

**Masconomet High School  
2018 Youth Risk Behavior Survey  
Results**

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## **Sample and Methodology**

### **Survey**

The 2018 Masconomet Youth Survey was adapted from the 2011 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) by the Centers for Disease Control. MOST OF US Teen Norms Survey; National Social Norms Resource Center – Assessment of Norms, Behaviors, and Attitudes; Survey of Student Norms – Hobart and William Smith Colleges – Alcohol Education Project. Questions in the survey measured youth demographics, substance use, protective factors, depression, personal safety, and sexual health. Social norms questions were added to assess misperceptions among Masconomet High School youth on areas of substance use. These questions were adapted from the *Most of Us* Teen Norms Survey<sup>2</sup>.

### **Sample**

The survey was administered on November 19, 2018. The final number and demographic profile of youth surveyed are discussed in below.

### **Data cleaning and validity**

Several steps were taken to ensure that the gathered data accurately reflects the behaviors of Masconomet High School youth, a process known as “data cleaning.” The completeness and logical consistency criteria used by the CDC were applied to the surveys. If a youth answered fewer than 20 questions, his/her survey was dropped (completeness). If a youth’s responses were “inconsistent” (e.g. they indicated they were 15 years old but said they had their first drink at age 17, or they responded in one question that they never have been sexually active and in a following question that they have had 3 sexual partners) responses to both questions (except for age) were set to missing.

Following the data cleaning procedure, the final sample size for the Masconomet High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey in 2018 is 1019 youth. Youth might have chosen not to answer certain questions so that the total number of responses to questions varies.

### **Comparison Data**

Since the survey administered at Masconomet High School was based on an existing instrument, comparison data for many question items is publicly available. Comparisons are useful for providing context to survey results and can aid in identifying both strengths and priority areas.

Where available, comparison data is provided in this report. National comparison numbers are from the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey data set issued by the Centers for Disease Control. State comparison numbers used are from the 2017 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey data set reported by The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and Public Health. This is the most current comparison data available.

## Sample

### Masconomet High School Survey Population

Total number of youth enrolled	1143
Number of youth absent on day of survey	107
Opt outs	4
Surveys removed or unaccounted for (e.g. youth did not complete)	13
Final sample included in analysis for this report	1019
Representation rate (% of youth included in analysis out of total available to take the survey)	98.7%
Participation rate (% of youth who took the survey out of total youth enrolled)	89%

## Demographic Profile

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents	
<b>Total Valid Surveys</b>	1019	100%	
<b>Sex</b>			<b>2016</b>
Female	531	52.1%	50.1
Male	469	46.0%	49.4
Non-binary	13	1.3%	
Missing total	6	0.	0.6
<b>Grade</b>			<b>2016</b>
9th grade	272	26.7%	24.4
10th grade	267	26.2%	23.2
11th grade	258	25.3%	24.7
12th grade	219	21.5%	26.9
Ungraded or other grade	1	0.1%	0.2
Missing total	2	0.2%	0.7
<b>Age</b>			<b>2016</b>
13 years old	1	0.1%	0.1
14 years old	196	19.2%	17.6
15 years old	256	25.1%	22.0
16 years old	274	26.9%	25.3

17 years old	212	20.8%	26.9
18 years old or older	80	7.9%	8.0
Race/Ethnicity (youth were allowed to select more than one response)			
White	901	88.8%	
Black or African American	26	2.6%	
American Indian or Alaska Native	26	2.6%	
Southeast Asian American	10	1.0%	
Hispanic or Latino	49	4.8%	
Asian American	61	6.0%	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	13	1.3%	
Other	73	7.2%	
Sexual Orientation			
Heterosexual	912	89.5%	
Gay or lesbian	14	1.4%	
Bisexual	50	4.9%	
Not sure	40	3.9%	
Missing	3	0.3%	

## Executive Summary

### Overall

- It should be noted that the number of completed surveys has decreased to 1019 – much of which can be accounted for by 17 year old boys. Since this group tends to be one of the least risk averse in the high school population, the results this year may show less risky behavior than one might anticipate.

### Substance Use

- Lifetime use of cigarettes, prescription drugs without a prescription, and ecstasy all decreased significantly from 2016. For the first time since reporting started in 2010 lifetime cigarette use was in single digits (6.7%)
- Electronic vapor products (27% used in past 30 days), alcohol (24%), and marijuana (19%) were the “drugs of choice” among MASCO high school youth, while tobacco cigarettes (3%) and prescription drugs without a prescription (1%) were used by a much lower percentage.
- While more youth reported lifetime use of alcohol than reported lifetime use of electronic vapor products, the opposite finding held for current use (vaping higher than drinking). This result could be a by-product of the relative "newness" of electronic vapor products.
- There were fewer significant differences between girls and boys on substance abuse questions in 2018 compared with 2016. We note below some of the findings
  - Like 2016, girls were **NOT** more likely than boys to have drunk alcohol during the past 30 days.
  - Boys are more likely than girls to have smoked tobacco and used marijuana 100 times during their lifetimes.
- There are significant differences across both age groups and grades on some questions regarding substance use. Especially notable was the increased use of alcohol, E-products, and marijuana with age. Again, differences are noted in the text.
- The age of onset of alcohol and tobacco use has increased since 2016. If this trend reverses in 2020 it will be an indication that the current 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders were somewhat of an anomaly (which we had hypothesized 4 years ago). However, if the age of onset remains the same or increases, it would be evidence, we think, of a more long lasting trend in increased risk aversion to substances.
- Slightly more than ½ of those who reported current use of alcohol also reported high risk drinking at least one time in the past month.
- When asked how great a risk of harm was associated with substance use, a large number of youth felt that use of tobacco cigarettes and prescription drugs without a prescription posed “moderate” or “great” risk of harm to the user. Use of both tobacco cigarettes and Rx drugs was quite low. No change from 2016.
- In 2018 compared with 2016, significantly fewer youth perceived high risk drinking as “great” risk, but significantly more perceived use of electronic vapor products and use of prescription drugs without a prescription to carry with it great risk.
- An increase in perceived riskiness of prescription drugs was associated with a decrease in use. Decreases in perceived riskiness of high risk drinking, however, was not associated with increased use.

- Youth perceptions of parental and peer disapproval generally mirrored their ratings of risk – quite high for cigarettes and Rx drugs and substantially lower for alcohol, E-products, and marijuana – although strong parental disapproval of marijuana and E-products is higher.
- Parental and peer disapproval of misuse of prescription drugs increased from 2016 to 2018 and parental disapproval of electronic vapor products and marijuana also increased.
- Youth’ perceptions of peer usage of substances are very significantly higher than reported use – and girls’ ratings of peer usage are significantly higher than boys’ ratings. There were no differences across time.

### **Sexuality and Sexual Behavior**

- As in 2016, about 1/3 of the youth reported being sexually active at some time during their lives.
- About 12% of those who are sexually active reported that they had used alcohol or drugs prior to the last time they were active – about ½ the proportion reported in 2016.
- About 5% reported being forced to have sexual contact against their will.
- Nearly 3/4 of those who are sexually active said they had used a condom the last time they were active (compared to about ½ in 2016).
- About 1 in 25 indicated that they did not protect themselves against pregnancy with any method the last time they had intercourse.
- Slightly more than 1% reported they have been told they have HIV or an STD.

### **Behaviors that Contribute to Unintentional Injuries**

- About 10% of the youth report that they ride in vehicles with others that have been drinking or smoking marijuana.
- Between a quarter and a third of those who drive report that they text or talk on the phone while they drive.
- There were no differences across time in any behaviors in this section.

### **Behaviors that Contribute to Violence**

- Fewer youth reported carrying a weapon in 2018 compared with 2016 but more youth reported being threatened or injured on school property with a weapon.
- About 1 in 14 carried a weapon and about 1 in 20 said they were threatened or hurt on school property with a weapon.
- About 1 in 7 had been in a fight.
- There were few differences across age but many differences across gender with boys were more likely than girls to engage in these behaviors.



