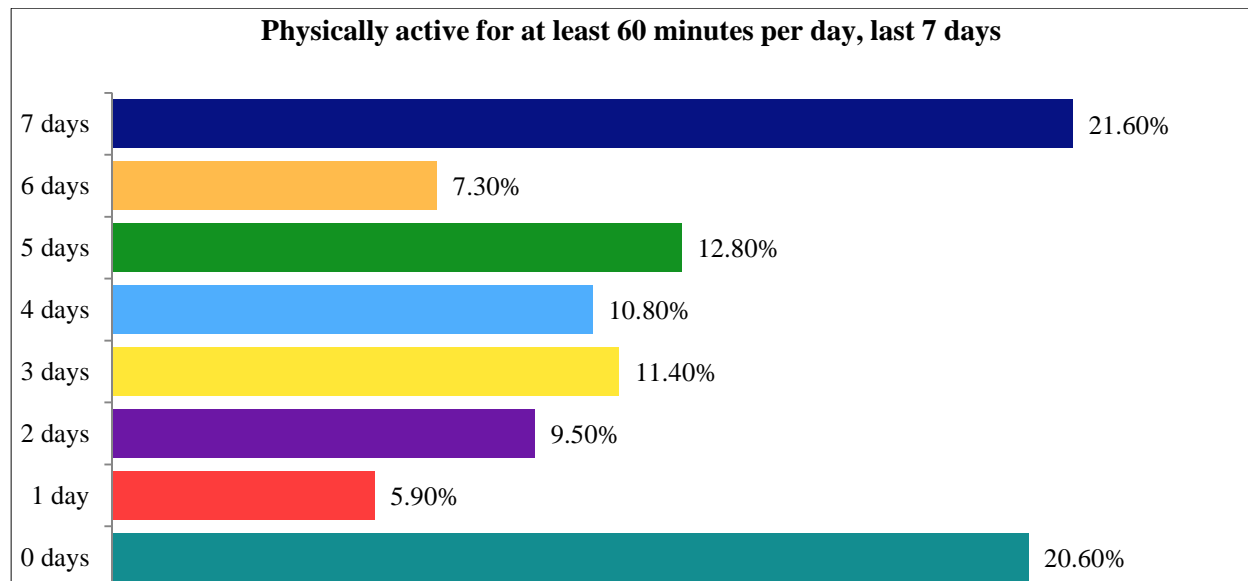
Physical activity is an important aspect of healthy development. Regular physical activity can help youth improve their cardiorespiratory fitness, build strong bones and muscles, control weight, and reduce the symptoms of anxiety and depression. It is also a method of prevention for disease later in life, such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and high blood pressure.

Physical injuries in youth can have long-term consequences. For example, those youth who sustain one concussion are more likely to have a repeat concussion. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the initial concussion can slow recovery and increase the likelihood of having long-term complications. In rare cases, concussions and/or repeat concussions can result in swelling of the brain, permanent brain damage, and even death.

Long term outcomes for concussions are just now beginning to be understood, and as science and medicine learn more, they report that even mild concussions can have serious negative physical and emotional outcomes.

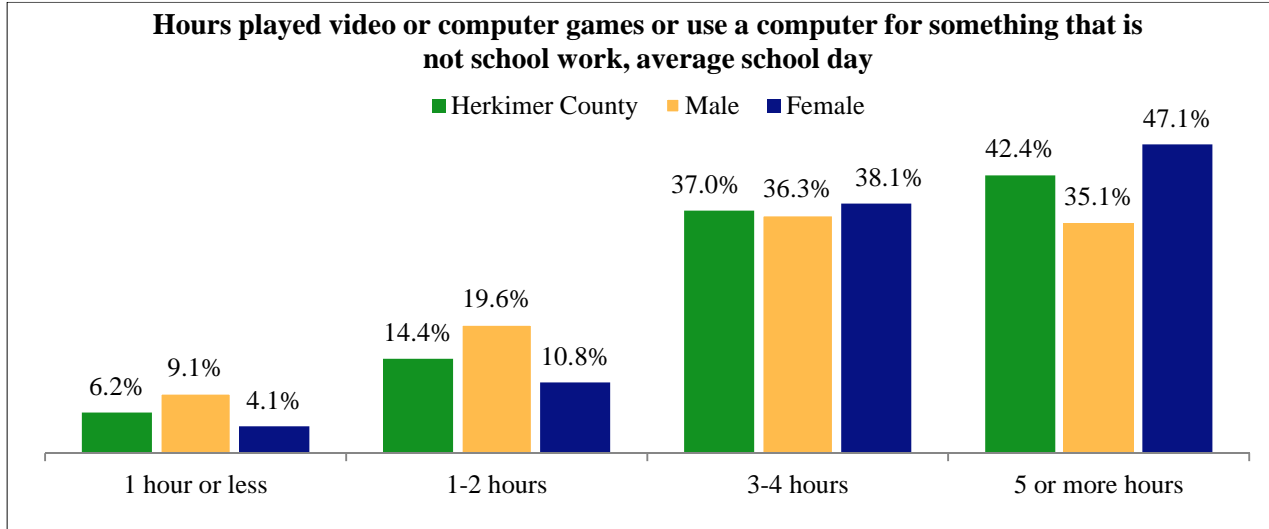
As with concussions, sunburns can have long-term consequences. These long term negative outcomes from sunburns are also just beginning to be fully understood by the scientific and medical communities. Skin cancer is a known negative outcome of frequent exposure to harmful UV rays and sunburns.

The following tables examine youth responses to questions about their physical health, injuries, and physical activities.

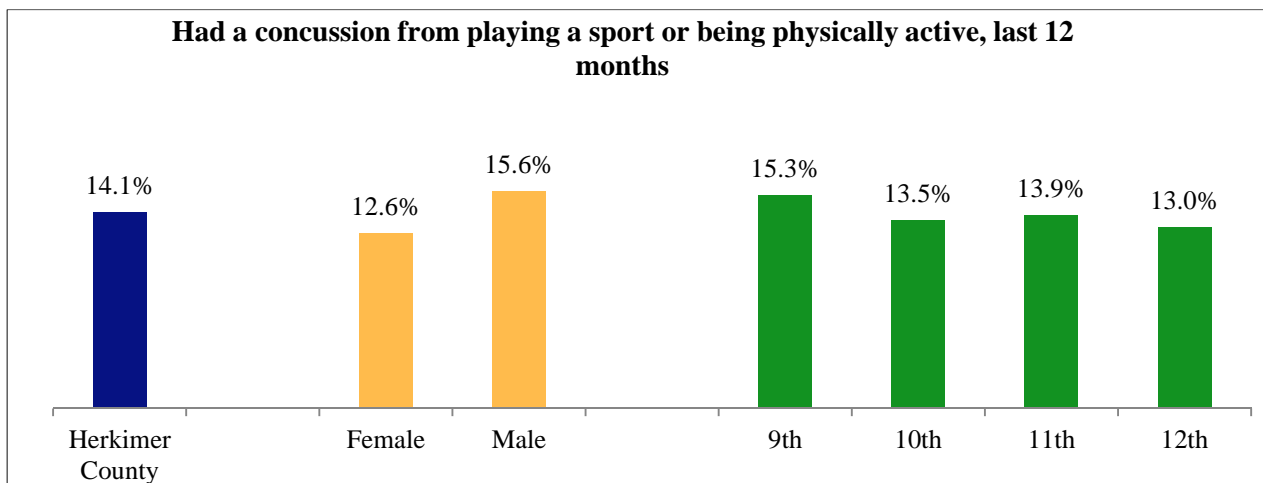


- Approximately one-fifth (21.6%) of Herkimer County youth report being physically active on every day during the 7 days prior to the survey.
- Approximately one-fifth (20.6%) of Herkimer County youth report not being physically active on any day during the 7 days prior to the survey.

# Physical Health, Injury, and Activity

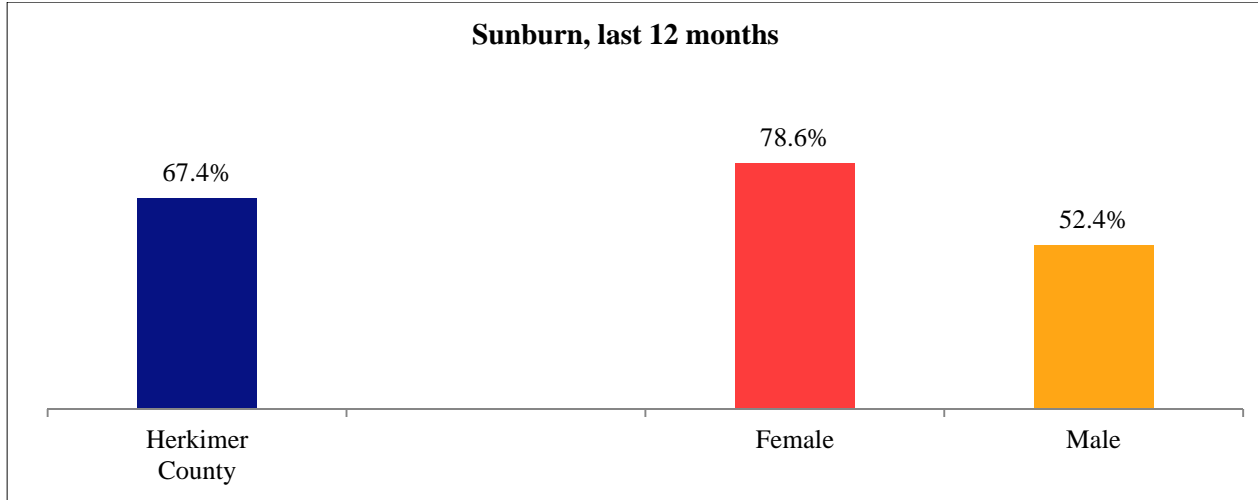


- 42.4% of Herkimer County youth report spending 5 or more hours using computers for something other than school work such as video games.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to spend 5 or more hours on the computer for something other than school work.

