

2010

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE
METROWEST ADOLESCENT HEALTH SURVEY
NEEDHAM
MIDDLE SCHOOL REPORT**

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Highlights from the 2010 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey Pollard Middle School, Needham

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY: POLLARD MIDDLE SCHOOL, NEEDHAM

The MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey (MWAHS) is an initiative of the MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation to monitor health and risk behaviors among middle and high school students. Beginning in 2006, the MWAHS has been administered every other year to middle and high school students in the region. Pollard Middle School has participated in the MWAHS since 2006.

The 2010 survey was administered to a census of students in grades 7 and 8 in 21 middle schools across the region. Thirteen districts also chose to survey 6th grade students. In total, 14,714 students in grades 6 through 8 in the region participated in this voluntary and anonymous survey. In Needham, 772 students in grades 7 and 8 participated in the 2010 MWAHS, representing 93% of students.

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 Needham's data in the areas of substance use, violence, bullying, mental health, and physical activity are provided in this booklet.

SUBSTANCE USE: POLLARD MIDDLE SCHOOL, NEEDHAM

CIGARETTE SMOKING

2010 PATTERNS (Grades 7-8)

- **6% of students have smoked a cigarette in their lifetime, and 2% smoked recently (in the past 30 days).**
- More males than females have initiated cigarette smoking: 8% of males and 3% of females smoked in their lifetime.
- Recent smoking increases from less than 1% in 7th grade to 4% in 8th grade.

2006-2010 TRENDS (Grades 7-8)

- **Smoking initiation has remained similar from 2006 to 2010 at 6-7%.**
- Recent smoking (in the past 30 days) was also steady at 2-3%.
- In the MetroWest region, cigarette smoking has declined since 2006.

ALCOHOL USE AND DRINKING AND DRIVING

2010 PATTERNS (Grades 7-8)

- **15% of students drank alcohol in their lifetime, 6% drank in the past 30 days, and 2% reported recent binge drinking (defined as consuming 5 or more drinks in a row).**
- More males than females initiate alcohol use in middle school (22% compared with 8%), and report current drinking (8% compared with 5%).
- Current drinking increases from 5% in 7th grade to 8% in 8th grade. Recent binge drinking (in the past 30 days) increases from 1% to 3%.
- 15% of students reported having ever ridden in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol. Reports are slightly higher among males than females (17% compared with 14%) and increase by grade, from 14% in 7th grade to 17% in 8th grade.

2006-2010 TRENDS (Grades 7-8)

- **Fewer students are starting to drink alcohol. In 2010, 15% of youth reported drinking in their lifetime, down from 20% in 2006.**
- During the same period, current drinking decreased slightly from 8% to 6%. Riding with a driver who had been drinking remained steady at 15-16%.
- The decline in alcohol initiation is notable only among females: Lifetime alcohol use decreased from 17% in 2006 to 8% in 2010 among females but remained steady at 22-23% among males.
- The decline in alcohol use in Needham is consistent with the decline in MetroWest.

MARIJUANA USE

2010 PATTERNS (Grades 7-8)

- **4% of youth have used marijuana in their lifetime, and 3% used marijuana in the past 30 days.**
- Males are more likely than females to initiate marijuana use (7% compared with 2%), but current use is reported by 3% of both males and females.
- Marijuana use increases by grade: 2% of 7th grade students have tried marijuana compared with 7% of 8th grade students.

2006-2010 TRENDS (Grades 7-8)

- **From 2006 to 2010, the proportion of youth who have tried marijuana in their lifetime remained steady at 3-4%.**
- Current marijuana use was also steady at 2-3%.
- Marijuana use among MetroWest middle school students has been steady since 2006.

INHALANT USE

2010 PATTERNS (Grades 7-8)

- **7% of youth used inhalants in their lifetime (defined as sniffing glue, breathing the contents of spray cans, or inhaling any paints or sprays to get high).**
- More males (10%) than females (4%) have used inhalants.
- Lifetime inhalant use does not increase by grade and is reported by 7% of both 7th and 8th grade students.