## **Bullying**

- Less than 20% of youth report having been bullied at school (15.1% - no change from 2016). Slightly more than 10% were bullied on the internet with girls more likely than boys to report this.
- Social media is the most commonly reported location for bullying and girls are more than twice as likely as boys to report experiencing or having seen bullying on social media (25% vs 13%).
- From 2016 to 2018 there was a significant decrease in the percent of youth reporting that teachers always attempt to stop bullying when they witness it. Since 2014 choices of this response have declined from 36% to 22%.
- About 1/3 reported having received social media posts that hurt or upset them. About 25% reporting having received explicit material via electronic media and about 14% said they had sent such material

## **Stress, Depression, and Self-Harm**

- About 20% of the youth reported always experiencing stress and about the same number reported almost never or never experiencing stress – about the same as in 2016.
- School work, self-expectations, extra-curricular activities, and parental expectations were the most common sources of stress.
- About 1 in 14 youth managed stress with drugs or alcohol and about 1 in 10 had no method for managing stress. Talking with friends, journaling etc and talking with parents were the most common means of managing stress.
- About 1 in 4 indicated that they were clinically depressed at some point during the past year – an increase from 2016.
- 10.7% seriously considered suicide; and 1.7% attempted suicide.
- About 1 in 11 engaged in self-harm.

## **Protective Factors**

- About ¾ of the youth reported having at least one adult at school they could talk with.
- Only about 1 in 33 reported that they had no one outside of school to confide in.
- Nearly 2/3 of the youth reported discussing electronic vapor products with an adult family member, nearly double the number in 2016.
- About 3/4 did community service work.

## **Weight, Weight Management, Exercise and Nutrition**

- About 1 in 5 youth reported that they saw themselves as overweight but about 4 in 10 reported that they were trying to lose weight.
- Only about 6% reported using unhealthy methods to lose weight and close to 9 in 10 engaged in aerobic exercise in the past 7 days.

## Substance Use

### Tobacco/Nicotine

Tobacco (cigarettes) is clearly **not** the “drug of choice” among Masco high school youth. About 1 in 20 reported ever tried smoking (6.7%) – a significant decrease compared with 2016 (6.7% vs 13.1%). Age of onset was 15.1 years. Just 1% started smoking before age 13 compared with 1.8% in 2016.

As with most substances examined in this survey, use in the past 30 days (current use) was significantly lower than lifetime use with about 1 in 33 youth reporting smoking during the past 30 days (2.7%). It was also significantly lower than in 2016 (2.7% vs 7.2%). This year 1.5% of the youth reported smoking between 1 and 5 days in the past 30 and only .5% reported smoking 20 or more days. Seniors, boys, and older youth were significantly more likely to have smoked in the past 30 days than were lowerclassmen, girls, and younger youth.

It appears that electronic vapor products hold substantially more appeal than do regular cigarettes with more than a quarter of youth reporting that they used an electronic version in the past 30 days (27.7%) – not significantly different from 2016. About 1 in 8 reported using 1 or 2 days (12.8%) while 8.8% report current frequent use (20 days or more). While the age and grade differences seen for cigarettes also applied to electronic vapor products, there was no difference between girls and boys. The most common other tobacco products tried were "Other" (15.6%), cigars/cigarillos/little cigars (3.5%), and flavored cigarettes (3.4%). The differences across demographic groups for cigarettes also applied to cigars.

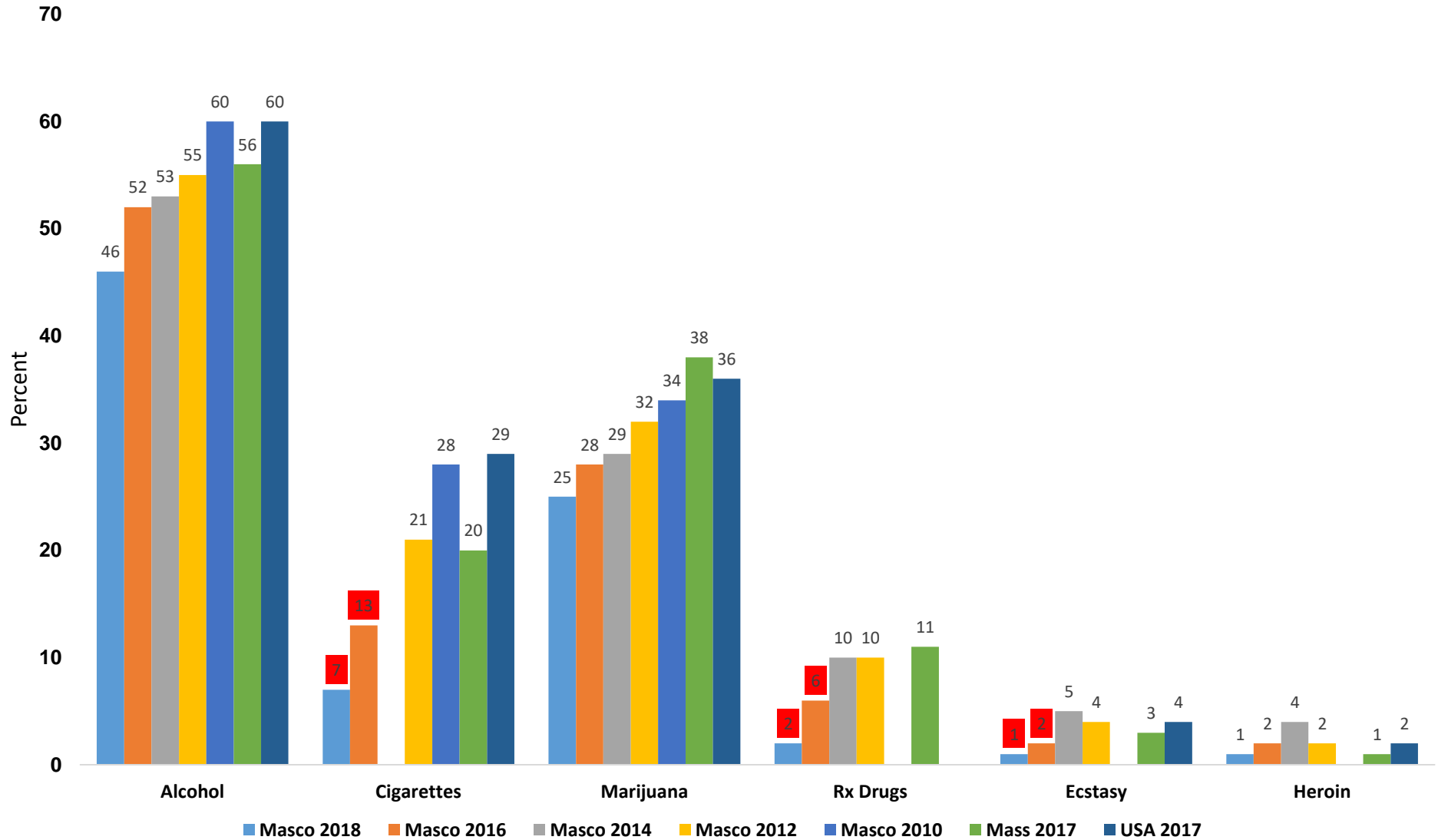
Most youth who smoked or vaped obtained their tobacco products by borrowing from someone (8.8%) or giving someone money to buy them (5.3%).

Charts 1 and 2 on the following pages demonstrate lifetime and current (past 30 day) use of various substances for MASCO in 2018 through 2012, and Massachusetts and the US in 2017. There is no data for lifetime use of cigarettes for MASCO in 2014.

There were no differences in lifetime use of alcohol or marijuana between 2018 and 2016 (Chart 1). However, lifetime use of cigarettes, prescription drugs without a prescription, and ecstasy, all decreased significantly from 2016 to 2018. Current use (past 30 days) of cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, and ecstasy also declined from 2016 to 2018 (Chart 2).

The two charts also reveal that current use is substantially lower than lifetime use for all substances.

