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Executive Summary:

Findings from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey Middle School age students (SY 2018-2019)

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Cohasset Public Schools

This is a summary of key findings from recent administration of a revised version of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey to a sample of middle school students in the Cohasset Public Schools (CPS). The survey was completed by 311 middle school students representing grades 6 through 8 and including approximately 78% of the middle school students in the Cohasset Public Schools. The survey questions address risky behaviors and activities as well as various health related issues concerning youth in Cohasset.

Overall, the findings are quite positive. Where comparisons are possible, the current figures for Cohasset are at least similar to the most recent statewide figures and in most cases better than the statewide figures. Further, there are notable improvements and/or maintenance of previous positive findings in most areas when comparing survey findings from 2017 with the present ones in Cohasset, as follows:

- Substance use – The percentage of students who report current substance use is negligible (2% or less) for all substances in the survey, including; cigarettes; vaping; alcohol; marijuana; prescription drugs without a prescription; and inhalants.
- Bullying: The percent of students who report being bullied at school declined from 21% to 18%, and the percent of students who report being cyber-bullied declined from 16% to 13%.
- Violence – Students who report physical fighting went down from 19% to 14%, and the rate of students who reported being threatened or injured at home declined from 10% to 5%.

Findings in two areas are mixed, with both positive as well as potentially problematic results, as follows:

- Stress – Students who report being fairly or very stressed at school went down from 53% to 43% while students who report being stressed outside school increased from 21% to 26%.

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- Depression/suicide – There was a slight increase in the percentage of students who reported significant depression (13% to 15%); but there were decreases in the percentage of students who reported: seriously considering suicide (11% to 6%); making a plan to commit suicide (5% to 3%); telling someone that they were considering suicide (6% to 5%); being told by someone else that they were considering suicide (22% to 19%); and even actual suicide attempts (3% to 1%).

Finally, there are a couple of findings that may require further exploration and possibly efforts at change, as follows:

- Screen time – The percentage of students who report playing video or computer games or using a computer for three or more hours a day for other than schoolwork increased from 29% to 35%.
- Lack of sleep – Over half the students (53%) report getting less than eight hours sleep per night on average, and the percentage of students who report getting enough sleep declined from 52% to 45%.

In addition to further examination of the issues raised by the above findings, we suggest detailed review of the full technical report of survey findings, which includes more information about the above findings as well as survey results in other areas not included in this summary report.

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Middle School age students (SY 2018-2019)
Cohasset Public Schools**

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Submitted to:
Safe Harbor Cohasset Coalition
and the
Cohasset Public Schools
Cohasset, MA

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Report of Findings: Cohasset Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Middle School (2019)

1.0 Background

This is a preliminary report of findings from recent administration of a revised version of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey to a large sample of middle school students in the Cohasset Public Schools (CPS). This survey is one of two similar surveys administered to youth in the Cohasset Public Schools this year, one administered to high school students and a second shorter version administered to middle school students.

1.1 Survey purposes

Findings from the survey are intended to address several key questions:

- What do the findings from the survey tell us about the challenges facing youth in our community?
- To what extent are there differences among sub-groups of students, such as by gender or grade?
- How do survey findings in the Cohasset schools compare to findings in the past and elsewhere?

1.2 Survey development

The two surveys administered to students in the Cohasset Public Schools this year both are revised versions of the widely used *Youth Risk Behavior Survey* (YRBS). The YRBS was developed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in collaboration with federal, state and private sectors. It is conducted periodically at the national, state, and local levels. The YRBS is updated periodically and is available in two versions: (1) the original version intended for use with high school students; and (2) a more recently developed and somewhat shorter version intended for use with middle school students.

The high school version of the YRBS is administered to students in grades 9-12, and the middle school version is administered to students in grades 6-8. The middle school version essentially is a shorter version of the high school survey. While many questions in the middle school version are unchanged from the high school version, other questions are omitted or modified in the middle school version to facilitate participation by younger students.

While the two surveys used in the Cohasset Public Schools this year include many of the questions from the standard YRBS, both are revised versions in the sense that some of the original standard questions have been omitted or altered slightly while others have been added to address issues of specific interest to residents of Cohasset.

1.3 Survey content

The questions in both surveys address risky behaviors and activities, various health related activities as well as attitudes toward certain behaviors. Survey questions in the middle school version address the following topics:

- Demographic characteristics of respondents
- Protective factors: school grades and adult support at school
- Automobile safety
- Violence related behavior
- Bullying
- Stress, sleep, and screen time
- Depression, self-harm, and suicide
- Tobacco use: Smoking and vaping
- Alcohol use
- Marijuana use
- Prescription drug use without a prescription
- Other drug use
- Weight and weight control

1.4 Survey administration and reporting

The middle school version of the YRBS was administered to middle school students in the CPS on June 4, 2019. Approximately one classroom period was set aside for completion of the surveys.

Several provisions were made to assure respondent confidentiality and voluntary participation by students – and in turn hopefully truthfulness and completeness of responses. Prior to survey administration, parents were given the opportunity to decide whether or not their child(ren) would participate in the survey. In addition, each student could choose to answer or not answer any or all questions. Finally, survey instructions directed students not to put their names on the surveys and explained that their answers would not be seen by anyone who knows them.

Prior to survey administration in the middle school, the IT Department loaded the middle school version of the YRBS into the school's online computer system; and the middle school students all completed the survey online during a single classroom period and submitted their answers electronically to a central data file. In turn, after submission of all survey responses by students, the IT Department sent the data file of responses to J. Richard Woy, Ph.D. of JRW Associates, an independent consulting contractor, for data analysis and preparation of reports of survey findings.

