

Highlights from the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

Informing data-driven school and community health policies and practices

2016 | Wayland Middle School

GRADES 6-8



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Wayland Middle School

Background and Methodology

The 2016 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey (MWAHS) marks the beginning of a new decade in monitoring trends in adolescent health behaviors to advance school and community prevention efforts. Since 2006, the MWAHS has been administered every other year in communities served by the MetroWest Health Foundation, with the goal of supporting data-driven improvements in health programs and policies at the local and regional levels. Wayland Middle School has participated in the MWAHS since 2006.

The 2016 middle school survey was administered to a census of students in grades 7 and 8 in all 24 school districts containing middle schools in the region served by the MetroWest Health Foundation. 18 school districts also chose to survey 6th grade students. In total, 16,387 middle school students in grades 6 through 8 in the region participated in this voluntary and anonymous survey. In Wayland, 595 students in grades 6 through 8 participated in the 2016 MWAHS, representing 93% of students.

As in previous survey waves, local procedures were followed to inform parents of the survey and give them the choice to opt out their child(ren). Students were also informed that their participation was voluntary and that no names or other identifying information were being collected. Data collection at each school was guided by a protocol that protected the privacy of students' responses.

Findings from the MWAHS are used by schools and communities to improve health education, inform prevention efforts, and set priorities for achieving a healthier youth population. Highlights from your district's data in the areas of substance use, violence, bullying, unintentional injury, mental health, physical activity, and protective factors are provided.

Key Findings: Substance Use

Cigarette Smoking and Use of Electronic Cigarettes

- 2016 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **2% of students have smoked a cigarette in their lifetime, and 1% smoked recently (in the past 30 days).**
- » Lifetime smoking is similarly low among females and males.
 - » No 6th grade students report smoking in their lifetime, but by 8th grade, 4% of middle school youth have smoked a cigarette.
 - » 2% of middle school youth have tried an electronic cigarette or other electronic vapor product in their lifetime, and 1% have used one in the past 30 days. By 8th grade, 6% of youth have used electronic cigarettes.
- 2006-2016 Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Youth smoking has declined substantially: Lifetime smoking decreased from 8% in 2006 to 2% in 2010 and remained similar at 1-2% over the past three surveys.**
- » During the same time period, recent smoking decreased from 4% to 1%.
 - » Cigarette smoking decreased among both males and females.
 - » Lifetime use of electronic cigarettes or other electronic vapor products is slightly higher in 2016 (3%) than in 2014 (1%). (2014 was the first year that data on electronic cigarette use was collected.)
 - » In the MetroWest region, cigarette smoking among middle school youth has declined by more than two-thirds since 2006.

Alcohol Use and Drinking and Driving

- 2016 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **6% of students drank alcohol in their lifetime, and 2% drank in the past 30 days.**
- » 1% of youth report recent binge drinking (defined as consuming 4 or more drinks in a row for females, or 5 or more drinks in a row for males in the past 30 days).
 - » More males than females initiate alcohol use in middle school (9% compared with 3%).
 - » Alcohol use increases substantially by grade: Lifetime use increases from less than 1% in 6th grade to 10% in 8th grade. No 6th grade students report recent drinking, but 3% of both 7th and 8th grade students have used alcohol in the past 30 days.
 - » Less than 1% of students report ever being a passenger in a car driven by a high school student who had been drinking alcohol.
- 2006-2016 Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Fewer middle school youth are drinking alcohol: Lifetime alcohol use decreased from 18% in 2006 to 8% in 2010 and has remained similar at 6-8%.**
- » Current drinking follows a similar trend, decreasing from 8% in 2006 to 3% in 2016.
 - » Drinking declined among both males and females. For example, lifetime drinking decreased from 12% in 2006 to 3% in 2016 among females, and from 25% to 13% among males.
 - » Drinking among middle school youth declined by more than half in MetroWest since 2006.

Marijuana Use

- 2016 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **1% of middle school youth have used marijuana in their lifetime, and 1% used marijuana in the past 30 days.**
- » Lifetime marijuana use does not differ by gender.
 - » No 6th grade students report marijuana use, but by 8th grade, just over 1% of students report lifetime and recent use.
- 2006-2016 Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Lifetime marijuana use decreased from 4% in 2006 to 1% in 2016, with reports ranging from 0-6% over the six surveys.**
- » Current marijuana use is also lower in 2016 (1%) compared with 2006-2008 (3-5%).
 - » Marijuana use in the MetroWest region decreased slightly from 2006 to 2016.