Chart 1  
 MASCO High School Lifetime Substance Use 2018  
 Compared to MASCO 2010-2016, Mass & USA (2017)



**Chart 2**  
**MASCO High School Current (Past 30 days) Substance Use 2016**  
**Compared to MASCO 2014, 2012, 2010, Massachusetts & United States (2015)**

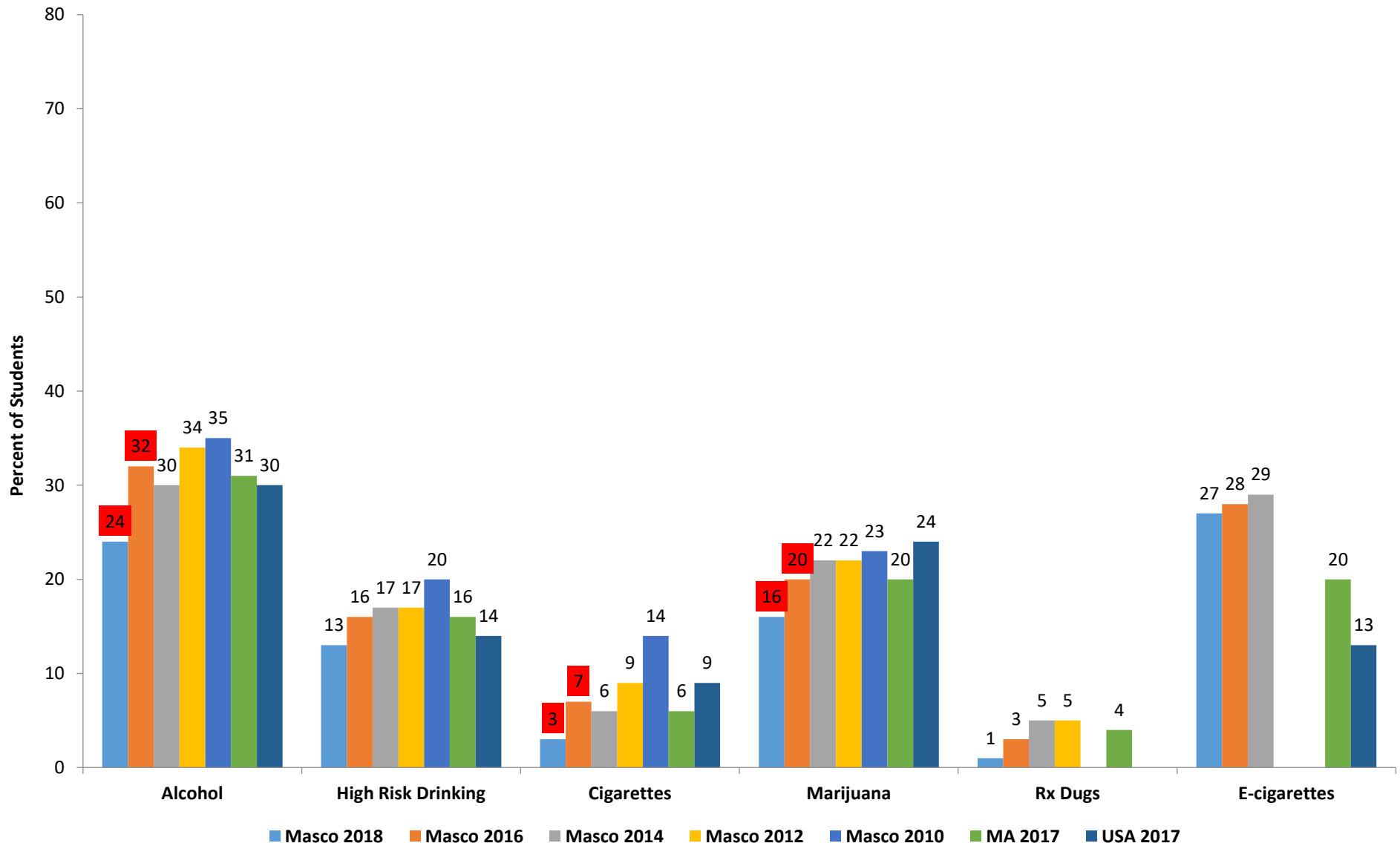


Chart 3 shows a relatively weak relationship between age and cigarette use, and age and use of prescription drugs without a prescription. While there is some increase in use with increased age, that rise is not dramatic.

In contrast, alcohol, use of electronic vapor products and being sexually active show the strongest relationships being age and use or participation. Marijuana shows a less strong relationship with about a 20 point spread between 14 and 18 year olds.

These results might suggest that teenagers may be less likely to “push the envelope” via tobacco use than they were in the past, while sex and alcohol are the preferred methods.

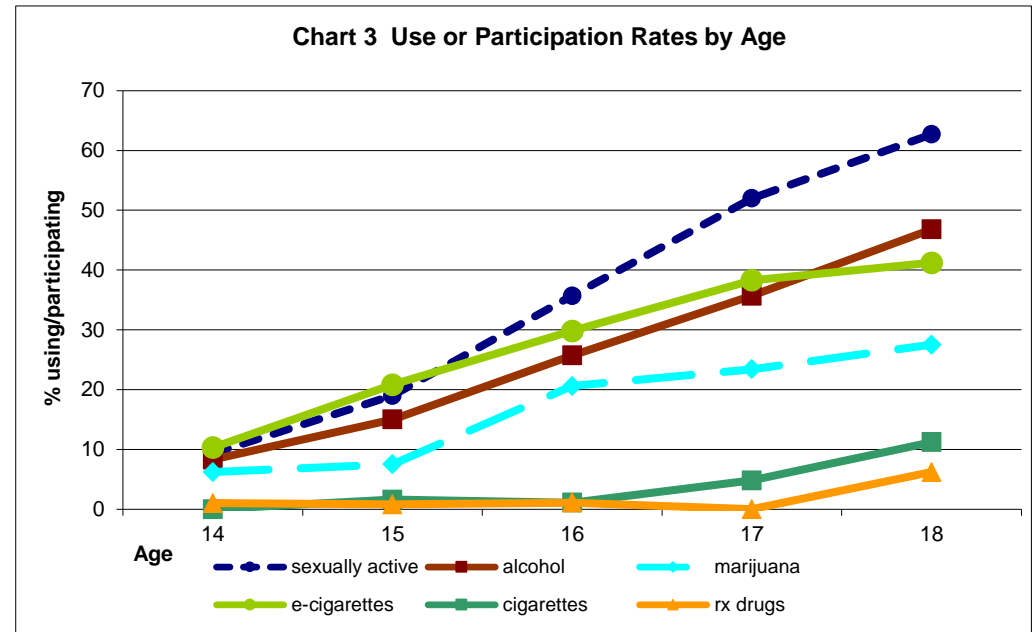
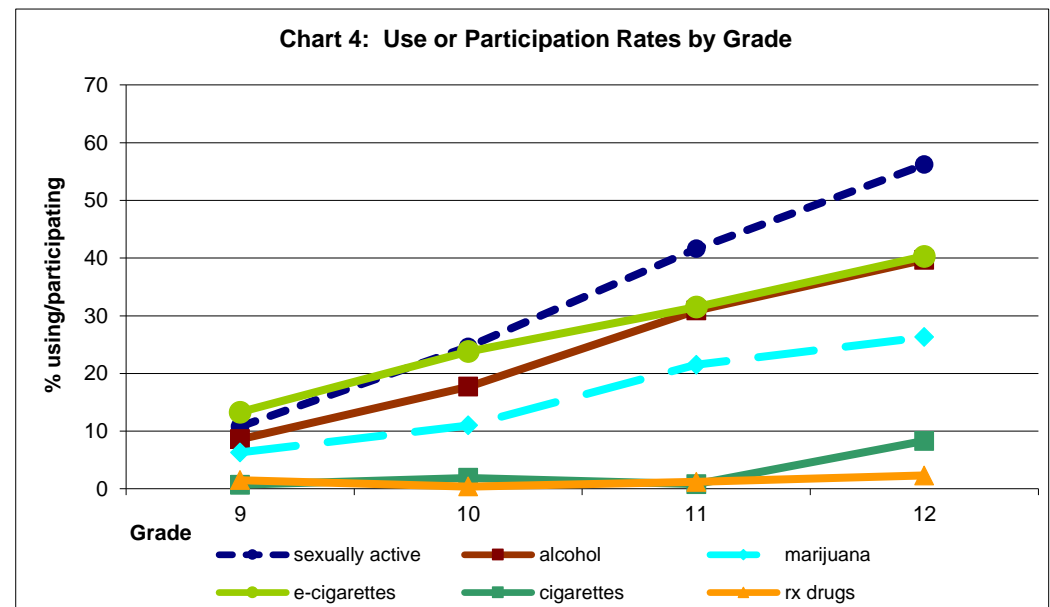


Chart 4 shows that similar patterns exist when use or participation are examined by grade. A comparison of the charts suggests that use of grade tends to somewhat obscure the alcohol use and sexual activity patterns for the oldest youth. That is, for these two areas 18 year olds tend to be relatively different from 17 year olds, yet many 17 year olds would have been in 12<sup>th</sup> grade when this survey was administered so the differences would be hidden if only grade is examined. For the remaining 4 areas (tobacco, pot, prescription drugs, and E-products) 17 and 18 year old are fairly similar.