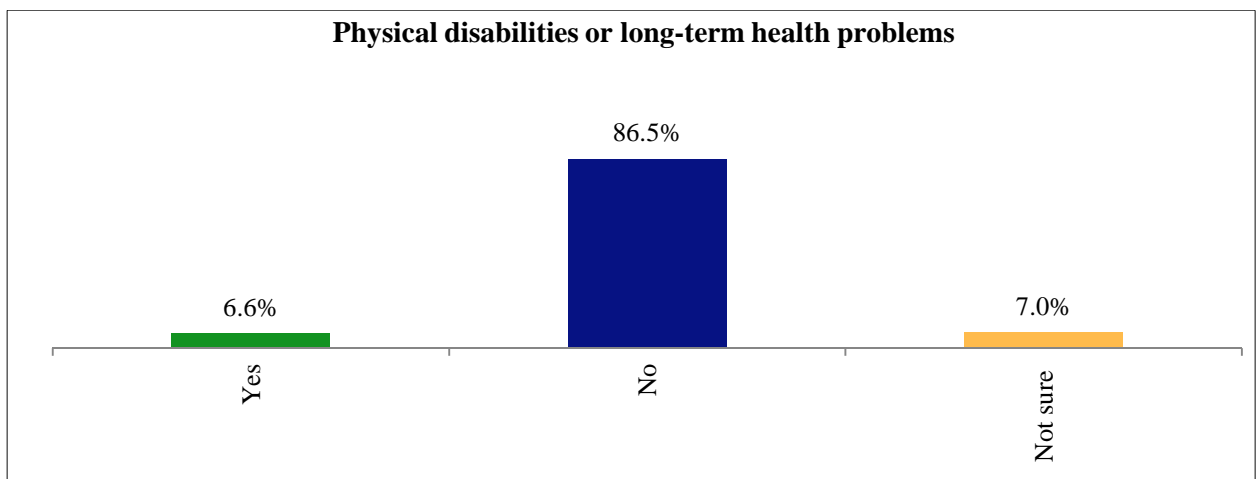


- 14.1% of Herkimer County youth report having a concussion in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- No statistically significant differences were noted between the sexes.

## Physical Health, Injury, and Activity



- 67.4% of Herkimer County youth report having sunburn in the 12 month prior to the survey.
- Females were statistically more likely than males to report having sunburn.
- Youth were asked to count sunburns from being outside, or using a sunlamp or tanning bed.

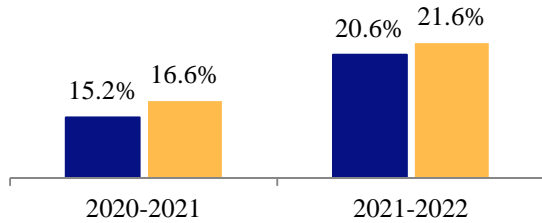


- 86.5% of Herkimer County youth report they do not have any physical or long-term disabilities that keep them from doing everyday activities or sports.
- 6.6% of Herkimer County youth report they do have physical disabilities or long-term health problems.
- 7.0% of youth were unsure if they have physical disabilities or long-term health problems.

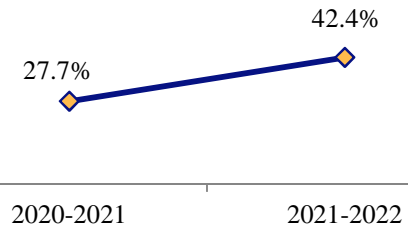
# Physical Health and Activity Trends

**Physically active for at least 60 minutes per day, last 7 days**

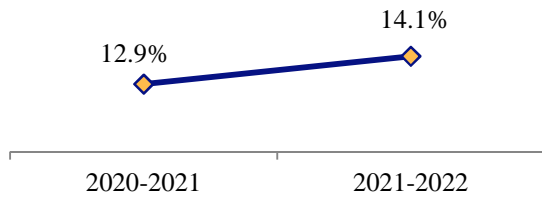
■ 0 days ■ All 7 days



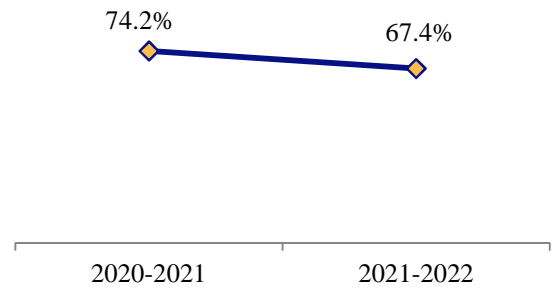
**5 or more hours played video or computer games or use a computer for something that is not school work, average school day**



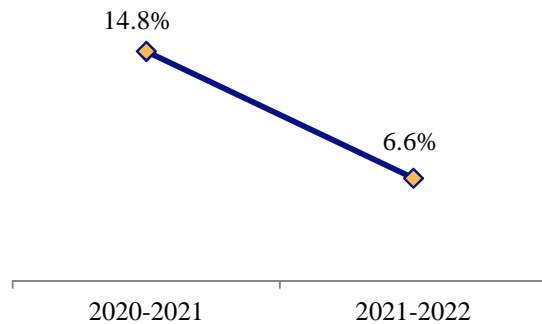
**Had a concussion from playing a sport or being physically active, last 12 months**



**Sunburn, last 12 months**



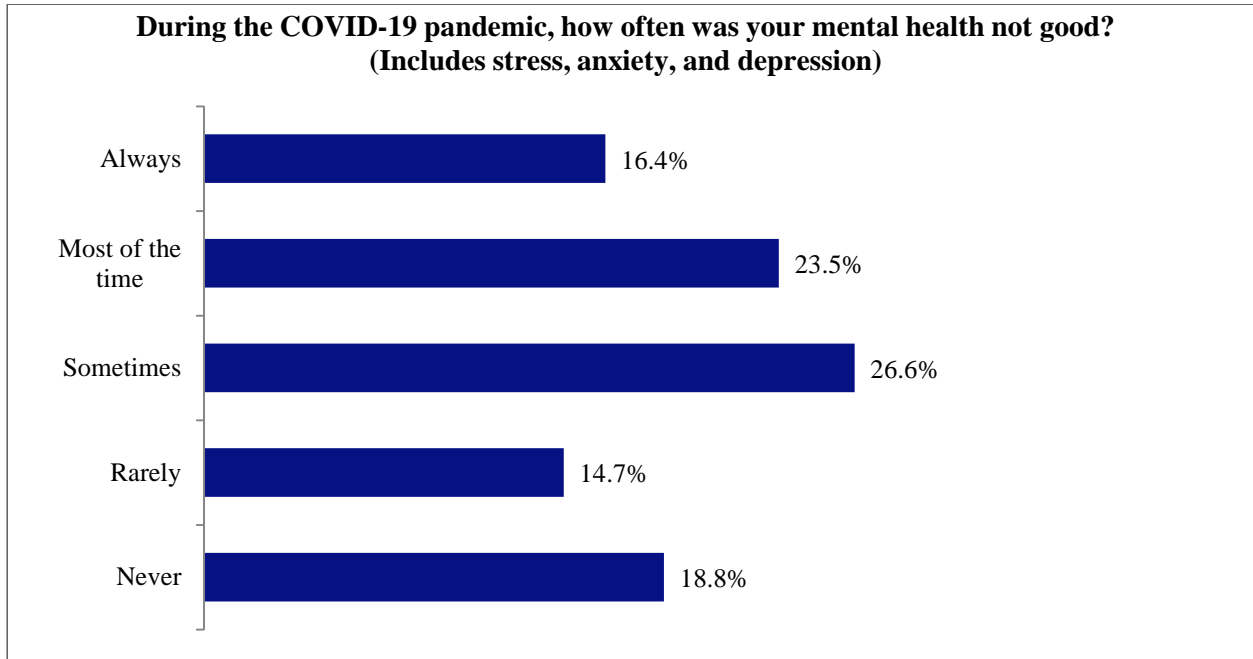
**Physical disabilities or long-term health problems**



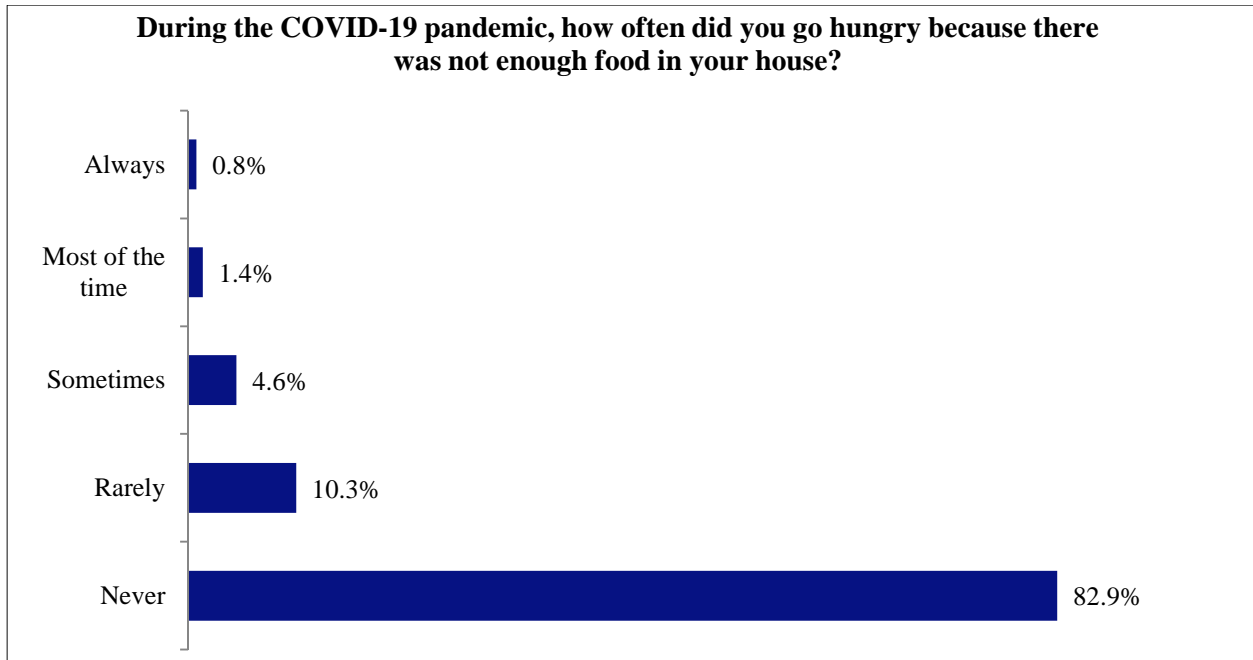
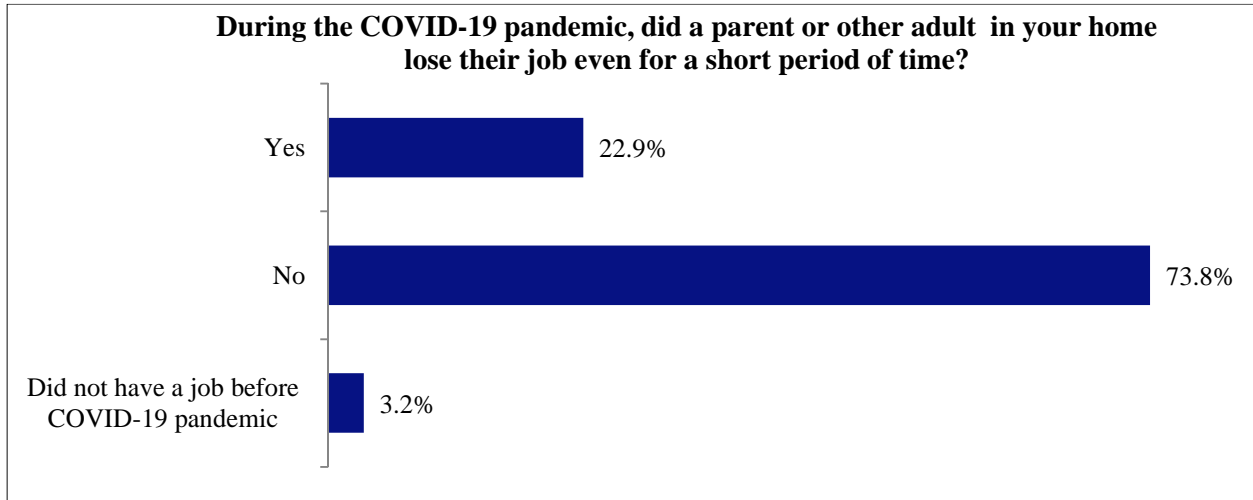
# COVID-19

