

Summary of Results from the 2004-2005 Cambridge Middle Grades Health Survey

Submitted to:

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The Cambridge Public Schools, and
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2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

➤ BACKGROUND	1
Report Format	1
Who Conducted the Survey?.....	1
How and When Was the Survey Conducted?	1
What Did the Survey Ask About?	2
Validity	2
Non-Respondents.....	2
Trends	2
Comparative Data.....	3
Who Has the Problem?	3
Who Is Responsible?	3
➤ SUBSTANCE USE	4
Current Substance Use for Cambridge Middle Grades Students (2005)	5
Current Substance Use for Cambridge Middle Grades Students, by Grade (2005)	6
Current Substance Use for Cambridge Middle Grades Students, by Gender (2005)	7
Trends in Current Substance Use for Cambridge Middle Grades Students ('97, '99, '01, '03, '05).....	8
Alcohol and Other Drug Related Issues Among Cambridge Middle Grades Students (2001, 2003, 2005).....	9
➤ VIOLENCE AND SAFETY	10
Percent of Cambridge Middle Grades Students Who Reported Violence-Related Experiences in the Past 12 Months (2001, 2003, 2005).....	11
Percent of Cambridge Middle Grades Students Who Reported Fighting, Being Threatened, or Bullied in the Past 12 Months (2001, 2003, 2005).....	12
Percent of Cambridge Middle Grades Students Who Reported Weapon Carrying in the Past 12 Months (2001, 2003, 2005)	13
➤ MENTAL HEALTH	14
Personal Experiences in the Past 12 Months Among Cambridge Middle Grades Students (2001, 2003, 2005).....	15
Percent of Cambridge Middle Grades Students Who Reported Worrying “Fairly Often” or “Most of the Time” in the Past 12 Months.....	16
Depression in the Past 30 Days Among Cambridge Middle Grades Students (2005).....	17
Self-Harm and Suicidal Ideation/Behavior in the Past 12 Months Among Cambridge Middle Grades Students (2001, 2003, 2005).....	18
➤ SEXUAL BEHAVIOR	19
Percent of Cambridge Middle Grades Students Who Have Ever Had Sexual Intercourse, Total and by Grade (2005)	20
Percent of Cambridge Middle Grades Students Who Talked with their Parents About Sex in the Past 12 Months, Total and by Grade (2005)	21
➤ WEIGHT PERCEPTION AND CONTROL	22
Perception of Body Weight by Cambridge Middle Grades Students, by Gender (2005)	23
Percent of Cambridge Middle Grades Students Reporting Attempts to Change Their Weight, by Gender (2005)	24
➤ PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	25
Percent of Cambridge Middle Grades Students Who Reported Engaging in Vigorous and Moderate Physical Activity in the Past 7 Days (2005).....	26
➤ RESILIENCY	27
Percent of Cambridge Middle Grades Students Reporting Potential Protective Factors (2003, 2005)	28
➤ APPENDIX A: Selected Data Tables	

BACKGROUND

REPORT FORMAT

In March of 2005, 1,180 Cambridge middle grades students (grades 6-8) took part in the 2004-2005 Cambridge Middle Grades Health Survey. Based on surveys such as the *Youth Risk Behavior Survey* (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), *Monitoring the Future* (NIDA, University of Michigan), *Profiles of Student Life – Attitudes and Behaviors*, and the *Survey of Student Resources and Assets* (America’s Promise and Search Institute), the questionnaire was designed to gather information on some of the important issues facing youth in Cambridge, such as substance use, violence and safety, and dietary behavior. This is the fifth administration of the Middle Grades Health Survey (the survey was also administered in 1997, 1999, 2001, and 2003). A similar survey of Cambridge high school students has also been conducted biennially since 1992.

This report summarizes results from the Cambridge Middle Grades Health Survey. It is designed to provide an overview of key survey data, focusing on three main themes: (1) What do the data from this survey tell us about the challenges facing youth in our community?; (2) Are there any important sub-population differences among respondents (such as by gender or grade)?; and (3) How have the data changed since the last several administrations of the survey? The summary presents an overview of findings grouped according to the following themes: Substance Use, Violence and Safety, Mental Health, Sexual Behavior, Weight Perception and Control, Physical Activity, and Resiliency. The main results in each section are illustrated using charts that are complemented by supplementary data or information. An appendix containing selected data follows the main results.

WHO CONDUCTED THE SURVEY?

The survey was conducted by the Cambridge Prevention Coalition, the Cambridge Public Schools, and the Cambridge Public Health Department in collaboration with Social Science Research and Evaluation, Inc., a non-profit social science research firm located in Burlington, Massachusetts.

HOW AND WHEN WAS THE SURVEY CONDUCTED?

The survey was administered as a questionnaire in March of 2005 to all Cambridge public school students in grades 6 through 8. The number of respondents in each grade is as follows:

6 th	7 th	8 th	Other/ Unknown	TOTAL
380	387	406	7	1180

School administrators set aside approximately 30-40 minutes for students to complete the survey. The attending classroom teacher was responsible for passing out the questionnaires and maintaining order in the classroom. In addition to English, the survey was translated into Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole.

WHAT DID THE SURVEY ASK ABOUT?

The survey focuses on issues ranging from demographic and background items (e.g., gender, age), to student substance use (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, other drugs), to other issues related to student health such as depression and suicide, violence and safety, sexual behavior, and dietary behavior.

VALIDITY

There is a good deal of research about the ways in which students respond to surveys and whether they tell the truth. This work indicates that student survey results are reasonably accurate provided that student participation is voluntary and that the respondents cannot be identified. The Cambridge Middle Grades Health Survey met these conditions. The voluntary nature of the survey was explained to both students and their parents. Prior to the survey, parents were given the opportunity to opt their child(ren) out of the survey. In addition, students could choose not to participate or to skip any items. The confidential nature of the survey was highlighted in the questionnaire instructions that asked students *not* to put their name on the questionnaire and explained that their answers would not be viewed by anyone who knows them.

Two other steps were taken to increase validity. First, each questionnaire was reviewed to identify any on which students obviously provided frivolous answers. Such questionnaires were omitted from all analyses. Second, analyses were conducted to test for the reasonableness of responses and for the consistency of responses across related items. When inconsistent responses were identified, the entire case or the suspect items for that case were treated as missing data in all subsequent analyses. These two procedures identified few problems.

The validity of the survey is also bolstered by using a questionnaire based largely upon existing instruments such as the *Youth Risk Behavior Survey* (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), *Monitoring the Future* (NIDA, University of Michigan), and *Profiles of Student Life – Attitudes and Behaviors* and *Survey of Student Resources and Assets* (America's Promise and Search Institute). These standardized instruments have been thoroughly tested and administered in large-scale research studies (e.g., Brener, N., Kann, L., McManus, T., Kinchen, S.A., Sundberg E.C., and Ross, J.G. [2002]. "Reliability of the 1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Questionnaire." *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 31, 336-342).

NON-RESPONDENTS

The survey results can be generalized only to students who were present when the survey was administered. The results may not reflect responses that might have been obtained from students who were absent or truant on the day(s) that the survey was administered.

TRENDS

Trend comparisons can provide extremely useful information on whether certain behaviors or conditions have improved, worsened, or stayed the same over time. In fact, it is best to repeat a survey such as this at regular intervals in order to track changes over time. Because this is the fifth administration of the Cambridge Middle Grades Health Survey, it is possible to look at certain trends among Cambridge youth.

COMPARATIVE DATA

A limitation of such data is that it is difficult to compare results from Cambridge to results from other communities. Making comparisons to other communities is quite complicated – surveys are not exactly alike, the populations used may differ in unknown ways, the timing of the surveys may vary, and so on. Although it is natural to want to compare to other communities, a great deal can be learned simply by looking at Cambridge data. The most useful comparisons are made by looking at Cambridge over time.

WHO HAS THE PROBLEM?

Although this survey was administered to middle grades students, this does not mean that the problems addressed are confined solely to youth. In fact, national studies of substance use show that rates of use are higher among young adults than adolescents. It is also important to keep in mind that this survey is designed primarily to assess risky behaviors and does not address all of the positive aspects of adolescent life.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Data on health behavior among youth is typically collected in public schools because it is comparatively simple to collect data from what is essentially a "captive" audience. The fact that data on youth are collected in schools, however, does not mean that the schools bear the sole or even the largest responsibility for the risky behaviors revealed in these surveys. Issues such as those addressed in the survey are not school problems; they are community problems that require the attention of all community members and organizations.

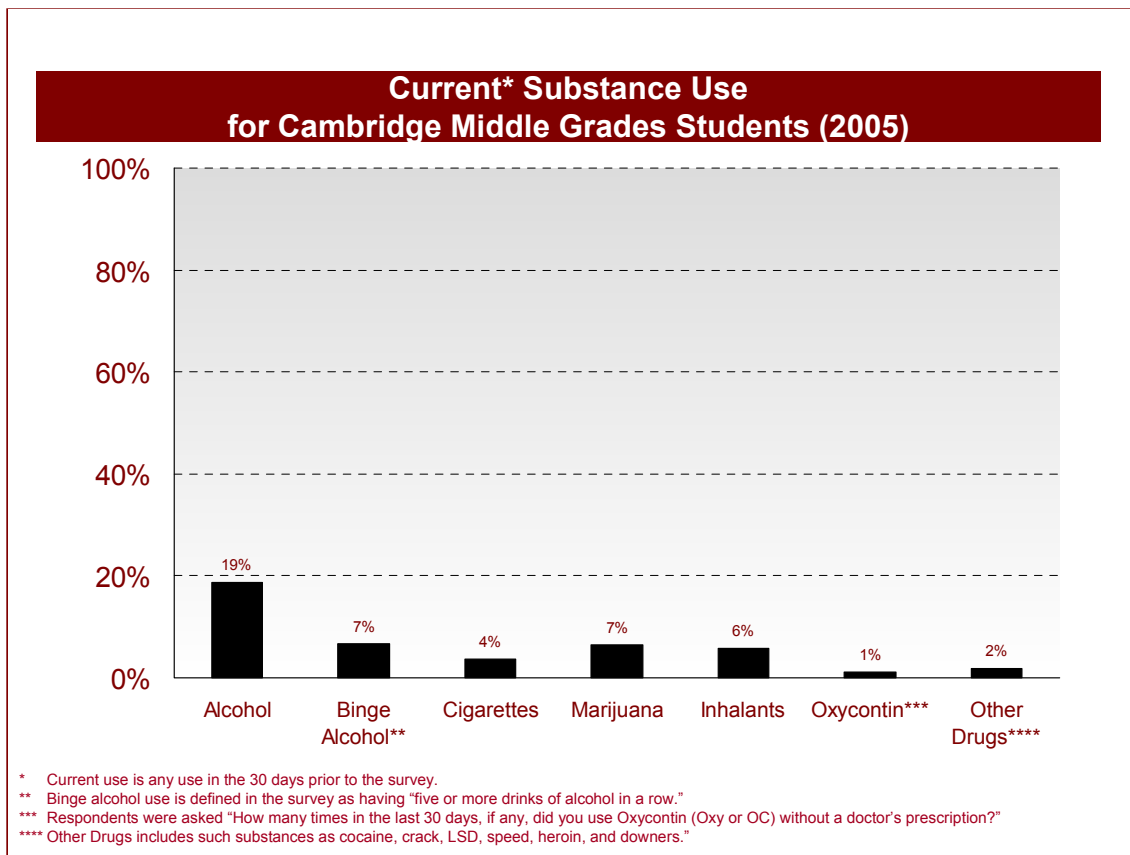
Substance Use

What substances are used most often by Cambridge youth?