## Alcohol

Alcohol is the most popular “substance” consumed by Masco high school youth with slightly less than half reporting having drunk alcohol at some point in their lives (45.7%) – not significantly different from the proportion in 2016 (52.5%). The age of onset was 14.6 – more than a year older than in 2014 (13.4) and 6.9% had their first drink before age 13. Older youth were more likely than younger youth to have had an alcoholic drink sometime during their lives. There was no difference between boys and girls in lifetime use of alcohol.

About 1 in 4 youth reported drinking in the past 30 days – significantly different from 2016 (23.4% vs 31.9%). As with lifetime use, likelihood of consumption in the past 30 days increases with age. Like 2016, there was no difference in current use of alcohol across gender. About 6 in 10 of all those who reported drinking during last 30 days said they were infrequent users (1 or 2 times – 13.9%) while only .5% said they were current frequent drinkers (20+ days per month).

High risk drinking was reported by 12.5% of the youth and is related to age in terms of both occurrence and frequency. Because of differences in question wording, results cannot be compared with 2016. About 8% report having engaged in binge drinking once or twice in the past 30 days and less than ½ of 1% reported it occurred on 20 days or more.

Over half the youth reported that it is fairly or very easy to obtain alcohol (55.8%). Older youth were more likely than younger youth and boys were more likely than girls to say it would be “very easy” to obtain alcohol. Three methods for obtaining alcohol that account for the majority of responses – friends (17.1%), parties (15.8%), and home (13.1%) and they mirror, responses to the question of where youth drank alcohol in the past year – weekend parties (16.4%), friend’s house (24.6%), family events (16.6%) and at home (14.0%). Girls were more likely than boys to report drinking at family events (20.3% vs 12.8%).

The most common methods for resisting peer pressure to drink were telling people they did not want to drink (49.9%), drinking non-alcoholic beverages instead (43.0%), and hanging out with people who do not drink (38.7%).

## Marijuana

The percent of youth reporting lifetime use of marijuana was 25.0% -- **not** significantly lower than in 2016 (28.2%). Again, upperclassmen and older youth were more likely than underclassmen and younger youth to have smoked pot. There were significant differences in terms of both lifetime use and frequency of use. Age of onset – 14.8 years -- about the same as 2016.

The percent of youth reporting use of marijuana in the past 30 days was significantly lower than current use in 2016 (20.1%). More than 1 in 10 reported being infrequent users (1 or 2 times) (10.4%), while 1.9% reported smoking 40 or more times. Past 30 day marijuana use increases with age and grade in terms of both occurrence and frequency (number of times used).

More than 1/3 reported that it was fairly or very easy to get marijuana (37.6%) with older youth, upperclassmen, and boys more likely than younger youth, lower classmen, and girls to say it was very easy. The most common way to obtain pot was through friends (17.9%).

### **Prescription Drugs and other substances:**

About 1 in 50 youth said they abused prescription drugs at some point in their lives – significantly lower than in 2014 (1.5% vs 5.6%). All of those indicated they had done so one or two times. Seniors were more likely than others to say they used prescription drugs without a prescription.

About 1 in 50 youth reporting abusing prescription drugs in the past 30 days (1.3%) with girls less likely than boys to have done so at least once (.2% vs 2.4%). More of those who abused were infrequent abusers (1 or 2 times) than frequent abusers (20+ times) (.7% and .4%).

In terms of other substances, lifetime use ranged from .6% to 3.2%. Ecstasy and inhalants showed significant decreases in lifetime use over time although the numeric differences were small.

Use of ecstasy during the past 30 days was significantly less than past 30 day use reported in 2016 (.5% vs 1.6%).

### **Access to Drugs on School Property:**

Slightly more than 1 in 10 youth said they were offered illegal drugs on school property (11% ) with boys significantly more likely than girls to report such an offer (13.8% vs 8.2%). Interestingly, there were no significant differences across age groups on this question.



## **Perceived Risk of Harm from Regular Substance Use :**

Youth were asked how much people risk harming themselves if they use various substances on a regularly (and in some cases, excessively).

**Smoking 1 or more cigarettes per day** – Slightly more than half of the youth indicated that this level of cigarette use posed a great deal of risk (55.0%). There were no significant differences across gender, age groups or time. The youngest youth (14) were less likely to perceive no risk than were 15 and 16 year olds.

**Using electronic vapor products** – About 1 in 3 youth indicated that electronic vapor products posed a great deal of risk (29.1%) – more than double that in 2016. Girls and younger youth were more likely than boy and older youth to see higher levels of risk.

**Having one or two drinks nearly every day** – More than 1 in 3 youth indicated that daily drinking posed a great deal of risk (39.3%) not different from 2016. Boys were more likely than girls to see lower levels of risk.

**High risk drinking once or twice a week** – More than 6 in 10 youth felt that this was very risky behavior (64.7%). There was a significant increase in perceived risk compared with 2016 (64.7% vs 60.6%).

**Using marijuana once or twice a week** – Slightly over 1 in 5 youth reported that they thought this level of marijuana use posed a great risk (23.4%). There was no significant difference between 2018 and 2016. The perception of “great risk” declined with age. In addition, boys were more likely than girls to say there was no risk (23.9% vs 14.0%).

**Using prescription drugs not prescribed to them** – Abuse of prescription drugs was seen as the most risky behavior of the substances examined with fully 83.2% saying use these drugs posed a great risk. Boys were more likely than girls to say there was no risk. There was a significant increase in perceived risk compared with 2016 (77.8% vs 83.4%)

It is very interesting to note that for cigarettes and prescription drugs, perceptions of risk mirrored actual past 30 day usage. Smoking and prescription drug use had the lowest past 30 day use (2.7% and 1.5%) and they were perceived as the most risky (55.0% and 83.2% - great risk). Also, these two substances showed relatively small increases in use as youth aged – and there was little difference in perception of risk as youth aged.

Interestingly, perceptions of high risk increased over time for vaping and use of prescription drugs, but 30 day use remained the same. In contrast, perceptions of high risk did not increase over time for smoking cigarettes, drinking 1 or 2 drinks a day or using marijuana but 30 day use declined. Thus, it appears that there is not a consistent relationship between perception of risk and use across substances.

