

2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

Empowering Communities to Develop
Strategic Prevention Programming

Mercer County



Conducted by
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The administration of the survey would not have been a success without the contributions of PAYS Advisory Group (PAYSAG), whose tireless efforts and ideas helped make this year's PAYS the most widely administered survey since Pennsylvania has been administering the tool. The 2021 PAYSAG members included:

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The success of the 2021 PAYS could not have been achieved without the support and participation of school superintendents, administrators, principals, prevention coordinators, and teachers throughout the state. We extend our appreciation to the students who responded to the survey. Their thoughtful participation resulted in a wealth of information that can be used to improve the circumstances in which they live and learn.

Please note that this report does not contain data from all survey questions. To access and analyze county or state level data from the entire survey dataset, please visit www.bach-harrison.com/PAYSWebTool. For more information about PAYS, and to see aggregate reporting of responses provided by Pennsylvania youth, please visit www.pays.pa.gov. This site contains links to materials developed for the 2021 administration, as well as materials from prior survey administrations. Results from earlier PAYS administrations (e.g. reports from 2019 and earlier) can be found by consulting the links to past years' reports.

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PAYS: GOALS AND OVERVIEW

Since 1989, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has conducted a biennial survey of youth in the 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th grades to gather information about their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors towards alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use to help communities address root causes of antisocial behavior.

The “Pennsylvania Youth Survey” or “PAYS” is conducted every other year, in the fall of odd-numbered years. Beginning with the 2013 administration, PAYS was offered at no charge to any school or district (public, private, charter, and parochial) courtesy of funding provided by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP), and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE).

The 2021 PAYS was the sixteenth biennial administration (1989-2021). Comparisons in this report were made between the results of the 2017, 2019, and 2021 surveys, as well as comparisons to youth nationwide.

Over the last several survey administrations, PAYS has added additional questions about problem behaviors based on areas of interest to state and local leaders. These include questions on illegal prescription drug use, vaping and e-cigarette use, gambling, depression and suicidal ideation, violence on school property, causes and effects of bullying and abuse (physical and online), Internet safety, transitions and mobility, and involvement in after-school activities in the community or workplace. After each survey administration, Pennsylvania stakeholders review the survey instrument to determine if there are additional areas of importance that should be included in the next cycle or if some items have outlived their value and should be removed.

Questions are asked across four domains (community, school, family, and peer/individual) to help determine where the strengths of a community are, which can be promoted

to assist students. The questions also help determine where potential problems may exist outside of school that can have an impact on a student’s readiness to learn when they arrive at their school each morning. This includes questions on food security, housing instability, and the loss of a close family member or friend.

PAYS is administered in each participating school using either paper/pencil or an online tool. The survey is voluntary – youth are able to skip any questions they do not wish to answer or to opt out of the survey entirely. Additionally, students are made aware that their responses will remain anonymous and confidential. No individual student-level data can be obtained from the data set, and the results are reported in aggregate at the local, county, and state levels.

PAYS is a primary tool in Pennsylvania’s prevention approach of using data to drive decision making. By looking not just at rates of problem behaviors but also at the root causes of those behaviors, PAYS allows schools and communities to address reasons (such as a lack of commitment to school) rather than only looking at the symptoms after the fact (like poor grades). This approach has been repeatedly shown in national research studies to be the most effective in helping youth develop into healthy, productive members of their society.

Participation by Pennsylvania youth

The 2021 PAYS was administered during the fall of 2021 to youth in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12, resulting in 246,081 valid surveys. Community-level summary reports were issued to more than 400 school districts and counties.

There were 1,072 schools that chose to participate in the 2021 PAYS (out of 1,908 eligible). Estimated enrollment figures for the 2020-21 school year show that participating schools had 353,920 students enrolled in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 who were eligible to participate in the survey. An attempt was made to survey all eligible Pennsylvania students, resulting in 246,081 valid participants in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 (a participation rate of 69.5%), represented evenly across the state.

Grade	County 2021			State 2021		
	Surveys	Enrolled in participating school(s)*	Participation rate	Surveys	Enrolled in participating school(s)*	Participation rate
6	533	853	62.5	61,883	82,017	75.5
8	733	934	78.5	72,076	91,744	78.6
10	694	942	73.7	61,931	91,568	67.6
12	681	976	69.8	50,191	88,591	56.7
Total	2,641	3,705	71.3	246,081	353,920	69.5

* Enrollment in the this table refers to the number of students enrolled in participating schools.

In this county, 28 out of 38 schools (in 13 of 14 districts) participated in the 2021 PAYS. 2020-21 enrollment show that of the 3,705 students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 enrolled in participating schools, 2,641 valid surveys were submitted (a participation rate of 71.3%).

Grade	County 2021			State 2021		
	Surveys	Enrolled in all schools(s)**	Modified participation rate**	Surveys	Enrolled in all schools(s)**	Modified participation rate**
6	533	1,065	50.0	61,883	121,636	50.9
8	733	1,125	65.2	72,076	126,966	56.8
10	694	1,162	59.7	61,931	128,219	48.3
12	681	1,148	59.3	50,191	123,381	40.7
Total	2,641	4,500	58.7	246,081	500,202	49.2

** Enrollment in the second table refers to the number of students enrolled in all schools in the district, county or community that were eligible to participate in 2021 PAYS, even if they did not participate.

Enrollment figures for all 38 schools in this county show that 4,500 students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12

were eligible to participate in the 2021 PAYS administration. This means that the 2,641 valid surveys submitted from this county resulted in a modified participation rate of 58.7% (as seen in the second table).

Statewide, the 1,908 schools eligible to participate in the 2021 PAYS had an estimated enrollment of 500,202 public school students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12. The 246,081 valid surveys submitted resulted in a modified participation rate of 49.2% statewide.

Sample Confidence Intervals

When reviewing survey results people often ask, “What is the margin of error?” This is referred to as the “confidence interval,” and it reflects the precision of a statistical estimate. For example, the overall statewide confidence interval for drug use with a prevalence rate of 50.0% is ±0.8 points, meaning that there is a 95% chance that the true score is between 49.2% and 50.8%.

Grade	Statewide Sample †	Enrollment for Statewide Sample †	Confidence Interval
6	6,517	111,546	±1.7
8	8,548	111,153	±1.5
10	6,040	114,474	±1.8
12	6,270	111,523	±1.7
Total	27,375	448,696	±0.8

† Information on the design of statewide sample can be found in the 2017 thru 2021 PAYS State reports.

Note that these confidence intervals are for prevalence rates of 50%. For less prevalent behaviors, such as heroin use and bringing a weapon to school, the confidence interval narrows substantially.

Validity of PAYS data

In order to ensure the highest level of confidence in the survey results, measures are implemented to retain only those surveys that are deemed to be most honest and to remove surveys determined to contain possible dishonest or exaggerated responses. Dishonest surveys were identified using five validity checks:

1. the student indicated that they had used a fictitious drug (statewide, 622 surveys were identified as dishonest with this check)
2. the student reported an improbably high level of multiple drug use (450 surveys statewide)
3. the student indicated past-month use rates that were higher than lifetime use rates (206 surveys)
4. the student reported an age that was inconsistent with their grade or the grades served by their school (311 surveys)
5. the student reported an age for joining a gang that was older than their reported age (29 surveys)

Dishonest and incomplete surveys were eliminated from the data and are not included in the final analyses. Of the 247,319 survey questionnaires from grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 completed and returned to Bach Harrison for analysis, 1,238 (0.5%) were eliminated for meeting one or more of the above criteria.

The results within this county report are based on 2,641 honest responses (out of 2,677 surveys submitted).

PAYS analysis

The analysis of survey results for students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 provides critical information regarding (a) the changes in patterns of the use and misuse of harmful substances and behaviors; and, (b) risk factors that are related to these behaviors and the protective factors that help guard against them. Using the results, school administrators, state agency directors, legislators, and other community leaders can direct prevention resources to areas where they are likely to have the greatest impact. PAYS data are used to inform parents, school districts, and agencies serving youth on development of protective factors and are aligned with evidenced-based programs, which may support youth during transition times in their development. DDAP has used county-level PAYS data to identify areas of higher need for prevention initiatives and to assist in establishing county level priorities that become the primary focus of prevention efforts and funding.

PAYS survey instrument and reporting were designed to further the mission and vision of PCCD. The mission is to enhance the quality of criminal and juvenile justice systems, facilitate the delivery of services to victims of crime, and assist communities to develop and implement strategies to reduce crime and victimization. The vision of the PCCD is to be a state and national leader by providing innovative services and programs that promote justice for all citizens and communities of Pennsylvania.

1. DEMOGRAPHICS

49.0% of participants were female, 47.7% were male, and 3.3% were other. 8th graders were the best represented, with an estimated 78.5% participation rate based on most recent enrollment.

Overall, 77.7% of students surveyed in this county were white or Caucasian, 9.5% of students were black or African American, and the remainder were a combination of the remaining categories. 5.8% of students identified as being of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

Grade-level data are only displayed in this report when there were a minimum of 25 valid participants. “All Grades” represents the combined responses of all participating students from grades 6, 8, 10, and 12. Please note the distribution of participants in “All Grades” data for this county and keep this in mind when comparing local data to state data. State-level “All Grades” data are most useful when the county data are available for all four grades, meet the minimum cutoff for the total number of participants, and have a similar distribution of participants to the state.

	County 2017		County 2019		County 2021		State 2021	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Survey respondents								
All	2,944	100.0	3,468	100.0	2,641	100.0	246,081	100.0
Survey respondents by grade								
6	300	10.2	631	18.2	533	20.2	61,883	25.1
8	927	31.5	995	28.7	733	27.8	72,076	29.3
10	840	28.5	987	28.5	694	26.3	61,931	25.2
12	877	29.8	855	24.7	681	25.8	50,191	20.4
Survey respondents by gender								
Male	1,436	49.7	1,685	49.6	1,248	47.7	121,792	49.8
Female	1,456	50.3	1,710	50.4	1,282	49.0	114,733	46.9
Other	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	86	3.3	7,937	3.2
Survey respondents by ethnicity								
Yes, of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	119	4.0	202	5.8	154	5.8	35,218	14.3
No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	2,825	96.0	3,266	94.2	2,487	94.2	210,863	85.7
Survey respondents by race								
Black, African American	234	7.9	268	7.7	252	9.5	23,823	9.7
American Indian	46	1.6	46	1.3	38	1.4	3,446	1.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	77	2.6	80	2.3	51	1.9	14,769	6.0
White, Caucasian	2,343	79.6	2,727	78.6	2,053	77.7	172,381	70.1
Multi-racial	163	5.5	227	6.5	149	5.6	15,273	6.2
Race Unmarked	81	2.8	120	3.5	98	3.7	16,389	6.7

PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

Demographic questions

How old are you?

10 / 11 / 12 / 13 / 14 / 15 / 16 / 17 / 18 / 19 or older

What grade are you in?

6th / 7th / 8th / 9th / 10th / 11th / 12th

Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano

Yes, Puerto Rican

Yes, Cuban

Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin (for example, Argentinean, Columbian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, etc.)

What is your race? (Select all that apply)

White, Caucasian

Black, African American

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian Indian, Japanese, Native Hawaiian, Chinese, Korean, Guamanian or Chamorro, Filipino, Vietnamese, Samoan, Other Asian, Other Pacific Islander

Are you male, female or other?

Think of where you live most of the time. Which of the following people live there with you? (Choose all that apply)

Mother / Stepmother / Foster mother / Grandmother / Aunt

/ Father / Stepfather / Foster father / Grandfather / Uncle /

Other adults / Older Brother(s) / Younger Brother(s) / Older

Stepbrother(s) / Younger Stepbrother(s) / Older Sister(s) /

Younger Sister(s) / Older Stepsister(s) / Younger Stepsister(s) /

Other children

What is the language you use most often at home?

English

Spanish

Another language

2. ATOD USE AND ACCESS

Monitoring Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug (ATOD) Trends in Pennsylvania Youth

Measurement

Alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) use and access is measured in PAYS by a set of 32 questions. The questions are similar to those used in the Monitoring the Future study, a nationwide study of drug use by middle and high school students. Consequently, national data as well as data from other similar surveys can easily be compared to data from PAYS.

Prevalence-of-use tables and graphs show the percentages of students who reported using ATODs. These results are presented for both lifetime and past 30-day prevalence of use periods. Past 30-day prevalence of use (whether the student has used the drug within the last month) is a good measure of current use. In addition to the standard lifetime and past 30-day prevalence rates for alcohol use, binge drinking behavior (defined as consuming five or more drinks in a row within the past two weeks) is also measured.

The survey also includes six questions designed to measure non-medical use of prescription drugs. The questions cover three general categories of non-medical prescription drug use: pain relievers, tranquilizers, and

stimulants. Questions were added in 2015 to assess recreational use of over-the-counter drugs and to assess the use of electronic vaping products such as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes, vape pipes, vaping pens, e-hookahs, or hookah pens.

Lifetime Use

Lifetime use is a measure of the percentage of students who tried the particular substance at least once in their lifetime and is used to show the percentage of students who have had experience with a particular substance. Lifetime prevalence of use (whether the student has ever used the drug) is a good measure of student experimentation with a given substance.

30-Day Use

30-day use (whether the student has recently used the drug) is a more sensitive measure of current activities.

Comparisons to National Results

Comparing and contrasting findings from a county- or school-district-level survey to relevant data from a national survey provides a valuable perspective on local data. In this report, national comparisons for ATOD use will be made to the 2021 Monitoring the Future study and to the 2018 Bach-Harrison Norm.

Monitoring the Future Data

The Monitoring the Future (MTF) survey project, which provides prevalence-of-use information for ATODs from a nationally representative sample of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders, is conducted annually by the Survey Research Center of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan (see www.monitoringthefuture.org). For a review of the methodology of this study, please see <http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/purpose.html>.

Monitoring the Future data appear on the charts as “MTF 2021”

Bach Harrison Norm

The Bach Harrison Norm was developed by Bach Harrison L.L.C. to provide states and communities with the ability to compare their results on risk, protection, and antisocial measures with more national measures. Survey participants from 11 statewide surveys were combined into a database of approximately 878,000 students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12. The results were weighted by state and grade to make each state’s

contributions more in line with the nation’s student population. Bach Harrison analysts then calculated rates for antisocial behavior, students at risk, and students with protection. The results appear on the charts as “BH Norm.” In order to keep the Bach Harrison Norm relevant, it is updated approximately every two years as new data become available. The most recent update to the Bach Harrison Norm was completed using 2016-2017 data.