The middle school version of the survey was completed by 311 middle school students representing grades 6 through 8. Based on an enrollment of 400 students, the sample represents approximately 78% of the middle school students in the Cohasset Public Schools. Assuming random sampling, this sample size can be assumed to be representative of the population of CPS

middle school students and is sufficient to assure confidence intervals of plus or minus 2% with a 99% level of confidence.

1.5 Comparisons

Since both surveys used in the CPS in 2019 include many questions from the standard versions of the YRBS, it is possible to make useful comparisons on some items between the figures for Cohasset and those for Massachusetts and/or the United States as a whole. However, these statewide and national figures are only available for the high school version of the YRBS. Statewide and national figures are not available for the middle school version of the YRBS, preventing these comparisons for middle school students.

For some items in the Cohasset middle school survey, findings from the Massachusetts Youth Health Survey (MYHS) are useful for comparison. The result of a collaboration between the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the MYHS is administered every two years to monitor health indicators, behaviors, and risk factors contributing to the leading causes of morbidity, mortality, and social and academic problems among adolescents in Massachusetts. Statewide figures for middle school students in 2017 on the Massachusetts Youth Health Survey are used where applicable for comparison with the figures from the Cohasset survey.

Regarding relevant comparisons with other data sources for middle school students, it should be noted that findings from the Monitoring the Future survey also are available for comparison with findings from the current Ipswich middle school survey. Supported by funding from the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA), the Monitoring the Future survey is a national survey carried out annually to track and document substance use by teenagers and young adults in the United States. This survey provides extensive national figures on substance use by 8th grade students. Findings from the Monitoring the Future Survey have not been included in this report because they are limited to 8th grade students and provide only national figures with no breakouts by individual states. Nevertheless, the Monitoring the Future survey system is a significant data resource regarding substance use by teenagers and young adults. Findings from this survey are readily available online, and the Cohasset School District might wish to make use of it if there were an interest in exploring substance use issues by middle school students in more detail.

1.6 Organization of the report

This report is designed to provide a detailed presentation of findings from the survey of middle school students. Findings are grouped according to the main survey topic areas listed above. In each topic area results are presented using tables. For each item in the survey, tables provide percentages for all respondents, breakouts of percentages by gender and grade level, and comparable percentages from the 2017 CPS YRBS and 2017 statewide MYHS where available. For each section of the report, the charts of percentages are supplemented by additional commentary.

Findings are presented using percentages. For each item in each table, the left-hand column provides the percentage for that item out of the total sample of respondents in 2019 while the next column to the right provides the comparable percentage figure from Cohasset in 2017 if such a figure is available. The next column to the right provides the comparable statewide percentage from the Massachusetts Youth Health Survey (MYHS) if such a percentage figure is available. The next two columns to the right break out percentages by gender comparing boys with girls in the sample, and the final two columns break out percentages by grade comparing 6th, 7th, and 8th graders in the sample.

The sections to follow provide the findings from the YRBS with middle school students in the Cohasset Public Schools in 2019.

2.0 Student demographics

Students by Age (Q04)

Age in years	Number	Percent
12 or younger	129	42
13	89	29
14	88	28
15 or older	3	1
Missing/Other	2	1
TOTAL	311	101

As might be expected, virtually all of the students in the sample were in the age range from 12 to 14 years, coinciding with the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades in school.

Students by gender (Q01)

Year	Female	Male	Non-binary	Missing	Total
2019	143	158	7	3	311

In 2018, there were slightly more boys than girls in the sample (boys – 51% vs girls – 46%).

Students by Grade (Q03)

Year	6 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th grade	Missing	Total
2019	113	93	104	1	311

In 2019, all three grades were well represented in the sample.

Students by Race/Ethnicity (Q05)

Race/Ethnicity	Number	Percent
American Indian/Alaskan Native	4	1
Asian	8	3
Black/African American	10	3
Hispanic/Latino	8	3
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	2	1
White	261	84
Chose not to specify	17	6
Missing	1	0
TOTAL	311	101

White students made up 84% of the sample. A significant number of respondents (6%) chose not to specify their race/ethnicity. The remaining 10% of the students in the sample were quite diverse, including representatives of a wide range of racial/cultural groups.

Sexual orientation (Q02)

Sexual orientation	Number	Percent
Heterosexual	269	87
Gay or lesbian	3	1
Bisexual	12	4
Not sure	26	8
Missing	1	0
TOTAL	311	100%

Almost nine out of 10 respondents (87%) reported being heterosexual with the remaining 13% variously reporting being Not sure (8%), Bisexual (4%), or Gay/Lesbian (1%).

3.0 Protective factors

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Protective factors								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6th	7th	8 th
	2019	2017						
Q06. Received mostly A's and B's in school (in past 12 months)	87	84	87	85	89	96	85	80
Q07. Reports there is at least one teacher or other adult at school to talk to about a problem	65	65	--	67	66	58	69	69
Q08. Agree or strongly agree that their teachers really care and give encouragement and support	69	69	--	70	71	71	69	71

Observations:

- In 2019, almost 9 out of 10 respondents reported receiving mostly A's and B's in school; and about two-thirds reported that there is at least one adult at school to talk with about a problem (65%) and that teachers at school really care and give encouragement and support (69%).
- Comparisons: As indicated in the table, the current reported rates for grades and teacher interest and support are very similar to the comparable rates in Cohasset in 2017; and the rate for grades of A's and B's is very similar to the statewide rate on the MYHS in 2017.
- By gender: Reported rates for boys and girls were very similar for all three variables.
- By grade: The percentage of students reporting grades of A's and B's declined from 6th to 8th grade from 96% in 6th grade to 80% for 8th graders. Between the 6th and 7th grade, the percent students reporting at least one adult at school to talk to about problems increased from 58% to 69%.