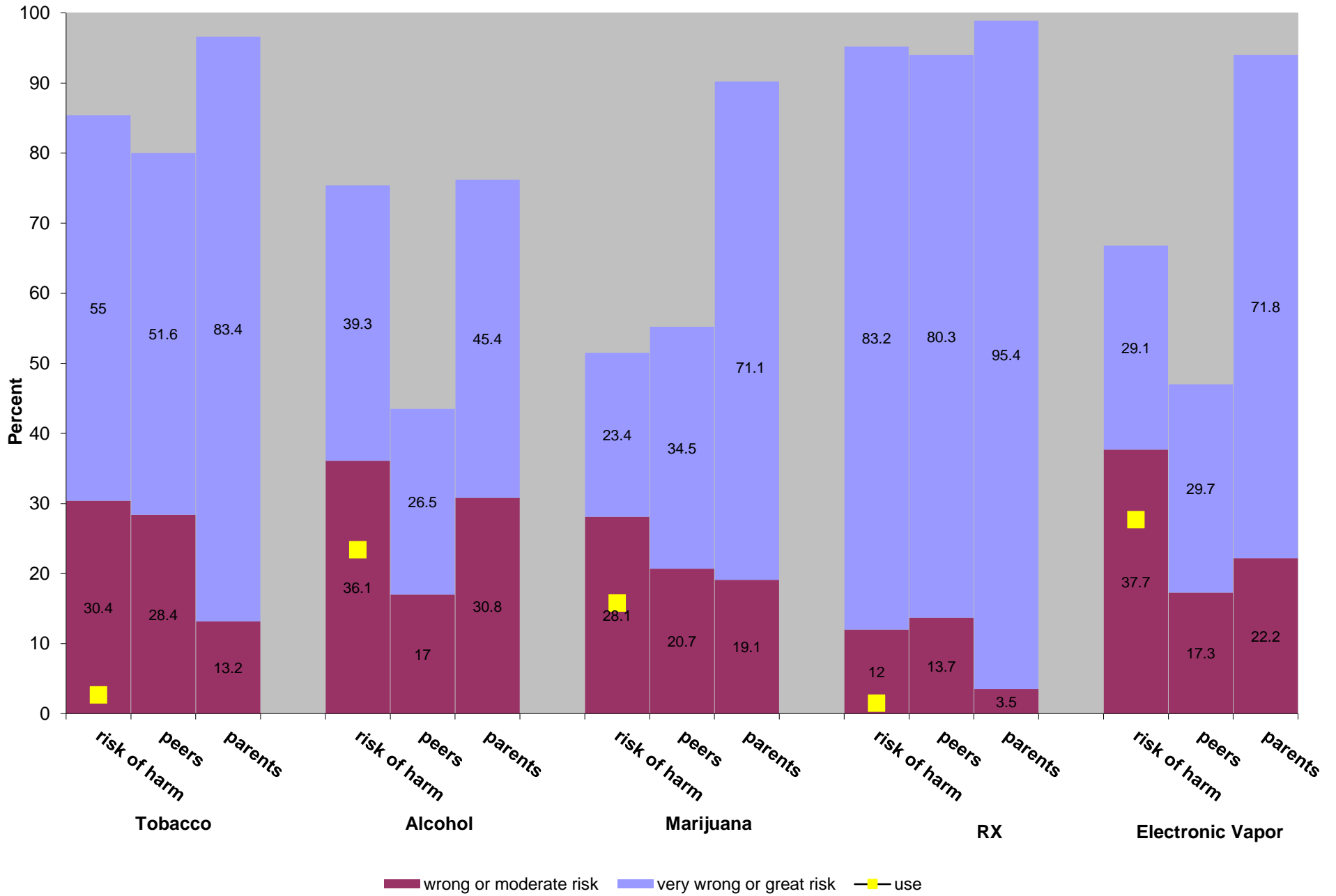
## **Peer and Parental Disapproval**

Youth were asked how wrong their parents and their friends feel it would be to engage in five behaviors. For both tobacco and misuse of prescription drugs, perception of risk, and parental and friend evaluations of use as “very wrong” are quite high (52% to 96%) and actual past 30 day use is quite low (3% and 2%). For alcohol, marijuana and E-product, parental and friend evaluations of use as “very wrong” are lower (especially for alcohol), and 30 day use is significantly higher.

Generally, parental and friend evaluations of “very wrong” differed across gender and age groups just as use differed across these groups. Girls were more likely than boys to feel that parents would respond “very wrong” to use of tobacco, marijuana and prescription drugs, and friends would respond “very wrong” to use of tobacco and prescription drugs. Younger youth were more likely than older youth to see parents and friends describing use of all but prescription drugs as “very wrong”.

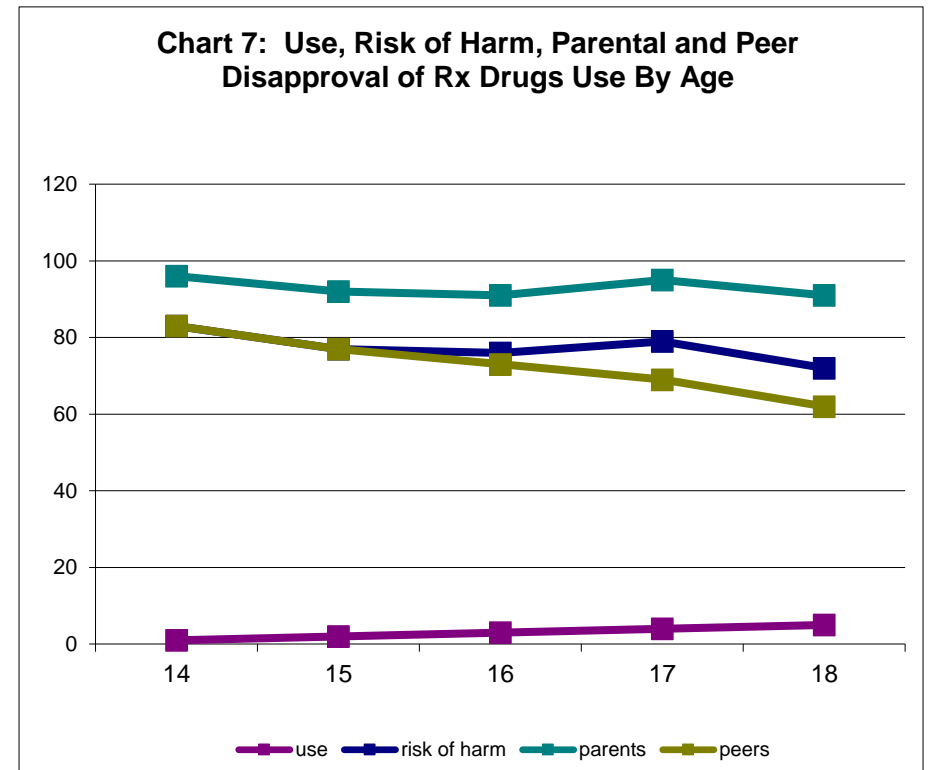
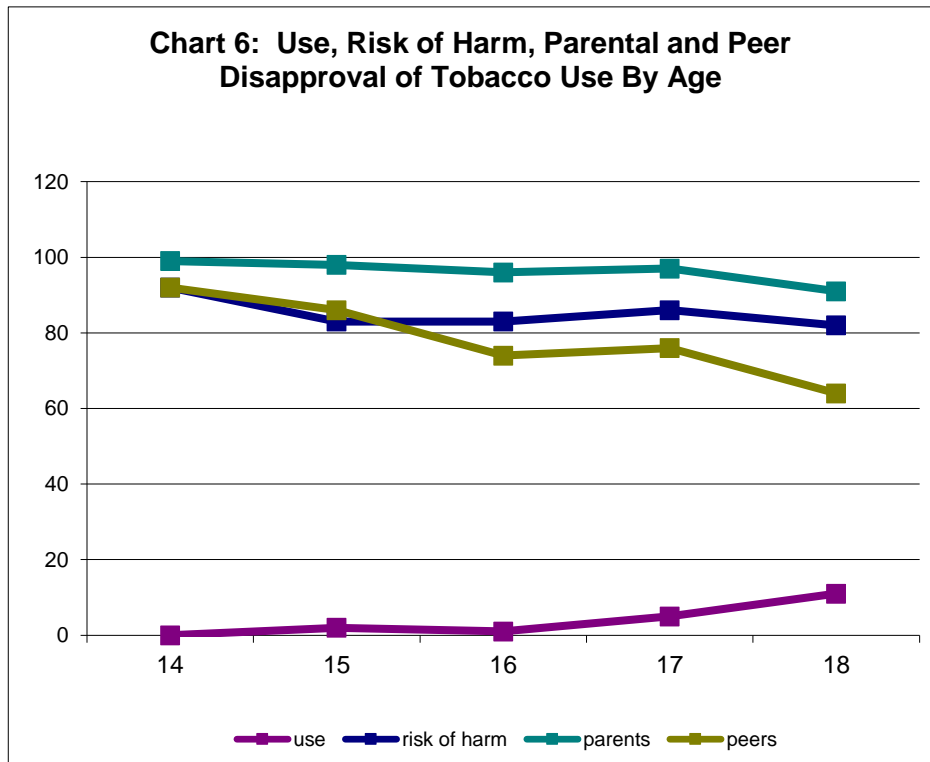
As in 2016, there was a significant increase in parental and peer disapproval for use of prescription drugs without a prescription. There was also a significant increase in parental disapproval of use of electronic vapor products and marijuana since 2016.