A comparison to state-wide and national results provides additional information for your county in determining the relative importance of levels of ATOD use, antisocial behavior, risk, and protection. Information about other students in the state and the nation can be helpful in determining the seriousness of a given level of problem behavior. Scanning across the charts, it is important to observe the factors that differ the most from the Bach Harrison Norm. This is the first step in identifying the levels of risk and protection that are higher or lower than those in other communities. The risk factors that are higher than the Bach Harrison Norm and the protective factors that are lower than the Bach Harrison Norm may be factors that your county should consider addressing when planning prevention programs.

HIGH PREVALENCE/EARLY INITIATION DRUGS

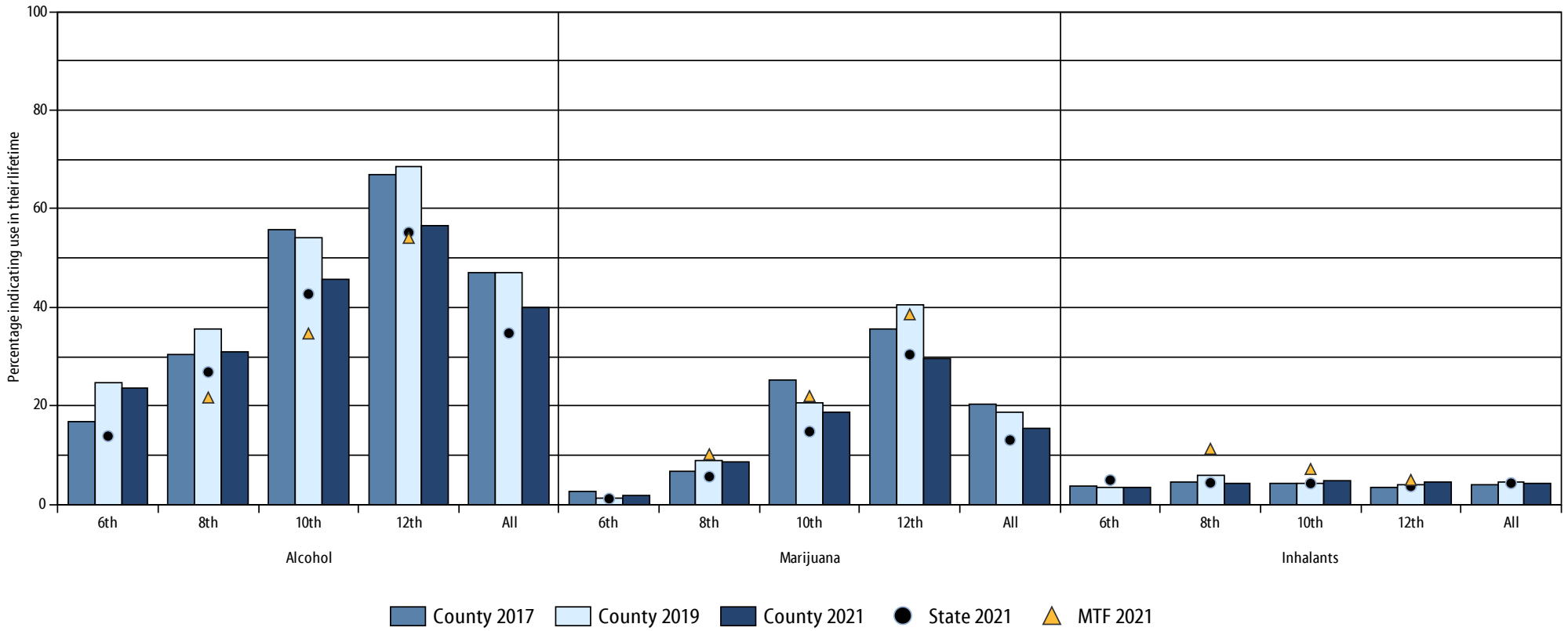
This section covers alcohol, tobacco (cigarettes, smokeless, and vaporized), marijuana, and inhalants, the drugs first and most commonly used by youth. The higher prevalence and earlier initiation of use makes monitoring these drugs useful when monitoring students at risk for progression from experimentation to social use to addiction to these and other substances.

Because these drugs generally enjoy more social acceptability, their use may normalize the larger idea of drug use as acceptable. Another potential risk is their use may “prime” the brain for addiction to other substances.

The highest lifetime usage rates were seen in alcohol (39.9% of students in this county, compared to 34.8% at the state level). The next highest lifetime use rate was marijuana, with 15.4% indicating use (compared to 13.1% at the state level). Although lifetime vaping statistics are not gathered, the 30-day use rate of e-cigarettes and other vapor products in this county was 16.9% (compared to 13.0% at the state level).

PAYS 2021 category:	PAYS 2021 question text:
<p>Alcohol including beer, wine, and hard liquor is the drug used most often by adolescents today.</p>	<p><i>How many times (if any) have you had beer, wine, or hard liquor in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?</i></p>
<p>Marijuana is the most widely used illicit drug. It is most frequently smoked although it can also be consumed mixed with food.</p>	<p><i>How many times (if any) have you used marijuana (pot, hash, cannabis, weed) in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?</i></p>
<p>Inhalants are any gases or fumes that can be inhaled for the purpose of getting high. While overall prevalence is fairly low, it is more prevalent with younger students, perhaps because inhalants are often easy for them to obtain. Health consequences can include brain damage and heart failure.</p>	<p><i>How many times (if any) have you sniffed glue, breathed the contents of an aerosol spray can, or inhaled other gases or sprays in order to get high in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?</i></p>
<p>Tobacco (including cigarettes and smokeless tobacco) was the second most commonly used drug among adolescents. National smoking rates, however, have declined substantially in recent years.</p>	<p><i>Have you ever smoked cigarettes?</i></p> <p><i>How frequently during the past 30 days have you smoked cigarettes?</i></p> <p><i>Have you ever used smokeless tobacco (chew, snuff, plug, dipping tobacco, chewing tobacco)?</i></p> <p><i>How frequently during the past 30 days have you used smokeless tobacco?</i></p>
<p>Vaping is a method of drug use where a device with a heating element is used to vaporize and inhale the psychoactive ingredients in tobacco, marijuana or sometimes other drugs.</p>	<p><i>How frequently have you used an electronic vapor product such as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes, vape pens, e-hookahs, or hookah pens during the past 30 days?</i></p>
	<p><i>If you used an electronic vapor product such as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes, vape pipes, vaping pens, e-hookahs, or hookah pens during the past 12 months, with which substances did you use it? (Mark all that apply.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Just flavoring</i> <i>Nicotine</i> <i>Marijuana or hash oil</i> <i>Other substance</i> <i>I don't know</i>

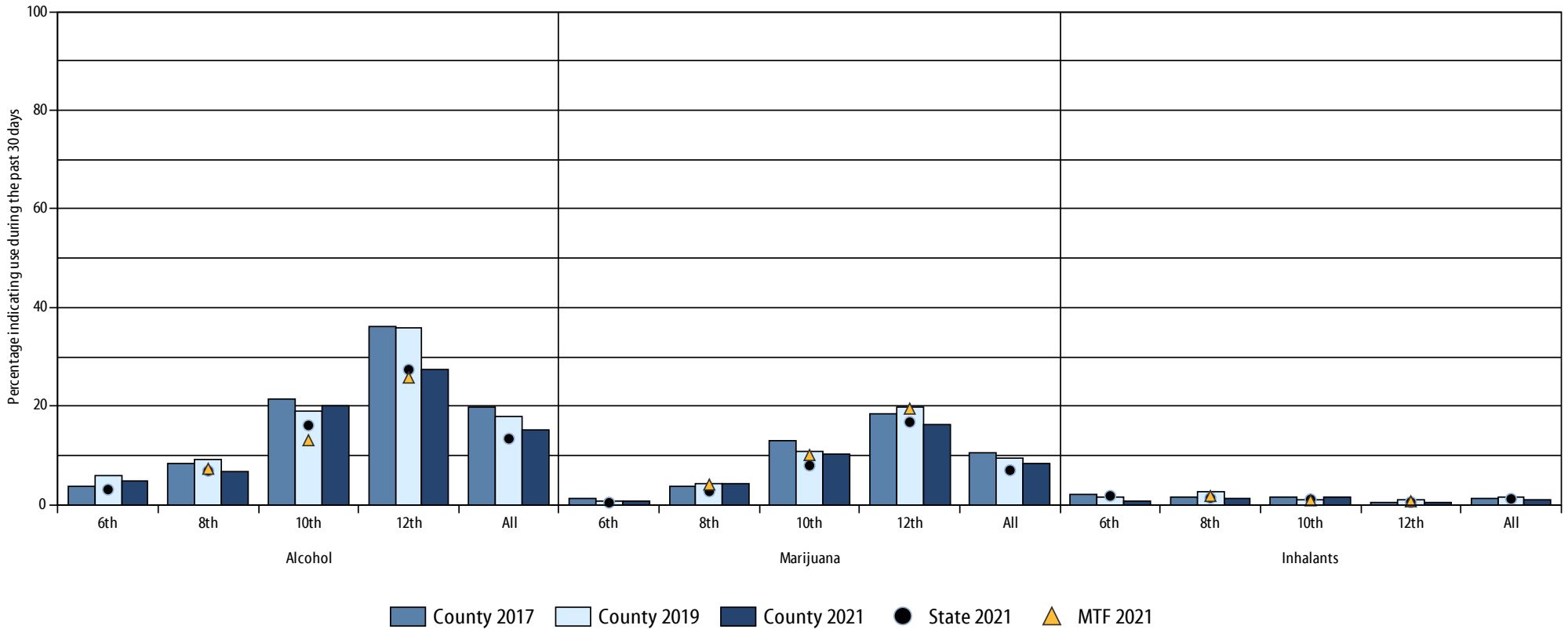
Early initiation and higher prevalence drugs - Lifetime use Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



4_26_2022

Grade	Alcohol					Marijuana					Inhalants				
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021
6th	16.9	24.6	23.6	13.9	n/a	2.8	1.3	1.9	1.2	n/a	3.7	3.4	3.5	5.0	n/a
8th	30.4	35.6	31.0	26.9	21.7	6.9	8.9	8.6	5.7	10.2	4.7	6.0	4.3	4.4	11.3
10th	55.7	54.2	45.7	42.7	34.7	25.4	20.6	18.8	14.8	22.0	4.3	4.3	4.8	4.3	7.2
12th	66.9	68.7	56.7	55.2	54.1	35.7	40.6	29.6	30.4	38.6	3.5	4.0	4.6	3.7	5.0
All	47.1	47.1	39.9	34.8	n/a	20.4	18.8	15.4	13.1	n/a	4.1	4.6	4.4	4.3	n/a

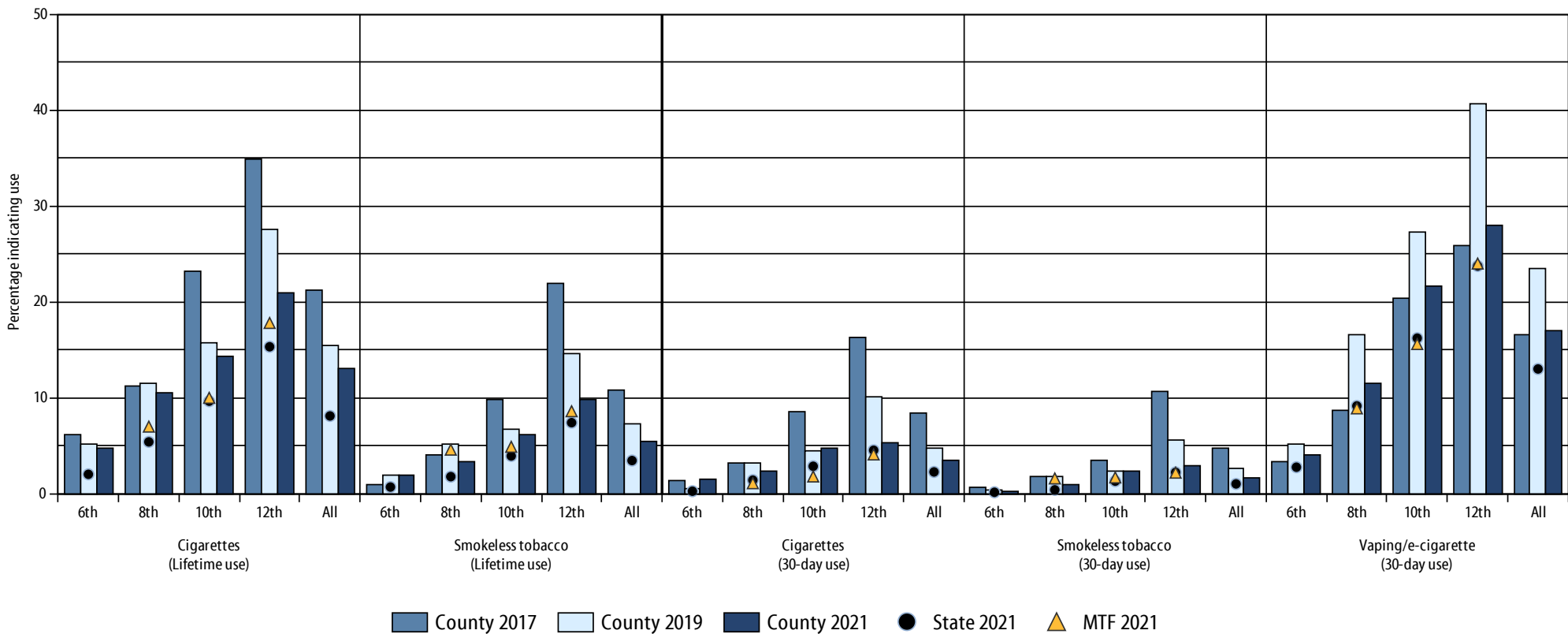
Early initiation and higher prevalence drugs - 30-day use Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



4_26_2022

Grade	Alcohol					Marijuana					Inhalants				
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021
6th	3.7	6.0	4.8	3.1	n/a	1.4	0.7	0.8	0.4	n/a	2.1	1.6	0.8	1.8	n/a
8th	8.3	9.2	6.7	6.9	7.3	3.8	4.2	4.4	2.7	4.1	1.5	2.7	1.4	1.4	1.8
10th	21.4	19.1	20.0	16.1	13.1	13.0	10.9	10.4	8.0	10.1	1.4	0.9	1.5	1.1	0.9
12th	36.1	35.8	27.5	27.4	25.8	18.3	19.8	16.2	16.8	19.5	0.3	0.9	0.4	0.5	0.7
All	19.9	18.0	15.1	13.4	n/a	10.6	9.4	8.3	7.0	n/a	1.2	1.6	1.0	1.2	n/a