4.0 Personal safety and bullying

4.1 Automobile safety

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Automobile safety								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6th	7th	8 th
	2019	2017						
In past 30 days:								
Q09 Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol	10	11	9	8	13	9	9	13
Q11. Rode with a driver who had used marijuana	3	3	6	1	5	3	0	7
Relationship to driver who had been drinking (those who had ridden with a driver who had been drinking) (N = 65)								
Q10a. Parent/guardian	52	--	--	46	62	60	50	56
Q10b. Sibling	2	--	--	0	7	0	0	7
Q10c. Other relative/family member	11	--	--	14	9	15	13	7
Q10d. Acquaintance/friend under 21	2	--	--	0	7	5	0	0
Q10e. Acquaintance/friend over 21	6	--	--	0	14	10	0	7
Q10f. Other	6	--	--	14	0	5	19	4

Observations:

- About 1 in 10 students (10%) reported riding with a driver who had been drinking, but only 3% reported riding with a driver who had been using marijuana. When those who reported riding with a drinking driver were asked their relationship to the driver who had been drinking, about half reported riding with a parent/guardian (52%).
- Comparisons: The 2019 figures for CPS were similar to figures for comparable items on the MYHS for Massachusetts as a whole for 2017 and for CPS in 2017.
- By gender: As indicated in the table, the figures for girls were slightly higher than the figures for boys for both riding with a driver who had been drinking (13% vs 8%) and riding with a driver who had been using marijuana (5% vs 1%).
- By grade: There were few differences by grade on these variables.

4.2 Violence and safety

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Violence and safety								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
In past 30 days:								
Q12. Did not go to school because you felt unsafe at school or going to or from school	7	6	--	3	8	7	9	5
In past 12 months:								
Q13. Threatened or injured at home	5	10	9	3	6	7	2	5
Q14. In a physical fight	14	19	--	18	8	15	15	12
Q15. Hit, slapped, or physically hurt in any other way on purpose	20	2 ¹	--	24	13	26	13	18
Relationship to person who hit, slapped or physically hurt you in purpose:								
Q16a. Boyfriend	0	--	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q16b. Girlfriend	0	--	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q16c. Family member	16	--	--	5	35	17	13	15
Q16d. Friend	53	--	--	68	35	52	53	55
Q16e. Other	31	--	--	28	30	31	33	30
Total percent	100	--	--	100	100	100	100	100

Observations:

- Few respondents (7%) reported sometimes not going to school because they felt unsafe, and a similar low percentage (5%) reported being threatened or injured at home. Between 1 and 2 out of 10 respondents (14%) reported being in a physical fight in the past year while about 1 in 5 (20%) reported being hit, slapped or otherwise hurt on purpose in the past year. When asked their relationship to those who hurt them, about half (53%) reported being hurt by a friend; and another 31% reported being hurt by “Other,” a group that turned out to be made up primarily of sports opponents, other students, or siblings. None reported being hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend, although some did report being hurt by a family member (16%).
- Comparisons: The 2019 figure for not going to school because of safety concerns is very similar to the comparable figure for Cohasset in 2017. The figures for being threatened or injured at home (5%) and for physical fighting (14%) both are better than comparable rates for Cohasset and/or statewide figures from 2017. As indicated in the table, the percentage of students who reported being in a physical fight declined from 19% to 14% from 2017 to 2019. As indicated in the footnote, the 2017 and 2019 figures for being hit, slapped or otherwise hurt on purpose probably are not directly comparable because of changes in wording of the item from 2017 to 2019.

¹ In 2017, this item was slightly different, specifying that the hitting, slapping, or other physical hurt was “by a boyfriend or girlfriend.”.

- By gender: As noted in the table above, boys were more likely than girls to report physical fighting (13% boys vs 6% girls) and being hit, slapped, or otherwise hurt on purpose (24% boys vs 13% girls). Girls were slightly more likely than boys to report not going to school because of feeling unsafe at school (girls 8% vs boys 3%) and being threatened or injured at home (6% vs 3%).
- By grade: There were modest differences on all variables by grade level. However, the differences did not fall into clear patterns with readily identified explanations.

4.3 Bullying

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Bullying								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
In past 12 months:								
Q17. Was bullied at school	18	21	34	11	26	19	24	13
Q22. Was bullied electronically	13	16	14	8	17	14	13	12
In past 12 months, bullying behavior:								
Q20a. Threatened to hurt someone	2	3	--	2	1	2	1	2
Q20b. Hurt someone	1	2	--	1	1	2	1	0
Q20c. Electronic bullying	2	6	--	3	1	0	3	3
Q20d. None of these things	95	93	--	93	98	96	96	93
In past 12 months, being bullied:								
Q21a. Someone threatened to hurt you	5	9	--	5	5	5	2	8
Q21b. Someone hurt you	5	6	--	3	6	6	4	3
Q21c. Was bullied electronically	13	16	--	8	17	13	12	13
Q21d. Did not experience any of these things	80	79	--	84	78	81	83	81
In past 30 days:								
Q18. Did not go to school because you felt uncomfortable because of another student	11	8	--	5	18	15	12	7
Q19. Did not go to school because you felt uncomfortable because of an adult at school	4	6	--	1	6	5	2	4