Inhalant Use

- 2016 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **3% of youth have used inhalants in their lifetime (defined as sniffing glue, breathing the contents of spray cans, or inhaling any paints or sprays to get high).**
- » Inhalant use is higher among males (4%) than females (1%).
 - » No 6th grade students report inhalant use, but 4% of both 7th and 8th grade students have used inhalants.
- 2006-2016 Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Lifetime use of inhalants is lower in 2016 (4%) compared with 2006 (9%), with reports ranging from 1-9% over the course of the MWAHS.**
- » Overall reports of inhalant use are lower among both females and males.
 - » There has also been a substantial decrease in inhalant use among MetroWest region middle school youth since 2006.

Key Findings: Violence

Physical Fighting

- 2016 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **26% of youth have been in a physical fight in their lifetime, and 8% have been in a fight on school property.**
- » Many more males than females report fighting overall (36% compared with 16%) and on school property (13% compared with 4%).
 - » The proportion of youth who have engaged in physical fighting in their lifetime ranges from 23-29% by grade.
- 2006-2016 Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Many fewer youth are involved in fighting: Reports of lifetime physical fighting decreased from 39% in 2006 to 26% in 2016.**
- » Lifetime reports of fighting on school property decreased from a high of 21% in 2008 to 9% in 2016.
 - » There were notable decreases in fighting among both males and females. For example, lifetime reports of fighting decreased from 58% in 2006 to 38% in 2016 among males, and from 24 % to 14% among females.
 - » In the MetroWest region, physical fighting among middle school youth also decreased substantially since 2006.

Weapon Carrying

- 2016 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **12% of youth have carried a weapon in their lifetime, and 1% have carried a weapon on school property.**
- » Consistent with gender patterns for physical fighting, many more males (21%) than females (3%) report carrying weapons.
 - » Lifetime reports of carrying weapons increase from 6% in 6th grade to 17% in 8th grade.
- 2006-2016 Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Lifetime reports of weapon carrying on school property are lower in 2016 (1%) compared with 2006 (4%).**
- » Overall reports of weapon carrying have been similar at 12-14% since 2008.
 - » In the MetroWest region, weapon carrying has remained somewhat similar since 2006.

Key Findings: Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying

- 2016 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **20% of middle school youth have been bullied in the past 12 months, and 17% have been bullied on school property. 6% of students report bullying other students.**
- » More females than males are victims of bullying overall (22% compared with 17%) and on school property (19% compared with 15%).
 - » School bullying victimization is higher in 6th grade (21%) than in 7th and 8th grades (15-16%).
 - » Among students who were bullied at school in the past 12 months, 45% talked to a school adult about being bullied, and 58% talked to a parent or other adult outside of school.
 - » 9% of youth reported being verbally harassed in the past 12 months due to their race, ethnicity or culture, 4% due to their sexual orientation, 4% due to a disability, and 20% due to their appearance (height, weight, or how they look). This data was first collected in 2016.
- 2006-2016 Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Fewer students are being bullied at school: Victimization on school property decreased from a high of 37% in 2008 to 18% in 2014, and lowered further to 15% in 2016.**
- » Reports of overall bullying victimization in the past 12 months also decreased, from a high of 38% in 2008 to 17% in 2016.
 - » There were considerable declines in bullying among both genders. For example, bullying on school property decreased from 33% in 2008 to 15% in 2016 among females, and from 42% to 15% among males.
 - » Reports of bullying also decreased substantially in the MetroWest region from 2008 to 2016.

Cyberbullying

- 2016 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **10% of youth report being victims of cyberbullying in the past 12 months, and 3% report cyberbullying someone else.**
- » Females are more likely to be victims of cyberbullying than males (12% vs. 8%).
 - » Cyberbullying increases slightly by grade, from 9% in 6th grade to 12% in 8th grade.
 - » The majority of cyberbullying victims do not seek help from adults: Among youth who were cyberbullied in the past 12 months, only 24% talked to an adult at school and 39% talked to a parent/adult outside of school.
 - » 8% of youth spend three or more hours daily on social media (11% of females and 6% of males). Youth who spend more time online and on social media are more likely to also report being involved in cyberbullying.
- 2006-2016 Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Reports of cyberbullying victimization have been similar at 10-12% since 2006.**
- » Cyberbullying has not changed substantially among either females or males.
 - » In MetroWest, cyberbullying victimization was higher in 2014-2016 than in prior years.