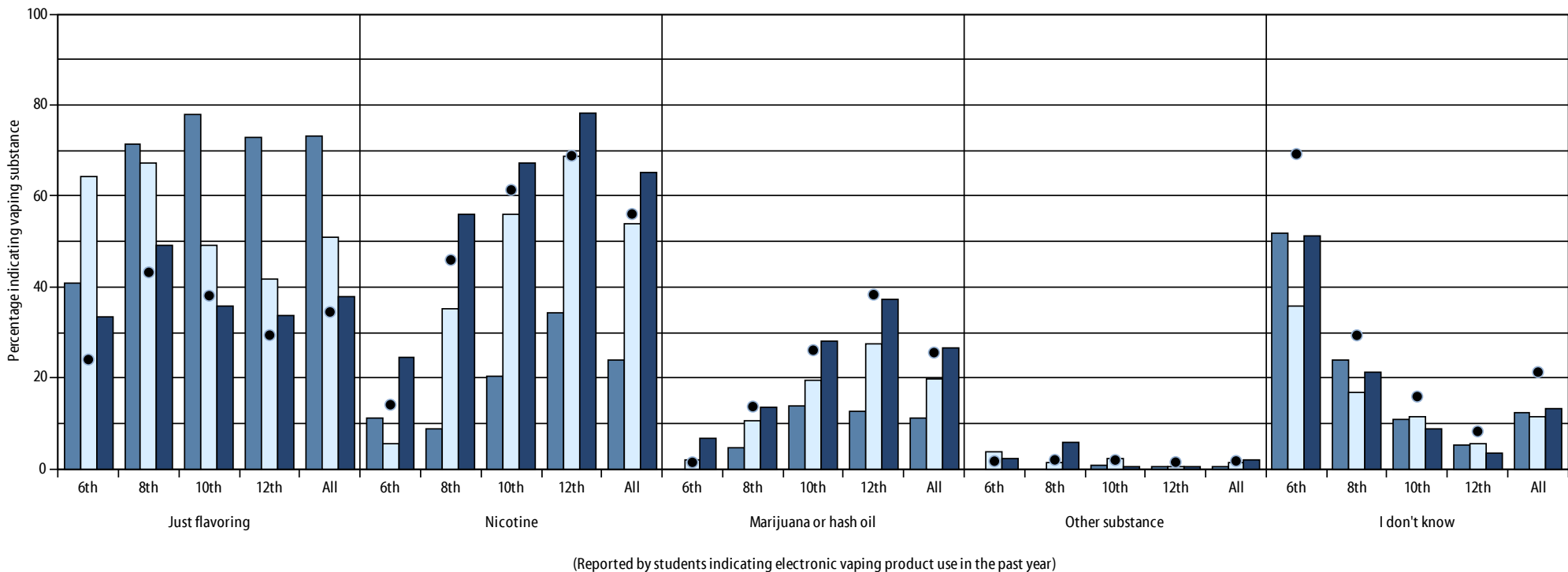
Tobacco and Vaping - Lifetime and 30-day use Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



4_26_2022

Grade	Cigarettes (Lifetime use)					Smokeless tobacco (Lifetime use)					Cigarettes (30-day use)					Smokeless tobacco (30-day use)					Vaping/e-cigarette (30-day use)				
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021
6th	6.1	5.2	4.8	2.0	n/a	1.0	1.9	1.9	0.7	n/a	1.3	0.5	1.5	0.3	n/a	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.2	n/a	3.4	5.2	4.1	2.8	n/a
8th	11.2	11.5	10.5	5.4	7.0	4.0	5.2	3.3	1.8	4.6	3.2	3.3	2.4	1.4	1.1	1.7	1.7	1.0	0.4	1.6	8.7	16.5	11.5	9.2	8.9
10th	23.2	15.7	14.3	9.6	10.0	9.9	6.7	6.2	3.9	4.9	8.6	4.4	4.7	2.9	1.8	3.5	2.4	2.4	1.3	1.7	20.4	27.3	21.6	16.2	15.6
12th	34.8	27.6	21.0	15.3	17.8	22.0	14.6	9.8	7.4	8.6	16.3	10.0	5.2	4.5	4.1	10.7	5.6	2.9	2.2	2.2	25.9	40.7	28.0	23.7	24.0
All	21.2	15.5	13.1	8.1	n/a	10.8	7.3	5.5	3.5	n/a	8.4	4.8	3.6	2.3	n/a	4.8	2.6	1.7	1.0	n/a	16.6	23.5	16.9	13.0	n/a

Vaping substances used by students indicating electronic vaping product use in the past year Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



County 2017 County 2019 County 2021 State 2021

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Grade	Just flavoring				Nicotine				Marijuana or hash oil				Other substance				I don't know			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	40.7	64.2	33.3	24.1	11.1	5.7	24.4	14.1	0.0	1.9	6.7	1.5	0.0	3.8	2.2	1.7	51.9	35.8	51.1	69.2
8th	71.4	67.3	49.2	43.2	8.7	35.1	55.9	46.0	4.8	10.6	13.6	13.7	0.0	1.4	5.9	2.0	23.8	16.8	21.2	29.4
10th	78.0	49.2	35.7	38.1	20.3	56.1	67.3	61.4	13.8	19.4	28.0	26.1	0.9	2.2	0.6	2.0	10.8	11.6	8.9	15.9
12th	72.8	41.6	33.8	29.4	34.2	68.8	78.1	68.9	12.8	27.4	37.3	38.3	0.7	0.5	0.5	1.5	5.4	5.6	3.5	8.3
All	73.1	50.8	37.8	34.5	23.9	54.0	65.2	56.1	11.1	19.8	26.5	25.6	0.6	1.4	1.9	1.8	12.4	11.6	13.2	21.3

PRESCRIPTION AND OVER-THE-COUNTER DRUGS AND MEDICATIONS

According to the recent Monitoring the Future study, prescription drugs are the most misused category of drugs after alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana.

Students often believe these substances are safer than illicit drugs because they are prescribed by a doctor and dispensed by a pharmacist. This is particularly troubling given the adverse health consequences related to prescription drug misuse: physiological and psychological addiction, physical dependence, and the possibility of overdose. In 2014, the CDC reported that 3 out of 4 new heroin users report having misused prescription opioids prior to using heroin. The presence of an opioid, illicit or prescribed by a doctor, was identified in 85% of the over 5,000 drug-related overdose deaths in Pennsylvania in 2020.

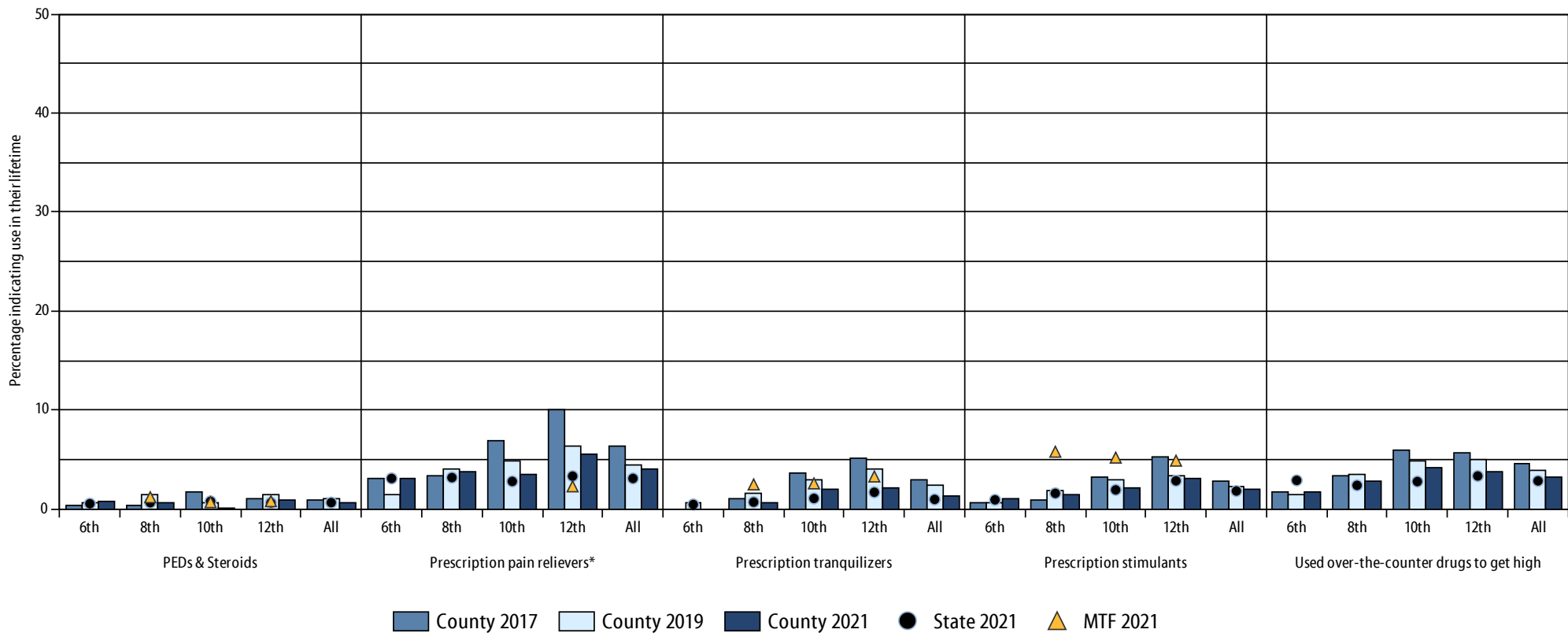
Although over-the-counter (OTC) medications represent less danger of fatal overdose, high perceived safety and lax control of distribution, in comparison to their prescription counterparts, in combination with the potential for misuse makes them worth monitoring.

The type of prescription drug most frequently misused by students in this county was prescription pain relievers (4.0% of students indicating lifetime use, compared to 3.1% at the state level). The next most frequently misused substance was over-the-counter drugs to get high (3.2% of students indicating lifetime use, compared to 2.9% at the state level).

PAYS 2021 category:	<i>PAYS 2021 question text:</i>
<p>Performance Enhancing Drugs (PEDs) such as steroids and human growth hormones are taken for muscle gain and athletic performance rather than psychoactive effects. Unsupervised use of steroids can prematurely stop the lengthening of bones as well as cause infertility and liver tumors.</p>	<p><i>How many times (if any) have you taken performance enhancing drugs (such as steroids, human growth hormone) without a doctor telling you to take them in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?</i></p>
<p>Over-the-Counter (OTC) Medications, when taken as intended, safely treat specific medical conditions. When taken in quantities other than recommended, OTC medicine may affect the brain much like illicit drugs will and repeated misuse may lead to dependence.</p>	<p><i>How many times (if any) have you used over-the-counter medicine (cough syrup, cold medicine, etc.) in order to get high in your lifetime/during the last 30 days?</i></p>

PAYS 2021 category:	<i>PAYS 2021 question text:</i>
Prescription Pain Relievers are used primarily to manage pain, but are also sought after for the accompanying euphoria.	<i>How many times (if any) have you used prescription pain relievers without a doctor's orders, in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?</i>
Prescription Tranquilizers are used to induce sleep, prevent seizures, and relieve anxiety, but non-medical use is widespread. Depressed respiration and slowed cognitive function are often compounded with concurrent alcohol use.	<i>How many times (if any) have you used prescription tranquilizers without a doctor telling you to take them in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?</i>
Prescription Stimulants are used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The PA Prescription Drug Monitoring Program indicates increases in stimulant prescriptions in recent years, which could increase availability for misuse.	<i>How many times (if any) have you used prescription stimulants without a doctor telling you to take them in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?</i>

Prescription and over-the-counter drugs and medications - Lifetime use Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

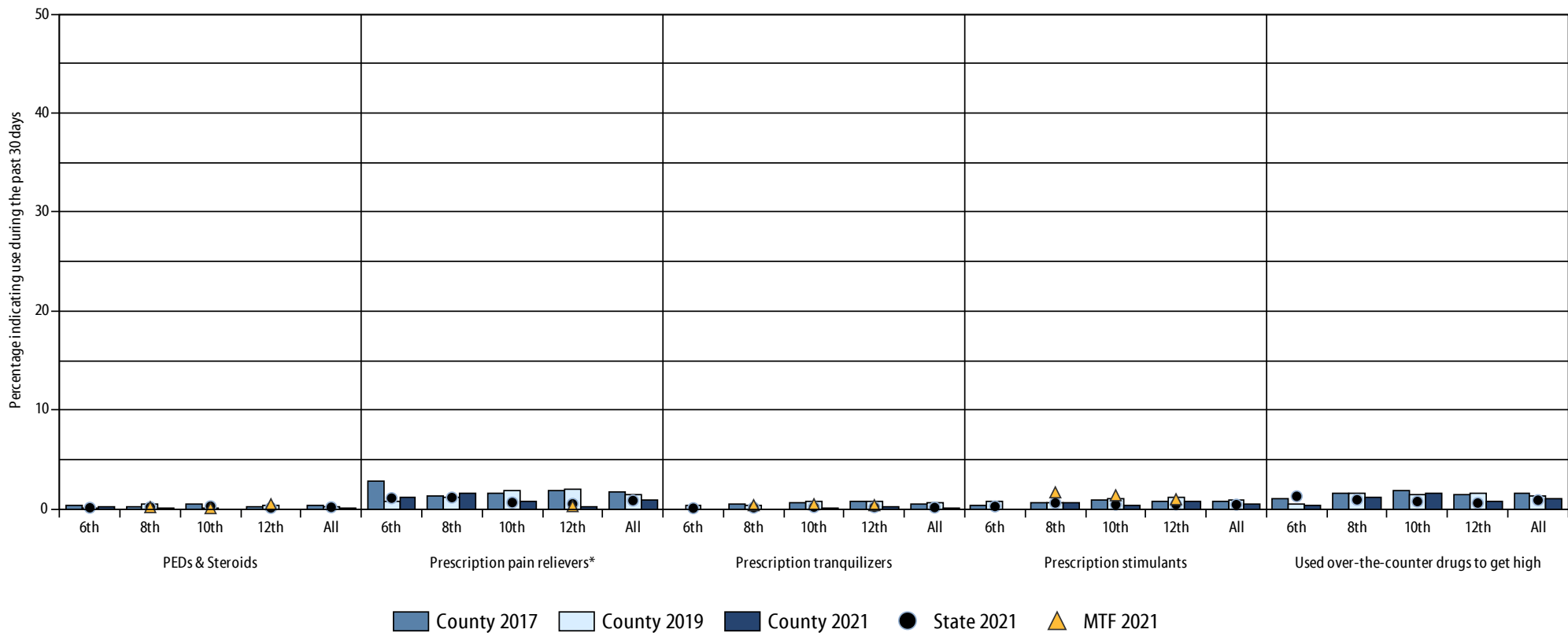


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*MTF comparison data for prescription pain reliever use are only available for the 12th grade