Observations:

- As indicated in the table, 18% of students reported being bullied at school in the past year. More than 1 in 10 respondents (13%) reported being bullied electronically, with respondents reporting being threatened (5%) or physically bullied (5%) less frequently. Fewer students reported bullying behavior than reported being bullied (bullying 6% vs being bullied 20%). About one in 10 students reported not going to school at least once in the past month because they felt uncomfortable being around another student (11%) at the school.
- Comparisons: The 2019 figures for CPS middle school respondents were quite similar to comparable CPS figures for 2017, with a few possible small differences in both directions. The percent of students who reported being bullied at school and bullied electronically both did go down from 2017 to 2019 (from 21% to 18% and from 16% to 13%).

13% respectively.) Note that the 18% percent students reporting being bullied at school in 2019 is much lower than the 34% statewide figure in 2017 on the MYHS.

- By gender: As indicated in the table, girls were more likely than boys to report being bullied both physically (26% vs 11%) and electronically (17% vs 8%). Girls also were more likely than boys to report not going to school because of discomfort with being around both another student (18% girls vs 5% boys) or an adult (6% girls vs 1% boys) at school.
- By grade: There were some differences on all variables by grade level. However, the differences did not fall into clear patterns with readily identified explanations.

5.0 Stress, sleep, and screen time

5.1 Stress

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Stress								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
Q23. Fairly often or very often stressed at school	43	53	--	32	54	31	42	57
Q24. Fairly often or very often stressed outside of school	26	21	--	16	37	20	23	33
Sources of stress that are rated sometimes or always significant								
Q28a. Amount of school	64	63	--	58	69	56	64	72
Q28b. Grades	72	66	--	66	78	61	71	83
Q28c. Balancing school and outside activities	56	58	--	50	62	48	61	59
Q28d. Family life	26	24	--	22	30	24	31	23
Q28e. Friends	32	28	--	19	43	29	38	28
Q28f. How others view you	32	30	--	19	45	28	36	31
Q28g. Treatment by peers online	14	14	--	12	17	12	21	8
Q28h. Life after high school	33	32	--	28	36	32	31	33
Q28i. Not meeting your own expectations	54	49	--	45	62	43	65	55
Q28j. Not meeting other's expectations	52	48	--	46	58	46	55	55

Observations:

- As indicated in the table, 43% of respondents reported being stressed at school fairly often or very often; and 26% reported being stressed outside school fairly often or very often. When asked to rate various sources of stress, high percentages of students identified various school related variables as significant sources of stress, including: (1) grades (72%); amount of school (64%); and balancing schoolwork with outside activities (56%). More than half the respondents also identified two other sources of stress: (1) not meeting your own expectations (54%); and (2) not meeting others' expectations (52%). Fewer than half the respondents reported the other sources of stress as sometimes or always significant.
- Comparisons: As indicated in the table, the current rate of reported stress at school is lower than the comparable rate for Cohasset in 2017 (43% vs 53%), but the rate for stress outside of school is a bit higher (26% vs 21%). Current rates for sources of stress are very similar to those in 2017.
- By gender: As indicated in the table, girls were more likely than boys to report experiencing stress on all variables and on some variables much more likely to do so.
- By grade: The rate for being fairly often or very often stressed at school increased from 31% for 6th graders to 57% for 8th graders. Similarly, the rate for frequent experienced stress outside school also increased from 20% for 6th graders to 33% for 8th graders.

5.2 Sleep and screen time

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Sleep and screen time								
Variables	% Total		% by Gender		% by Grade			
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
Q102. Played video or computer games or used a computer for 3 or more hours per day for other than schoolwork	35	29	34	37	31	24	39	44
Q25. On average, get less than 8 hours of sleep	53	54	--	46	61	33	58	71
Q26. Feel you typically get enough sleep	45	52	--	54	36	50	55	30
Reasons for not getting enough sleep (of those who report not getting enough sleep) (N = 210)								
Q27a. Schoolwork	75	91	--	64	84	66	76	83
Q27b. Family issues	11	14	--	11	12	10	9	13
Q27c. Friend issues	13	15	--	3	21	11	16	12
Q27d. Electronics/Social media	39	36	--	33	45	23	42	51
Q27e. Other	32	33	--	32	30	41	35	22

Observations:

- About 1 in 3 respondents reported (35%) reported playing video or computer games or using a computer for 3 or more hours per day for other than schoolwork. More than half the respondents (53%) reported typically getting less than 8 hours sleep, and less than half (45%) reported that they typically get enough sleep. Of those who reported not getting enough sleep, three-quarters (75%) reported schoolwork as a reason for not getting enough sleep with about 39% also identifying electronics/social media as a reason for loss of sleep. No more than 13% of respondents identified issues with family or friends as reasons for lack of sleep.
- Comparisons: As indicated in the table, these current rates of reported screen time and sleep are quite similar to the rates in Cohasset in 2017, with the rate of extensive screen time up slightly (35% vs 29%) and the rate reporting not enough sleep down slightly (45% vs 54%).
- By gender: While girls were more likely than boys to report less than 8 hours of sleep (61% vs 46%), boys were more likely than girls to report extensive screen time (37% vs 31%) and to report typically getting enough sleep (54% vs 36%). Similarly, when asked to identify reasons for loss of sleep, girls were more likely than boys to identify schoolwork, friend issues, and electronics/social media as reasons for loss of sleep.
- By grade: Reported extensive screen time increased from 24% to 44% from 6th to 8th grade. Similarly, reported rate of sleep time of less than 8 hours per night increased from 33% in the 6th grade to 71% for 8th graders while the percent students who reported typically getting enough sleep dropped from 50% in 6th grade to 30% in 8th grade.