How does use change as youth age?

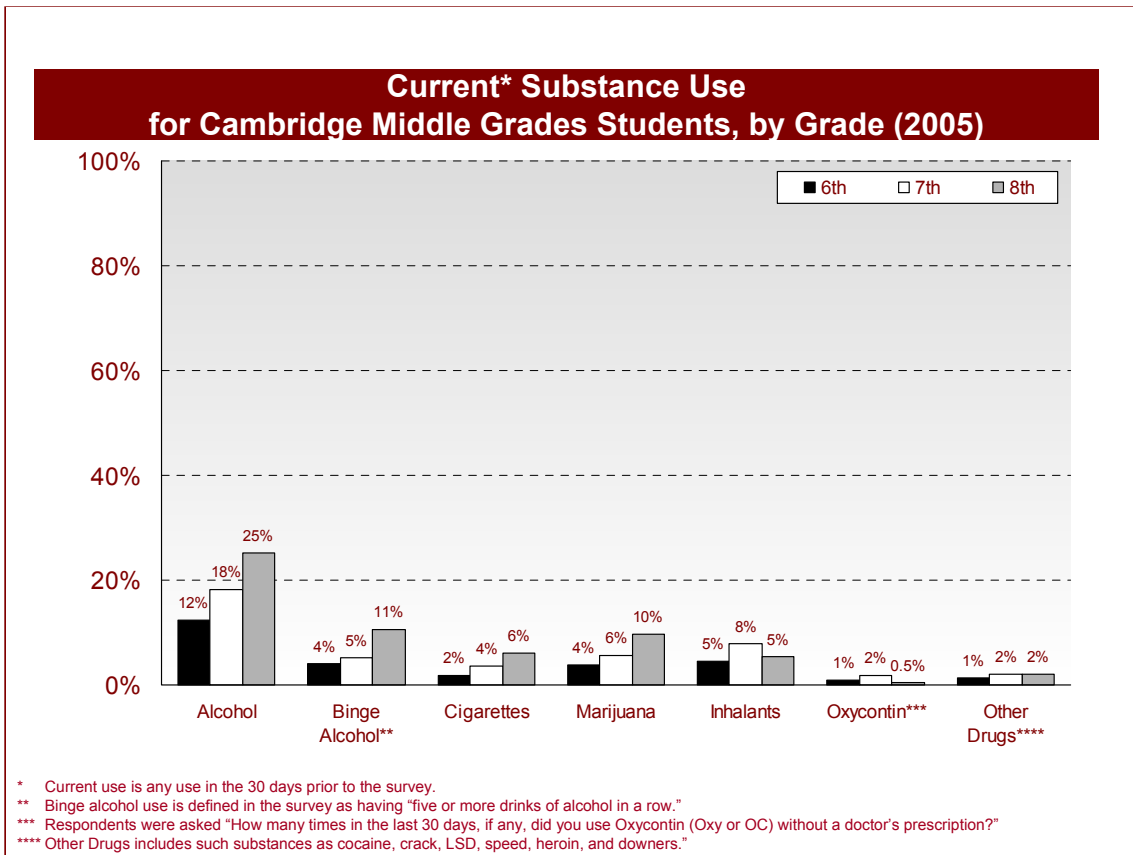
Are boys or girls more likely to use substances?

How has use changed in Cambridge over time?



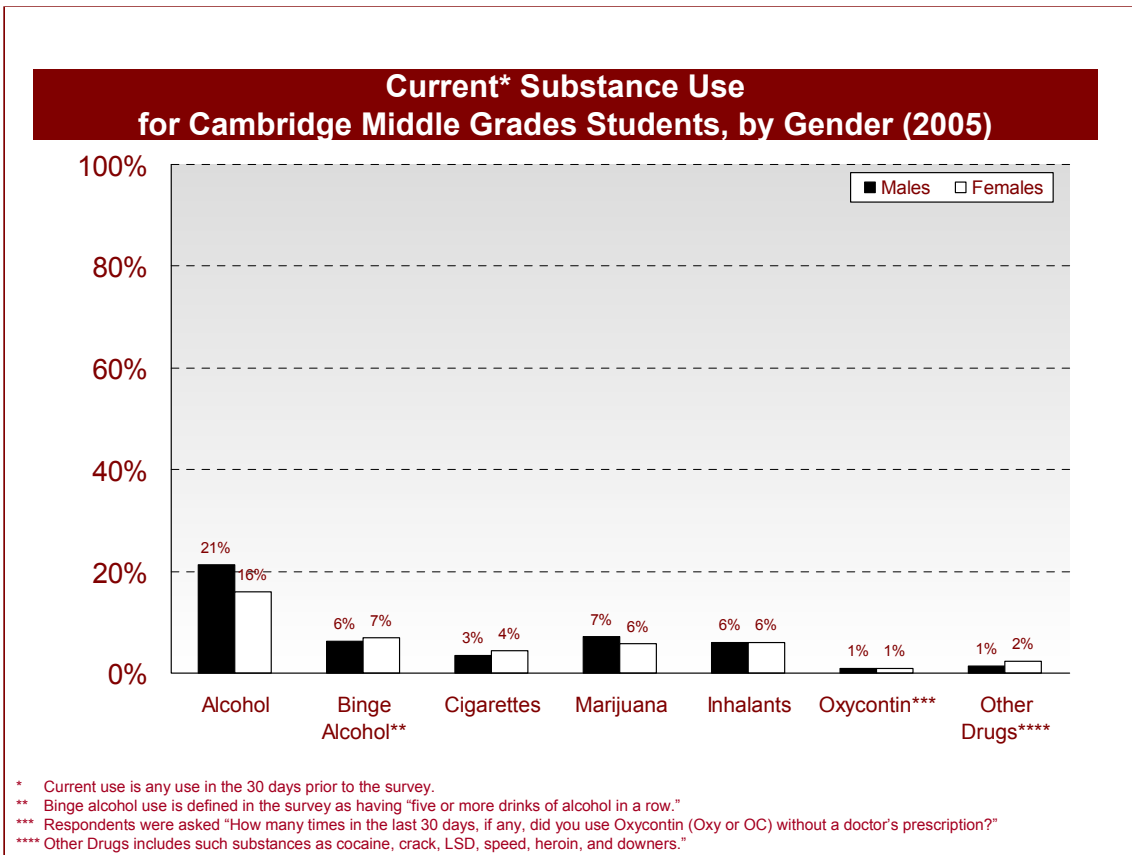
SELECTED POINTS

- Current use is any use in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Alcohol is the substance of choice, with roughly one in five Cambridge middle grades students (19%) reporting that they consumed alcohol in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- Seven percent (7%) of all respondents reporting binge drinking (consuming five or more drinks in a row) during the same time period. This means that of those who reported that they consumed alcohol in the 30 days prior to the survey, one-third (35%) reported binge drinking at least one time in that time period.
- Following alcohol, respondents were most likely to report current use of marijuana (7%), inhalants (6%), cigarettes (4%), and other drugs (2%).
- Note that current use of marijuana (7%) is more common than use of cigarettes (4%).
- A new item added in 2005 asked respondents about current use of Oxycontin without a doctor's prescription. Overall, 1% of respondents (12 students) reported that they used Oxycontin without a doctor's prescription in the 30 days prior to the survey.



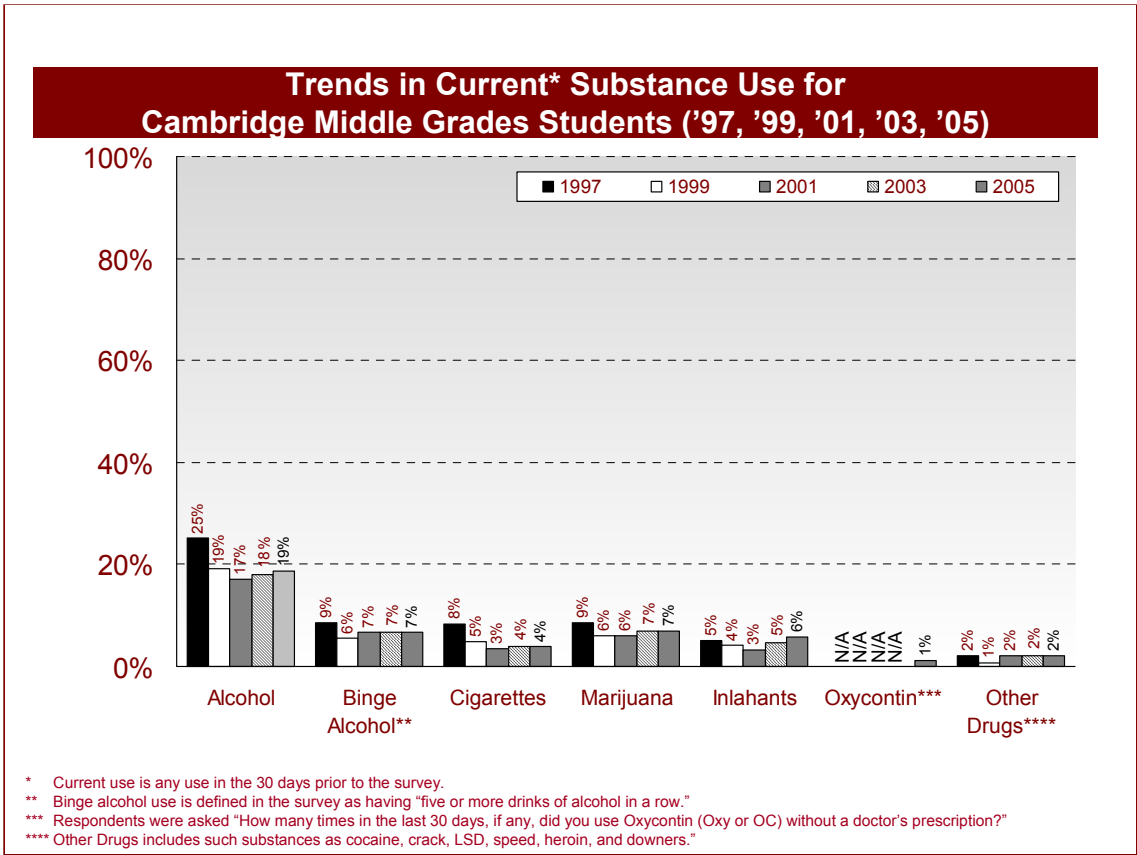
SELECTED POINTS

- Current use of alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana increased with age/grade. For example, the percentage of students who reported current alcohol use increased from 12% in 6th grade to 25% in 8th grade.
- Current use of inhalants was highest among 7th graders (8%), while use of Oxycontin and Other Drugs was fairly stable across the three grade levels.