Grade	PEDs & Steroids					Prescription pain relievers*					Prescription tranquilizers					Prescription stimulants					Used over-the-counter drugs to get high				
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021
6th	0.3	0.6	0.8	0.5	n/a	3.0	1.5	3.1	3.1	n/a	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.5	n/a	0.7	0.7	1.0	0.9	n/a	1.7	1.5	1.8	2.9	n/a
8th	0.4	1.4	0.7	0.6	1.2	3.4	4.1	3.7	3.2	n/a	1.1	1.5	0.7	0.7	2.5	0.9	1.9	1.5	1.6	5.8	3.4	3.5	2.8	2.4	n/a
10th	1.7	0.6	0.1	0.8	0.7	6.9	4.8	3.5	2.8	n/a	3.7	2.9	2.1	1.1	2.6	3.2	2.9	2.2	1.9	5.2	5.9	4.8	4.2	2.8	n/a
12th	1.0	1.4	0.9	0.6	0.8	10.1	6.4	5.5	3.3	2.3	5.2	4.1	2.1	1.7	3.3	5.3	3.4	3.1	2.9	4.9	5.6	5.0	3.8	3.3	n/a
All	1.0	1.1	0.6	0.7	n/a	6.4	4.4	4.0	3.1	n/a	2.9	2.4	1.3	1.0	n/a	2.8	2.3	2.0	1.8	n/a	4.6	3.9	3.2	2.9	n/a

Prescription and over-the-counter drugs and medications - 30-day use Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



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*MTF comparison data for prescription pain reliever use are only available for the 12th grade

Grade	PEDs & Steroids					Prescription pain relievers*					Prescription tranquilizers					Prescription stimulants					Used over-the-counter drugs to get high				
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021
6th	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	n/a	2.8	0.8	1.2	1.1	n/a	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.1	n/a	0.3	0.8	0.0	0.3	n/a	1.0	0.5	0.4	1.3	n/a
8th	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.2	1.3	1.2	1.7	1.2	n/a	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.6	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.2	0.9	n/a
10th	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.1	1.6	1.8	0.7	0.7	n/a	0.6	0.8	0.1	0.2	0.5	1.0	1.0	0.4	0.5	1.4	1.8	1.5	1.6	0.8	n/a
12th	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1	0.5	1.8	2.0	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.8	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.8	1.2	0.7	0.5	1.0	1.5	1.5	0.7	0.6	n/a
All	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.2	n/a	1.7	1.5	1.0	0.9	n/a	0.6	0.6	0.1	0.2	n/a	0.8	0.9	0.5	0.5	n/a	1.6	1.3	1.0	0.9	n/a

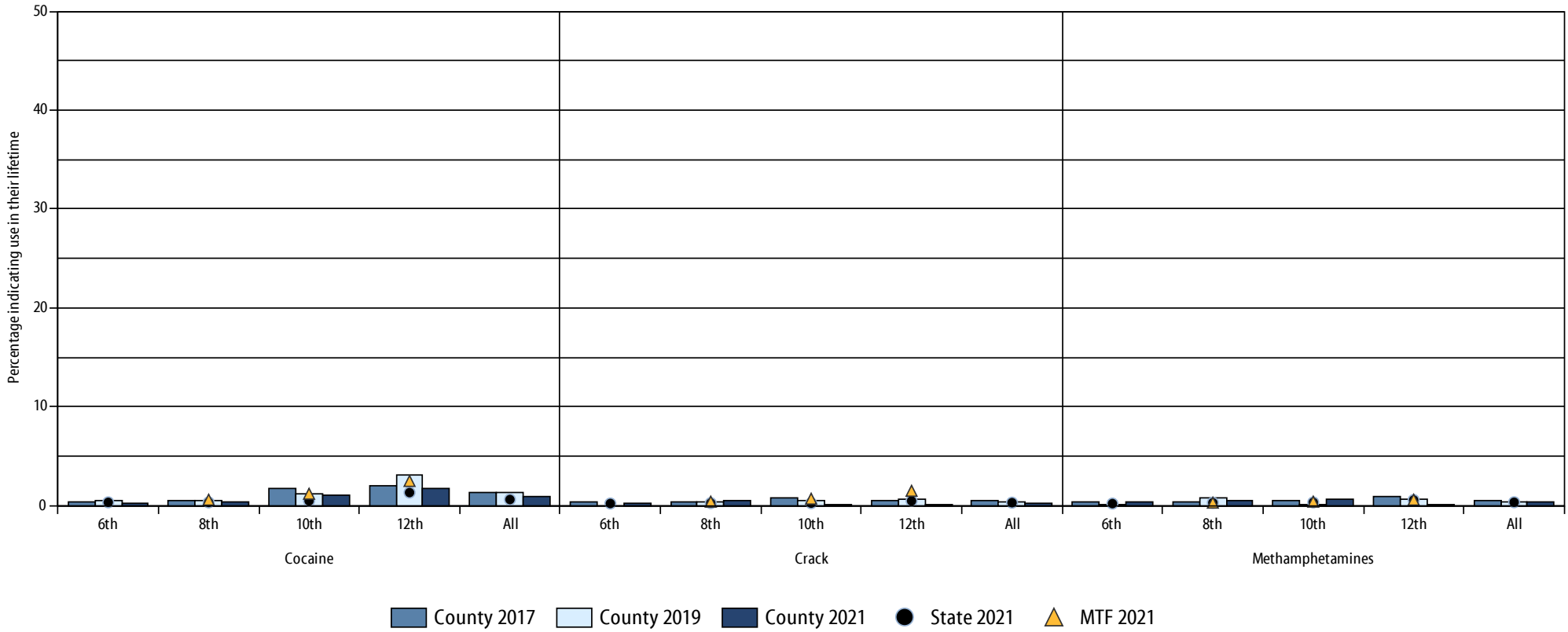
OTHER DRUGS

PAYS also measures the prevalence of use for a variety of other drugs. The rates for prevalence of use of these other drugs are generally lower than the rates for alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and inhalants. Use of these other drugs tends to be concentrated in the upper grade levels.

The most frequently used substance in the “other” category in this county was hallucinogens (3.2% of students indicating lifetime use, compared to 2.2% at the state level).

PAYS 2021 category:	PAYS 2021 question text:
<p>Cocaine is a powerfully addictive stimulant. Users may develop tolerance and use can cause a variety of physical problems, including chest pain, strokes, seizures, and abnormal heart rhythm.</p>	<p><i>How many times (if any) have you used cocaine in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?</i></p>
<p>Crack is an inexpensive, smokable form of cocaine producing a very intense but short-term high. Use is associated with cough, shortness of breath, and severe chest pains.</p>	<p><i>How many times (if any) have you used crack in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?</i></p>
<p>Methamphetamine is a highly addictive stimulant with effects similar to cocaine. Use of methamphetamine can cause physical and psychological problems, such as rapid or irregular heart rate, increased blood pressure, anxiety, and insomnia.</p>	<p><i>How many times (if any) have you used methamphetamine (meth, crystal meth, crank) in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?</i></p>
<p>Heroin is a highly addictive drug that can be injected, snorted, or smoked. Users risk overdose as well as long-term problems such as collapsed veins and bacterial infections.</p>	<p><i>How many times (if any) have you used heroin in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?</i></p>
<p>Hallucinogens produce distortions in perception and mood. Effects are unpredictable, varying widely depending on dose, mindset, and setting. Effects can range from anxiety and rapid heart rate to seizures and psychosis.</p>	<p><i>How many times (if any) have you used hallucinogens (acid, LSD, shrooms) in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?</i></p>
<p>Ecstasy (also known as MDMA or Molly) has both stimulant and hallucinogenic effects. Dangers include hyperthermia, hyponatremia and possible long-term changes in mood due to long-lasting changes in neurons that make serotonin.</p>	<p><i>How many times (if any) have you used Ecstasy or Molly in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?</i></p>
<p>Synthetic Drugs are analogues to marijuana, stimulants, and hallucinogens. They are easily available, as modification of chemical formulas allows sellers to sidestep prohibition efforts. Little is known about long term use but acute effects are reported frequently.</p>	<p><i>How many times (if any) have you used synthetic drugs (man-made drugs such as Bath Salts, K2, Spice, Mr. Smiley, Blaze) in your lifetime/during the past 30 days?</i></p>

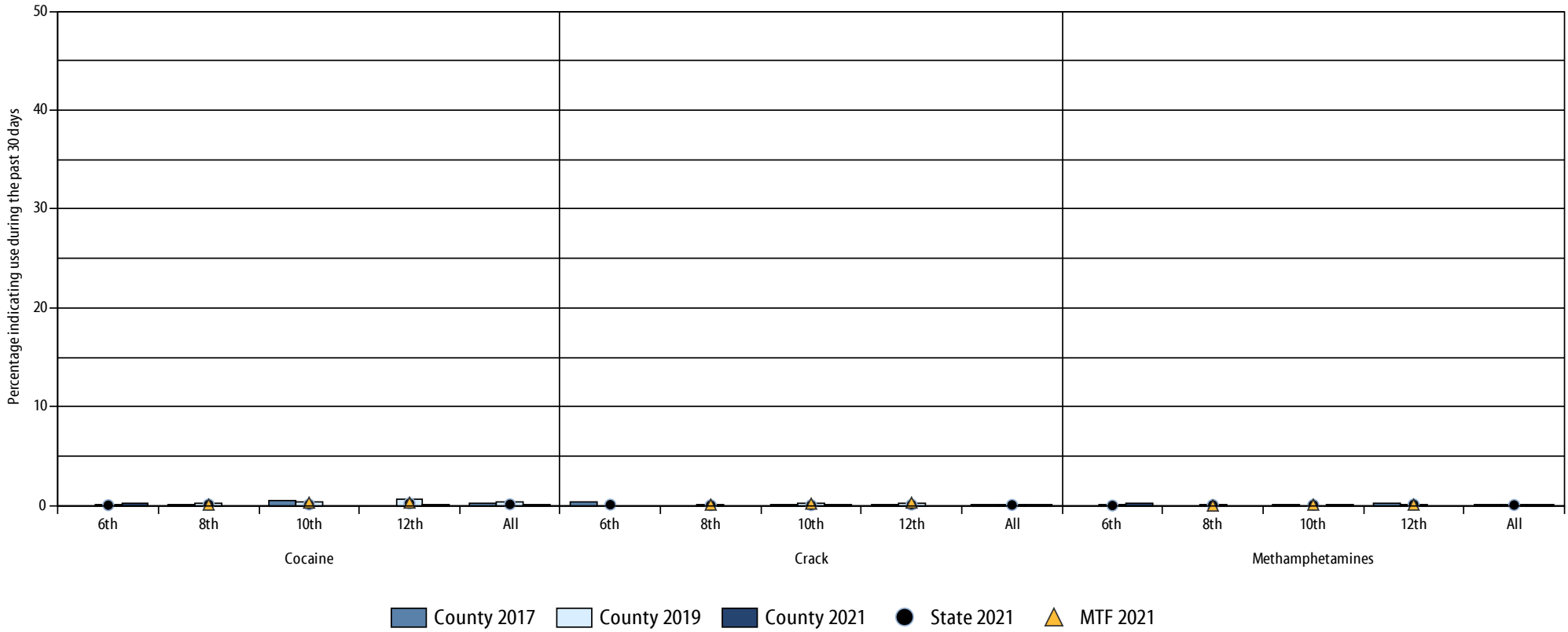
Other drugs (cocaine, crack, methamphetamines) - Lifetime use Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



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Grade	Cocaine					Crack					Methamphetamines				
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021
6th	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.3	n/a	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.2	n/a	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2	n/a
8th	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.7	0.6	0.3	0.3
10th	1.8	1.2	1.0	0.5	1.2	0.7	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.7	0.5	0.1	0.6	0.3	0.4
12th	1.9	3.1	1.8	1.3	2.5	0.6	0.6	0.1	0.5	1.5	0.9	0.6	0.1	0.6	0.6
All	1.3	1.3	0.9	0.6	n/a	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.3	n/a	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.3	n/a

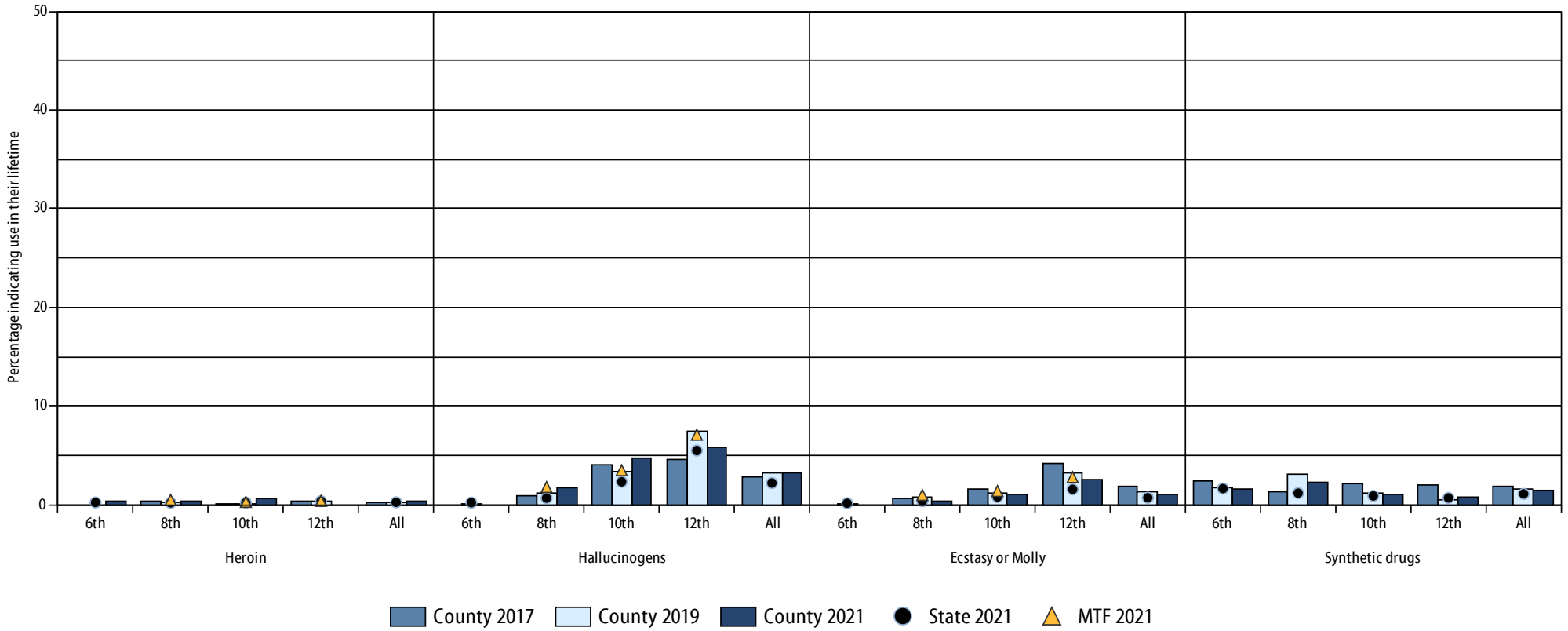
Other drugs (cocaine, crack, methamphetamines) - 30-day use Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