On March 13, 2020 Herkimer County schools closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic that affected youth across New York State and the United States. Students attended school through virtual learning using laptops and the internet. This transition has had unknown effects on our youth. It is vital that we understand their experiences in order to provide appropriate supports for them as they grow.

The following tables examine youth experiences during COVID-19.

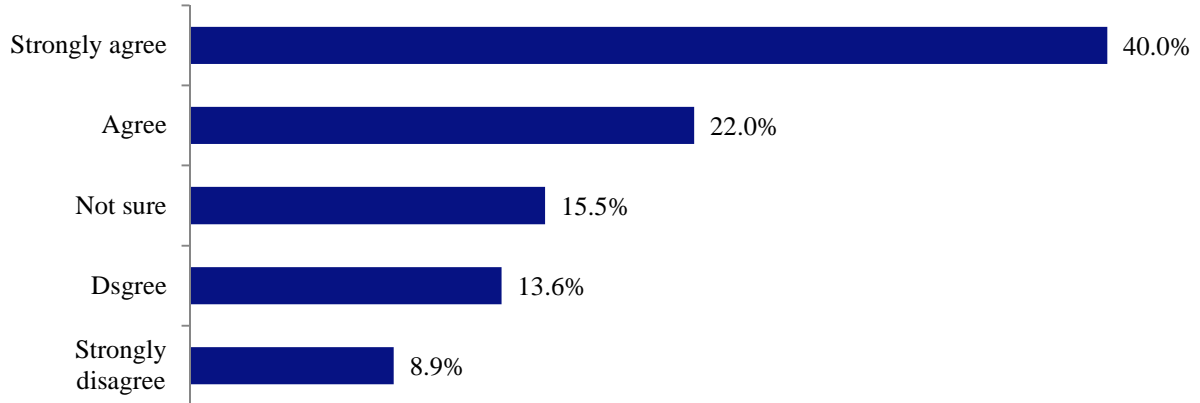


# COVID-19

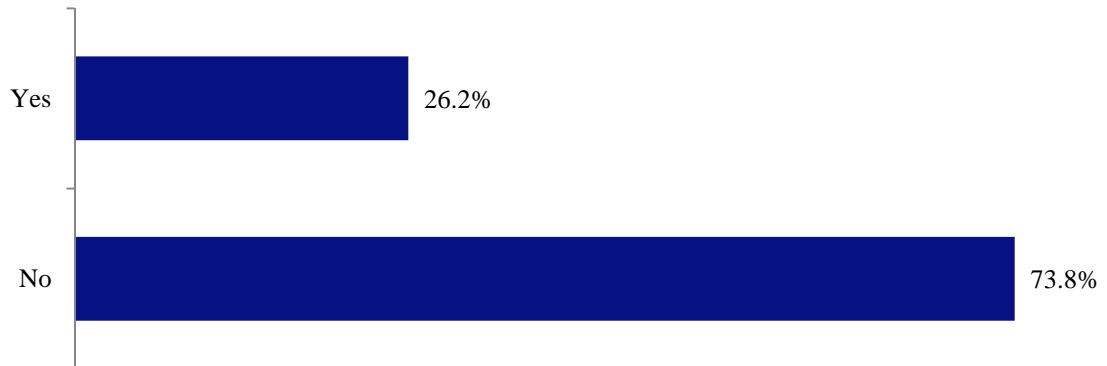


# COVID-19

**Doing my school work was more difficult during the COVID-19 pandemic than before the pandemic started**



**During the COVID-19 pandemic, did you get medical care from a doctor or nurse using a computer, phone, or other device?**

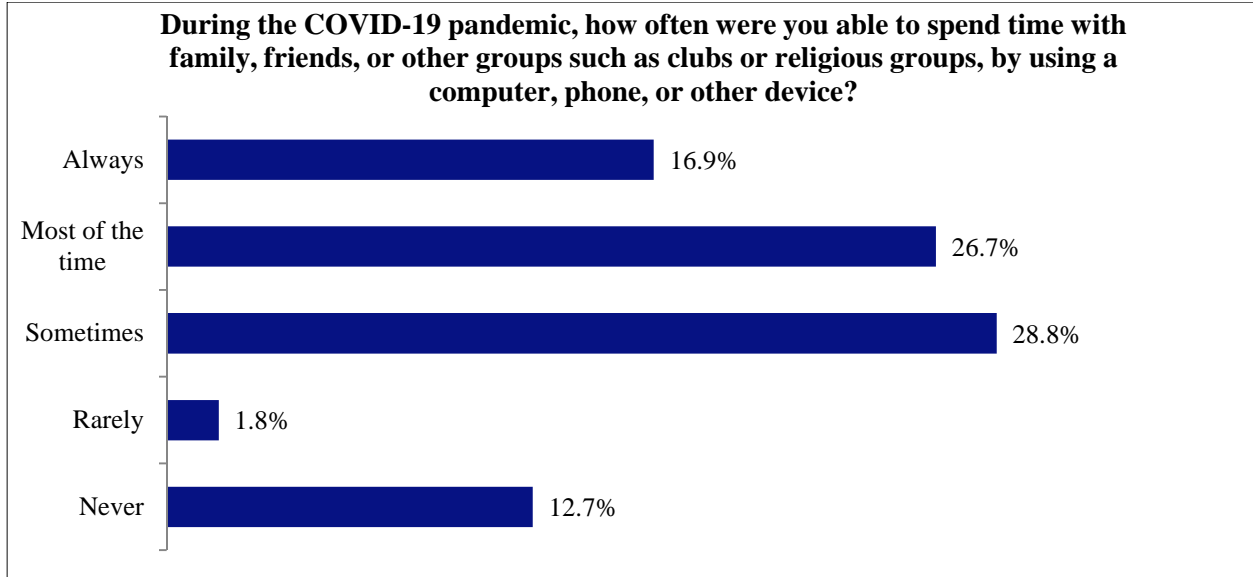


**During the COVID-19 pandemic, did you get mental health care, including treatment or counseling for use of alcohol or drugs, using a computer, phone, or other device?**





# COVID-19

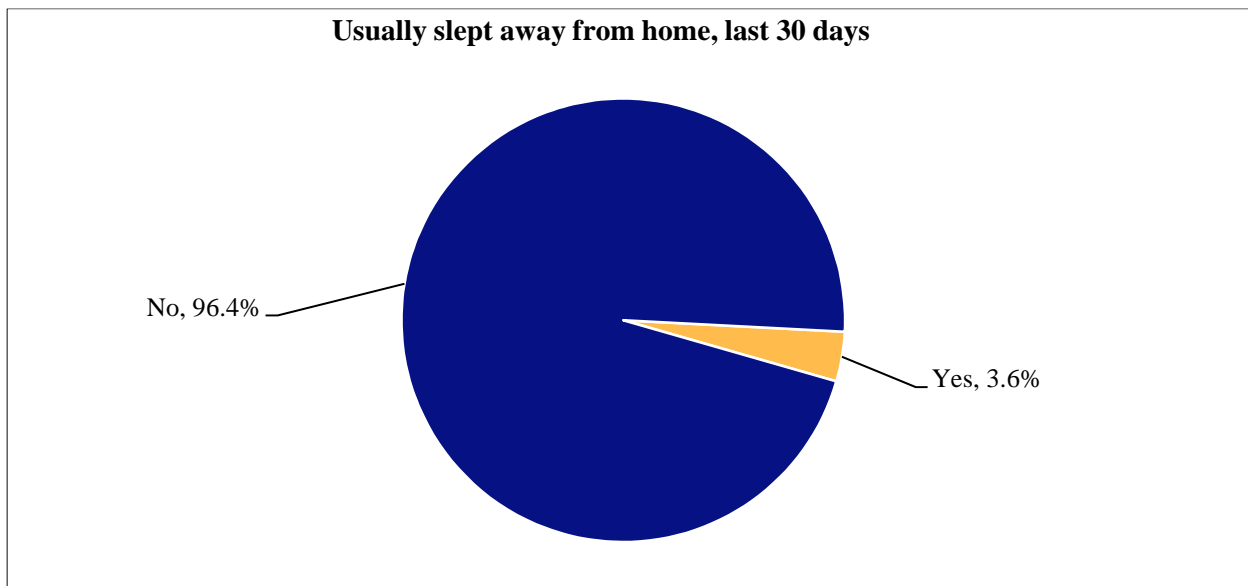


# Social-Emotional Health

Social emotional health (SEH) is defined as the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions, reactions, and relationships. SEH is linked to academic success, healthy relationships, responsible decision making, and future success in adulthood.