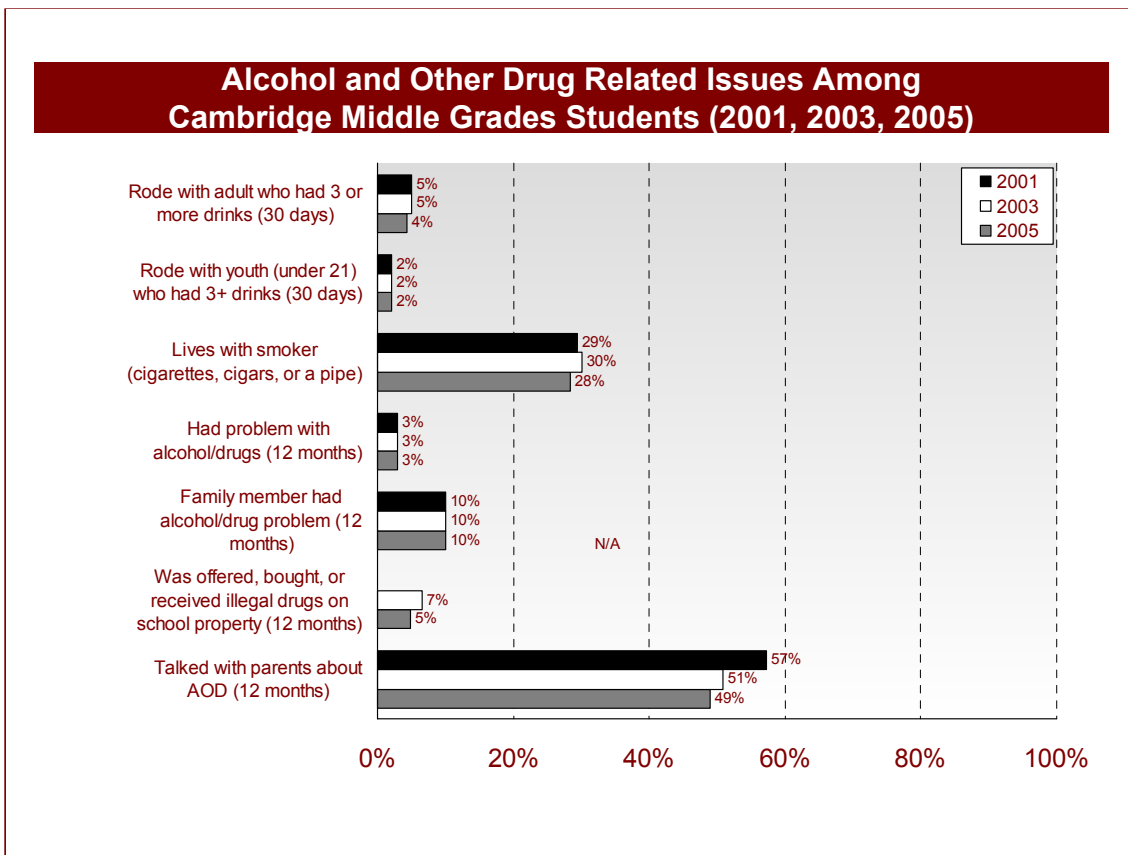
SELECTED POINTS

- Cambridge middle grades male students were more likely than females to report current use of alcohol (21% males vs. 16% females).
- Reported use of all of other substances was nearly identical for both male and female respondents.



SELECTED POINTS

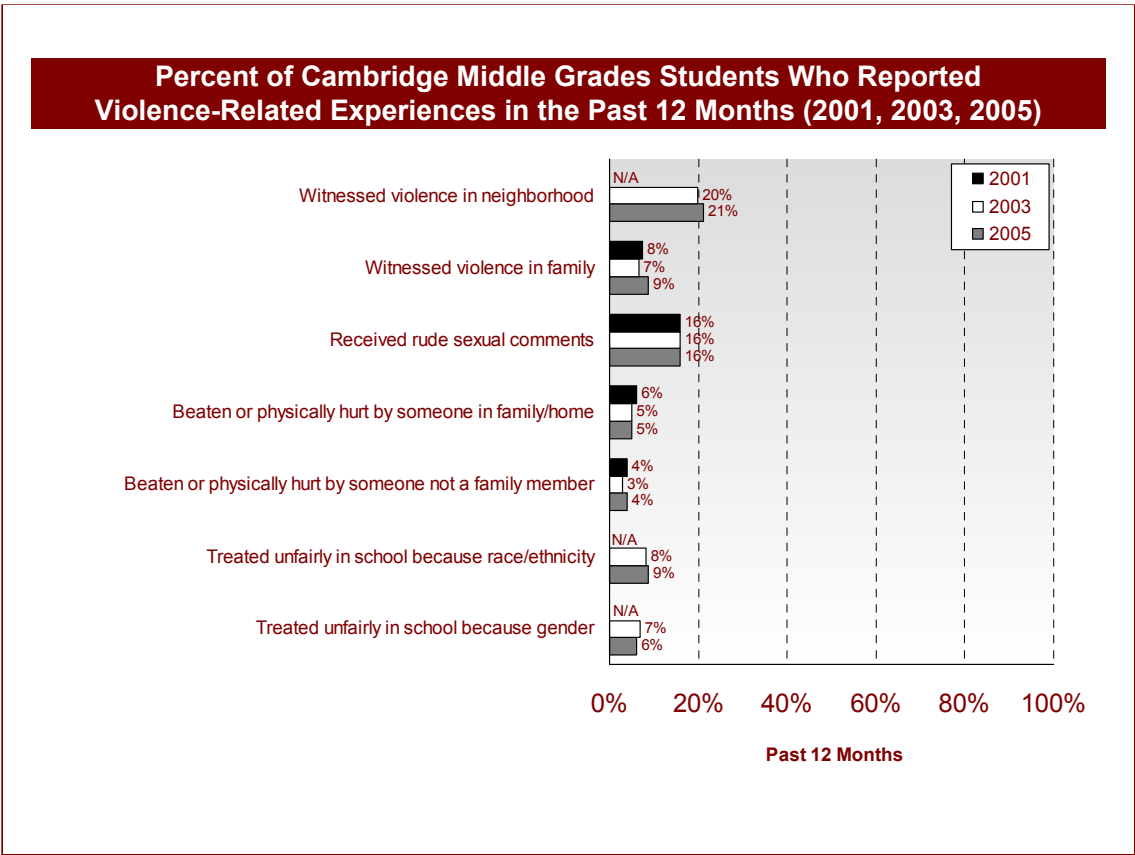
- Current use of all substances by Cambridge middle grades students remained virtually unchanged between 2003 and 2005.
- Across almost every substance, the highest level of reported use occurred in 1997, followed by declines to a low point in 2001 and then a leveling off in 2003 and 2005.



SELECTED POINTS

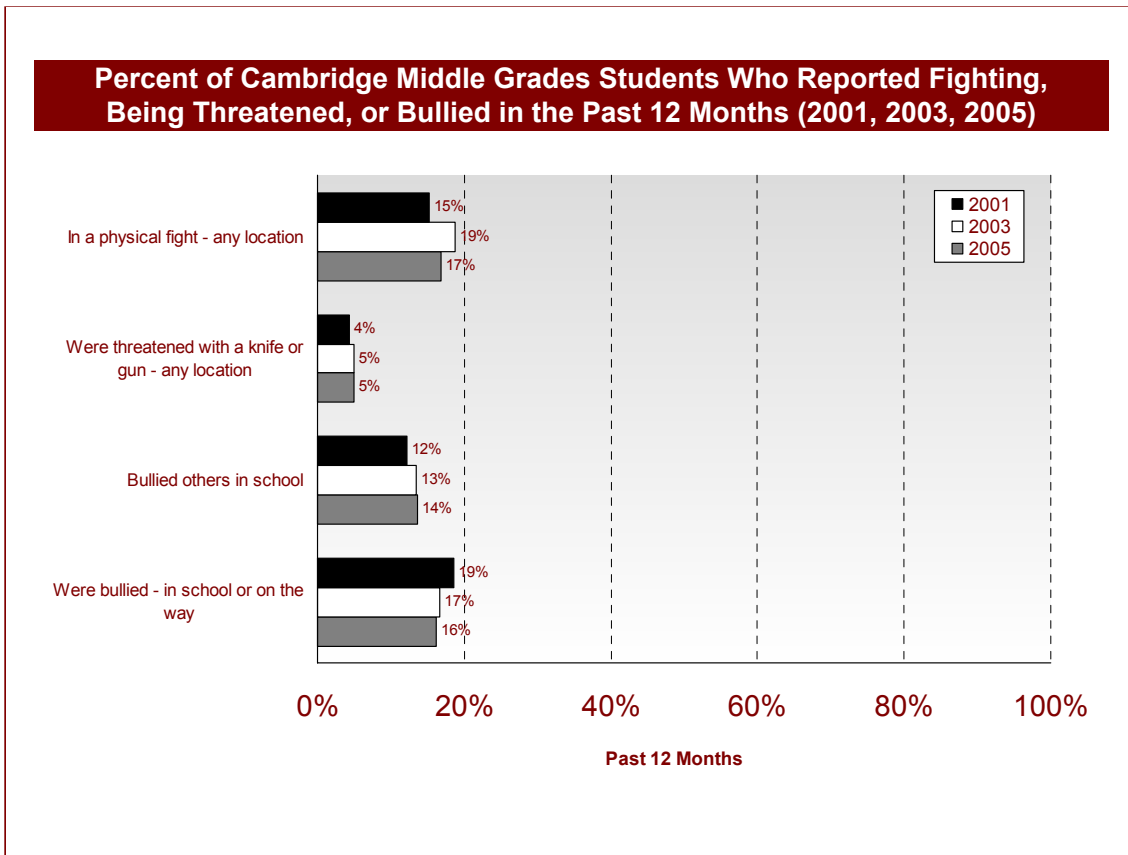
- These data illustrate alcohol and other drug related issues among Cambridge middle grades students.
- **Trends:** Trend data reveal similar reports between 2001 and 2005 in alcohol and other drug related issues among Cambridge youth. There was a decrease in the percent of students who reported that they talked with their parents about about alcohol or other drug use during the past 12 months in 2005 (49%) from 2001 (57%).
- **Gender:** In 2005, Cambridge females (52%) were more likely than males (46%) to report that they talked with their parents about alcohol or other drug use during the past 12 months. Males and females were similar on each of the other alcohol and drug-related issues.
- **Grade:** In 2005, reports of riding with an adult driver who had 3 or more drinks in the past 30 days, riding with a youth (under 21) who had 3 or more drinks in the past 30 days, having had a problem with alcohol or drugs in the past 12 months, and being offered, buying, or receiving an illegal drug on school property in the past 12 months all increased with age/grade. This was particularly true for those who reported being offered, buying, or receiving illegal drugs on school property in the past 12 months (6th grade: 1%; 7th grade: 3%; 8th grade: 10%). The other items were consistent across age/grade.