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Grade	Cocaine					Crack					Methamphetamines				
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021
6th	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	n/a	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	n/a	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	n/a
8th	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0
10th	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
12th	0.0	0.7	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1
All	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1	n/a	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	n/a	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	n/a

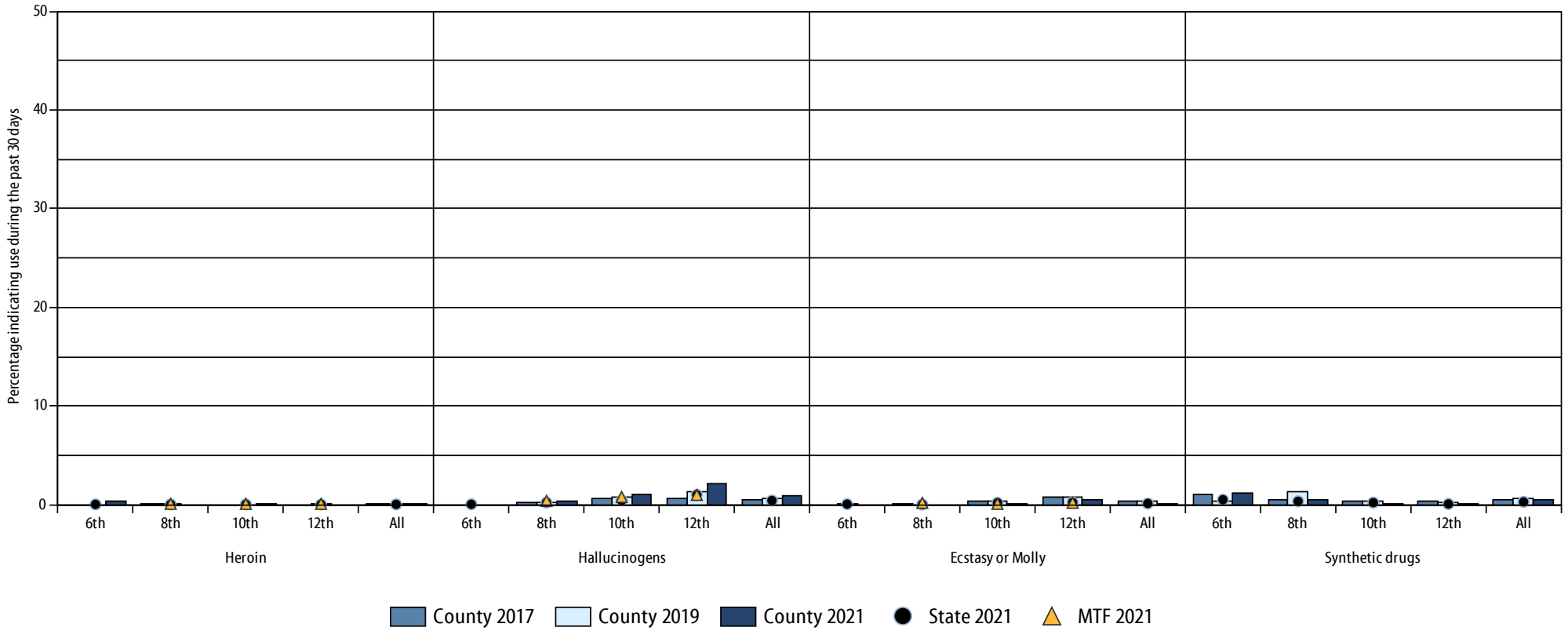
Other drugs (heroin, hallucinogens, ecstasy, and synthetic drugs) - Lifetime use Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



4_26_2022

Grade	Heroin					Hallucinogens					Ecstasy or Molly					Synthetic drugs				
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021
6th	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.2	n/a	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.2	n/a	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.2	n/a	2.4	1.7	1.6	1.6	n/a
8th	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.9	1.2	1.8	0.7	1.8	0.7	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.0	1.3	3.1	2.2	1.2	n/a
10th	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.2	0.3	4.1	3.4	4.7	2.3	3.5	1.6	1.1	1.0	0.8	1.4	2.2	1.1	1.0	0.9	n/a
12th	0.3	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.4	4.6	7.5	5.9	5.5	7.1	4.2	3.2	2.5	1.6	2.8	2.0	0.5	0.8	0.7	n/a
All	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	n/a	2.8	3.2	3.2	2.2	n/a	1.9	1.4	1.0	0.7	n/a	1.9	1.6	1.4	1.1	n/a

Other drugs (heroin, hallucinogens, ecstasy, and synthetic drugs) - 30-day use Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



4_26_2022

Grade	Heroin					Hallucinogens					Ecstasy or Molly					Synthetic drugs				
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021
6th	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	n/a	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	n/a	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.1	n/a	1.0	0.3	1.2	0.5	n/a
8th	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.4	1.3	0.6	0.4	n/a
10th	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.6	0.7	1.0	0.4	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.2	n/a
12th	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.7	1.3	2.1	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1	n/a
All	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	n/a	0.4	0.6	0.9	0.4	n/a	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.1	n/a	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.3	n/a

RISKY SUBSTANCE USE-RELATED BEHAVIORS

Binge drinking and driving while intoxicated are particularly risky substance use-related behaviors. These behaviors are strongly linked to serious negative health consequences, such as alcohol poisoning, automobile fatality, and increased risk of stroke, as well as DUI conviction and resulting complications with employment, college applications, and financial aid.

Binge drinking – loosely, “drinking to get drunk” – is the pattern of alcohol consumption that is probably of greatest concern from a public health perspective. Studies have shown that it is related to increased rates of injury due to intoxication, as well as an increased probability of driving while intoxicated.

Driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol endangers everyone on the roadway. Alcohol and marijuana impair clear thinking and hand-eye coordination. In 2020 17% of the driver fatalities in the 16-20 age group were drinking drivers, up from 14% in 2019. Studies also show that the risk of involvement in a traffic crash increased as drivers’ THC levels (i.e., marijuana use) increased. Drivers having the highest THC levels had a significantly higher risk of crashing than drug free drivers.

6.7% of students in this county engaged in binge drinking in the past two weeks (compared to 5.0% at the state level). 3.5% of 12th grade students reported driving while or shortly after drinking (compared to 2.5% at the state level).

PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

Risky substance use-related behaviors

Think back over the last two weeks.

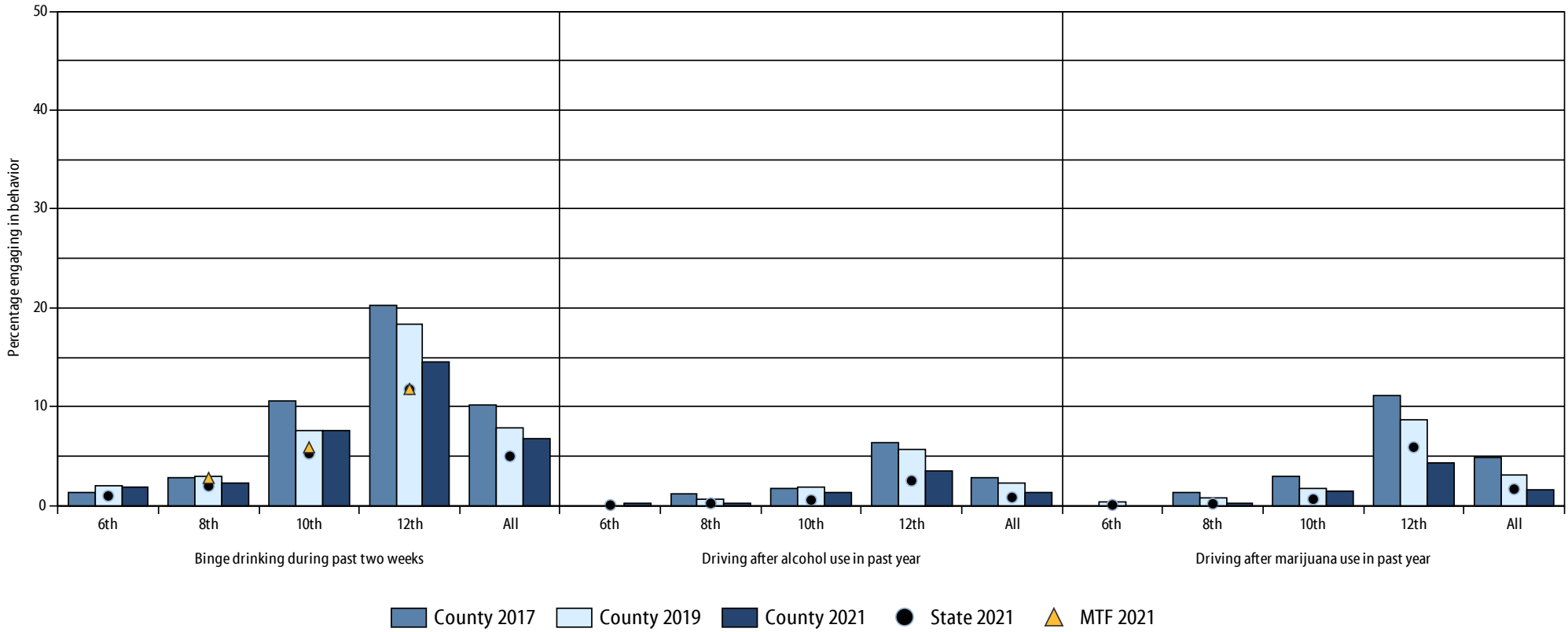
How many times have you had five or more alcoholic drinks in a row?

How often have you:

Driven a motor vehicle while or shortly after drinking?

Driven a motor vehicle while or shortly after using marijuana (pot, hash, cannabis, weed)?

Risky substance use-related behavior Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



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Grade	Binge drinking during past two weeks					Driving after alcohol use in past year					Driving after marijuana use in past year				
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	MTF 2021
6th	1.4	2.0	1.9	1.0	n/a	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	n/a	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.1	n/a
8th	2.9	3.0	2.2	2.0	2.8	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.2	n/a	1.3	0.7	0.3	0.2	n/a
10th	10.5	7.5	7.6	5.3	5.9	1.7	1.9	1.3	0.6	n/a	2.9	1.7	1.5	0.6	n/a
12th	20.2	18.3	14.5	11.8	11.8	6.3	5.7	3.5	2.5	n/a	11.1	8.6	4.4	5.9	n/a
All	10.1	7.9	6.7	5.0	n/a	2.9	2.3	1.3	0.8	n/a	4.8	3.1	1.6	1.7	n/a

ACCESS AND WILLINGNESS TO USE

Along with perceptions of substance misuse risk and level of substance misuse disapproval, student willingness to try or use ATODs is one of the attitudes that facilitates drug use.

Questions about how and where ATODs were obtained help suggest new approaches for preventing substance use.

Sources of alcohol may include sources such as a *parent, brother or sister, relative, friend, or other person*. Methods of acquiring alcohol include *bought or stole it, had someone purchase it, and took from home*. Willingness to use is purely a measure of a student's openness to a substance (the survey explicitly states *[t]hese are not questions about current or past use of these drugs*).

Perceived availability of substances is associated with increased drug use. The perceived availability of prescription drugs is of particular concern, because their availability may be independent of usual illicit avenues of obtaining substances. (Note that perceived availability of ATODs in general is also measured as a single scale in the Risk Factor section of this report.)

29.5% of students chose "Parents provided it to me" as their most frequent source/method of obtaining the alcohol they used, compared to 32.2% at the state level. The next most frequently reported source of alcohol was "Friends' parents provided it to me" with 25.8% of students indicating this method, compared to 20.3% at the state level. The third most frequently reported source was "took it without permission [from my home, friend's home, store, etc.]" with 25.5% of students indicating this method, compared to 31.3% at the state level.

44.4% of students chose "a friend or family member gave them to me" as their most frequent source/method of obtaining the prescription drugs they used without a doctor's prescription, compared to 40.8% at the state level. The next most frequently reported source of prescription drugs was "took them from a family member living in my home" with 36.1% of students indicating this method, compared to 47.8% at the state level.

22.8% of students showed a willingness to use alcohol (indicating they "would like to try it or use it" or "would use it any chance I got"), compared to 19.9% at the state level.

PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

Sources of alcohol

If you drank alcohol during the past 12 months, how did you usually get it? (Mark all that apply.)

- Did not drink any alcohol*
- Bought it in a store*
- Bought it at a restaurant, bar, or club*
- Bought it at a public event such as a concert or sporting event*
- Gave someone money to buy it for me*
- Parents provided it to me*
- Friends' parents provided it to me*
- Friends, brothers, or sisters over 21 provided it to me*
- Friends, brothers, or sisters under 21 provided it to me*
- Other relatives (uncles, aunts, cousins, grandparents, etc.) provided it to me*
- Other source provided it to me*
- Took without permission, stole, or found it (my home, friend's home, store, etc.)*

Sources of prescription drugs

If you used any prescription drugs without a prescription from your doctor during the last 12 months, how did you get them? (Mark all that apply.)

- I did not take any prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription.*
- Took them from a family member living in my home.*
- Took them from other relatives not living in my home.*
- Took them from someone not related to me.*
- A friend or family member gave them to me.*
- Bought them from someone.*
- Ordered them over the Internet.*

Willingness to use

How willing are you to try the drugs listed below before you are 21? These are not questions about current or past use of these drugs.