2006-2010 TRENDS (Grades 7-8)

- **Lifetime use of inhalants decreased from 13% in 2006 to 7% in 2010.**
- Inhalant use decreased among both males (from 16% in 2006 to 10% in 2010) and females (from 11% to 4%).
- These findings are similar to regional reports.

VIOLENCE: POLLARD MIDDLE SCHOOL, NEEDHAM

PHYSICAL FIGHTING

2010 PATTERNS (Grades 7-8)

- **37% of youth have been in a physical fight in their lifetime, and 12% have been in a fight on school property.**
- More males than females report fighting (58% compared with 15%) and fighting on school property (21% compared with 4%).
- 39% of 7th grade students and 35% of 8th grade students have been in a fight in their lifetime. Fighting on school property is reported by 14% of 7th grade students and 11% of 8th grade students.

2006-2010 TRENDS (Grades 7-8)

- **Reports of fighting have declined: 37% of students in 2010 reported being in a physical fight in their lifetime, compared with 45% in 2006.**
- Lifetime reports of fighting on school property also decreased, from 20% in 2006 to 12% in 2010.
- There were declines in fighting among both genders.
- These trends in fighting are similar to those in the region.

WEAPON CARRYING

2010 PATTERNS (Grades 7-8)

- **9% of youth have carried a weapon in their lifetime, and 1% have carried a weapon on school property.**
- Consistent with gender patterns for fighting, more males (14%) than females (3%) report carrying weapons.
- 10% of 7th grade youth and 7% of 8th grade youth have carried a weapon in their lifetime.

2006-2010 TRENDS (Grades 7-8)

- **Consistent with physical fighting, reports of weapon carrying decreased from 13% in 2006 to 9% in 2010.**
- These findings are similar to regional reports.

BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING: POLLARD MIDDLE SCHOOL, NEEDHAM

BULLYING

2010 PATTERNS (Grades 7-8)

- **30% of youth have been victims of bullying in the past 12 months, and 24% have been bullied on school property. 17% of students report bullying other students.**
- Similar proportions of females and males report bullying victimization (30% and 31% respectively) and victimization on school property (25% and 24% respectively). However, males are more likely than females to bully others (20% compared with 15%).
- Reports of bullying in the past 12 months are slightly higher in 7th grade (32%) compared with 8th grade (28%).
- While 30% of students report they have been bullied in the past 12 months, only 19% report talking to an adult about being victimized.

2006-2010 TRENDS (Grades 7-8)

- **Reports of bullying victimization have decreased: In 2010, 30% of youth reported they were bullied in the past 12 months, compared with 46% in 2006.**
- Bullying victimization on school property fell from 41% in 2006 to 24% in 2010.
- The declines in bullying are similar for both genders: For example, victimization decreased from 42% in 2006 to 30% in 2010 for females, and from 50% to 31% for males.
- Student reports of bullying also decreased in the MetroWest region.

CYBERBULLYING

2010 PATTERNS (Grades 7-8)

- **12% of youth report being victims of cyberbullying in the past 12 months, and 6% report cyberbullying someone else.**
- Cyberbullying victimization is reported by more females than males (13% compared with 10%), but perpetration is similar among females and males (6% and 7% respectively).
- Cyberbullying is similar in 7th grade (11%) and 8th grade (12%).
- While 12% of students report they have been cyberbullied in the past 12 months, only 4% have talked to an adult about being victimized.

2006-2010 TRENDS (Grades 7-8)

- **Reports of cyberbullying victimization have decreased from 17% in 2006 to 12% in 2010.**
- Cyberbullying decreased among both females (from 21% in 2006 to 13% in 2010) and males (from 14% to 10%).
- In MetroWest, reports of cyberbullying have remained steady since 2006.