Key Findings: Mental Health

Stress

- 2016 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **15% of youth report that their life was very stressful in the past 30 days.**
- » Females are more likely to report this level of stress than males (20% compared with 10%).
 - » Reports of stress are substantially higher in 8th grade (27%) compared with 6th grade (7%) and 7th grade (10%).
 - » The most common source of stress is worrying due to school issues (41%), followed by social issues (15%), appearance issues (12%), and family issues (11%).
- 2006-2016 Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Overall reports of stress among middle school youth are higher in 2016 (19%) compared with 2006 (16%), with reports ranging from 8-19% over the six surveys.**
- » Reports of stress are higher in 2016 than 2006 among females (24% compared with 16%), but more similar among males (13% compared with 15%).
 - » In the MetroWest region, stress has increased in recent years.

Depressive Symptoms, Self-Injury, and Suicidality

- 2016 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **6% of students report depressive symptoms in the past 12 months (defined as feeling sad or hopeless for two or more weeks in a row).**
- » 5% of youth report self-injury (defined as cutting, burning, or bruising oneself on purpose) in the past 12 months.
 - » 8% of youth report that they had considered suicide in their lifetime, and 1% had made a suicide attempt.
 - » Females are more likely than males to report mental health problems. For example, 8% of females and 4% of males report depressive symptoms.
 - » 1% of middle school youth missed school in the past 30 days due to feeling sad or hopeless, or having thoughts about hurting themselves.
 - » Reports of depressive symptoms and self-injury in the past 12 months do not follow a consistent pattern by grade. Lifetime reports of seriously considering suicide increase from 3% in 6th grade to 13% in 8th grade.
- 2006-2016 Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Reports of depressive symptoms and self-injury are lower in 2016 compared with past surveys; however, reports of suicidal thoughts have not changed overall.**
- » For example, depressive symptoms decreased from 14% in 2006 and 2008 to 6% in 2016, with decreases among both females and males.
 - » Suicidal thoughts decreased from 10% in 2006 to 4% in 2010, but returned to 10% in 2016. However, there was a decrease in suicide attempts, from 5% in 2006 to 1% in 2016.
 - » There has also been a recent decrease in depressive symptoms among MetroWest region middle school youth, and reports of suicidality have remained similar since 2006.

Key Findings: Physical Activity, Sleep, and Overweight/Obesity

Physical Activity

- 2016 Patterns** (Grades 6-8) » **85% of youth report engaging in vigorous physical activity.** (Vigorous physical activity is defined as exercising for at least 20 minutes that makes you sweat and breathe hard on three or more of the past seven days).
- » Males are more likely than females to report this level of physical activity (90% compared with 80%).
 - » Reports of physical activity are similar by grade at 84-87%.
- 2006-2016 Trends** (Grades 7-8) » **The proportion of youth who exercised vigorously on at least 3 days per week decreased from 82% in 2006 to 73% in 2010, but then increased to 86% in 2016.**
- » Physical activity among MetroWest region youth has been similar since 2006.

Sleep

- 2016 Patterns** (Grades 6-8) » **69% of middle school youth get 8 or more hours of sleep on an average school night.**
- » More males than females get 8 hours of sleep per night (72% compared to 67%).
 - » Reports of getting 8 or more hours of sleep decrease substantially as students get older, from 86% in 6th grade to 51% in 8th grade.
- 2006-2016 Trends** (Grades 7-8) » **The proportion of youth sleeping 8 or more hours per night decreased from 69% in 2014 to 62% in 2016.** (2014 was the first year that sleep data was collected.)
- » Youth in the MetroWest region report slightly less sleep over the last two surveys.

Overweight/Obesity

- 2016 Patterns** (Grades 6-8) » **13% of youth are overweight or obese.** (Reports are based on self-reported height and weight, which is used to calculate body mass index. Overweight/obesity is defined as being in the 85th percentile or above for body mass index by age and gender.)
- » Males are more likely than females to be overweight or obese (17% compared with 9%).
 - » Overweight/obesity is similar across grades.
- 2006-2016 Trends** (Grades 7-8) » **Overweight/obesity has ranged from 11-16% since 2006 and was reported by 13% of youth in 2016.**
- » In the MetroWest region, overweight/obesity has not changed notably over the six surveys.