Violence and Safety



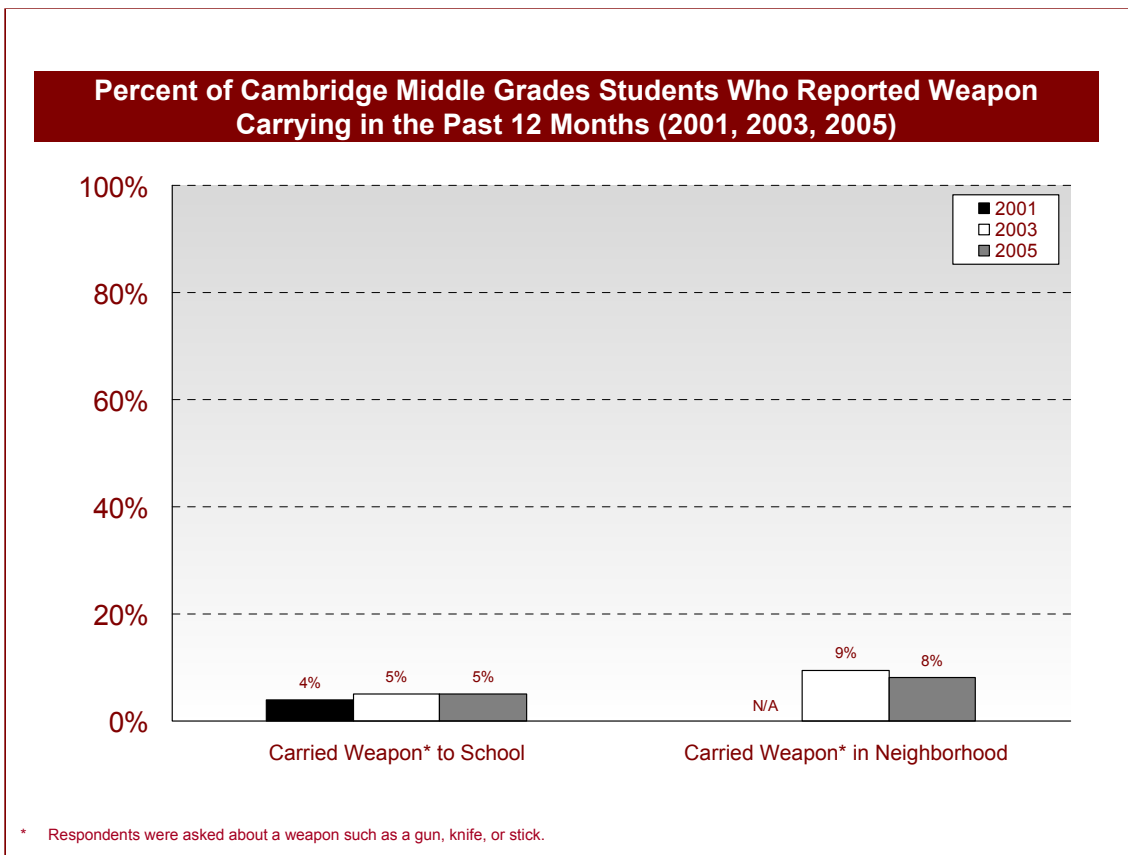
SELECTED POINTS

- These data illustrate violence-related experiences that respondents reported happened to them at least once in the past 12 months.
- **Trends:** Trend data reveal similar reports between 2001 and 2005 in violence-related experiences among Cambridge youth.
- **Gender:** In 2005, Cambridge females were more likely than males report receiving rude sexual comments (22% females vs. 9% males), witnessing violence in their family (11% vs. 7%), and being treated unfairly in school because of their gender (8% vs. 4%). Males and females were similar on the other items.
- **Grade:** In 2005, reports of receiving rude sexual comments increased by age/grade: (6th grade: 10%; 7th grade: 16%; 8th grade: 20%). The other items were consistent across age/grade.



SELECTED POINTS

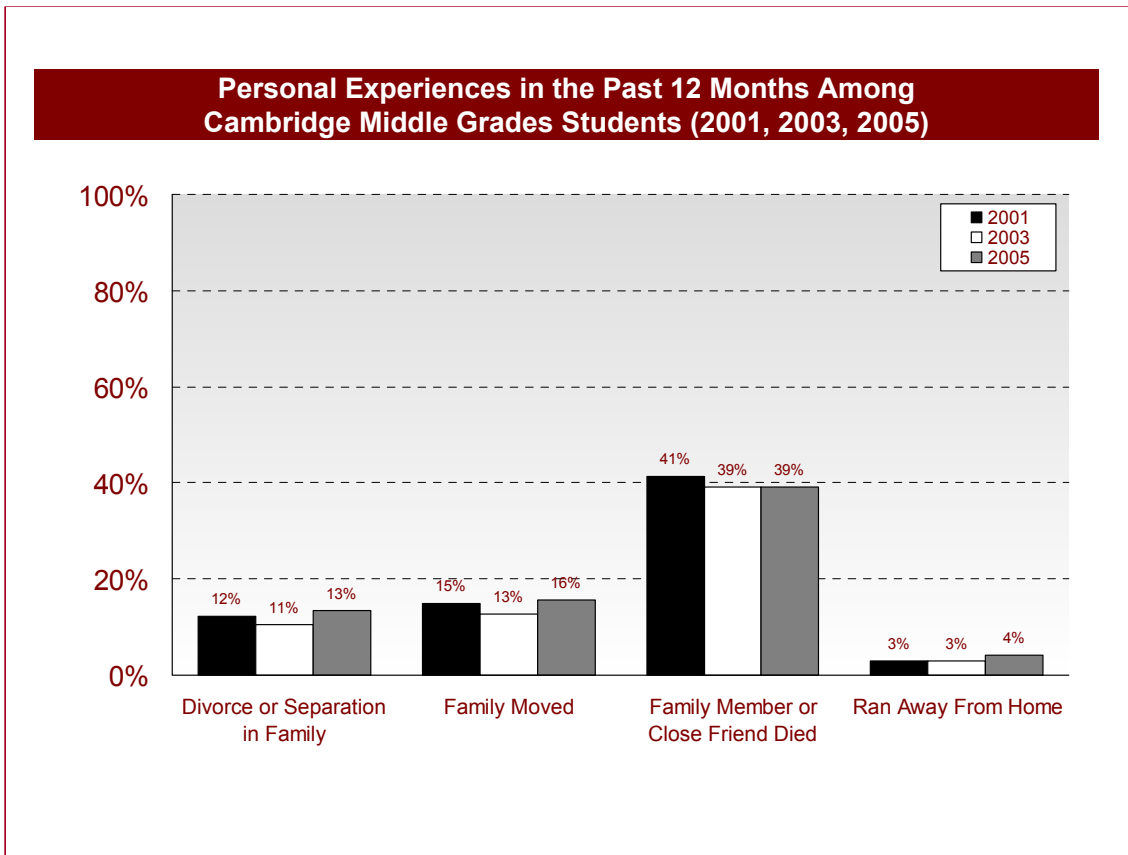
- In 2005, 17% of Cambridge middle grades students reported being in a physical fight, 5% were threatened with a knife or gun, 14% bullied other students in school, and 16% were bullied in school or on the way to school during the past 12 months.
- **Trends:** Trend data reveal similar reports between 2001 and 2005 among Cambridge youth.
- **Gender:** In 2005, Cambridge males were more likely than females to report being in a physical fight (22% males vs. 12% females), being threatened with a knife or gun (6% vs. 3%), and bullying others in school (15% vs. 12%). Reports of being bullied were similar for both males and females.
- **Grade:** In 2005, reports of being threatened with a knife or gun increased from 3% in 6th grade to 6% in 8th grade. Reports of being bullied in school or on the way to school decreased from 20% in 6th grade to 13% in 8th grade. Reports of bullying others were nearly identical across age/grade.



SELECTED POINTS

- In 2005, 5% of Cambridge middle grades students reported carrying a weapon to school, and 8% reported carrying a weapon in their neighborhood during the 12 months prior to the survey.
- In both 2003 and 2005, students were almost twice as likely to report carrying a weapon in the past 12 months in their neighborhood compared to in school.
- **Trends:** Trend data reveal little change in reports between 2001 and 2005 among Cambridge youth. The item asking about weapon carrying in their neighborhood was not asked in 2001.
- **Gender:** In 2005, Cambridge males were more likely than females to report carrying weapons both in school (6% males vs. 3% females), and in their neighborhood (12% vs. 4%).
- **Grade:** In 2005, reports of weapon carrying a weapon in school (2%, 4%, 8%), and carrying a weapon in their neighborhood (3%, 7%, 14%) all increased with age/grade from 6th to 8th grade.