A youth's sense of well-being, security, healthy attachment to their community, and establishing a healthy relationship with a caring adult are important aspects of SEH. Having ones primary needs such as shelter and food met is a predictor of a youth's ability to manage their own feelings and reactions as well as being able to empathize and relate to others.

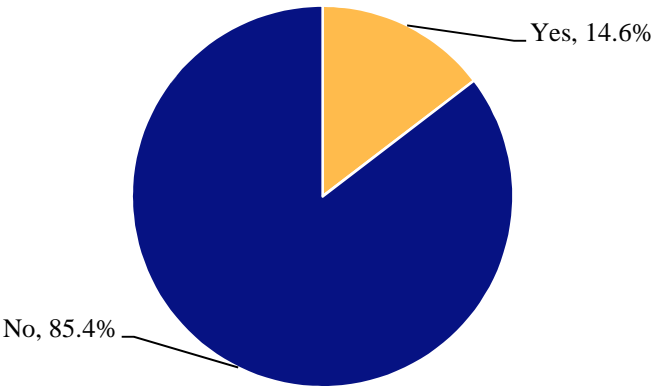
The following tables examine youth responses to questions about their social-emotional health.



- Youth were asked where they usually slept during the last 30 days.
- 96.4% of Herkimer County youth reported that during the 30 days prior to the survey they usually slept in the home of their parents or guardians.

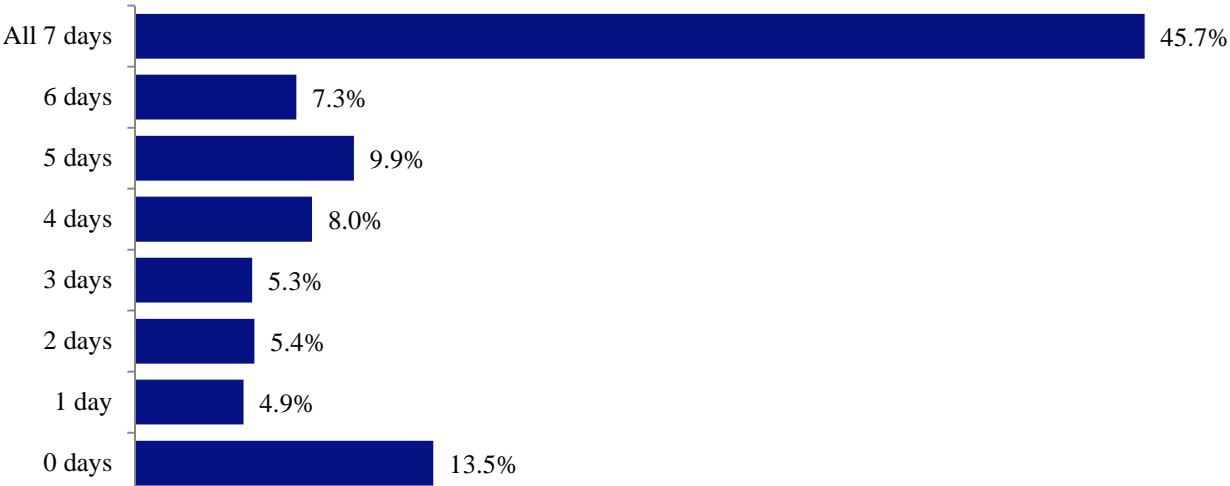
# Social-Emotional Health

**Gone hungry because there was not enough food in your home, last 30 days**



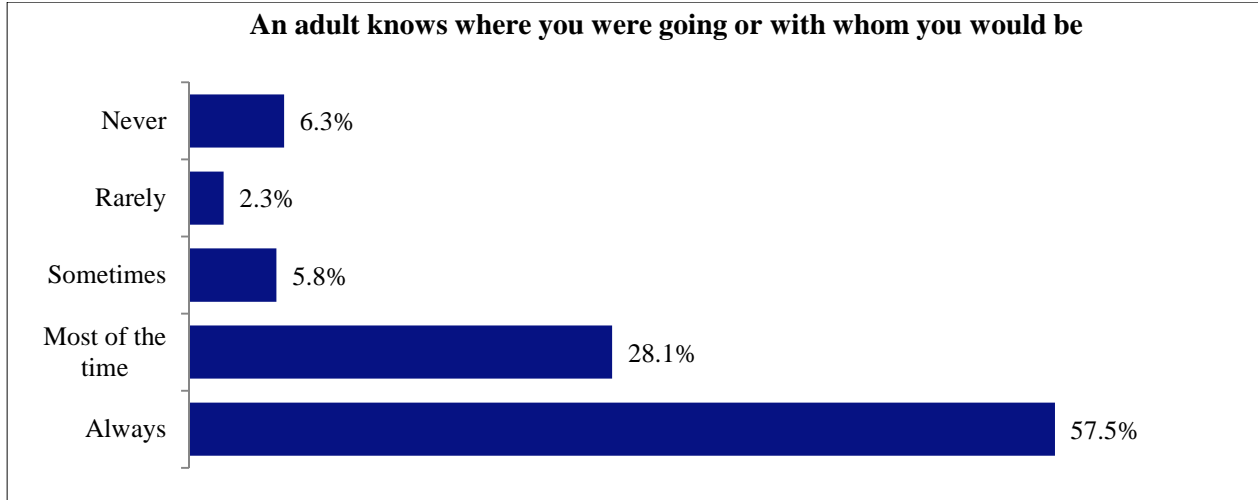
- 14.6% of Herkimer County youth report going hungry because there was not enough food in the home during the 30 days prior to the survey.

**Eat dinner at home with at least one parent or adult family member, last 7 days**

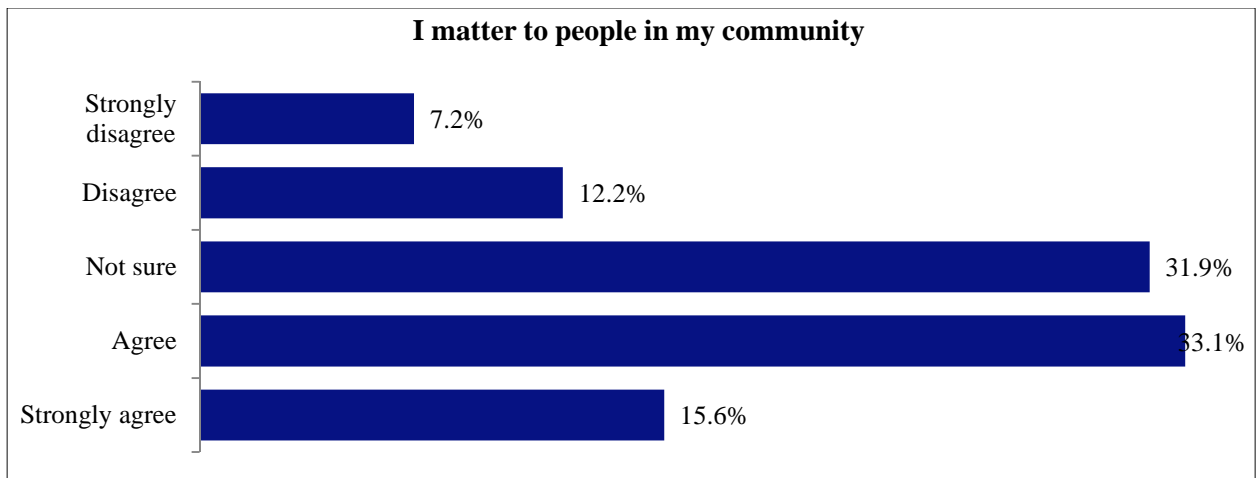


- The majority of Herkimer County youth (45.7%) report eating dinner with at least one parent, adult, or family member on all 7 nights prior to the survey.

# Social-Emotional Health

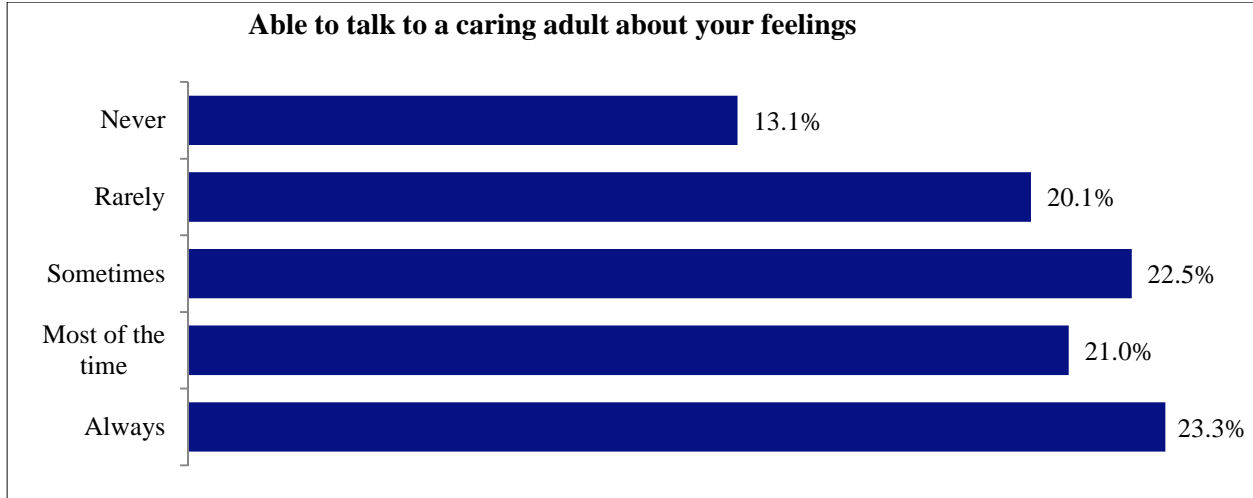


- The majority of Herkimer County youth (85.6%) report that an adult most of the time, or always, knows where they are going or with whom they will be.
- 8.5% of Herkimer County youth report that an adult rarely or never knows where they are going or with whom they will be.