**Chart 5: Substance Use, Risk of Harm, and Peer and Parental Disapproval of Use of Five Substances**

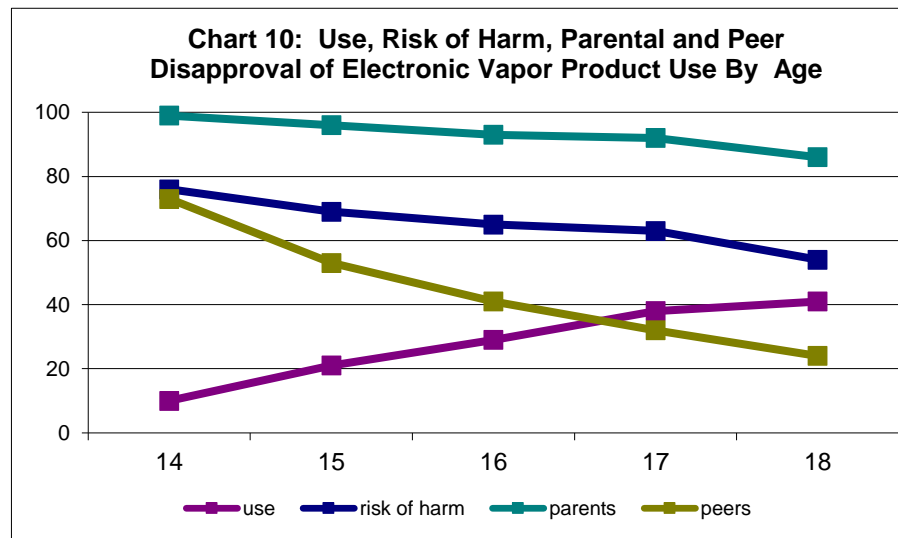
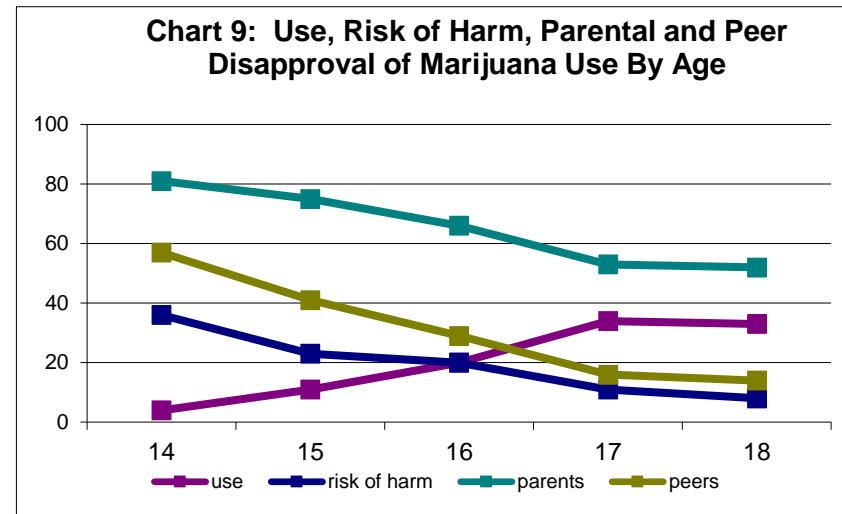
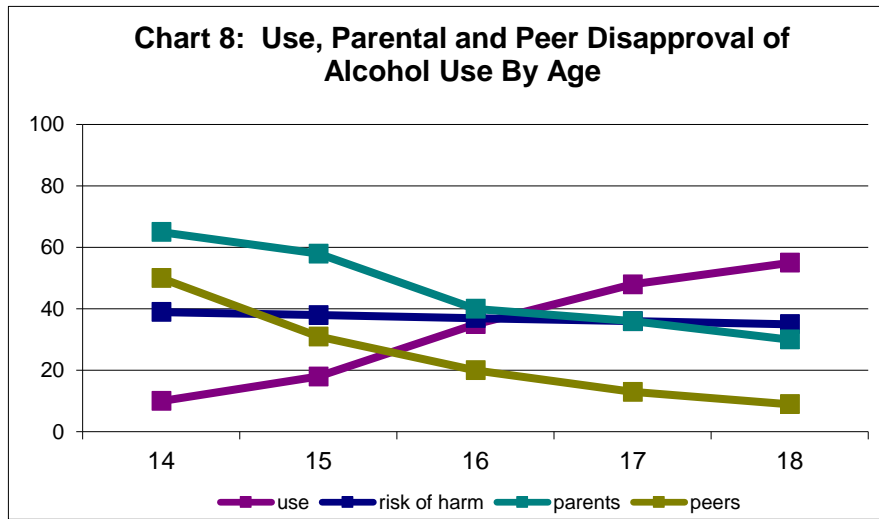


Charts 6 through 10 illustrate the relationships between age and perceived risk of harm and perceived disapproval for five substances. In these charts peer and parental disapproval are the most extreme responses “Very Wrong” and risk of harm is also the most extreme responses “Very great risk”. Use of most extreme response is more enlightening in this analysis than is the summation of the top two responses.

Tobacco and Rx Use without prescription show substantially different patterns than alcohol, marijuana, and E-products. First, use for both smoking tobacco and use prescriptions without a prescription is quite low for all groups – never reaching 20%. Second, risk of harm and perceived parental disapproval are high for both across all age groups. For tobacco and prescription drugs, risk of harm remains almost constant across age – a somewhat unexpected finding. For both substances, perceptions of parental disapproval remain relatively stable across age groups. Perceptions of peer disapproval decrease as age increases.



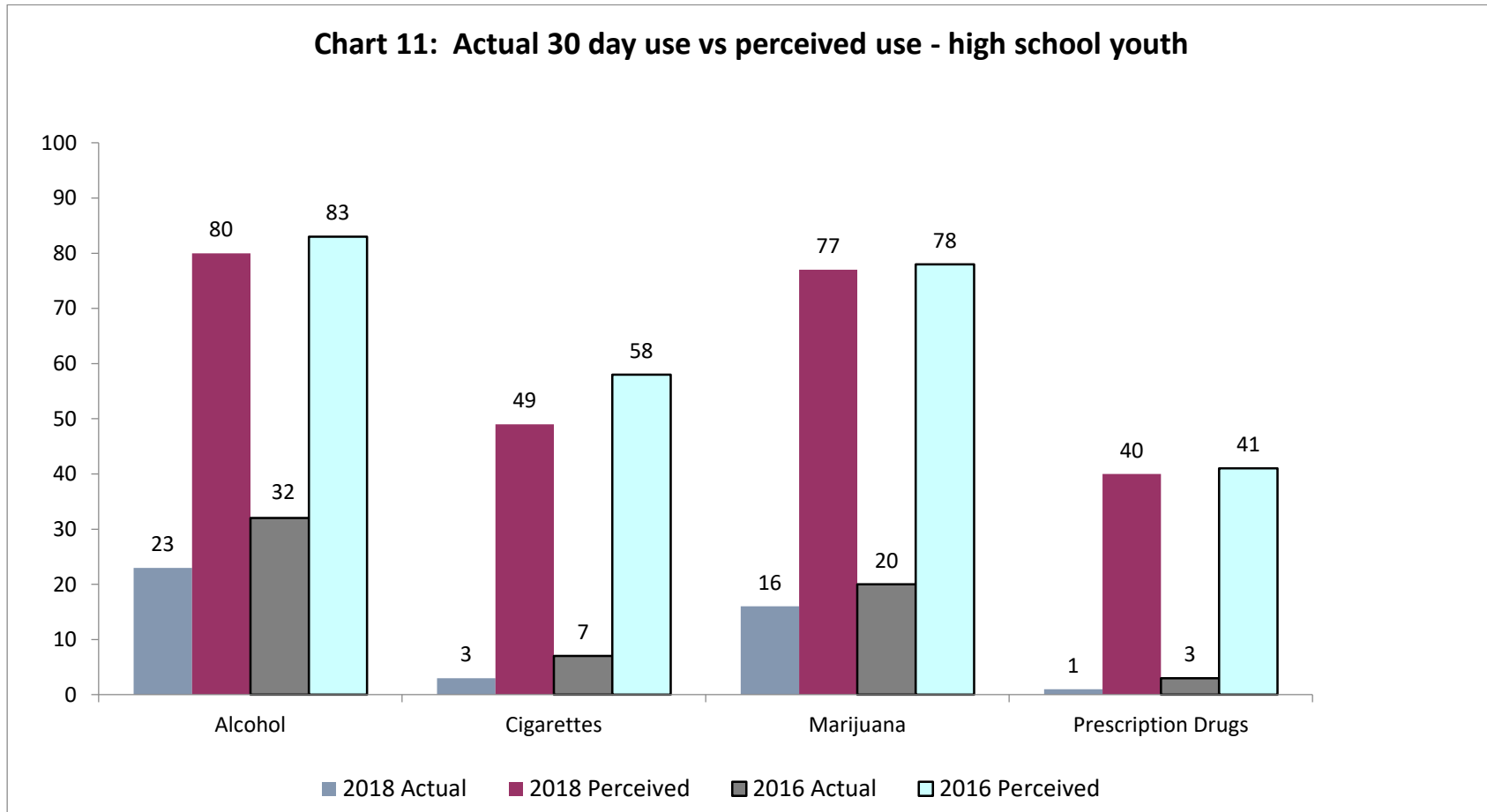
Use of marijuana shows a clear pattern – risk of harm and disapproval decrease significantly with age while use increases significantly with age. For alcohol, risk of harm is relatively stable across age, while disapproval of both groups decreases and use increases with age. The disapproval levels started at 50% or higher for 14 year olds. Parental disapproval follows the same pattern, but the rates are higher. The pattern for E-products is somewhat different. Perceived harm and parental disapproval are relatively high across age groups while peer disapproval decreases with age and use increases – but not nearly as sharply as alcohol.