Key Findings: Protective Factors

School Attachment and Engagement

- 2016 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **More than four out of five youth report being engaged in and connected with their school.** This is indicated by agreement with statements such as “I feel close to people at this school” (82%), “I am happy to be at this school” (84%), and “I feel safe in my school” (92%).
- » Reports of school attachment are similar among males and females and decrease from 6th grade to 8th grade.
- 2006-2016 Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Reports of school attachment have not changed substantially since 2006.**
- » School attachment has also been similar among MetroWest region middle school students since the beginning of the MWAHS.

Adult Support

- 2016 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **75% of youth have at least one teacher or other adult at school to talk to if they have a problem, and 93% of youth have a parent or other adult outside of school to talk to about things that are important to them.**
- » Adult support at school is similar by gender and decreases slightly by grade. The same patterns are true for adult support outside of school.
- 2006-2016 Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **More youth are reporting adult support at school. Reports of having an adult at school to talk to are higher in 2016 (73%) compared with 2006 (67%).**
- » Adult support outside of school has ranged from 89-95% over the six surveys.
- » In the MetroWest region, adult support at school has also increased since 2006.

Conclusions

For more than a decade, the MWAHS has monitored trends in adolescent health, informing local decisions and strategies to improve education, policy, and prevention efforts across the MetroWest region. Each survey that is administered provides new data to highlight areas of progress as well as to draw attention to emerging risks and continued areas for concern. The 2016 data show that Wayland is making important advances in some behavioral health areas, such as cigarette smoking, alcohol use, and school bullying. While these demand continued attention, the data also highlight other areas of concern, including cyberbullying, stress, and mental health. Continued use of the MWAHS data to identify priorities and drive local decisions will help to address the greatest challenges to adolescent health and lead to safer and healthier communities.

Wayland Middle School (Grades 7-8)

2006-2016 Trends in Key Indicators

MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

	Year of Survey (%)					
	2006 (434)	2008 (440)	2010 (419)	2012 (400)	2014 (412)	2016 (409)
SUBSTANCE USE						
Lifetime cigarette smoking	7.7	7.1	2.2	2.3	1.0	2.5
Current cigarette smoking (past 30 days)	3.5	4.1	1.2	0.8	0.2	0.7
Lifetime alcohol use	18.3	16.5	7.5	7.6	6.3	7.9
Current alcohol use (past 30 days)	8.2	6.2	1.2	3.6	1.0	3.2
Binge drinking (past 30 days)*	3.5	3.0	0.7	0.5	0.0	1.0
Lifetime marijuana use	4.0	5.7	1.9	1.0	0.0	1.0
Current marijuana use (past 30 days)	3.3	4.8	1.9	0.8	0.0	1.0
Lifetime inhalant use	8.9	8.7	1.4	2.3	0.7	3.9
VIOLENCE						
Physical fighting (lifetime)	39.0	40.3	34.5	29.9	30.5	26.0
Physical fighting on school property (lifetime)	16.7	21.2	11.6	8.6	8.4	8.8
Carried a weapon (lifetime)	17.5	13.6	11.8	12.5	12.3	14.1
Carried weapon on school property (lifetime)	4.0	2.8	0.7	0.3	1.0	1.0
BULLYING VICTIMIZATION						
Bullying victim (past 12 months)	33.7	38.4	26.9	24.2	19.9	17.4
Bullying victim on school property (past 12 months)	29.4	37.2	23.6	18.9	17.9	15.2
Cyberbullying victim (past 12 months)	12.5	10.5	9.6	11.6	9.7	11.3
MENTAL HEALTH						
Life "very" stressful (past 30 days)	15.7	13.6	7.9	11.1	9.6	19.1
Depressive symptoms (past 12 months)	13.7	13.8	7.9	7.4	8.6	6.2
Self-injury (past 12 months)	11.0	7.6	4.5	3.0	6.9	5.4
Considered suicide (lifetime)	9.5	9.7	4.1	4.8	7.0	10.4
Attempted suicide (lifetime)	4.9	4.1	1.4	1.3	1.5	1.3
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND BODY WEIGHT						
Exercised for ≥20 minutes on 3 or more days/week	81.5	76.1	72.6	78.9	81.2	85.8
Overweight or obese [†]	14.1	16.2	16.0	10.5	13.6	12.9

* From 2006 to 2014, binge drinking was defined as 5 or more drinks in a row on one or more occasion for all students. In 2016, binge drinking was defined as 4 or more drinks in a row for females and 5 or more drinks in a row for males.