- ALCOHOL (beer, wine, coolers, hard liquor such as vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum)*
- MARIJUANA (pot, hash, cannabis, weed)*

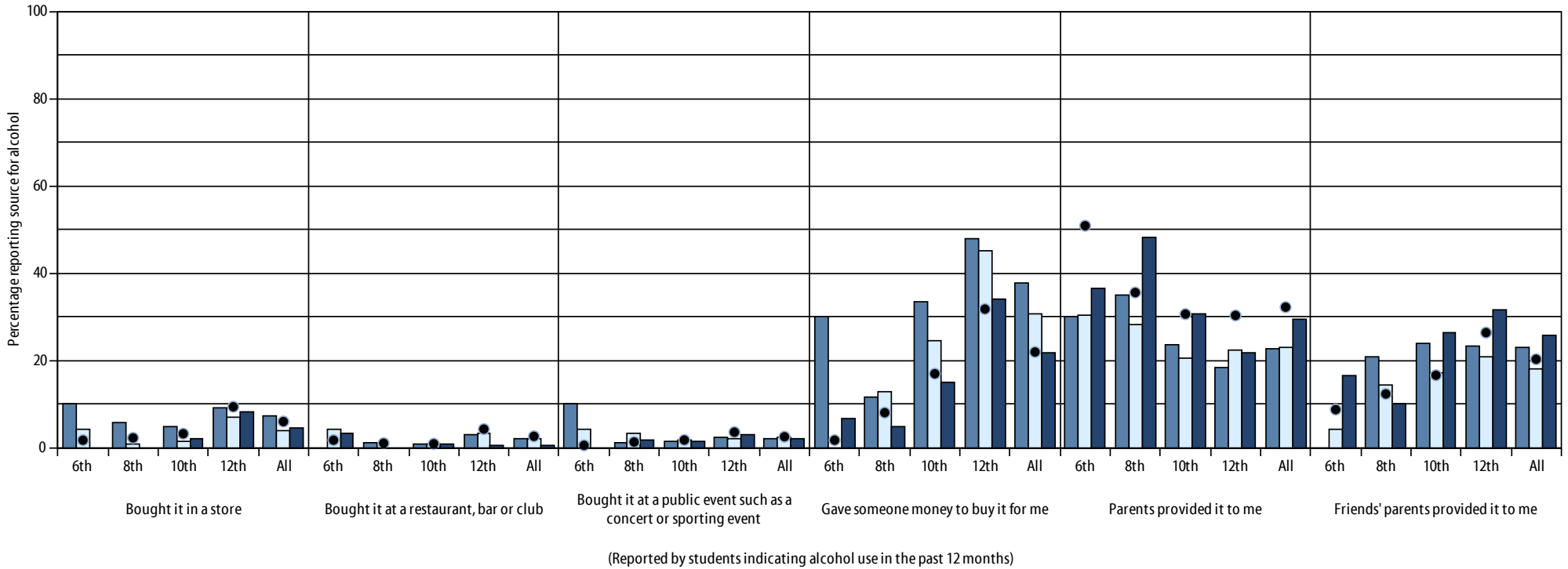
Perceived availability

How easy would it be for you to get any, if you wanted to get any of the following:

- Beer, wine, or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum)?*
- Cigarettes?*
- A drug like cocaine, LSD, heroin, or amphetamines?*
- Marijuana?*

If you wanted to get prescription drugs not prescribed to you, how easy would it be for you to get some?

Sources of alcohol by students who reported alcohol use Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

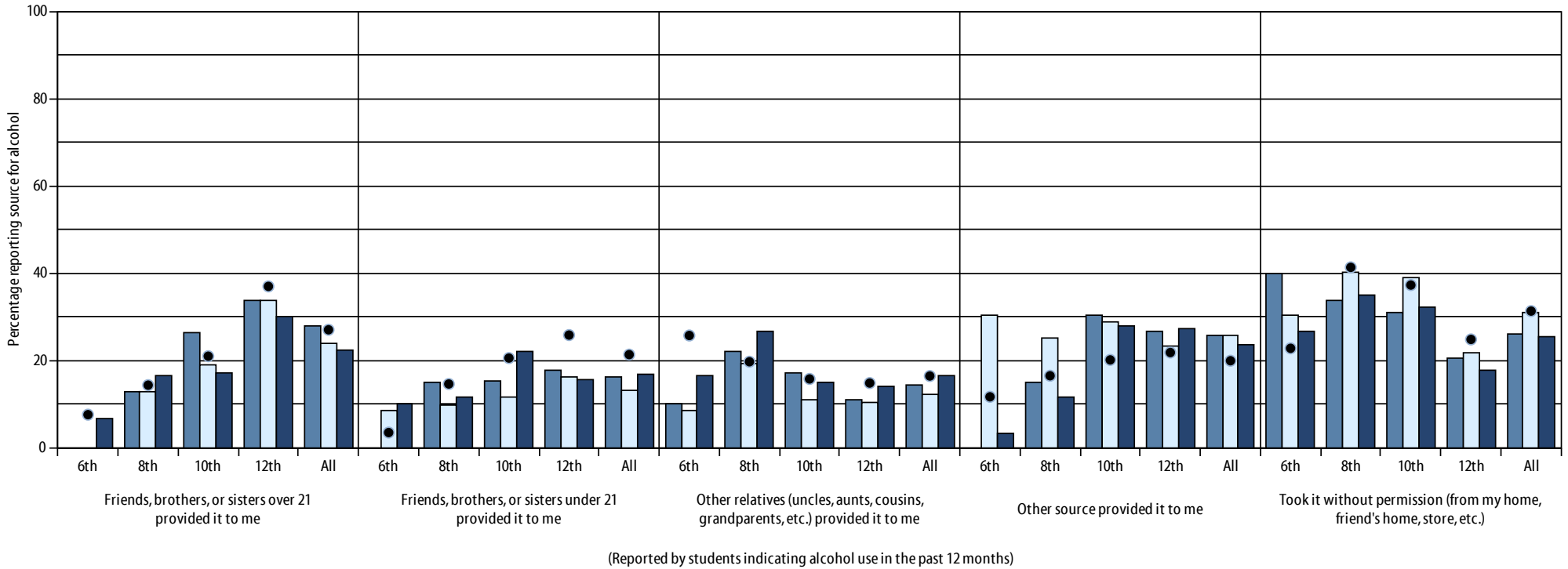


County 2017 County 2019 County 2021 State 2021

4_26_2022

Grade	Bought it in a store				Bought it at a restaurant, bar or club				Bought it at a public event such as a concert or sporting event				Gave someone money to buy it for me				Parents provided it to me				Friends' parents provided it to me			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	10.0	4.3	0.0	1.8	0.0	4.3	3.3	1.8	10.0	4.3	0.0	0.6	30.0	0.0	6.7	1.8	30.0	30.4	36.7	50.9	0.0	4.3	16.7	8.8
8th	5.8	0.8	0.0	2.3	1.2	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.2	3.2	1.7	1.3	11.6	12.9	5.0	8.1	34.9	28.2	48.3	35.6	20.9	14.5	10.0	12.3
10th	4.9	1.4	2.1	3.2	1.0	0.9	0.7	0.9	1.5	1.9	1.4	1.8	33.3	24.7	15.0	17.0	23.5	20.5	30.7	30.6	24.0	17.2	26.4	16.6
12th	9.1	7.0	8.1	9.4	3.1	3.3	0.5	4.3	2.5	2.0	3.0	3.6	47.8	45.0	34.0	31.8	18.4	22.3	21.8	30.3	23.4	21.0	31.5	26.4
All	7.3	3.9	4.4	6.0	2.1	2.0	0.7	2.6	2.1	2.3	2.1	2.5	37.7	30.8	21.8	22.0	22.6	23.1	29.5	32.2	22.9	18.0	25.8	20.3

Sources of alcohol by students who reported alcohol use (cont'd) Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

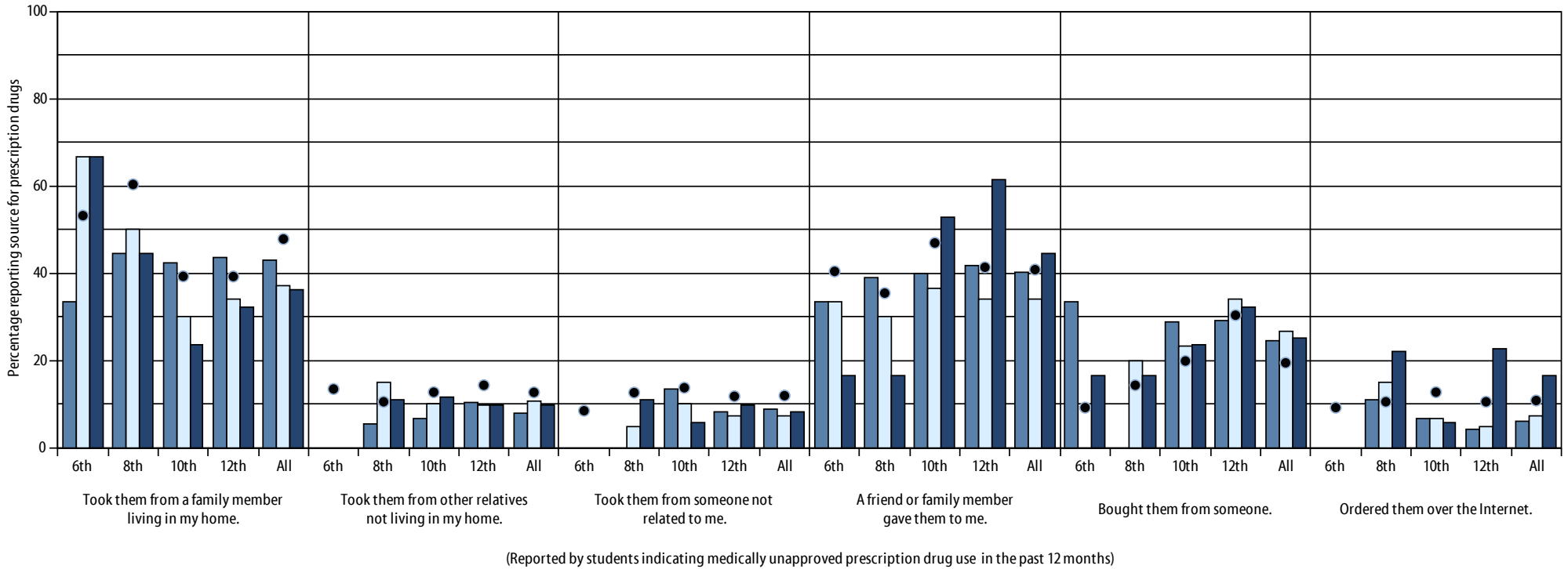


County 2017 County 2019 County 2021 State 2021

4_26_2022

Grade	Friends, brothers, or sisters over 21 provided it to me				Friends, brothers, or sisters under 21 provided it to me				Other relatives (uncles, aunts, cousins, grandparents, etc.) provided it to me				Other source provided it to me				Took it without permission (from my home, friend's home, store, etc.)			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	0.0	0.0	6.7	7.6	0.0	8.7	10.0	3.5	10.0	8.7	16.7	25.7	0.0	30.4	3.3	11.7	40.0	30.4	26.7	22.8
8th	12.8	12.9	16.7	14.4	15.1	9.7	11.7	14.6	22.1	19.4	26.7	19.7	15.1	25.0	11.7	16.5	33.7	40.3	35.0	41.3
10th	26.5	19.1	17.1	21.0	15.2	11.6	22.1	20.6	17.2	11.2	15.0	15.8	30.4	28.8	27.9	20.1	30.9	39.1	32.1	37.3
12th	33.8	33.7	29.9	37.0	17.8	16.3	15.7	25.8	10.9	10.3	14.2	14.8	26.6	23.3	27.4	21.8	20.6	21.7	17.8	24.8
All	27.9	23.9	22.2	27.0	16.3	13.3	16.9	21.3	14.5	12.2	16.4	16.5	25.8	25.7	23.7	20.0	26.1	31.1	25.5	31.3

Sources of prescription drugs by students who reported prescription drug use Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

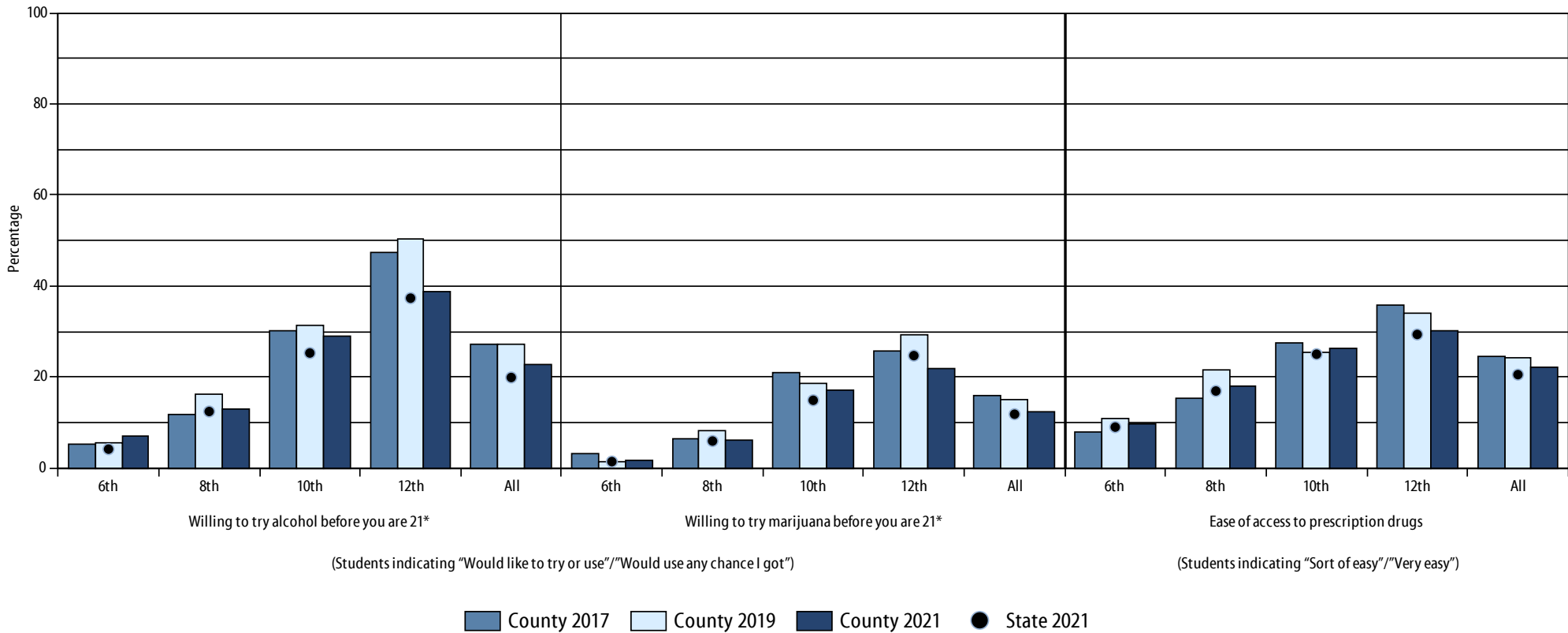


County 2017 County 2019 County 2021 State 2021

4_26_2022

Grade	Took them from a family member living in my home.				Took them from other relatives not living in my home.				Took them from someone not related to me.				A friend or family member gave them to me.				Bought them from someone.				Ordered them over the Internet.			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	33.3	66.7	66.7	53.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.5	33.3	33.3	16.7	40.4	33.3	0.0	16.7	9.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.2
8th	44.4	50.0	44.4	60.3	5.6	15.0	11.1	10.5	0.0	5.0	11.1	12.7	38.9	30.0	16.7	35.4	0.0	20.0	16.7	14.3	11.1	15.0	22.2	10.5
10th	42.2	30.0	23.5	39.3	6.7	10.0	11.8	12.8	13.3	10.0	5.9	13.8	40.0	36.7	52.9	46.9	28.9	23.3	23.5	19.9	6.7	6.7	5.9	12.8
12th	43.8	34.1	32.3	39.2	10.4	9.8	9.7	14.3	8.3	7.3	9.7	11.8	41.7	34.1	61.3	41.4	29.2	34.1	32.3	30.4	4.2	4.9	22.6	10.5
All	43.0	37.2	36.1	47.8	7.9	10.6	9.7	12.7	8.8	7.4	8.3	12.0	40.4	34.0	44.4	40.8	24.6	26.6	25.0	19.5	6.1	7.4	16.7	10.9