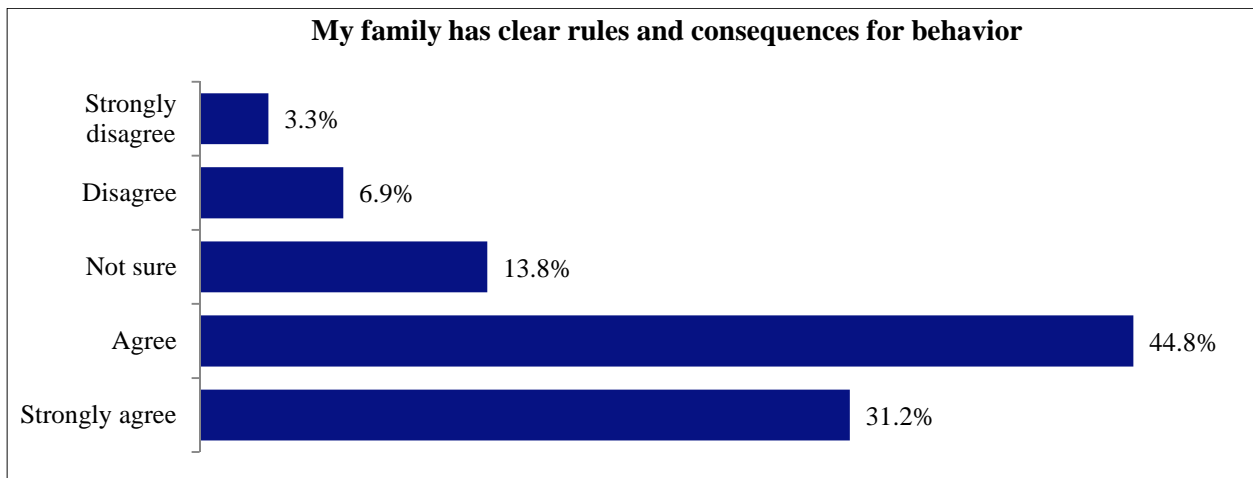


- Nearly half (48.7%) of Herkimer County youth agree that they matter to people on their community.
- Nearly one-third (31.9%) were unsure if they mattered to people in their community
- Nearly one-fifth (19.4%) of youth reported they did not matter to people in their community.

# Social-Emotional Health

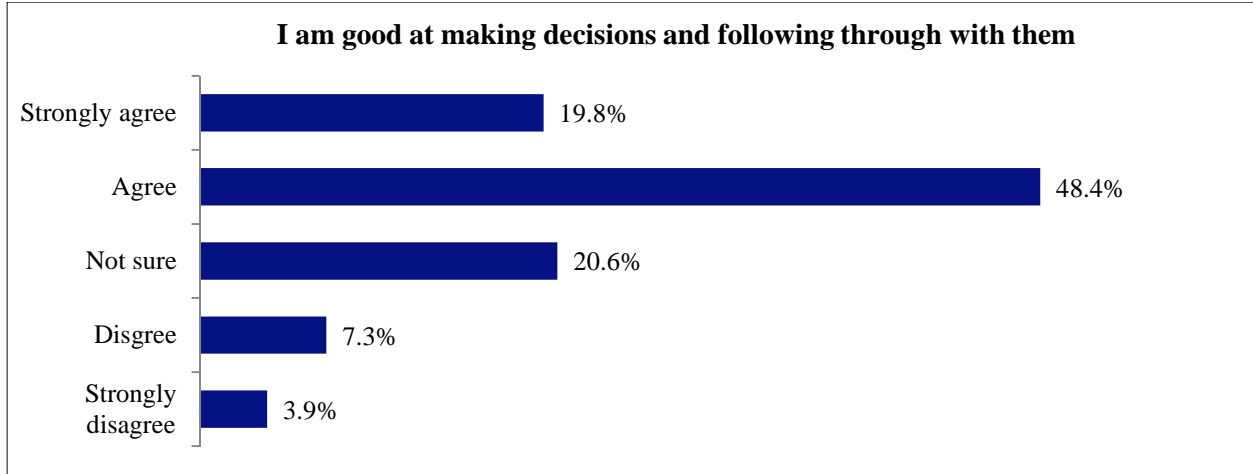


- 44.3% of Herkimer County youth report being able to talk to a caring adult about their feelings.
- A third (33.2%) of Herkimer county youth report never or rarely being able to talk to a caring adult about their feelings

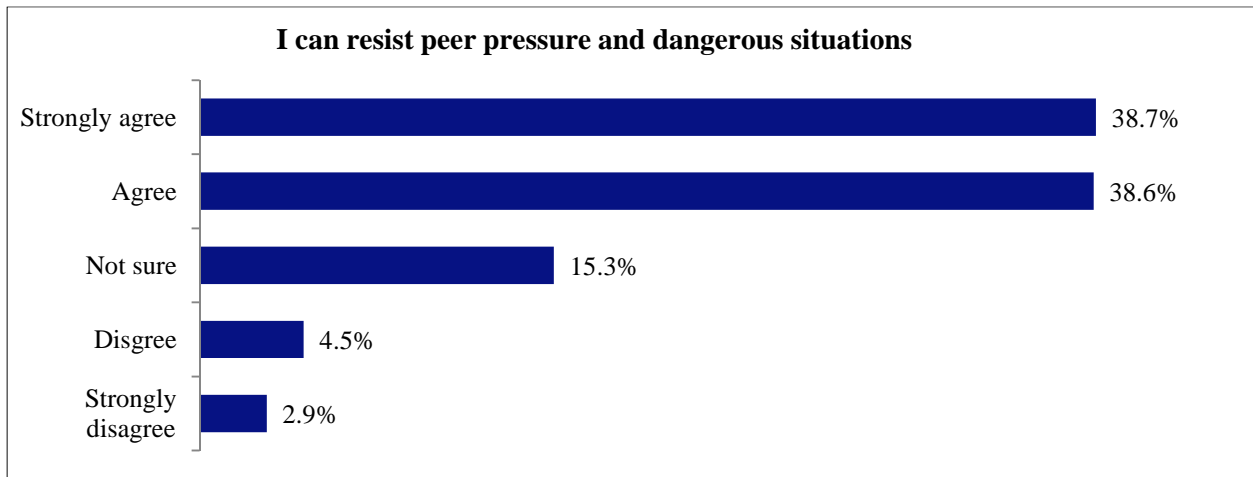


- Three quarters (76%) of Herkimer County youth report their family has clear rules and consequences for behavior.
- 13.8% of Herkimer County youth were unsure if their family had clear rules and consequences.
- 10.2% of youth reports their family did not have clear rules or consequences for behavior.

# Social-Emotional Health

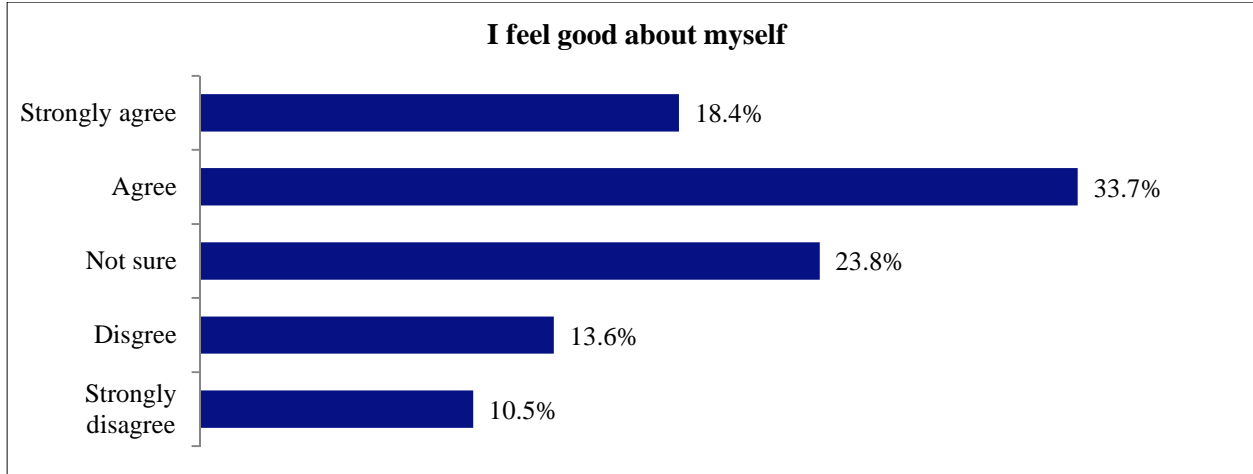


- More than half (68.2%) of Herkimer County youth report they are good at making decisions and following through with them.
- 20.6% of youth were unsure.
- 11.2% of youth reported they did not believe they were good at making decisions and following through with them.

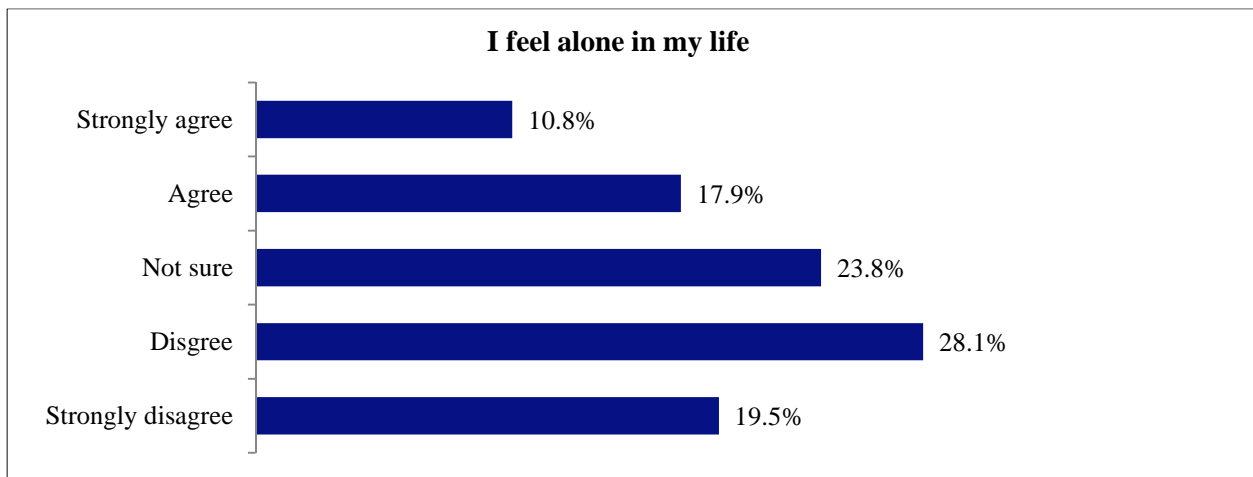


- Slightly over three-quarters (77.3%) of Herkimer County youth report they can resist peer pressure and dangerous situations.
- 7.4% of youth report they cannot resist peer pressure and avoid dangerous situations.