MENTAL HEALTH: POLLARD MIDDLE SCHOOL, NEEDHAM

2010 PATTERNS (Grades 7-8)

- **11% of students reported that their life was “very” stressful in the past 30 days. 8% reported depressive symptoms and 4% reported self-injury (defined as cutting, burning, or bruising oneself on purpose) in the past 12 months.**
- 8% of youth said they had considered suicide in their lifetime, and 2% had made a suicide attempt.
- Females are more likely than males to report stress (14% compared with 7%), but other mental health problems are similar among males and females.
- Reports of stress increase slightly from 9% in 7th grade to 12% in 8th grade. Reports of depressive symptoms, self-injury, and suicidality are similar in 7th and 8th grades.

2006-2010 TRENDS (Grades 7-8)

- **Reports of depressive symptoms decreased slightly from 2006 to 2010. For the most part, however, reports of mental health problems, including stress, self-injury, and suicidality, remained steady.**
- District and regional reports of mental health are similar.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND BODY WEIGHT: POLLARD MIDDLE SCHOOL, NEEDHAM

2010 PATTERNS (Grades 7-8)

- **82% of youth engaged in vigorous physical activity for 20 minutes or longer at least 3 times per week.**
- 15% of youth are overweight/obese (based on self-reported height and weight, which is used to calculate body mass index).
- Males are more likely than females to report the above level of physical activity (84% compared with 80%), yet more males than females are overweight/obese (18% compared with 12%).
- Physical activity and overweight/obesity are similar in 7th and 8th grades.

2006-2010 TRENDS (Grades 7-8)

- **The proportion of youth exercising vigorously 3 or more times a week was steady from 2006 to 2010 at 81-83%.**
- Overweight/obesity remained similar at 13-16%.
- These trends in physical activity and overweight/obesity are consistent with regional data.

CONCLUSIONS: POLLARD MIDDLE SCHOOL, NEEDHAM

The third administration of the MWAHS in 2010 provides important data to monitor trends in youth health and risk behaviors. While additional timepoints are important for establishing trends, the 2010 data show that Needham is making significant advances in some behavioral health areas, such as bullying. However, other areas demand continued attention, including substance use and mental health. The 2012 MWAHS will provide additional data to further inform school and community efforts to improve the health of middle school youth.

Needham Middle School Students (Grades 7-8) 2006-2010 Trends in Key Indicators*

	Year of Survey (%)		
	2006 (654)	2008 (653)	2010 (772)
SUBSTANCE USE			
Lifetime cigarette smoking	6.9	6.6	5.7
Current cigarette smoking (past 30 days)	3.4	2.0	2.0
Lifetime alcohol use	19.7	19.8	14.8
Current alcohol use (past 30 days)	8.1	6.3	6.4
Binge drinking (past 30 days) [†]	2.3	2.0	2.0
Rode with driver who had been drinking (lifetime)	14.9	15.8	15.5
Lifetime marijuana use	3.5	3.3	4.3
Current marijuana use (past 30 days)	2.6	2.0	3.0
Lifetime inhalant use	13.4	6.8	7.1
VIOLENCE			
Physical fighting (lifetime)	45.4	42.3	36.9
Physical fighting on school property (lifetime)	20.3	14.9	12.3
Carried a weapon (lifetime)	12.6	10.9	8.8
Carried weapon on school property (lifetime)	2.8	2.5	1.2
BULLYING VICTIMIZATION			
Bullying victim (past 12 months)	46.1	46.4	30.4
Bullying victim on school property (past 12 months)	41.0	41.6	24.1
Cyberbullying victim (past 12 months)	17.3	14.9	11.5
MENTAL HEALTH			
Life "very" stressful (past 30 days)	12.4	10.2	10.6
Depressive symptoms (past 12 months)	12.8	9.4	8.5
Self-injury (past 12 months)	4.5	5.6	4.4
Considered suicide (lifetime)	8.0	7.6	8.1
Attempted suicide (lifetime)	2.5	1.7	1.7
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND BODY WEIGHT			
Exercised for ≥20 minutes on 3 or more days/week	81.3	83.3	81.7
Overweight or obese [‡]	16.3	12.8	14.8

* Source: MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

† Consumed 5 or more drinks in a row on one or more occasions

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

Needham Middle School Students (Grades 7-8) 2010 Gender Patterns for Key Indicators*