Access and willingness to use Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



(Students indicating "Would like to try or use"/"Would use any chance I got")

(Students indicating "Sort of easy"/"Very easy")

*Questions were revised in 2015 to add the qualifier "before you are 21." Rates reported in 2015 may be lower than previous years' data.

Grade	Willing to try alcohol				Willing to try marijuana				Ease of access to prescription drugs			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	5.2	5.5	7.1	4.2	3.1	1.3	1.8	1.4	7.8	10.8	9.8	9.0
8th	11.9	16.3	13.1	12.5	6.5	8.2	6.2	6.0	15.5	21.5	18.0	17.0
10th	30.3	31.4	29.0	25.3	21.0	18.5	17.1	14.9	27.4	25.5	26.4	25.0
12th	47.3	50.4	38.8	37.3	25.7	29.3	21.9	24.7	35.8	34.1	30.3	29.4
All	27.1	27.2	22.8	19.9	16.1	15.1	12.2	11.9	24.7	24.1	22.1	20.6

3. ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR

The charts and tables that follow present the rates of a variety of antisocial behaviors (ASB). Antisocial behavior may be outwardly directed, involving aggression against adults or peers, or might be behavior destructive to property, self, and others.

Less overt antisocial behavior includes addictive behavior (such as gambling) or dishonest communication with parents.

Rates of both antisocial behavior and gambling reflect reported behavior in the past year. Gambling in the past 30-days is provided as a more sensitive indicator of student gambling involvement. Questions assessing lifetime incidence of gambling, online betting, personal skills games (such as pool, darts, coin tossing, video games), and other ways provide additional information about gambling involvement.

Intervention programs that focus on diminishing rewards for ASB and increasing reinforcement for prosocial behavior can encourage young people to discard these detrimental behavioral strategies.

GAMBLING

Even though gambling activities are legally restricted to adults, there is clear evidence that underage youth actively participate in gambling.

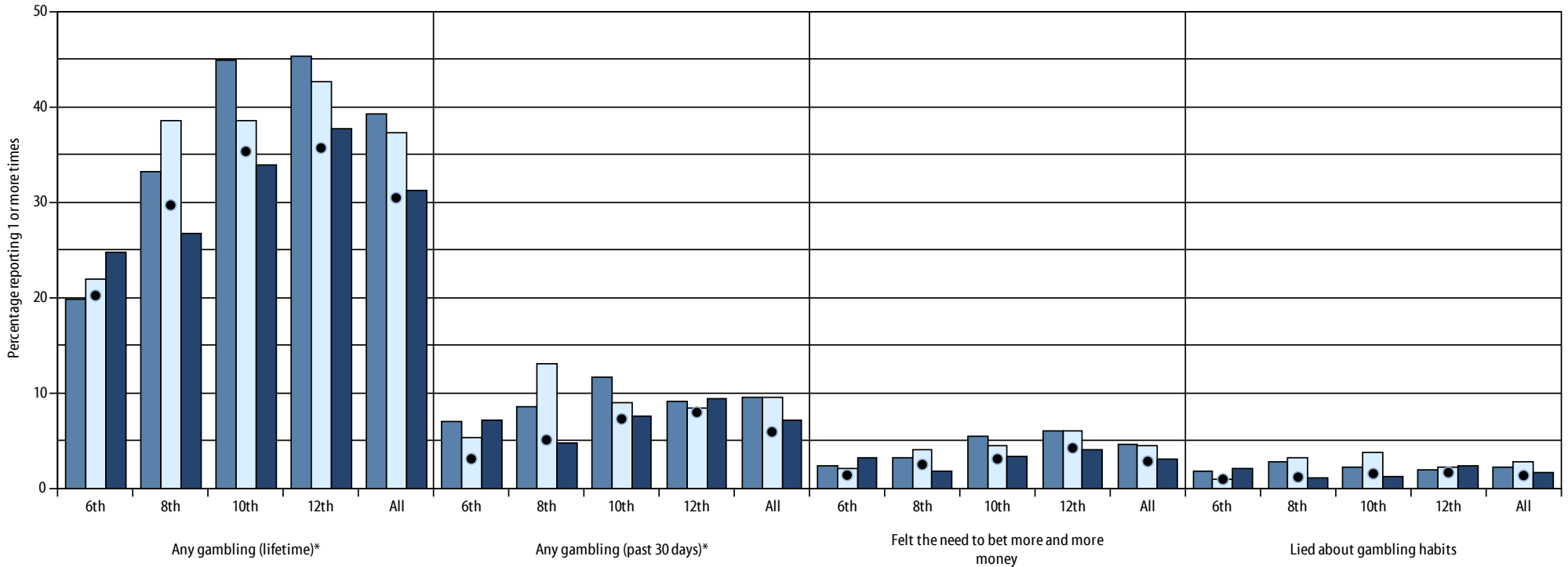
Despite being promoted as a harmless form of entertainment, gambling operates on the same reward pathways and the same neurotransmitters as ATOD addiction. Youth gambling is associated with alcohol and drug use, truancy, low grades, and risk-taking behavior.

Overall, 31.2% of students in this county engaged in gambling for money or anything of value in their lifetime (compared to 30.4% at the state level).

The most frequently reported form of gambling was “lottery [scratch cards, numbers, etc.]” reported by 21.1% of students who had gambled in the past 12 months (compared to 18.3% at the state level).

PAYS 2021 category:	<i>PAYS 2021 question text:</i>
Students engaging in gambling	<p><i>How many times (if any) have you, in your lifetime bet/gambled for money or anything of value?</i></p> <p><i>In the past 30 days have you bet/gambled for money or anything of value?</i></p>
Specific types of student gambling	<p><i>During the past 12 months, how often have you bet/gambled, even casually, for money or valuables in the following ways:</i></p> <p><i>Table games like poker or other card games, dice, backgammon, or dominoes</i></p> <p><i>Lottery (scratch cards, numbers, etc.)</i></p> <p><i>Sporting events or sports pools</i></p> <p><i>Online (Internet) gambling</i></p> <p><i>Personal skill games (such as pool, darts, coin tossing, video games)</i></p> <p><i>Bet/gambled in some other way</i></p>
Compulsive/dishonest gambling behavior	<p><i>Have you ever felt the need to:</i></p> <p><i>Bet more and more money?</i></p> <p><i>Lie to important people (such as your family/friends) about how much you gamble?</i></p>

Gambling Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

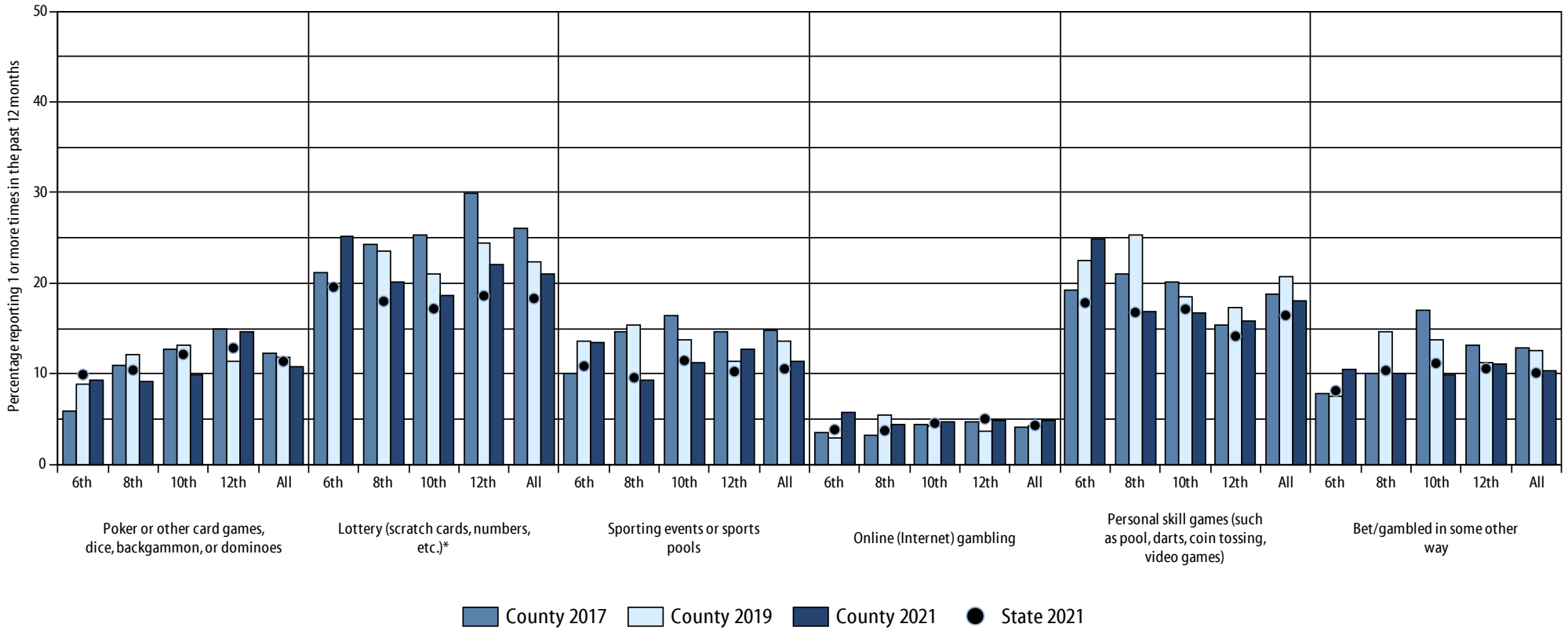


■ County 2017
 ■ County 2019
 ■ County 2021
 ● State 2021

*Lifetime and 30 day gambling were not measured prior to 2015. (Previous PAYS administrations measured gambling over the past 12 months.)

Grade	Any gambling (lifetime)				Any gambling (past 30 days)				Felt the need to bet more and more money				Lied about gambling habits			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	19.8	21.9	24.7	20.2	7.0	5.3	7.2	3.1	2.3	2.1	3.2	1.4	1.8	0.9	2.0	1.0
8th	33.2	38.6	26.7	29.7	8.5	13.0	4.8	5.1	3.2	4.1	1.8	2.5	2.8	3.1	1.1	1.2
10th	44.9	38.5	33.9	35.3	11.7	9.0	7.5	7.3	5.4	4.5	3.3	3.1	2.2	3.8	1.3	1.5
12th	45.3	42.6	37.6	35.7	9.0	8.4	9.4	8.0	6.0	6.0	4.1	4.2	2.0	2.2	2.4	1.7
All	39.3	37.2	31.2	30.4	9.5	9.5	7.2	5.9	4.6	4.4	3.0	2.8	2.3	2.8	1.6	1.3

Types of gambling Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



*The lottery response category was revised in 2015 with additional examples (scratch cards, numbers, etc.). Rates reported in 2015 may be higher than previous years' data.