# Social-Emotional Health



- Half (52.1%) of Herkimer County youth report feeling good about themselves.
- Nearly a quarter (24.1%) of youth report they do not feel good about themselves.
- 23.8% of youth report being unsure.



- 28.7% of Herkimer County youth report they feel alone in their life.
- 23.8% of youth report they were unsure if they felt alone in their life.
- 47.6% of youth reported they did not feel alone in their life.

# Social-Emotional Health Trends

**Gone hungry because there was not enough food in your home, last 30 days**



2020-2021

2021-2022

**Eat dinner at home with at least one parent or adult family member, last 7 days (all 7 days)**



2020-2021

2021-2022

**I matter to people in my community**



2020-2021

2021-2022

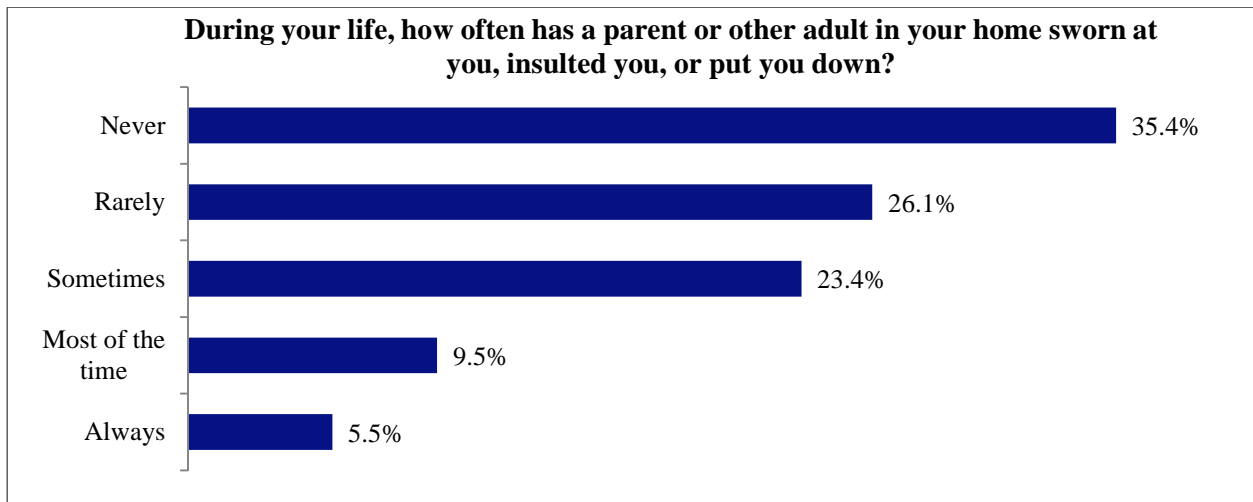


# Adverse Childhood Experiences

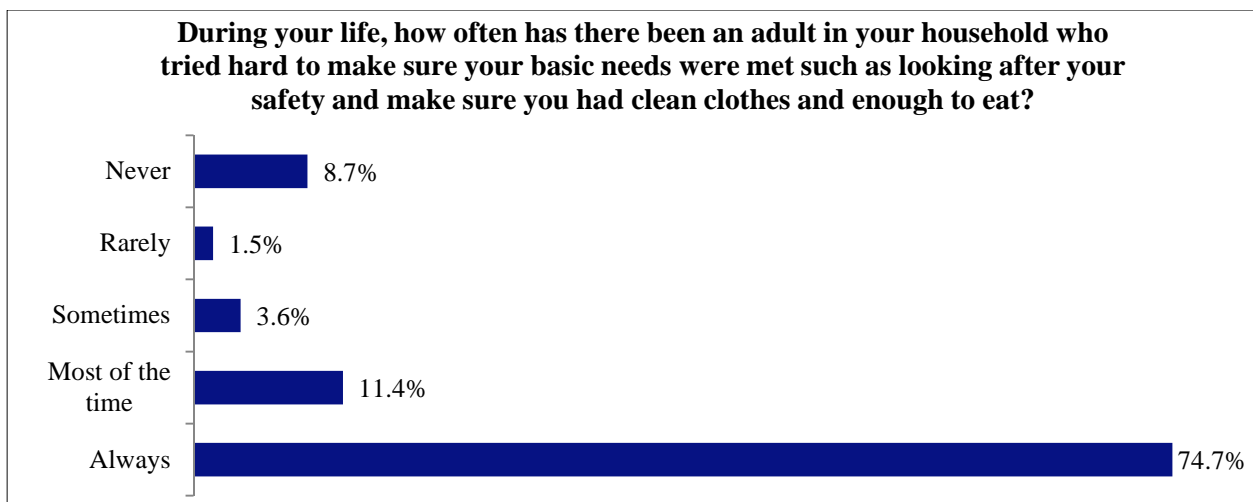
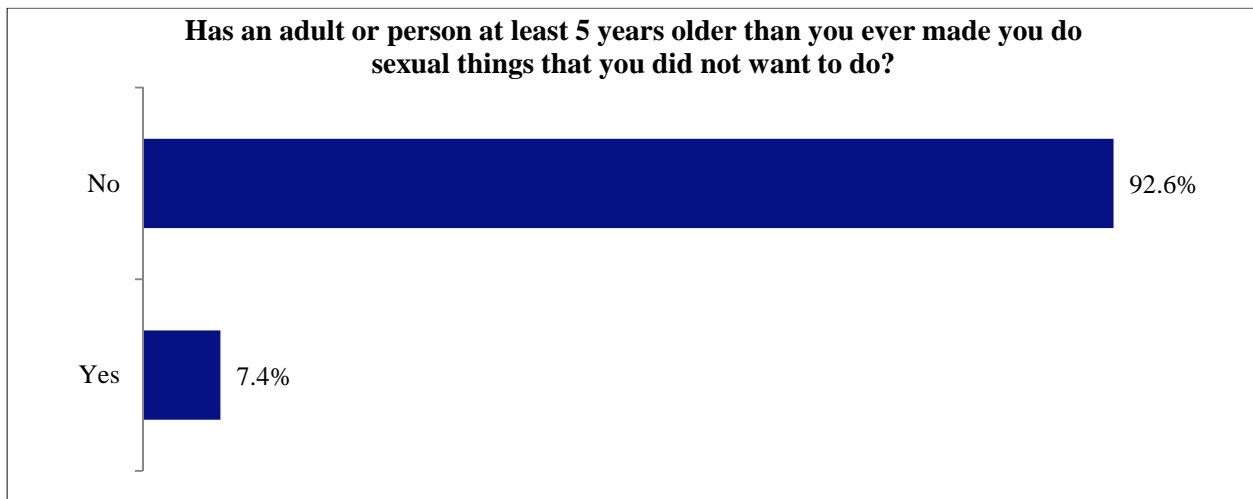
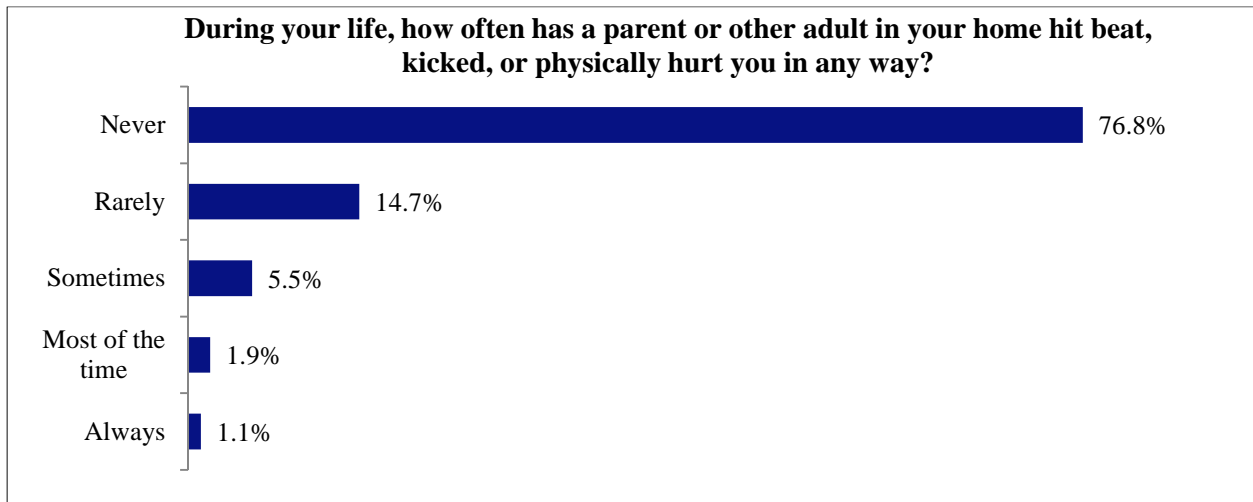
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are defined as potentially traumatizing experiences that youth from zero to 17 years can experience. These experiences can include interpersonal violence such as experiencing or witnessing domestic violence, violence in the community, or having a family member attempt or die by suicide. Adverse experiences could also include environmental trauma such as having a family member in jail, or a family situation exacerbated by substance use or mental illness. ACEs are linked to lifelong poor health outcomes such as high blood pressure, anxiety disorders, and substance use disorders. Additionally, ACEs can affect education and academic performance, job opportunities in adulthood, and lifelong economic difficulties.

ACEs are common in the United States with 16.7% of adults reported experiencing 4 or more ACEs in their childhoods. In NY State, 13.1% of NYS adults report experiencing 4 or more ACEs. The assessment for ACEs includes 8 questions. Herkimer County youth were asked all 8 questions from the Adverse Childhood Experiences survey. Of the youth who responded, 15.5% reported experiencing 4 or more ACEs, a higher percentage than NYS adults, but lower than the national percentage.

The following tables examine youth responses to each individual adverse childhood experience survey question.