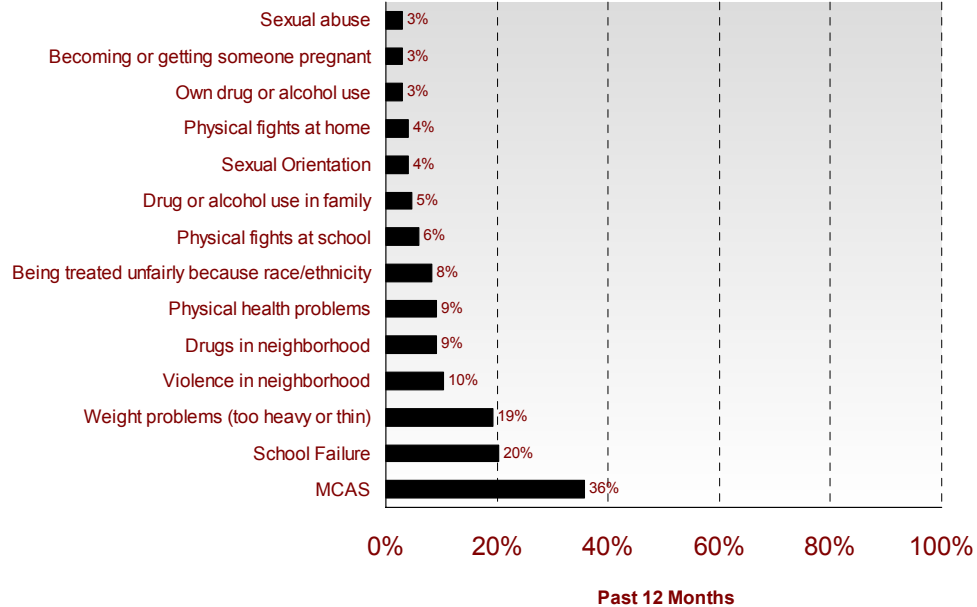
Mental Health



SELECTED POINTS

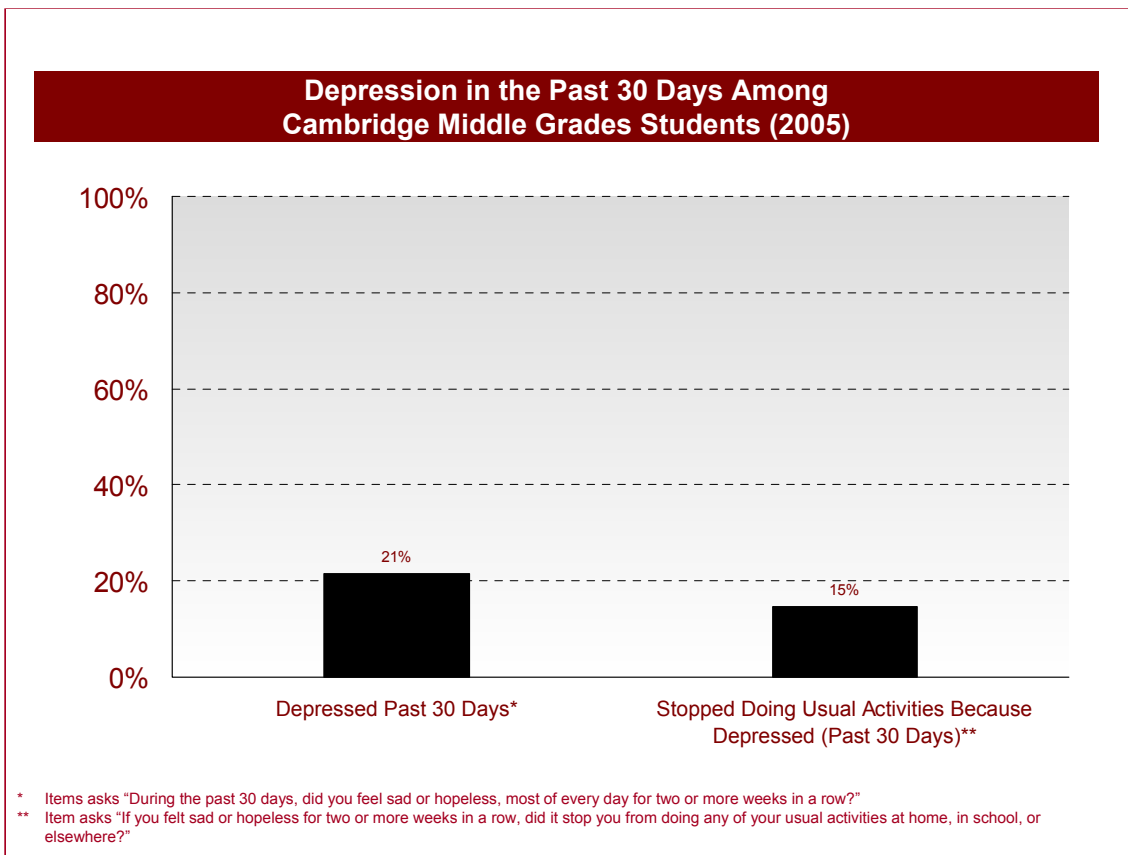
- These data illustrate personal experiences that Cambridge middle grades reported happened to them in the past 12 months.
- **Trends:** Trend data reveal similar reports between 2001 and 2005 in personal experiences among Cambridge youth.
- **Gender:** There was little variation by gender in the percentage of 2005 Cambridge middle grades students who reported these experiences in the past 12 months.
- **Grade:** There was a very slight increase in the percentage of students who reported that they ran away from home in the past 12 months from 6th grade (2%) to 8th grade (5%). There were no substantive differences by age/grade for any of the other items.

Percent of Cambridge Middle Grades Students Who Reported Worrying “Fairly Often” or “Most of the Time” About Various Issues in the Past 12 Months (2005)



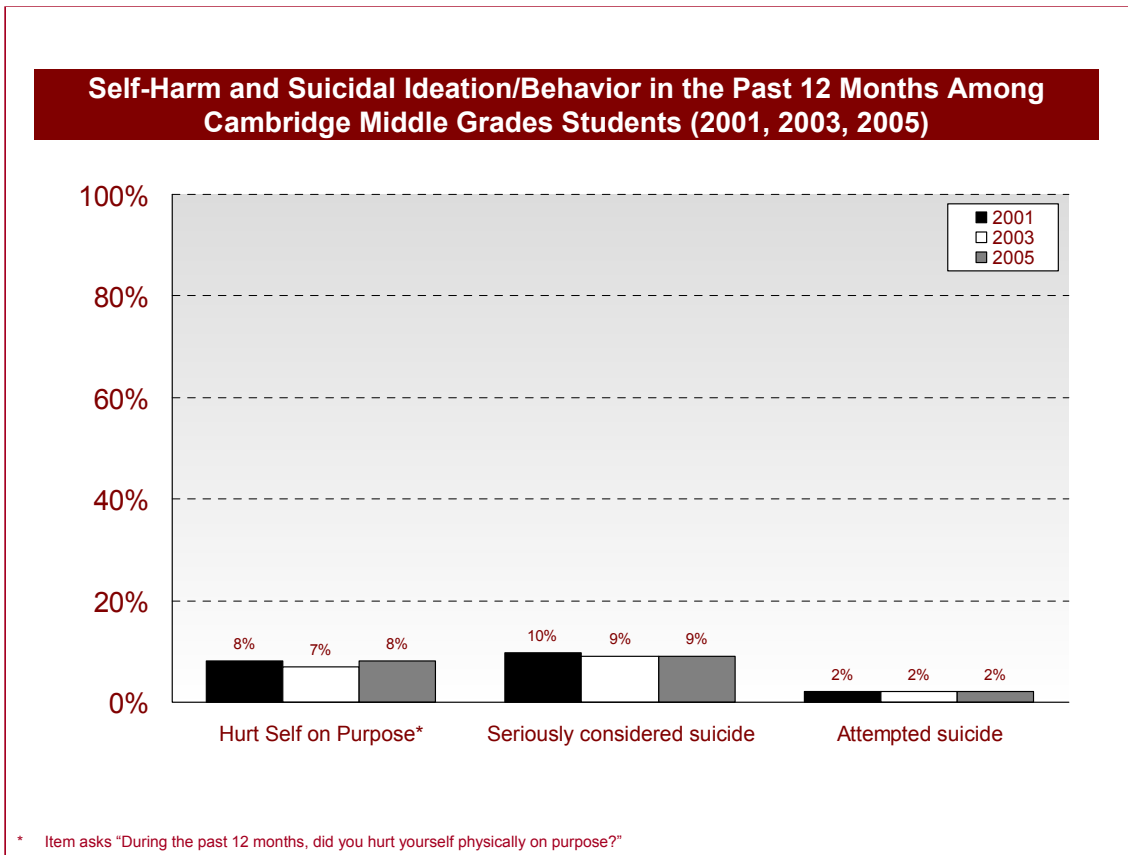
SELECTED POINTS

- These data illustrate the percentage of students who reported worrying about various issues “fairly often” or “most of the time” in the past 12 months.
- Cambridge middle grades students reported worrying the most about MCAS (36%), school failure (20%), and weight problems (19%).
- **Trends:** The scale used in the 2005 survey for the worrying items was modified from that used from 1997 to 2003. This modification prohibits trend comparisons between the 2005 survey and the earlier data.
- **Gender:** Female respondents were much more likely than males to report worrying about physical health problems (12% females vs. 6% males), weight problems (28% vs. 11%), and MCAS (41% vs. 31%). The other items were similar across both males and females.
- **Grade:** Reports of worrying about physical health problems (6%, 9%, 12%), and school failure or poor grades (15%, 20%, 25%) both increased with age/grade from the 6th to 8th grades. The other items were consistent across age/grade.



SELECTED POINTS

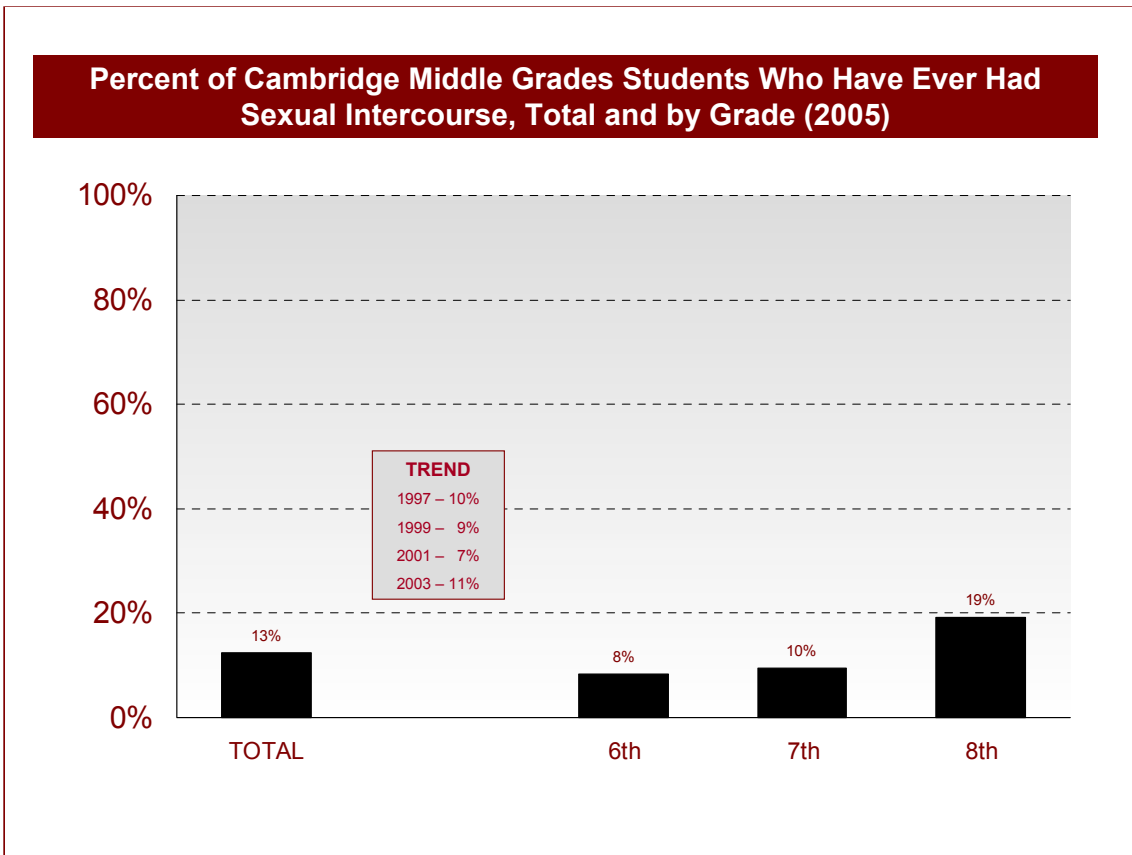
- Roughly one in five Cambridge middle grades students (21%) reported that they felt sad or hopeless most every day for two or more weeks in a row during the 30 days prior to the survey. Slightly fewer (15%) reported that they stopped doing at least some of their usual activities at home, in school, or elsewhere because they felt sad or hopeless for two or more weeks in a row.
- **Trends:** The two depression items were not asked in the 2003 survey.
- **Gender:** Cambridge middle grades female students were more likely than their male counterparts to report feeling sad or hopeless most of every day for two or more weeks in a row (27% females vs. 16% males), and to report that they stopped doing some of their usual activities (18% vs. 11%).
- **Grade:** There were very slight increases in the percentage of students who reported feeling sad or hopeless most of every day for two or more weeks in a row (20%, 21%, 24%) by age/grade from 6th grade to 8th grade. The percentage who reported that they stopped doing some of their usual activities (14%, 14%, 15%) was consistent across age/grade.