6.0 Depression, self-harm, and suicide

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Depression, self-harm and suicide								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
Q30. Ever physically injured yourself in order to feel better emotionally	9	9	17 ²	4	11	14	7	4
Q34. Ever told anyone that you were considering suicide	5	6	--	3	7	5	6	5
Q37. Ever been told by someone that they were considering suicide	19	22	--	11	25	18	17	21
Responses to being told by someone that they were considering suicide:			--					
Q38a. Never been told this	79	74	--	86	74	80	80	77
Q38b. Kept the information to myself	7	8	--	4	8	5	7	8
Q38c. Told a friend	4	5	--	1	6	4	5	3
Q38c. Told a trusted adult	9	11	--	4	13	6	9	12
Q38d. Other	7	11	--	4	9	10	4	8
In past 12 months:								
Q29. Felt depressed enough for at least two weeks that you stopped usual activities	15	13	19	8	21	11	17	16
Q31. Intentionally injured self to feel better emotionally	8	9	17 ³	4	11	12	7	4
Q32. Seriously considered suicide	6	11	9	4	9	6	6	7
Q33. Made a plan to commit suicide	3	5	--	2	4	2	5	3
Q35. Attempted suicide	1	3	4	1	1	1	1	1
Q36. Injured yourself in a suicide attempt, requiring treatment by doctor or nurse	1	1	--	0	1	0	0	2

Observations:

- As indicated in the table, 15% of respondents reported feeling significant depression at some point during the previous 12 months. About 6% reported seriously considering suicide; 3% reported making a plan to commit suicide; 1% reported actually attempting suicide; and 1% reported injuring themselves in a suicide attempt. In addition, 9% of respondents reported self-inflicted injury to relieve tension.
- Only 5% of respondents reported ever telling someone that they were considering suicide, but almost one in five respondents (19%) reported being told by someone else

² The wording of this item was “intentionally injured yourself without wanting to die.”

³ The wording of this item was “intentionally injured yourself without wanting to die.”

that they were considering suicide. Responses to being told by another about possible suicide differed, with some respondents keeping the information to themselves (7%), some telling a friend (4%), others telling a trusted adult (9%), and some responding in other ways (7%).

- Comparisons: As indicated in the table, these current percentages for depression and suicide-related behavior are generally similar to the figures for Cohasset in 2017 and a bit lower than statewide figures on the MYHS in 2017.
- By gender: As indicated in the table, girls were more likely than boys to report almost all depression and suicide-related behaviors, with the exception of actual suicide attempts and injuries as a result of suicide attempts where percentages reported by boys and girls were very low and essentially the same.
- By grade: There were few differences in percentages by grade, although the rate of students reporting physically injuring themselves in order to relieve tension decreased from 14% for 6th graders to 4% for 8th graders.

7.0 Tobacco use

7.1 Cigarette smoking

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Cigarette smoking								
Variables ⁴	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
Q40 Ever smoked cigarettes, even one or two puffs (lifetime)	1	2	4	0	1	1	1	1
Q41. Tried cigarette smoking before age 13 years, even one or two puffs.	0	2	--	0	0	1	0	0
Q45. Tried to quit smoking in past 12 months	0	1	--	0	0	0	0	0
In past 30 days:								
Q42. Smoked cigarettes (At least one day in past month)	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	0
Q42. Smoked more than 10 cigarettes per day (on days they smoked in past month, among those who currently smoke cigarettes)	1	1	--	0	0	2	0	0
Q44. Smoked cigarettes on school property (At least one day in past month)	0	1	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q46. Used chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip (At least one day in past month)	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Q47. Used chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip on school property (At least one day/past month)	0	1	--	0	1	1	0	0
How students obtained cigarettes (during past 30 days, one response only)								
Q43a. Bought them in a store	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q43b. Bought them from a vending machine	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q43c. Gave someone else money to buy them for me	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q43d. Borrowed them from someone else	0	1	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q43e. A person 18 years old or older gave them to me	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q43f. Took them from a store or a family member	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q43g. Obtained them some other way	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0

Observations:

- As indicated in the table, reported use of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products by middle school students in Cohasset was virtually non-existent in 2019. Current findings are similar to findings from 2017 in Cohasset and even a bit lower.

⁴ No data are provided for question 39 because the rates of use of the various tobacco products were negligible.

7.2 Other tobacco-related perceptions and beliefs

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Other tobacco-related perceptions and beliefs								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
Q48. Believe people take moderate or great risk of harm by smoking one or more packs of cigarettes per day	92	87	--	92	94	92	94	88
Q49. Believe their parents think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to smoke tobacco	98	97	--	99	98	98	99	99
Q50. Believe their friends think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to smoke tobacco	93	94	--	92	94	95	94	90

Observations:

- As indicated in the table, 92% of respondents report believing that smoking one or more packs of cigarettes per day involves moderate or great risk of harm. Similarly, 98% reported that their parents think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to smoke tobacco; and 93% of respondents reported that their friends think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to do so.
- Comparisons: Current rates are similar to comparable rates in Cohasset in 2017.
- By gender: As indicated in the table, rates for girls and boys were very similar on all three variables.
- By grade: Respondents' rates varied little by grade on these variables.