† Students who were ≥85th percentile for body mass index by age and gender, based on reference data

Wayland Middle School (Grades 6-8) 2016 Gender Patterns for Key Indicators

MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

	Gender (%)		Total (%)
	Female (308)	Male (286)	(595)
SUBSTANCE USE			
Lifetime cigarette smoking	1.0	2.5	1.7
Current cigarette smoking (past 30 days)	0.3	0.7	0.5
Lifetime alcohol use	2.6	8.8	5.6
Current alcohol use (past 30 days)	1.0	3.5	2.2
Binge drinking (past 30 days)*	0.3	1.1	0.7
Lifetime marijuana use	0.3	1.1	0.7
Current marijuana use (past 30 days)	0.7	0.7	0.7
Lifetime inhalant use	1.3	4.2	2.7
VIOLENCE			
Physical fighting (lifetime)	15.7	36.5	25.7
Physical fighting on school property (lifetime)	3.6	12.6	8.0
Carried a weapon (lifetime)	3.0	20.8	11.5
Carried weapon on school property (lifetime)	0.0	2.1	1.0
BULLYING VICTIMIZATION			
Bullying victim (past 12 months)	22.2	17.1	19.9
Bullying victim on school property (past 12 months)	18.6	14.7	16.9
Cyberbullying victim (past 12 months)	12.5	8.1	10.5
MENTAL HEALTH			
Life "very" stressful (past 30 days)	19.6	10.0	15.1
Depressive symptoms (past 12 months)	8.1	4.3	6.5
Self-injury (past 12 months)	6.2	3.6	4.9
Considered suicide (lifetime)	9.2	6.6	8.2
Attempted suicide (lifetime)	0.7	1.5	1.1
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND BODY WEIGHT			
Exercised for ≥20 minutes on 3 or more days/week	80.5	90.0	85.1
Overweight or obese [†]	8.7	16.7	12.5

* From 2006 to 2014, binge drinking was defined as 5 or more drinks in a row on one or more occasion for all students. In 2016, binge drinking was defined as 4 or more drinks in a row for females and 5 or more drinks in a row for males.

† Students who were ≥85th percentile for body mass index by age and gender, based on reference data

Wayland Middle School (Grades 6-8)
2016 Grade Patterns for Key Indicators
MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

	Grade (%)			Total (%) (595)
	6 th (186)	7 th (189)	8 th (220)	
SUBSTANCE USE				
Lifetime cigarette smoking	0.0	1.1	3.6	1.7
Current cigarette smoking (past 30 days)	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.5
Lifetime alcohol use	0.5	5.4	10.0	5.6
Current alcohol use (past 30 days)	0.0	3.2	3.2	2.2
Binge drinking (past 30 days)*	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.7
Lifetime marijuana use	0.0	0.5	1.4	0.7
Current marijuana use (past 30 days)	0.0	0.5	1.4	0.7
Lifetime inhalant use	0.0	3.7	4.1	2.7
VIOLENCE				
Physical fighting (lifetime)	25.1	22.8	28.8	25.7
Physical fighting on school property (lifetime)	6.0	9.0	8.7	8.0
Carried a weapon (lifetime)	5.9	11.2	16.5	11.5
Carried weapon on school property (lifetime)	1.1	1.1	0.9	1.0
BULLYING VICTIMIZATION				
Bullying victim (past 12 months)	25.5	16.4	18.2	19.9
Bullying victim on school property (past 12 months)	20.8	14.8	15.5	16.9
Cyberbullying victim (past 12 months)	8.6	10.7	11.9	10.5
MENTAL HEALTH				
Life "very" stressful (past 30 days)	6.5	9.7	27.2	15.1
Depressive symptoms (past 12 months)	7.1	3.2	8.7	6.5
Self-injury (past 12 months)	3.8	3.8	6.9	4.9
Considered suicide (lifetime)	3.3	6.9	13.3	8.2
Attempted suicide (lifetime)	0.6	1.1	1.4	1.1
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND BODY WEIGHT				
Exercised for ≥20 minutes on 3 or more days/week	83.6	87.4	84.4	85.1
Overweight or obese [†]	11.6	12.4	13.3	12.5

* From 2006 to 2014, binge drinking was defined as 5 or more drinks in a row on one or more occasion for all students. In 2016, binge drinking was defined as 4 or more drinks in a row for females and 5 or more drinks in a row for males.

† Students who were ≥85th percentile for body mass index by age and gender, based on reference data

This report was prepared by
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For information about EDC, visit our website at www.edc.org.