SELECTED POINTS

- Eight percent (8%) of 2005 Cambridge middle grades students reporting *hurting themselves on purpose* in the past 12 months, 9% reported *seriously considering suicide*, and 2% *attempted suicide*.
- **Trends:** The self-harm and suicidality items were consistent from 2001 to 2005.
- **Gender:** Cambridge middle grades female students were more likely than their male counterparts to have reported each of these issues in 2005: *hurting themselves on purpose* (10% females, 6% males), *seriously considered suicide* (12%, 7%), *attempted suicide* (3%, 2%).
- **Grade:** In 2005, the percentage of students reporting each of these behaviors increased from 6th grade to 7th grade and then decreased in 8th grade: *hurt self on purpose* (6%, 10%, 8%); *seriously considered suicide* (7%, 12%, 9%); *attempted suicide* (1%, 4%, 3%).

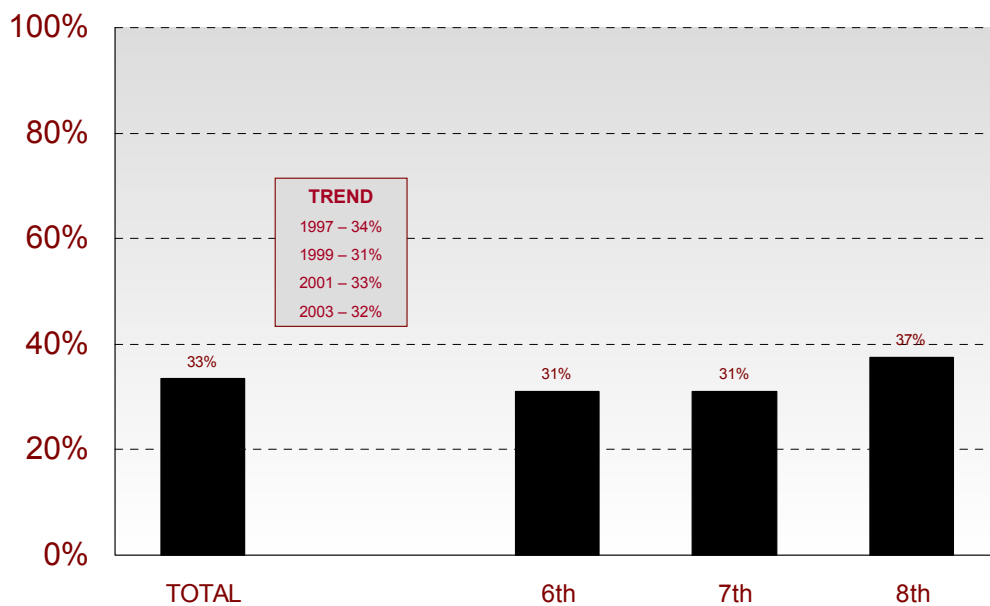
Sexual Behavior



SELECTED POINTS

- Thirteen percent (13%) of all Cambridge middle grades students reported ever having sexual intercourse in 2005: 8% of 6th graders, 10% of 7th graders, and 19% of 8th graders.
- **Trends:** The percentage of Cambridge middle grades students who reported ever having sexual intercourse decreased from 1997 to 2001 and then increased from 7% in 2001 to 13% in 2005.
- **Gender:** In 2005, a larger percentage of Cambridge middle grades males (18%) than females (7%) reported ever having sexual intercourse.
- **Grade:** The percentage of 2005 Cambridge students who reported ever having sexual intercourse increased with age/grade (8% in 6th grade to 19% in 8th grade).

Percent of Cambridge Middle Grades Students Who Talked with their Parents About Sex In the Past 12 Months, Total and by Grade (2005)

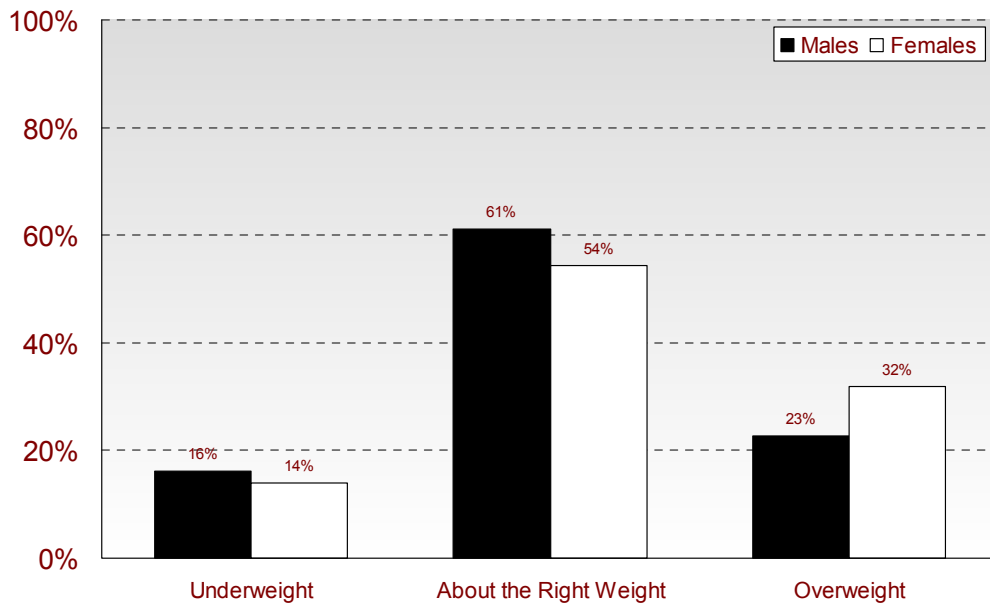


SELECTED POINTS

- Thirty-three percent (33%) of all Cambridge middle grades students reported that they talked with their parents about sex during the 12 months prior to the survey.
- **Trends:** The percentage of Cambridge middle grades students who reported that they talked with their parents about sex during the past 12 months was fairly consistent from 1997 to 2005 (34%, 31%, 33%, 32%, 33%).
- **Gender:** In 2005, female middle grades students were slightly more likely than males to report having talked with their parents about sex (35% females vs. 32% males).
- **Grade:** The percentage of Cambridge middle grades students who reported that they talked with their parents about sex during the 12 months prior to the survey was identical for 6th and 7th graders (31%) and then increased to 37% among 8th graders.

Weight Perception and Control

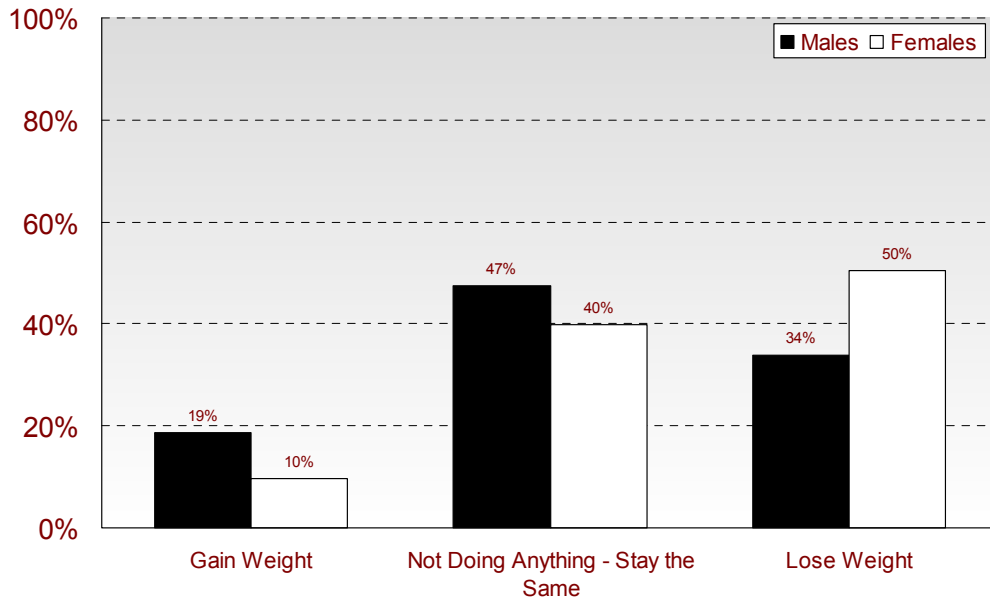
Perception of Body Weight by Cambridge Middle Grades Students, by Gender (2005)



SELECTED POINTS

- Fourteen percent (14%) of Cambridge middle grades females described themselves as *underweight* compared to 16% of males, 54% as *about the right weight* compared to 61% of males, and 32% as *overweight* compared to 23% of males.
- **Trends:** The percentage of males and females who reported that they were *underweight*, *about the right weight*, and *overweight* was identical from 2003 to 2005. This item was not asked prior to 2003.
- **Grade:** There were no substantive differences on the perception of body weight item by age/grade.