7.3 Electronic vapor products: Vaping

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Electronic vapor products: Vaping								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
Q51 Ever tried vaping (vape pen, juul,,e-cigarette, etc.) (lifetime)	3	3	10	1	4	2	2	5
Q54. Tried a vaping device before age 13 years	0	--	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q58 Vaping led to tobacco use	1	--	--	0	1	1	0	1
Q53. Having trouble stopping vaping currently (of those who reported past 30 day vaping)	0	--	--	0	0	0	0	0
In past 30 days:								
Q52. Vaped (At least one day in past month)	1	2	--	1	1	1	0	1
Q52. Vaped frequently (20 or more days in past month)	0	1	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q57. Vaped on school property (At least once in past month)	1	--	--	1	1	1	0	1
Substances used most frequently in vaping device (of those who reported vaping, choose only one)								
Q55a. THC	22	13	--	0	50	0	0	33
Q55b. Nicotine	11	0	--	50	0	0	0	17
Q55c. Flavoring only	33	63	--	50	50	0	0	50
Q55d. Other	33	25	--	0	0	100	0	0
Total percent	99	101		100	100	100		100

Observations:

- Reported lifetime and past 30-day rates of use of electronic vapor products were 3% and 1% respectively; and virtually no students reported frequent vaping, vaping on school property, use of a vaping device before age 13 years, or vaping leading to tobacco use. The few students who reported vaping reported using a variety of substances in their vaping devices.
- Comparisons: The current figures are similar to and perhaps a bit lower than comparable figures for Cohasset in 2017. The current reported lifetime rate of 3% for vaping is lower than the statewide rate of 10% on the MYHS in 2017.
- By gender and grade: Current reported rates for these variables are very low, and there are no apparent differences by gender or grade.

8.0 Alcohol use

8.1 Lifetime and current alcohol use

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Lifetime and current alcohol use								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
Q58 Ever drank alcohol (lifetime)	5	10	14	3	6	4	2	9
Q59. Drank alcohol before age 13 years (For first time other than a few sips)	4	8	4	3	5	5	2	5
In past 30 days:								
Q60. Currently drink alcohol (at least 1 day in past 30 days)	2	2	--	3	3	2	1	4
60. Currently drink alcohol frequently (20 or more days in past month)	0	1	--	1	0	0	0	1
Q61. Binge drinking; Drank 5 or more drinks in a row at least once (past month)	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
Q64. Drank alcohol on school property (at least once in past month)	0	1	--	0	0	0	0	0

Observations:

- Reported lifetime and past 30-day rates of alcohol drinking were 5% and 2% respectively, and 4% of respondents reported drinking before age 13 years. Virtually no students reported frequent drinking, binge drinking, or drinking alcohol on school property.
- Comparisons: The current rates for alcohol drinking all are quite low and a bit lower than comparable rates for 2017 in Cohasset, with the exception of current drinking which was very low in both years (2%).
- By gender and grade: The rates for all variables were quite low, and there was little variation by gender or grade level.

8.2 How students obtain alcohol

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
How students obtain alcohol								
Variables ⁵	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
How students obtained alcohol (during past 30 days, one response only)								
Q62a. I did not drink alcohol in the past 30 days	98	97	--	99	98	98	99	97
Q62b. Bought it in a store	0	1	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q62c. Bought it in a restaurant, bar, or club	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q62d. Bought it at a public event	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q62e. Gave family member or friend over 21 money to buy it	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q62f. Gave a stranger over 21 money to buy it	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q62g. Took the alcohol from home	0	1	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q62h. A friend gave it to me	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q62i. My parent(s) provided it to me	2	1	--	1	3	2	0	3
Q62j. A friend's parents provided it to me	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q62k. I got it some other way	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0
Total percent	100	100		100	101	100	99	100

Observations:

- As indicated in the tables above, very few middle school students reported past 30-day drinking (2%); and of those, all reported that their parents had provided it to them.
- Comparisons: These findings are quite similar to the comparable findings from 2017 in Cohasset.
- By gender and grade: The rates for these variables were very low, and there was little variation by gender or grade level.

⁵ Data for Q63 is not provided because no students responded to this question. The question was intended only for students who reported that a friend had given alcohol to them and sought to find out where the friend had obtained the alcohol. Since no students reported that a friend had given them alcohol, no students responded to Q63.

8.3 Other alcohol-related behavior, perceptions, and attitudes

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Other alcohol-related behavior, perceptions, and attitudes								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
Q65 Believe people take moderate or great risk of harm by taking 5 or more drinks once or twice a week	85	82	--	86	87	88	84	83
Q66 Believe people take moderate or great risk of harm by taking 1 or 2 drinks daily	79	77	--	78	85	83	81	74
Q67. Believe their parents think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to have 1 or 2 drinks once or twice a month	92	96	--	93	92	90	93	90
Q68. Believe their friends think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to have 1 or 2 drinks once or twice a month	85	90	--	86	86	89	90	77
Q69. Somewhat or strongly disapprove of teens their age having 1 or 2 drinks once or twice a month	81	85	--	82	79	86	85	69
Q70. Believe any drinking by students their age is not good	26	30	--	31	20	31	29	18
Q71. Believe that 40% or more Cohasset Middle School students drank alcohol in previous month	8	5	--	6	8	10	10	8
Q72. Believe that 30% or more Cohasset Middle School students had 5 or more drinks in a row in previous month	3	2	--	2	9	4	6	1
Q74. Discussed underage drinking with their parent(s)/caregiver(s) in past month	28	28	--	26	32	26	31	29
Q75. Discussed rules about drinking with their parent(s)/caregiver(s) in past month	27	25	--	26	30	30	32	22
Q76. Report that their parents lock alcohol in their home	15	--	--	14	15	13	17	15
Q77. Report that their parents allow them to drink alcohol (1 drink only)	7	--	--	3	11	4	6	12
Q77. Report that parents allow them to drink alcohol (more than 1 drink)	1	--	--	1	1	1	1	2
Limits other students' parents place on student drinking in home (one choice only)								
Q73a. No drinking allowed	87	86	--	91	86	87	86	89
Q73b. Drinking with family when parents present	10	9	--	6	12	10	8	11
Q73c. Drinking with friends when parent present	1	2	--	2	0	0	2	1
Q73d. No limits on drinking	2	3	--	1	2	3	4	0