# Adverse Childhood Experiences

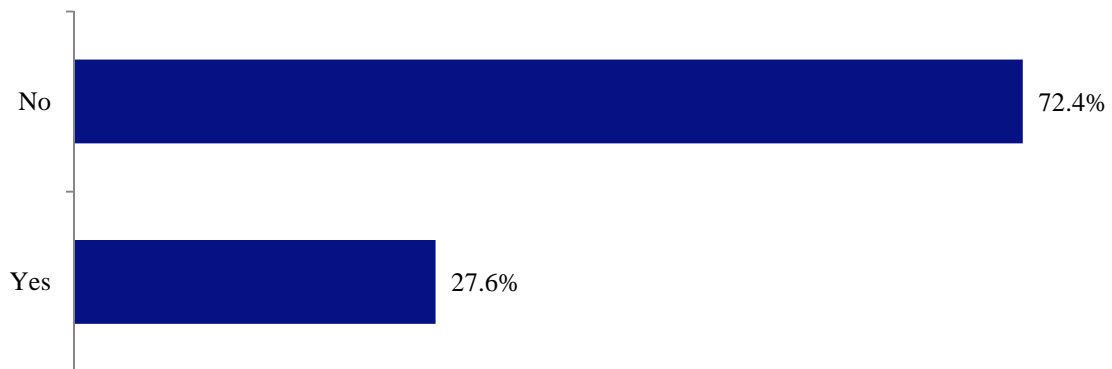


# Adverse Childhood Experiences

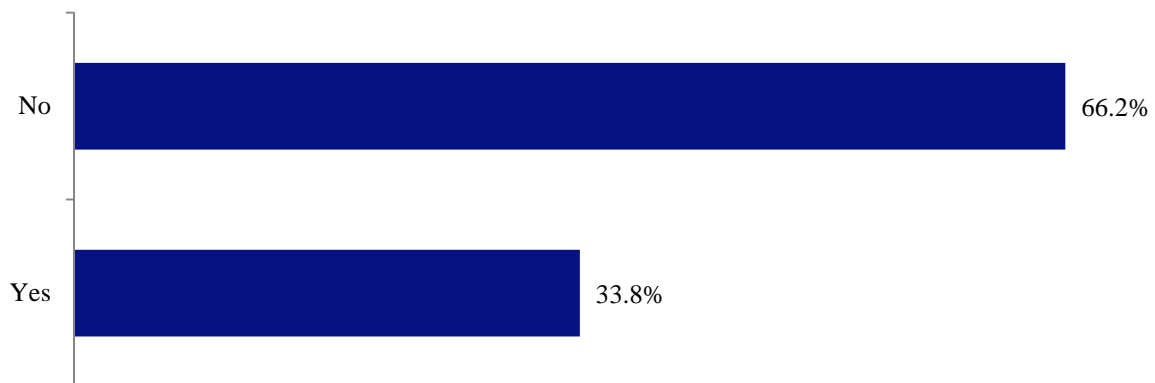
**During your life, how often have your parents or other adults in your home slapped, hit, kicked, punched, or beat each other up?**



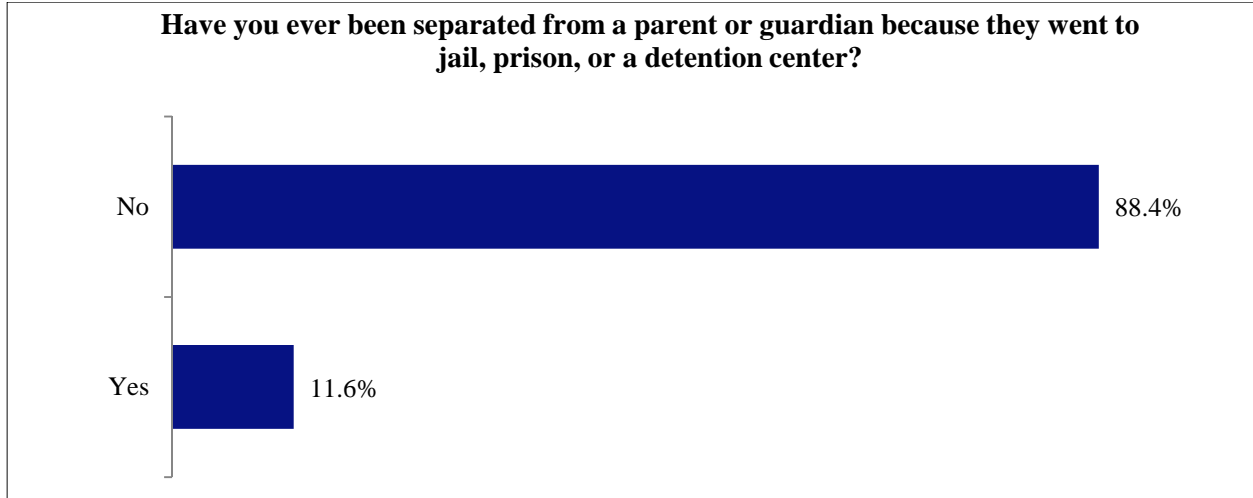
**Have you ever lived with someone who was having a problem with alcohol or drug use?**



**Have you ever lived with someone who was depressed, mentally ill, or suicidal?**

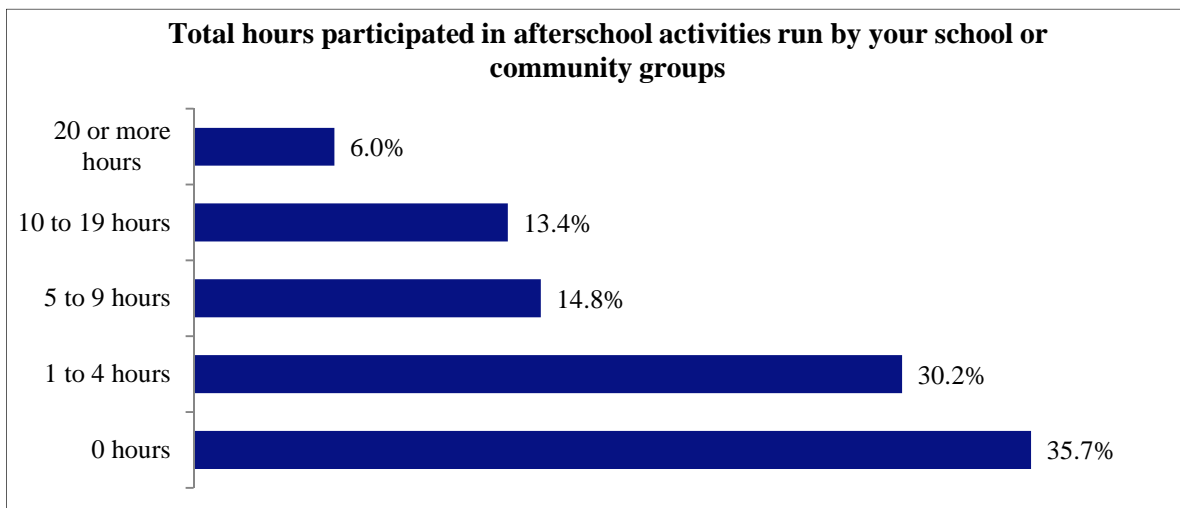


# Adverse Childhood Experiences



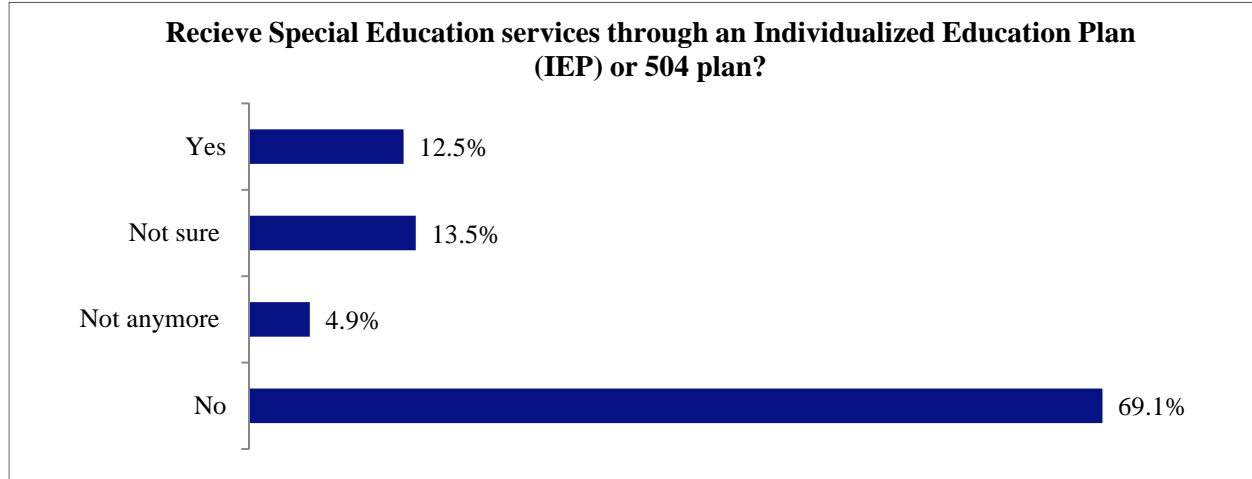
## Education

Education is an important determinant of physical and emotional health. Higher levels of education are associated with higher incomes in adulthood and those ancillary benefits that come with higher paying jobs. These benefits include health insurance, access to quality healthcare, and the ability to afford healthier diets and to live in safer neighborhoods with well-funded school systems for their children to attend. These ancillary benefits are associated with generational wealth-building, more positive health outcomes, and the disruption of generational poverty and trauma.