### **Social Norming:**

Perceptions – and misperceptions – of 30 day use of misuse of all substances except prescription drugs in 2016 were very similar to those levels in 2014. Alcohol and marijuana reached the 50% threshold of difference between actual and perceived that is needed to be termed a “misperception” while cigarettes was at 49% and prescription drugs, at 40%.

Very interestingly, there were significant differences between girls and boys in perceptions of use for all four substances. In all four cases, girls had a significantly higher rate than boys.



## Sexuality and Sexual Behaviors

### **Sexual identity**

Close to 9 in 10 youth described themselves a heterosexual. The remainder of the youth responded lesbian or gay (1.4%), bisexual (4.9%) or questioning (3.9%). Girls were more likely than boys to say they are bisexual (7% vs 1.9%). In terms of gender identity, .1% said they thought of themselves as transgender males, .1% identified as transgender females, .5% as transgender other, .8% were uncertain how they thought of themselves, 1.4% did not understand the question, and the remainder indicated they did not think of themselves as transgender.

### **Sexual Activity**

Slightly less than 1/3 of the respondents reporting having been sexually active at some time during their lives with boys more likely than girls to respond “yes” (37.6% vs 26.2%) and older youth more likely than younger youth to indicate they had been sexually active. There was no difference across time. Age of onset was 15.3 and 1.6% reported being sexually active before age 13.

Most youth who reported being sexually active ever, or in the past 3 months indicated that they had had only one sexual partner (15.9% and 19.9%), respectively. In terms of age, those 16 years and older were more likely than those under 16 to report having been sexually active with at least 1 partner both at some point during their lives and during the past 3 months.

About 12% of those who were sexually active reported that they had used drugs or alcohol prior to their last sexual encounter with 16-18 year olds more likely than those under 16 to report this behavior. This is about half the proportion of sexually active in 2016 who reported alcohol or drug use before their last sexual encounter. Close to 5% reported that someone had sexual contact with them against their will.

### **Safety, Protection, Pregnancy, and STDs**

Condom use: Close to 3/4 of the youth who are sexually active report that they or their partner used a condom the last time they were sexually active. Youth sixteen and over were more likely than older youth to report using a condom.

Pregnancy and pregnancy prevention: Only 1 in 25 youth who reported having sexual intercourse did not protect against pregnancy. More than 1/2 (56%) used a condom, 25% used birth control pills, and about 8% used some other method. Less than 2% reported having been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant (1.4%) – a significant decrease compared with 2016.

HIV and STDs: Eight point seven percent of youth reported having been tested with older youth more likely than younger youth to report this. Slightly more than 1% said they been told they had HIV or an STD (1.1%).

### Behaviors that Contribute to Unintentional Injuries

Youth were asked a series of questions about safety choices they make while rollerblading etc., operating a vehicle or being a passenger in a vehicle. The table below illustrates how frequently they engage in behaviors that might contribute to injury. For each behavior, we present the percentage who make a “poor choice” regarding safety at least once. For example, in terms of wearing a helmet while rollerblading, biking, etc., we show the percent who did not respond “Always”. For questions that deal with driving, the number is the percentage of those who do drive that engage in the behavior.

Rollerblading/skiing/etc	75.3%
Seat belt when riding with others	21.3%
Drive with other who drank	10.5%
Drive after drinking	3.0%
Drive with other who use pot	12.9%
Drive after smoking pot	6.6%
Text while driving	25.0%
Use cell while driving	33.0%

The most consistent differences across demographic groups was the boys were more likely than girls to ignore safety precautions in all areas. Of note, the proportion of non-drivers is higher in 2018 than in 2016.

The most consistent differences across demographic groups was the boys were more likely than girls to ignore safety precautions in all areas.



## Behaviors that Contribute to Violence

Youth were asked a series of questions regarding carrying weapons, fighting, and being threatened or injured. There were few differences across time or across age groups on these questions, but there are significant differences across gender on all questions. Differences are noted below.

- In past 30 days did you . . .
  - Carry a weapon – 7.1% (less than 2016 9.2% and boys more likely than girls 14.4% vs .8%)
  - Carry a gun – 2% (Boys more likely than girls 4.1% vs 0%)
  - Carry a weapon on school property – .5%
  - Not go to school because you felt unsafe – 4.7% with increase in "1 day" response compared to 2016 (3.2% vs 1.7%)
- In the past 12 months . . .
  - Were you threatened or injured on school property with a weapon – 4.9% (up from 2.8% in 2016 and boys more likely than girls 6.7% vs 2.9%)
  - Were you in a physical fight – 14.9% (Boys more likely than girls 26.1% vs 4.0%)
  - Were you in a physical fight in which you needed to be treated by MD or nurse – 1.8% (Boys more likely than girls 2.8% vs .4%)
  - Were you in a physical fight on school property – 5.1% (Boys more likely than girls 9.3% vs .9%)
- Have you ever been hurt **physically or sexually** by a date – Yes 3.4% (Girls more likely to be **sexually** hurt than boys 2.6% vs .2%).

## Bullying

Youth were asked if they had been the victim or perpetrator of bullying in the past couple of months and to provide some details regarding types of bullying, reactions to bullying, and locations. This year, they were also asked about hurtful posts on social media and receiving and sending sexually explicit posts. Given the discrepancy between number of victims and number of perpetrators, it would appear that 1) youth are hesitant to admit they bully others, 2) youth don't define their actions as bullying, or 3) most bullying is done by a relatively small group of youth.

All differences across gender, age, grade, and time are noted below.

- **Youth as victim of bullying**

- Occurrence

- In the past few months have been bullied at least once **at school** – 15.1% not significantly different from 2016. (Girls more likely than boys to have been bullied once or twice in past couple of months 13.2% vs 8.2%.)
- In the past few months have been bullied at least once **on cellphone or over internet** – 12.7% (Girls more likely than boys to report once or twice 13.0% vs 7.8%)

- Most common types of bullying at school

- Others spread lies/rumors – 8.2% (Girls more likely than boys 10.2% vs 5.3%)
- Been called mean names, made fun of – 7.5%
- Excluded – 6.9% (Girls more like than boys 9.6% vs 3.3%)

- **Youth as perpetrator of bullying**

- Occurrence

- In the past few months bullied another youth at least once at school – 4.1%
- In the past few months bullied another youth at least once **on cellphone or over internet** – 3.4%

- Most common types of bullying at school

- Called others mean names, made fun of – 2.6%. (Boys more likely than girls 3.7% vs 1.3)
- Excluded – 1.3%

- **Location of bullying**

- Most youth indicate they have not experienced or seen bullying in the past few months (65.3%) – significantly higher than 2016 59.4% -- with boys more likely than girls to say they haven't experienced/seen it (72.7% vs 59.3%)
- Most common locations
  - Social media – 19.6% (Girls more likely than boys 24.9% vs 13.2%)

- Hallways – 12.6%
  - In the cafeteria – 11.5%
  - On the bus – 6.8%
- **Reactions and Responses to bullying**
    - **Victim's** most typical reactions to bullying
      - Walk away/ignore – 14.0% (Girls more likely than boys 17.3% vs 10.0%)
      - Respond with words or actions – 9.3%
      - Tell the person bullying to stop – 7.1%
      - Tell parents – 5.3% (Girls more likely than boys 6.7% vs 3.7%)
    - **Observer's** most typical reactions to bullying
      - Never noticed any – 47.3% - boys more likely than girls (53.4% vs 41.9%)
      - Try to help the bullied youth – 33.2% girls more likely than boys 36.8% vs 29.2%
      - Do nothing but think I should help – 11.5% girls more likely than boys (13.6% vs 9.2%)
      - Tell my parents – 10.3% girls more likely than boys 14.2% vs 6.2%.
    - **Frequency with which teachers try to put a stop to bullying**
      - Almost always – 22.3% (down from 30.3% in 2014 : Boys more likely than girls to report this frequency (29.8% vs 15.6%)
      - Almost never – 12.6% (not different from 2016)

### **Hurtful posts and explicit material:**

About 2/3 of the youth reported that they never received social media posts that upset them (67.9%); 17.3%, that they received them before but not in the past year; and 14.8%, in the past year. About 1% said they received such posts once a week or more . Girls were more likely than boys to report having received these posts at some point (40.3% vs 23.2%) with 22.7% vs 11.6% receiving some but not in the current year and 15.0% vs 8.6% saying they had received them a few times in the prior year.