Observations:

- Student attitudes toward teen drinking: Respondents answers to this series of questions suggests that a majority of students believe that frequent and/or heavy drinking by teens is bad. As indicated in the table, 85% and 79% of respondents believe that binge drinking and daily drinking respectively involve moderate or great risk of harm. On the other hand, only 26% of respondents report believing drinking alcohol once or twice a month is bad.
- Student perceptions of other students and parents: Most respondents (92%) reported that their parents think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to drink alcohol moderately once or twice a month, and most respondents (85%) also reported that their friends think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to do so. Few respondents (8%) reported believing that 40% or more of Cohasset Middle school students had drunk alcohol in the previous month; and only 3% reported believing that 30% or more of Cohasset Middle school students had been binge drinking in the previous month.
- Parental involvement and limits regarding teen drinking: Rates of reported parental involvement and limits tended to be modest and varied by type. About 1 of 4 respondents reported talking with a parent about underage drinking (28%) or rules for drinking (27%) in the previous month. Only 8% of respondents reported that their parents allowed them to drink alcohol, with 7% reporting parents limited them to one drink and the remaining 1% reporting parents allowed them to have multiple drinks. Only 15% reported that parents lock up alcohol in their homes. When asked about limits parents other than their own place on teen alcohol use at home, most (87%) reported that other parents allowed no teen alcohol use at home; and most of the remainder reported that parents allowed teen drinking only with parents present.
- Comparisons: Where comparisons are possible, current rates are quite similar to comparable rates in Cohasset in 2017.
- By gender: As indicated in the table, rates for boys and girls were quite similar on these variables.
- By grade: Respondents' rates of expressed concern that drinking is risky, harmful, or wrong all decline from the 6th to 8th grades, as do the rates of those who report parents or friends' disapproval of underage drinking.

9.0 Marijuana use

9.1 Lifetime and current marijuana use

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Lifetime and current marijuana use								
Variables	% Total		% by Gender		% by Grade			
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
Q78 Ever used marijuana (lifetime)	2	2	6	0	2	2	0	3
Q79. Used marijuana before age 13 years (For first time)	1	1	--	0	1	1	0	1
In past 30 days:								
Q80. Currently use marijuana (at least 1 day in past 30 days)	1	1	2	1	1	1	0	3
Q80. Currently use marijuana frequently (at least 20 times in past 30 days)	0	1	--	1	0	0	0	1
Q81. Currently use synthetic marijuana (K2, spice, etc.) (at least 1 day in past 30 days)	1	1	--	1	1	1	0	1
Q82. Used marijuana on school property (at least once in past month)	1	1	--	1	1	0	1	2

Observations:

- Reported lifetime and past 30-day rates of marijuana use were 2% and 1% respectively. Only 1% of respondents reported marijuana use before age 13 years while virtually none reported current frequent marijuana use. The rate of current use of synthetic marijuana was negligible (1%) as was the rate of use of marijuana on school property (1%).
- Comparisons: The current rates for all variables are similar to the reported rates in Cohasset in 2017 and, where comparisons are available, a bit lower than the rates for Massachusetts as a whole in 2017.
- By gender and grade: The reported rates of marijuana use were very low on all variables, and there was very little variation by gender or grade level.

9.2 Other marijuana-related behavior, perceptions, and attitudes

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Other marijuana-related behavior, perceptions, and attitudes								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
Q83 Believe people take moderate or great risk of harm by using marijuana once or twice a week	79	76	--	77	84	89	82	57
Q84. Believe their parents think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to use marijuana	96	97	--	99	94	98	97	93
Q85. Believe their friends think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to use marijuana	91	90	--	94	90	95	93	85
Q86. Believe that 30% or more Cohasset Middle School students had used marijuana in previous month	20	10	--	14	28	17	19	29
Q87. Adults in family use marijuana	5	--	--	3	7	5	1	10

Observations:

- Student attitudes toward teen marijuana use: As indicated in the table, about 8 out of 10 respondents (79%) report believing that marijuana use once or twice a week involves moderate or great risk of harm.
- Student perceptions of other students and parents: Almost all respondents (96%) reported that their parents think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to use marijuana, almost as many respondents (91%) reported that their friends think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to do so. In addition, 20% of respondents reported believing that 30% or more of Cohasset middle school students had used marijuana in the previous month. Since the current reported rate for past 30 day marijuana use by Cohasset middle school students is only 1%, the latter finding suggests that a substantial majority of Cohasset middle school students believe more marijuana use by middle school students is occurring than is actually taking place according to survey findings.
- Parental/adult marijuana use: About 1 out of 20 respondents (5%) reported that an adult in his or her home uses marijuana.
- Comparisons: Current figures for these variables are quite similar to figures for comparable items for Cohasset in 2017.
- By gender: As indicated in the table, girls were more likely than boys to report that marijuana use poses significant risk for harm (84% vs 77%).
- By grade: Respondents' rates of expressed concern that marijuana use poses serious risk of harm declines from the 9th to 12th grades, as do the rates of those who report parents or friends' disapproval of underage drinking.