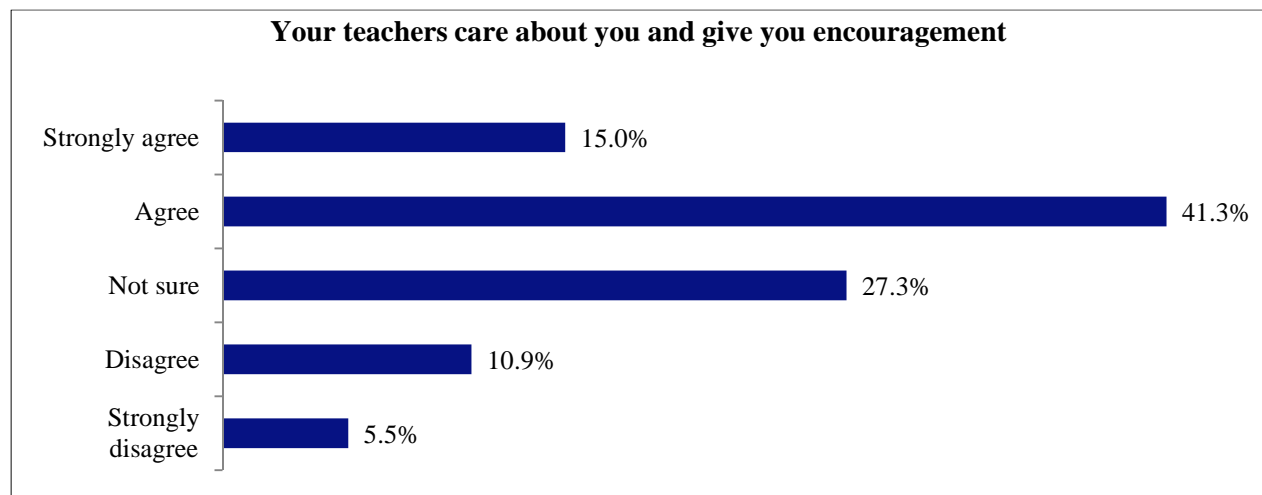


- Slightly more than one-third (35.7%) of Herkimer County youth report spending 0 hours per week participating in school activities run by their school or a community group.
- 19.4% of youth reported spending 10 or more hours per week participating in school or community sponsored activities.

# Education

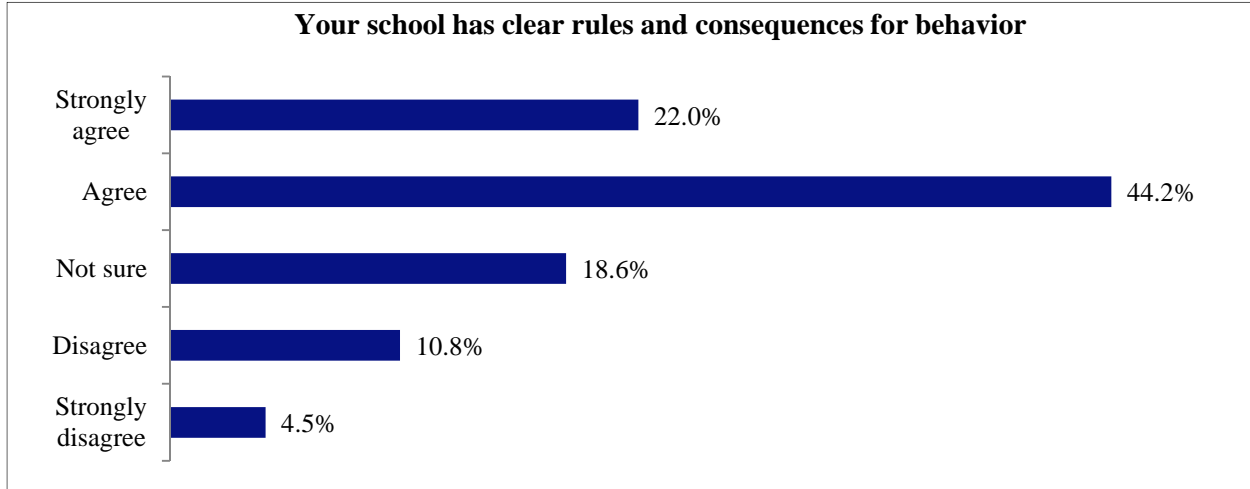


- 12.5% of Herkimer County youth reported currently having an IEP or a 504 plan.
- 4.9% of youth report previously, but not longer, having and IEP or a 504 plan.

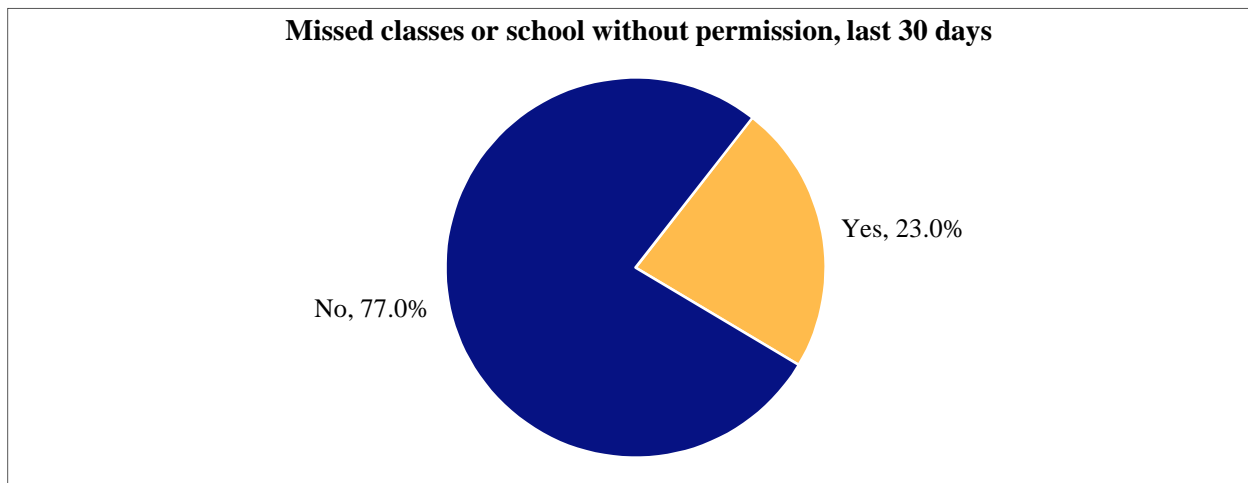


- 56.3% of Herkimer County youth reported feeling that their teachers care about them and give them encouragement.
- 16.4% of youth reported feeling that their teachers do not care about them nor give them encouragement.

# Education

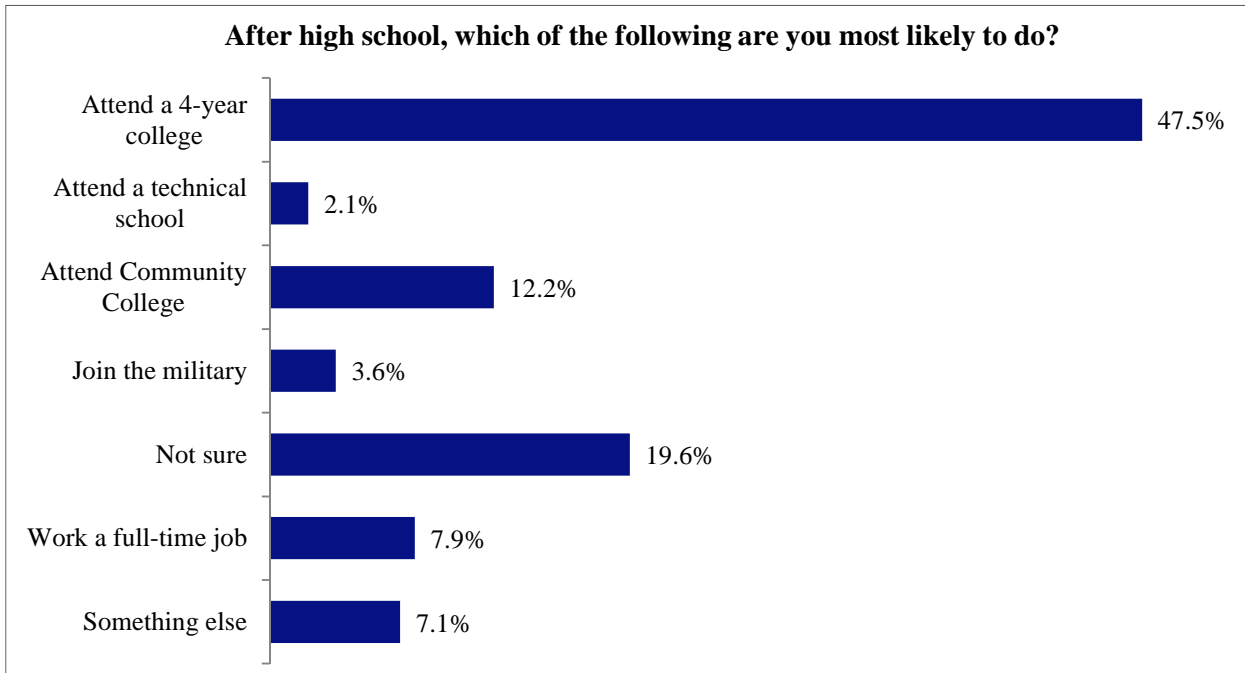


- 66.2% of Herkimer County youth report their school has clear rules and consequences for behavior.
- 15.3% of youth reported their school does not have clear rules and consequences for behavior.



- 23% of Herkimer County youth report missing classes or school without permission in the 30 days prior to the survey.

# Education

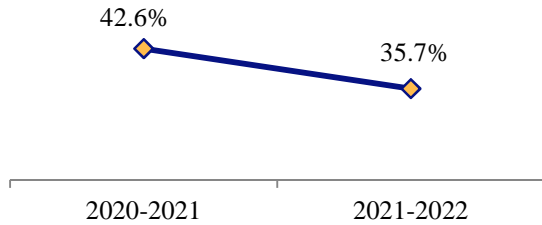


- More than half (59.7%) of Herkimer County youth report planning to attend a 2 or 4-year college when they graduate high school.
- 2.1% of youth report planning to attend a technical school.
- 3.6% reporting planning to join the military.
- 7.9% report planning to enter the full-time workforce after graduation.

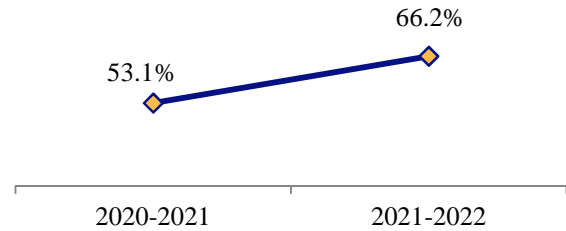


# Education Trends

**Spend 0 hours participating in afterschool activities run by your school or community groups**



**Agree your school has clear rules and consequences for behavior**



**Attending a 2-or 4-year college after high school graduation**