Percent of Cambridge Middle Grades Students Reporting Attempts to Change Their Weight, by Gender (2005)

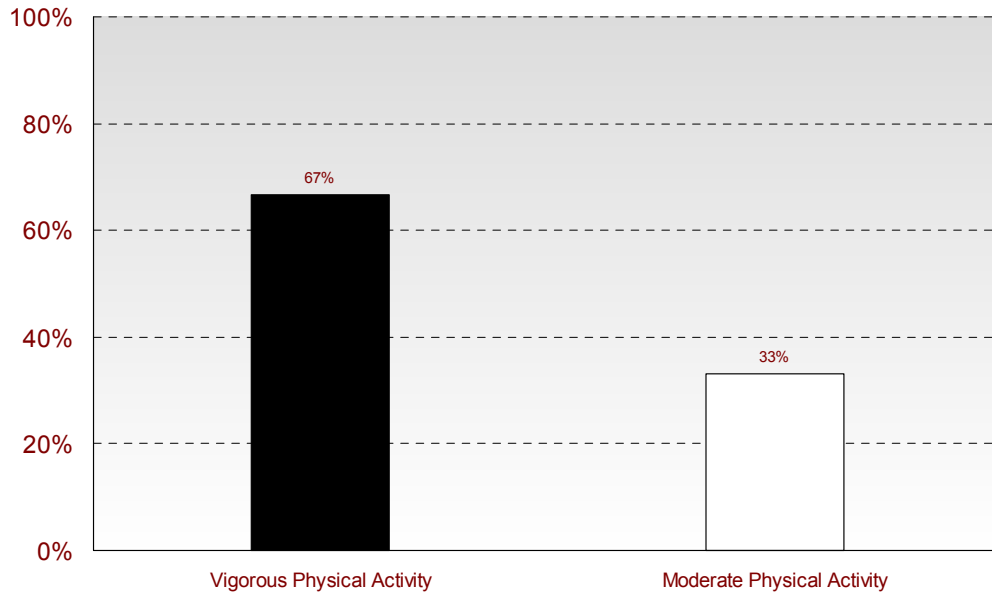


SELECTED POINTS

- In 2005, Cambridge middle grades males were much more likely than females to report that they were trying to *gain* weight (19% males, 10% females) and females were far more likely to report trying to *lose* weight (50% females, 34% males).
- **Trends:** This item was not asked prior to the 2005 survey.
- **Grade:** The percentage of students who report that they are trying to lose weight decreased slightly from 6th grade to 8th grade (47%, 41%, 39%).

Physical Activity

Percent of Cambridge Middle Grades Students Who Reported Engaging in Vigorous* and Moderate Physical Activity in the Past 7 Days (2005)**



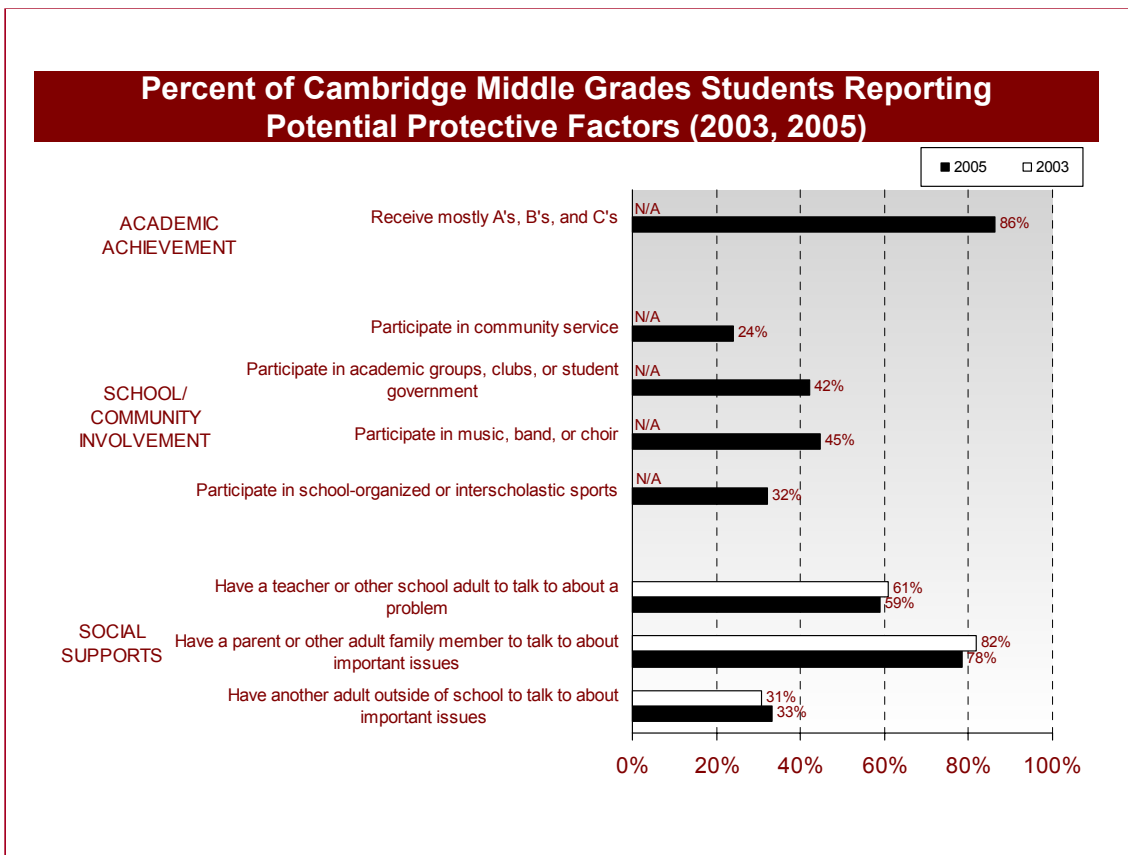
* Vigorous physical activity was defined as participating in physical activities that make you sweat or breathe hard for at least 20 minutes on at least 3 of the past 7 days.

** Moderate physical activity was defined as participating in physical activities that did not make you sweat or breathe hard for at least 30 minutes on at least 5 of the past 7 days.

SELECTED POINTS

- Sixty-seven percent (67%) of Cambridge middle grades students reported participating in *vigorous* physical activity at least 3 times in the past 7 days, and 33% reported participating in *moderate* physical activity at least 5 times in the past 7 days.
- *Vigorous* physical activity is defined as participating in physical activities that make you sweat or breathe hard for at least 20 minutes. *Moderate* physical activity is defined as participating in physical activities that did not make you sweat or breathe hard for at least 30 minutes.
- **Trends:** These items were not asked prior to the 2005 survey.
- **Gender:** In 2005, Cambridge males were more likely than females to report engaging in both *vigorous* activity (73% males, 60% females), and *moderate* activity (38% males, 28% females).
- **Grade:** There were slight increases from 6th grade to 7th and 8th grade in the percentage of 2005 Cambridge middle grades students who reported engaging in *vigorous* or *moderate* physical activity: *vigorous* (62%, 69%, 69%); *moderate* (29%, 36%, 35%).

Resiliency



SELECTED POINTS

- While the Cambridge survey focused on many risk behaviors, it also contained items designed to measure the strength of certain protective factors such as social supports and school/community involvement.
- **Trends:** The social supports items were all similar from 2003 to 2005. The items on academic achievement and school/community involvement were not prior to the 2005 survey.
- **Gender:** In 2005, female students were more likely than males to report participating in community service (28% females vs. 20% males); participating in academic groups, clubs, or student government (49% vs. 35%); participating in music, band, or choir (51% vs. 38%), and having an adult non-family member outside of school to talk to about important issues (39% vs. 28%). The other resiliency items did not differ substantively based on gender.
- **Grade:** The percentage of 2005 Cambridge youth who reported participating in community service; participating in academic groups, clubs, or student government; participating in school-organized or interscholastic sports; and having an adult non-family member outside of school to talk to about important issues increased with age/grade.

The percentage of 2005 middle grades students who reported participating in music, band, or choir decreased with age/grade from 53% in 6th grade to 33% in 8th grade. There were also decreases from 6th grade to 7th grade in the percentage of students who reported that they have a teacher or other school adult to talk to about a problem (67% to 55%).

Appendix A:

Selected Data Tables

2005 CAMBRIDGE MIDDLE GRADES HEALTH SURVEY

Alcohol and Other Drug Use and Related Issues – Middle School (N≈1,180)

	TOTAL Cambridge					GENDER		GRADE		
	1997 (1420)	1999 (1550)	2001 (1435)	2003 (1395)	2005 (1180)	Females (569)	Males (607)	6 th (380)	7 th (387)	8 th (406)
CURRENT USE (any use in past 30 days)										
Alcohol	25.2%	19.2%	17.0%	17.9%	18.6%	15.9%	21.3%	12.3%	18.1%	25.1%
Binge alcohol use ¹	8.6%	5.6%	6.7%	6.6%	6.6%	7.0%	6.3%	4.1%	5.1%	10.5%
Cigarettes	8.3%	4.9%	3.4%	3.9%	3.8%	4.3%	3.4%	1.8%	3.5%	6.1%
Marijuana	8.5%	5.6%	5.9%	6.7%	6.5%	5.8%	7.2%	3.9%	5.7%	9.7%
Inhalants	5.0%	4.1%	3.3%	4.7%	5.8%	6.2%	5.5%	4.5%	7.9%	5.3%
Oxycontin ²	NA	NA	NA	NA	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%	0.8%	1.9%	0.5%
Other Illegal Drugs ³	2.1%	0.6%	1.6%	2.3%	1.9%	2.4%	1.4%	1.4%	2.2%	2.0%
ALCOHOL-RELATED RIDING (past 30 days)										
Rode with drinking adult driver	5.6%	5.2%	5.0%	4.9%	4.3%	5.3%	3.3%	3.5%	4.2%	5.0%
Rode with drinking driver under 21 yrs of age	3.4%	2.3%	2.0%	1.9%	2.4%	1.4%	3.3%	1.6%	1.8%	3.7%
FAMILY TOBACCO USE										
Live with someone who smokes cigarettes, cigars, or a pipe	34.9%	31.0%	29.4%	30.1%	28.4%	26.7%	30.0%	26.9%	29.1%	28.6%
TALKED WITH PARENTS ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE (past 12 months)										
Talked with parents about alcohol or other drug use in the past 12 months	52.8%	57.5%	57.2%	50.8%	49.0%	52.0%	46.3%	49.6%	46.4%	50.9%
ILLEGAL DRUG AVAILABILITY										
Was offered, bought, or received an illegal drug on school property in past 12 months	NA	NA	NA	6.6%	4.9%	3.6%	6.3%	1.3%	2.9%	10.2%
ALCOHOL OR DRUG USE PROBLEMS (past 12 months)										
Had a problem with alcohol or drugs in the past 12 months	4.4%	3.2%	2.7%	3.4%	2.8%	3.2%	2.5%	0.5%	2.6%	5.3%
A family member had a problem with alcohol or drugs in the past 12 months	11.6%	9.9%	9.5%	9.8%	10.4%	11.3%	9.5%	8.7%	11.4%	10.8%

¹ Respondents were asked if they had "5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row."

² Respondents were asked about use of Oxycontin without a doctor's prescription.

³ Respondents were asked about other drugs such as "cocaine, crack, LSD, speed, heroin, or downers."