	Gender (%)		Total (%)
	Female (377)	Male (394)	(772)
SUBSTANCE USE			
Lifetime cigarette smoking	3.5	7.9	5.7
Current cigarette smoking (past 30 days)	1.3	2.6	2.0
Lifetime alcohol use	7.7	21.6	14.8
Current alcohol use (past 30 days)	5.1	7.8	6.4
Binge drinking (past 30 days) [†]	1.3	2.6	2.0
Rode with driver who had been drinking (lifetime)	13.6	17.3	15.5
Lifetime marijuana use	1.9	6.7	4.3
Current marijuana use (past 30 days)	2.9	3.1	3.0
Lifetime inhalant use	3.7	10.3	7.1
VIOLENCE			
Physical fighting (lifetime)	15.5	57.5	36.9
Physical fighting on school property (lifetime)	3.7	20.6	12.3
Carried a weapon (lifetime)	3.5	14.0	8.8
Carried weapon on school property (lifetime)	0.8	1.5	1.2
BULLYING VICTIMIZATION			
Bullying victim (past 12 months)	29.6	31.3	30.4
Bullying victim on school property (past 12 months)	24.5	23.8	24.1
Cyberbullying victim (past 12 months)	13.1	10.1	11.5
MENTAL HEALTH			
Life "very" stressful (past 30 days)	14.2	6.9	10.6
Depressive symptoms (past 12 months)	8.6	8.2	8.5
Self-injury (past 12 months)	3.7	5.1	4.4
Considered suicide (lifetime)	9.1	7.2	8.1
Attempted suicide (lifetime)	1.9	1.5	1.7
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND BODY WEIGHT			
Exercised for ≥20 minutes on 3 or more days/week	79.9	83.5	81.7
Overweight or obese [‡]	11.6	17.9	14.8

* Source: MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

† Consumed 5 or more drinks in a row on one or more occasions

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

Needham Middle School Students (Grades 7-8) 2010 Grade Patterns for Key Indicators*

	Grade (%)		Total (%)
	7 th (406)	8 th (366)	(772)
SUBSTANCE USE			
Lifetime cigarette smoking	4.0	7.7	5.7
Current cigarette smoking (past 30 days)	0.5	3.6	2.0
Lifetime alcohol use	16.0	13.5	14.8
Current alcohol use (past 30 days)	5.0	8.0	6.4
Binge drinking (past 30 days) [†]	0.7	3.3	2.0
Rode with driver who had been drinking (lifetime)	14.2	16.9	15.5
Lifetime marijuana use	2.2	6.6	4.3
Current marijuana use (past 30 days)	1.5	4.7	3.0
Lifetime inhalant use	7.0	7.1	7.1
VIOLENCE			
Physical fighting (lifetime)	38.6	35.1	36.9
Physical fighting on school property (lifetime)	13.9	10.7	12.3
Carried a weapon (lifetime)	10.4	7.1	8.8
Carried weapon on school property (lifetime)	1.2	1.1	1.2
BULLYING VICTIMIZATION			
Bullying victim (past 12 months)	32.4	28.2	30.4
Bullying victim on school property (past 12 months)	26.1	22.0	24.1
Cyberbullying victim (past 12 months)	11.0	12.1	11.5
MENTAL HEALTH			
Life "very" stressful (past 30 days)	9.0	12.4	10.6
Depressive symptoms (past 12 months)	8.4	8.5	8.5
Self-injury (past 12 months)	3.7	5.2	4.4
Considered suicide (lifetime)	9.0	7.1	8.1
Attempted suicide (lifetime)	1.7	1.6	1.7
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND BODY WEIGHT			
Exercised for ≥20 minutes on 3 or more days/week	81.1	82.5	81.7
Overweight or obese [‡]	15.5	14.0	14.8

* Source: MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

† Consumed 5 or more drinks in a row on one or more occasions

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

Education Development Center, Inc.
Health and Human Development Division
Center for Research on High Risk Behaviors
55 Chapel Street
Newton, Massachusetts 02458-1060
617-969-7100