Slightly more than 1 in 4 said they had received explicit material via electronic media during the past 12 months with boys more likely than girls to report this (29.6% vs 23%). About 1 in 7 said they had sent such material in the past 12 months (14.1%) with 9<sup>th</sup> graders less likely than all others to report having done so.

## Stress, Depression, and Self-Harm

### Stress:

When asked how much of a problem stress was nearly equal numbers of youth replied “Not a problem at all/Almost never a problem” (17.8%) and “Always a problem” (22.6%) with the remaining split about evenly between “Sometimes” and “Often”. Girls were more likely than boys to respond “Always” (30.5% vs 11.4%), while boys were more likely to respond “Not at all” or “Almost Never” (30.5% vs 6.4%).

The most frequently mentioned sources of stress were

- School work (90.8%)
- My expectations of myself (61.0%)
- Extra-curricular activities (43.7%)
- Parents' expectations of me (43.6%)
- Friendships (42.0%)
- Getting into college (40.6%)
- Family (32.6%)

In 2018 compared to 2016, all but one topic exceeded 40%. Girls were more likely than boys to report feeling stressed about all topics. The same pattern was true last year.

Most youth employed some type of positive stress management technique with the most popular being

- Talking to friends (53.7%).
- Journal/draw/listen to music/spend time alone (42.2%)
- Talk to parent or family member (36.2%).
- Exercise/yoga (29.3%).

About 1 in 10 each said they used drugs or alcohol to manage stress (7.5%) or they had no way to manage stress (10.3%).

### Depression and Self-harm (including suicide):

When asked if they exhibited signs of clinical depression (feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row . . .), 22.0% responded “Yes” with girls more likely than boys to respond in this manner (25.4% vs 17.3%). About 1 in 11 reported having hurt or injured themselves on purpose at least once (8.8%). The percentage of girls responding “yes” dropped significantly since 2016 (5.7% vs 11.4%).

During the past twelve months, 10.7% said they seriously considered suicide (up from 7.2% in 2016) and 6.6% said they made a plan about how they would attempt suicide. Like 2016 there was no differences across gender on this question. During the past 12 months 1.7% said they actually attempted and .5% indicated they were treated by a doctor or nurse.

## **Protective Factors**

Protective factors are associated with the prevention of risky behaviors and substance use. Perception of risk of harm from substance use and parental and peer disapproval of substance use were discussed earlier and were shown to relate to substance use (pages 49-70). In this section we address presence of supportive adults, feeling valued, and participation in sports and extra-curricular activities.

### **Feeling Safe at School:**

More than ½ of the youth agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I feel safe at school"; close to 1/3 were neutral (30.9%); and, 11.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Boys were more likely than girls to strongly agree (15.8% vs 7.8%) and girls were more likely than boys to respond "Neutral" (37.1% vs 24.1%). Fifteen and eighteen year olds were more likely than 14 year olds to disagree and seventeen year olds were more likely than 14 year olds to strongly disagree.

### **Supportive Adults:**

More than ¾ of the youth reported having at least one teacher or other school adult they could talk with about important things. Outside of school only 3.1% said they did not have an adult to turn to about things important to them, while more than half mentioned parent or other adult family member (50.7%) and 41.9% mentioned both family and non-family adults. Girls were more likely than boys to have both family and non-family adults to talk to (45.5% vs 37.9%) while boys were more likely than girls to say they did not have someone outside of school to talk to (4.5% vs 1.1%). These percentages were not different from those found in 2016.

When asked if they had spoken with an adult family member about various topics, about 1/4 said they had not, while 62.9% had discussed electronic vapor products (a significant increase from 2016 – 33.5%); 58.5% had discussed alcohol; 51.0%, marijuana; 40.1%, riding with someone who was under the influence; 35.4%, sexual activity; and, 26.1%, tobacco. The remaining topics were named by under 20%.

### **Feeling Valued:**

Slightly more than ½ agreed or strongly agreed with the statements:

- I feel my teachers care about me and give me encouragement and support. (56.8%)
- I feel my peers at this school care about me as a person. (56.2%)

Slightly less than ½ agreed or strongly agreed with the statements:

- I feel that adults in the Tri-Town community care about me as a young person. (45.1%)

Interestingly, boys were more likely than girls to strongly agree with the first two statements (14.5% vs 8.7% and 15.8% vs 7.7%, respectively).

**Participation in sports and extra-curriculars:**

Nearly 3/4 said they were involved in an organized after-school activity (74.5%); and almost 2/3 said they spent at least 1 hour on volunteer work or community service (62.4%). Girls were more likely than boys to be involved with organized after-school activities (80.5% vs 67.9%) and community service (70.1% vs 54.5%).

### **Weight and Weight Management:**

The relationship between body image (perception of weight) and weight management was fundamentally the same as in 2014 and 2016. The proportion seeing themselves as underweight is very close to the proportion who are trying to gain weight (18.5% and 18.4%, respectively). However, the proportion seeing themselves as overweight (21.1%) is significantly lower than the proportion who are trying to lose weight (39.5%) with girls more likely than boys to report they were trying to lose weight 53.0% vs 24.5%).

Somewhat over ½ of the youth described their weight as “about right” (60.4% -- with girls more likely than boys to say they are about the right weight (65.0% vs 55.0%) and yet some of those girls must be trying to lose weight in order to reach the 53.0% of girls who report they are trying to lose. It appears that even if a girl perceives her weight to be “about right”, she feels pressure to become thinner.

Only 6.4% of the youth mentioned unhealthy weight management methods (e.g. fasting, diet pills, vomiting, laxatives) with girls more likely than boys to use those methods (9.0% vs 2.6%). Preferred methods of weight management were exercise (63.2%) and eating fewer calories (33.9%). There were no changes over time.

### **Physical Activity:**

Close to 9 in 10 youth reported engaging in 60 minutes of physical activity that made them sweat and breathe hard at least one day in the last seven (85.9%) with boys doing so more frequently than girls.

### **“Electronic” Activity:**

Only 1.0% said they did not use an electronic device for non-homework activities and 2.3% said they used one for less than an hour a day. In contrast 65.2% said they used a computer or smartphone 3 or more hours per day – not significantly different from 2016.

### **Nutrition and sleep:**

Breakfast: About 4 in 10 reported eating breakfast every day (41.7% - significantly lower than 2016 – 46.5%) and 8.4% reported never eating breakfast.

Caffeine: About equal numbers of youth reported not having a caffeinated beverage in the past 7 days (28.9%) and reporting having caffeine at least once a day (20.1%).

Energy Drinks: About 1 in 8 of the youth indicated they had an energy drink in the past 30 days (11.9%). Boys were more likely than girls to say they did so (18.2% vs 5.7%). There was no difference across time.

Sleep: Less than a quarter of the youth reported getting 8 or more hours of sleep on school nights (23.6% - a significant decrease compared with 2016 40.1%) and 34.2% said they usually slept 7 hours. Nearly 1 in 5 reported sleeping 5 hours or less (16.9%). Tenth, 11th and 12<sup>th</sup> graders were more likely than 9th graders to report getting 6 hours and 9<sup>th</sup> graders were more likely than all other grades to get 8 or more hours of sleep. Girls were more likely than boys to say they slept 5 hours and boys were more likely than girls to say they slept 8 hours.