2005 CAMBRIDGE MIDDLE GRADES HEALTH SURVEY

Violence and Safety – Middle School (N≈1,180)

	TOTAL Cambridge					GENDER		GRADE		
	1997 (1420)	1999 (1550)	2001 (1435)	2003 (1395)	2005 (1180)	Females (569)	Males (607)	6 th (380)	7 th (387)	8 th (406)
VIOLENCE-RELATED EXPERIENCES IN PAST 12 MONTHS										
Witnessed violence in family	10.1%	6.3%	7.5%	6.5%	8.6%	10.6%	6.6%	7.6%	9.8%	8.3%
Witnessed violence in neighborhood	NA	NA	NA	19.9%	21.1%	19.9%	22.4%	19.6%	20.7%	23.1%
Received rude sexual comments	17.5%	16.6%	16.0%	16.1%	15.5%	22.0%	9.1%	9.9%	15.8%	20.0%
Treated unfairly in school because of race or ethnicity	NA	NA	NA	8.2%	8.8%	8.7%	9.0%	7.8%	8.2%	10.2%
Treated unfairly in school because of gender	NA	NA	NA	7.0%	6.1%	7.8%	4.4%	5.9%	4.8%	7.5%
Beaten or physically hurt by someone in your family or home	6.4%	4.5%	6.2%	5.3%	4.9%	5.2%	4.6%	5.4%	4.3%	5.0%
Beaten or physically hurt by someone not a family member	4.8%	3.1%	4.1%	2.8%	4.0%	3.0%	5.0%	4.1%	4.8%	3.3%
BULLYING, FIGHTING, & THREATENING IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS										
Were bullied, threatened, or pushed around in school or on the way	19.7%	18.4%	18.6%	16.6%	16.2%	16.5%	15.8%	19.8%	16.3%	12.7%
Bullied, threatened, or pushed other kids around in school	17.6%	16.4%	12.2%	13.4%	13.6%	12.3%	14.9%	13.4%	13.7%	13.9%
In a physical fight - any location	25.4%	21.7%	15.3%	18.7%	16.8%	11.8%	21.5%	17.7%	15.6%	17.1%
Were threatened with a knife or gun - any location	5.6%	5.3%	4.3%	4.6%	4.5%	3.2%	5.8%	2.5%	4.8%	6.2%
WEAPONS CARRYING IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS										
Carried a weapon to school such as a gun, knife, or stick	9.3%	5.4%	3.9%	4.5%	4.7%	3.4%	5.9%	1.6%	4.0%	8.2%
Carried a weapon in your neighborhood	NA	NA	NA	9.4%	8.2%	3.9%	12.4%	3.3%	6.9%	13.9%

2005 CAMBRIDGE MIDDLE GRADES HEALTH SURVEY

Mental Health – Middle School (N ≈ 1,180)

	TOTAL Cambridge					GENDER		GRADE		
	1997 (1420)	1999 (1550)	2001 (1435)	2003 (1395)	2005 (1180)	Females (569)	Males (607)	6 th (380)	7 th (387)	8 th (406)
PERSONAL EXPERIENCES IN PAST 12 MONTHS										
Divorce or separation in family	11.0%	10.7%	12.2%	10.6%	13.4%	14.1%	12.9%	14.2%	14.9%	11.3%
Family moved	17.1%	14.5%	14.8%	12.8%	15.7%	14.2%	17.1%	17.9%	14.8%	14.1%
Family member or close friend died	40.9%	41.9%	41.3%	39.0%	38.6%	41.0%	36.4%	37.3%	39.3%	38.8%
Ran away from home	3.7%	3.0%	3.1%	3.0%	4.2%	4.8%	3.7%	2.2%	5.3%	5.2%
WORRYING (past 12 months)¹										
Physical health problems	NA	NA	NA	NA	9.0%	12.3%	6.0%	6.0%	9.1%	11.7%
Weight problems (too heavy or thin)	NA	NA	NA	NA	19.2%	28.2%	10.5%	16.7%	19.9%	20.3%
Sexual abuse	NA	NA	NA	NA	2.8%	4.3%	1.2%	2.5%	2.1%	3.5%
Becoming or getting someone pregnant	NA	NA	NA	NA	2.8%	3.6%	2.1%	1.6%	2.9%	3.8%
School failure or poor grades	NA	NA	NA	NA	20.2%	22.6%	17.9%	14.9%	20.3%	24.7%
Drug or alcohol use in family	NA	NA	NA	NA	4.6%	5.2%	4.0%	4.7%	4.5%	4.3%
Own drug or alcohol use	NA	NA	NA	NA	2.6%	3.2%	2.1%	2.8%	1.1%	4.1%
Physical fights at home	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.7%	4.3%	3.1%	5.3%	2.6%	3.0%
Physical fights at school	NA	NA	NA	NA	5.9%	5.6%	6.2%	6.9%	6.7%	4.3%
Being treated unfairly because race/ethnicity	NA	NA	NA	NA	8.2%	7.9%	8.5%	8.5%	7.2%	8.9%
Sexual orientation	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.6%	3.6%	3.7%	2.5%	2.9%	5.3%
Drugs in neighborhood	NA	NA	NA	NA	8.8%	9.6%	8.1%	10.2%	7.2%	9.0%
Violence in neighborhood	NA	NA	NA	NA	10.4%	11.3%	9.7%	12.2%	8.9%	10.1%
MCAS	NA	NA	NA	NA	35.7%	41.0%	30.6%	37.1%	37.2%	32.5%
DEPRESSION, SELF-HARM, & SUICIDE										
Depressed ² (past 30 days)	NA	NA	NA	NA	21.4%	27.3%	15.8%	19.5%	20.7%	23.7%
Stopped doing usual activities because depressed (past 30 days)	NA	NA	NA	NA	14.6%	18.0%	11.4%	14.0%	14.3%	15.2%
Hurt self on purpose (past 12 months)	9.8%	7.6%	7.6%	6.9%	7.9%	10.1%	5.8%	5.9%	9.6%	8.2%
Seriously considered suicide (12 months)	9.5%	8.1%	9.7%	9.0%	9.1%	11.6%	6.7%	6.5%	11.8%	9.0%
Attempted suicide (past 12 months)	2.0%	2.5%	2.3%	2.3%	2.4%	3.0%	1.9%	0.5%	4.2%	2.5%

¹ Percentages based on respondents who indicated that they worried about this issue "Fairly Often" or "Most of the Time."

² Depression was defined in the survey as "feeling sad or hopeless most of every day for two or more weeks in a row."

2005 CAMBRIDGE MIDDLE GRADES HEALTH SURVEY

Scholastic Issues and Social Supports – Middle School (N≈1,180)

	TOTAL Cambridge					GENDER		GRADE		
	1997 (1420)	1999 (1550)	2001 (1435)	2003 (1395)	2005 (1180)	Females (569)	Males (607)	6 th (380)	7 th (387)	8 th (406)
SCHOLASTIC ISSUES IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS										
Had one or more failing grades	30.6%	28.4%	27.3%	26.9%	24.0%	21.2%	26.4%	22.0%	23.2%	26.3%
Skipped or cut school	14.3%	12.6%	11.1%	12.0%	7.9%	7.1%	8.8%	5.2%	7.1%	11.2%
Suspended from school	11.9%	10.0%	10.7%	11.7%	12.2%	9.6%	14.7%	11.4%	11.1%	14.2%
Receive mostly A's, B's, and C's	NA	NA	NA	NA	86.2%	88.4%	84.1%	86.8%	87.0%	85.2%
SCHOOL ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION (During 2004-2005 School Year)										
Participated in academic groups, clubs, or student government	NA	NA	NA	NA	42.2%	48.9%	35.4%	38.5%	42.4%	45.2%
Participated in music, band, or choir	NA	NA	NA	NA	44.7%	51.1%	38.4%	52.5%	49.7%	33.0%
Participated in community service, in or out of school	NA	NA	NA	NA	24.1%	28.1%	20.1%	20.2%	24.9%	26.8%
Participated in school-organized or interscholastic sports	NA	NA	NA	NA	32.0%	31.7%	32.2%	17.2%	34.5%	43.0%
SOCIAL SUPPORTS										
Have a parent or other adult family member to talk to about important issues	NA	NA	NA	81.8%	78.4%	79.6%	77.5%	79.4%	78.7%	77.4%
Have a teacher or other adult school staff member to talk to about a problem	NA	NA	NA	60.9%	58.9%	61.2%	56.6%	66.7%	54.7%	55.4%
Have another adult outside of school to talk to about important issues	NA	NA	NA	30.7%	33.2%	39.1%	27.8%	29.5%	33.6%	36.5%

2005 CAMBRIDGE MIDDLE GRADES HEALTH SURVEY

Health – Middle School (N ≈ 1,180)

	TOTAL Cambridge					GENDER		GRADE		
	1997 (1420)	1999 (1550)	2001 (1435)	2003 (1395)	2005 (1180)	Females (569)	Males (607)	6 th (380)	7 th (387)	8 th (406)
SEXUAL BEHAVIOR										
Ever had sexual intercourse	9.7%	8.9%	7.4%	11.1%	12.5%	6.9%	17.8%	8.3%	9.5%	19.3%
Talked with parents about sex (12 months)	34.3%	30.6%	32.6%	31.8%	33.4%	35.2%	31.8%	31.0%	31.4%	37.4%
Were touched, pinched, grabbed, or patted in a sexual way against will (12 months)	11.4%	8.8%	10.2%	11.7%	9.3%	14.4%	4.6%	4.0%	9.2%	14.2%
Were forced, tricked, or pressured to have sex that you did not want (12 months)	NA	NA	NA	NA	2.1%	2.8%	1.4%	1.4%	1.9%	3.0%
Forced, tricked, or pressured someone into having sex with you (12 months)	2.1%	2.0%	1.7%	2.0%	1.6%	1.1%	2.0%	0.3%	2.1%	2.2%
WEIGHT										
Describe self as slightly/very overweight	NA	NA	NA	27.1%	27.2%	31.8%	22.8%	26.6%	27.4%	27.8%
Trying to lose weight	NA	NA	NA	NA	42.0%	50.4%	33.9%	46.7%	40.6%	38.8%
WEIGHT LOSS OR MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES IN PAST 12 MONTHS										
<i>Exercised</i> to lose/maintain weight	NA	NA	77.8%	77.7%	78.2%	80.3%	76.0%	78.8%	78.0%	77.4%
<i>Diet pills/powders/liquids</i> to lose/maintain weight	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.7%	3.6%	3.8%	3.6%	4.6%	3.0%
<i>Ate less food, fewer calories, or foods low in fat</i> to lose/maintain weight	NA	NA	NA	NA	35.6%	44.4%	27.3%	36.1%	36.2%	34.5%
<i>Went without eating for 24 hours or more (fasting)</i> to lose/maintain weight	NA	NA	NA	NA	7.4%	10.6%	4.3%	8.5%	7.6%	6.2%
<i>Vomited or took laxatives</i> to lose/maintain weight	NA	NA	NA	NA	2.0%	2.9%	1.2%	1.4%	2.5%	2.2%
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN PAST 7 DAYS										
Participated in regular <i>vigorous</i> physical activity (3 or more days a week) ¹	NA	NA	NA	NA	66.6%	60.4%	72.5%	61.7%	68.7%	68.8%
Participated in regular <i>moderate</i> physical activity (5 or more days a week) ²	NA	NA	NA	NA	33.1%	27.6%	38.2%	28.5%	35.9%	34.5%

¹ The term vigorous physical activity was defined in the survey as "exercise or participation in sports for at least 20 minutes that made you sweat and breathe hard."

² The term moderate physical activity was defined in the survey as "participation in other physical activity for at least 30 minutes."