10.0 Other drug use

10.1 Prescription drug use without a prescription: Current and lifetime use

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Use of prescription drugs without a prescription: Current and lifetime use								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
In past 30 days:								
Q88 Used a prescription drug not prescribed to you	0	4	1	1	0	1	0	0
During your lifetime:								
Q89. Used a prescription stimulant (Adderall, Ritalin, etc) not prescribed to you	3	4	--	2	3	0	3	4

Observations:

- The reported past 30-day rate for use of prescription drugs without a prescription was negligible; and the reported lifetime rate for use of prescription stimulants without a prescription was 3%.
- Comparisons: The current rates for all variables are essentially unchanged from the reported rates in Cohasset in 2017.
- By gender and grade: The reported rates of use are very low for both variables, and there is little variation by gender or grade level.

10.2 Prescription drug use without a prescription: Perceptions and attitudes

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Prescription drug use without a prescription: Perceptions and attitudes								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
Q90 Believe people take moderate or great risk of harm by using prescription drugs not prescribed to them	89	86	--	88	91	88	87	91
Q91. Believe their parents think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to use prescription drugs without a prescription	95	95	--	94	96	97	94	93
Q92. Believe their friends think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to use prescription drugs without a prescription	95	92	--	94	96	95	93	94
Q93. Believe that 10% or more Cohasset Middle School students had used a prescription drug without a prescription in previous month	50	29	--	43	58	48	57	47

Observations:

- Student attitudes toward teen prescription drug use without a prescription: As indicated in the table, 9 out of 10 respondents (89%) report believing that use of prescription drugs without a prescription involves moderate or great risk of harm.
- Student perceptions of other students and parents: Similarly, virtually all respondents (95%) reported that their parents think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to use prescription drugs without a prescription; and most respondents (95%) also reported that their friends think it would be wrong or very wrong for them to do so. In addition, half of the respondents (50%) reported believing that 10% or more of Cohasset middle school students had used a prescription drug without a prescription in the previous month. Since the current reported rate for past 30 day use of prescriptions drugs without a prescription by Cohasset middle school students is 0%, the latter finding suggests that a substantial majority of Cohasset middle school students believe more use of prescription drugs without a prescription by middle school students is occurring than is actually taking place according to survey findings.
- Comparisons: Current figures for these variables are very similar to figures for comparable items for Cohasset in 2017.
- By gender: As indicated in the table, rates by girls and boys were quite similar for these variables, except that girls were more likely than boys to report believing that 10% or more middle school students had used prescription drugs without a prescription during the past month (58% vs 43%).
- By grade: There was very little variation by grade level on these variables.

10.3 Other drug use

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Other drug use								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
During your lifetime:								
Q94. Ever used inhalants	2	3	--	0	3	3	1	3
Past 12 months:								
Q95. Were offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property	3	3	--	3	2	1	2	5
Illegal drugs offered, sold, or given to you on school property (past 12 months)								
Q96a. Juul pods	2	--	--	2	2	0	2	3
Q96b. Alcohol	0	--	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q96c. Marijuana	1	--	--	1	1	0	0	2
Q96d. Prescription medication	0	--	--	0	0	0	0	0
Q96e. Other	0	--	--	0	0	0	0	0

Observations:

- Reported lifetime rate of use of inhalants was 2%; and few students (3%) reported being offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property in the previous year. The substances being offered were Juul pods and marijuana.
- Comparisons: Where comparisons were possible, the current figures are very similar to comparable figures from 2017 in Cohasset.
- By gender and grade: Rates on these variables were very low, and there was little variation by gender or grade level.

11.0 Overweight and weight control

2018-2019 Cohasset YRBS – Middle School								
Overweight and weight control								
Variables	% Total			% by Gender		% by Grade		
	Cohasset		MYS 2017	M	F	6 th	7 th	8 th
	2019	2017						
Q97. Described self as slightly or very overweight	18	16	25	17	19	18	14	20
Q98. Were not trying to lose weight	73	71	--	80	65	76	67	77
In past 30 days, to lose weight or keep from gaining weight:								
Q99. Went without eating for 24 hours or more	6	5	8	3	8	5	6	6
Q100. Took diet pills, powders, liquids without a doctor's advice	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	0
Q101. Vomited or took laxatives	1	2	4	0	1	0	1	1

Observations:

- While only 18% of middle school respondents reported being slightly or very overweight, 27% reported that they were trying to lose weight. Regarding recent efforts to lose weight or prevent weight gain, 6% of respondents reported fasting; and only 1% reported taking diet pills, powders or liquids without a doctor's advice or vomiting or taking laxatives.
- Comparisons: As indicated in the table, these rates regarding perception of weight and weight control are a bit better than the statewide rates for Massachusetts in 2017 and are quite similar to the comparable rates for Cohasset in 2017.
- By gender: Girls were more likely than boys to report trying to lose weight (35% girls vs 20% boys). Girls also were more likely than boys to report fasting to lose weight (8% girls vs. 3% boys).
- By grade: Percentages of respondents who reported being overweight and reported efforts to lose weight appeared to vary little by grade level.

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