Grade	Poker or other card games, dice, backgammon, or dominoes				Lottery (scratch cards, numbers, etc.)*				Sporting events or sports pools				Online (Internet) gambling				Personal skill games (such as pool, darts, coin tossing, video games)				Bet/gambled in some other way			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	5.8	8.9	9.4	9.9	21.2	19.7	25.2	19.6	10.0	13.5	13.5	10.9	3.5	2.9	5.7	3.9	19.3	22.5	24.9	17.8	7.8	7.6	10.5	8.1
8th	11.0	12.2	9.2	10.4	24.4	23.5	20.1	18.0	14.7	15.4	9.3	9.6	3.2	5.4	4.4	3.7	21.0	25.3	16.9	16.8	10.0	14.7	10.1	10.4
10th	12.7	13.2	9.9	12.2	25.4	21.0	18.6	17.2	16.5	13.8	11.2	11.5	4.4	4.2	4.8	4.6	20.1	18.5	16.8	17.1	16.9	13.8	9.9	11.2
12th	14.9	11.4	14.6	12.9	29.9	24.4	22.0	18.6	14.6	11.4	12.7	10.3	4.8	3.6	4.9	5.0	15.3	17.3	15.8	14.2	13.1	11.3	11.2	10.6
All	12.3	11.8	10.8	11.4	26.1	22.4	21.1	18.3	14.8	13.6	11.4	10.6	4.1	4.2	4.9	4.3	18.8	20.8	18.0	16.5	12.8	12.5	10.4	10.1

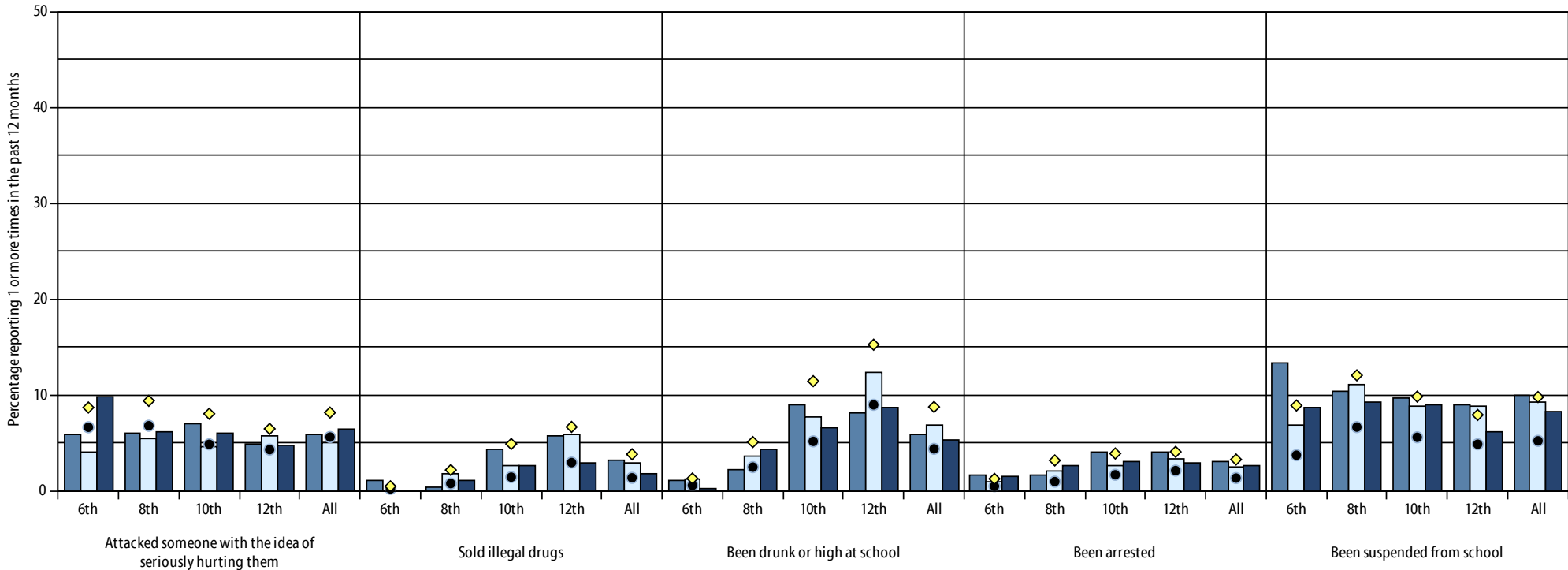
OTHER ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR

This section presents the percentage of youth who reported engaging in other antisocial behaviors (e.g., attacking someone with the idea of seriously hurting them, selling illegal drugs, attending school while drunk or high), and related consequences (e.g., being suspended from school or arrested).

The most frequent “other” antisocial behavior in Mercer County was “been suspended from school,” reported by 8.3% of students (compared to 5.2% at the state level).

PAYS 2021 category:	PAYS 2021 question text:
Other antisocial behavior	<p><i>How many times in the past 12 months have you:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting them?</i> <i>Sold illegal drugs?</i> <i>Been drunk or high at school?</i>
Consequences of antisocial behavior	<p><i>How many times in the past 12 months have you:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Been arrested?</i> <i>Been suspended from school?</i>

Other antisocial behavior Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



County 2017 County 2019 County 2021 State 2021 BH Norm

4_26_2022

Grade	Attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting them					Sold illegal drugs					Been drunk or high at school					Been arrested					Been suspended from school				
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	BH Norm	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	BH Norm	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	BH Norm	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	BH Norm	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	BH Norm
6th	5.9	4.1	9.9	6.6	8.7	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.5	1.1	1.2	0.3	0.6	1.3	1.6	0.9	1.5	0.5	1.3	13.4	6.8	8.7	3.7	8.9
8th	6.0	5.5	6.2	6.8	9.4	0.5	1.8	1.1	0.8	2.2	2.3	3.6	4.3	2.5	5.1	1.7	2.1	2.7	1.0	3.2	10.3	11.1	9.3	6.7	12.1
10th	7.0	4.6	6.0	4.9	8.1	4.3	2.6	2.6	1.4	4.9	9.0	7.7	6.6	5.2	11.4	4.0	2.6	3.1	1.7	3.9	9.7	8.8	9.0	5.6	9.8
12th	4.9	5.7	4.7	4.3	6.5	5.7	5.8	3.0	3.0	6.7	8.2	12.4	8.7	9.0	15.2	4.0	3.4	3.0	2.1	4.1	9.0	8.8	6.2	4.9	7.9
All	5.9	5.1	6.4	5.6	8.2	3.2	2.9	1.8	1.4	3.8	5.9	6.8	5.4	4.4	8.8	3.0	2.4	2.7	1.3	3.3	10.0	9.2	8.3	5.2	9.8

4. COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL CLIMATE AND SAFETY

Over the last 15 years, many youth surveys, including PAYS, have moved to incorporate risk and protective factor data alongside more traditional health behavior assessments. As this approach has evolved, school climate and safety have emerged as focal points for prevention programming and policy planning.

Creating safe supportive schools is essential to ensuring students' academic and social success. There are multiple elements to establishing learning environments in which youth feel a sense of belonging which prompts feelings of safety, connectedness, value, and responsibility for their behavior and learning. School climate and safety are measured in four ways: commitment and involvement at school, involvement in after-school and community programs, violence (actual and threatened), and bullying.

COMMITMENT TO SCHOOL

Students who feel appreciated and rewarded for their involvement in school have reduced likelihood of involvement in drug use and problem behaviors. Giving students opportunities to participate in important activities at school helps to create a feeling of personal investment in their school. This increased investment results in greater bonding and adoption of the school’s standard of behavior, reducing the likelihood that the students will become involved in problem behaviors.

Students who demonstrate a lack of commitment to school are more likely to have ceased viewing being a student as a positive role. These students have a higher risk for a variety of problem behaviors.

42.1% students in this county viewed the things they are learning in school as going to be important later in life (compared to 41.8% at the state level). School work was viewed as meaningful and important by 31.5% of students (state rate: 32.4%) and 33.0% enjoyed being in school during the past year (state rate: 37.6%).

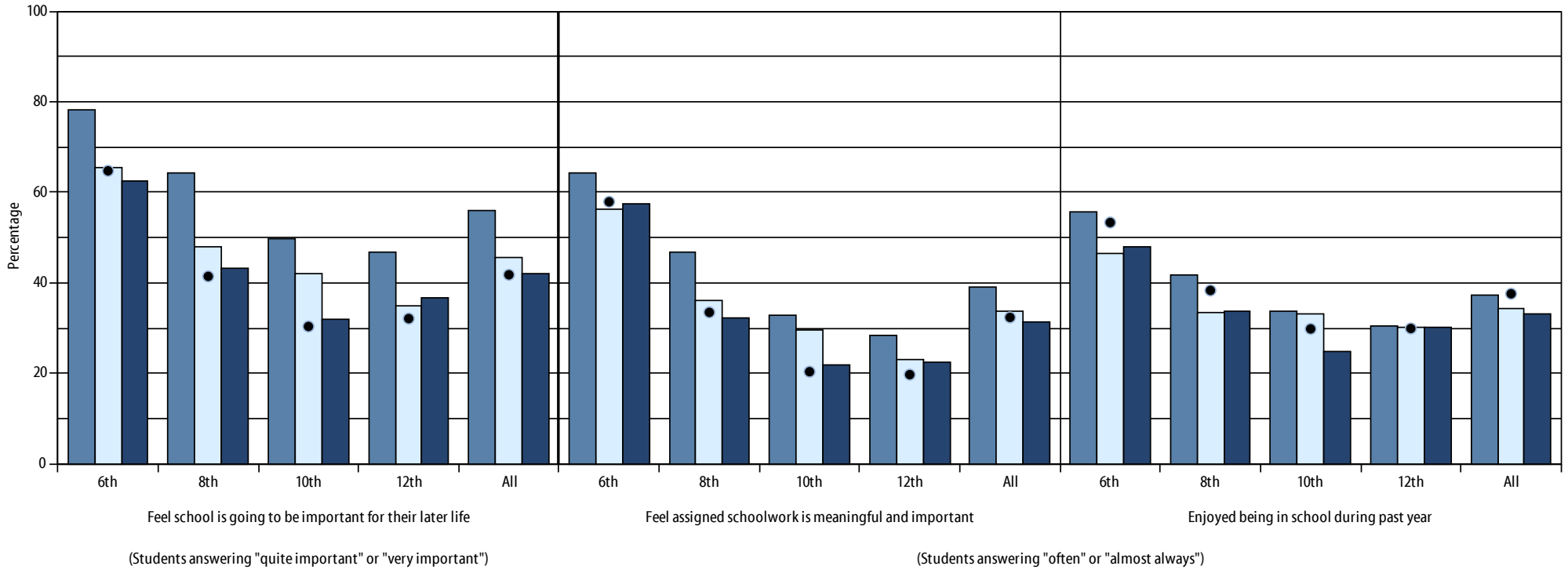
A feeling of safety was reported by 79.6% of the students, compared to 82.0% at the state level. 75.5% students reported opportunities to talk with a teacher one-on-one (state rate: 78.5%) and 83.5% reported chances to be part of class discussions or activities (state rate: 86.5%). 46.4% of students reported that teachers praise them when they work hard in school (state rate: 51.8%).

PAYS 2021 category:	<i>PAYS 2021 question text:</i>
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Perceived importance of school	<p><i>How important do you think the things you are learning in school are going to be for your later life?</i></p> <p><i>How often do you feel that the school work you are assigned is meaningful and important?</i></p> <p><i>Now thinking back over the past year in school, how often did you:</i> <i>Enjoy being in school?</i></p>
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Positive school environment	<p><i>There are lots of chances for students in my school to talk one-on-one with a teacher.</i></p> <p><i>I have lots of chances to be part of class discussions or activities.</i></p> <p><i>I feel safe at my school.</i></p> <p><i>My teachers praise me when I work hard in school.</i></p>
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Commitment and involvement in school - Perceived importance of school Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

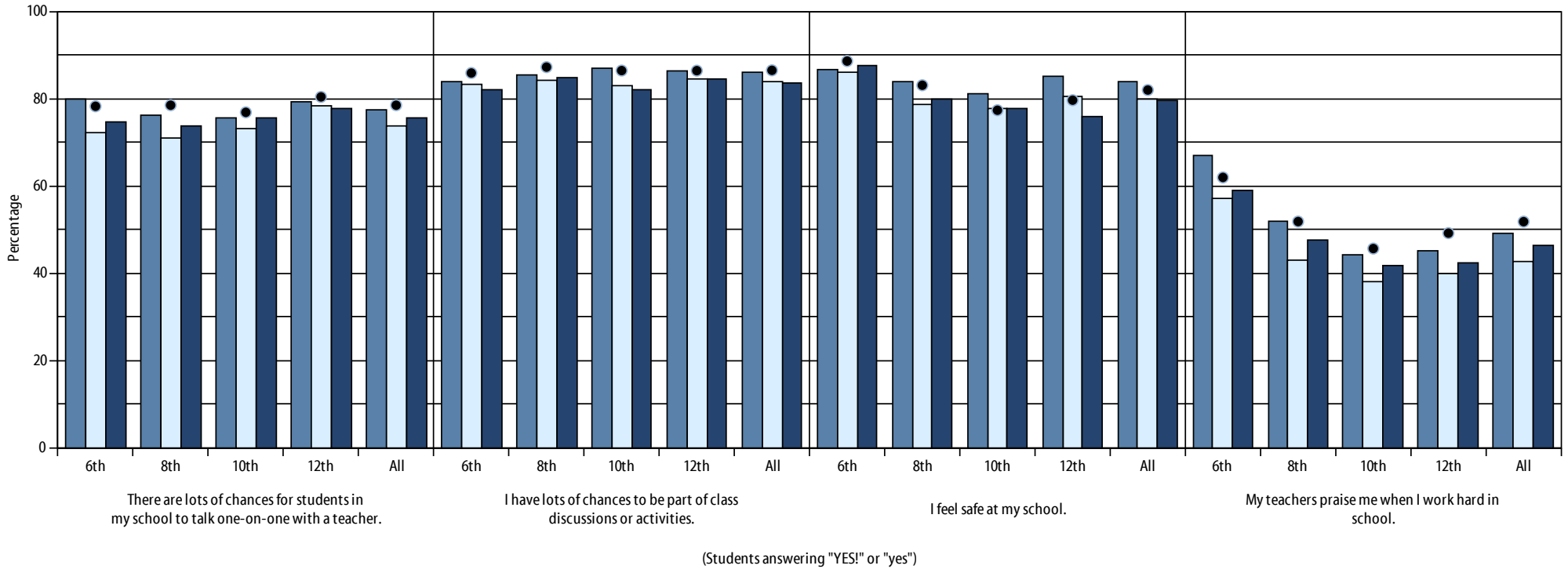


County 2017 County 2019 County 2021 State 2021

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Grade	Feel school is going to be important for their later life				Feel assigned schoolwork is meaningful and important				Enjoyed being in school during past year			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	78.3	65.5	62.5	64.8	64.4	56.3	57.5	57.9	55.8	46.4	47.8	53.3
8th	64.4	48.1	43.3	41.4	46.9	36.1	32.3	33.5	41.8	33.4	33.8	38.3
10th	49.7	42.1	31.9	30.4	33.0	29.5	22.0	20.4	33.8	33.3	24.9	29.8
12th	46.7	34.9	36.8	32.1	28.5	23.0	22.4	19.7	30.4	30.2	30.1	29.9
All	56.1	45.6	42.1	41.8	38.9	33.7	31.5	32.4	37.4	34.5	33.0	37.6

Commitment and involvement in school - Positive school environment Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



County 2017 County 2019 County 2021 State 2021

4_26_2022

Grade	There are lots of chances for students in my school to talk one-on-one with a teacher.				I have lots of chances to be part of class discussions or activities.				I feel safe at my school.				My teachers praise me when I work hard in school.			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	79.9	72.1	74.7	78.2	84.0	83.3	82.1	85.9	86.8	86.2	87.6	88.6	67.1	57.0	58.9	61.9
8th	76.2	71.0	73.8	78.5	85.3	84.3	84.9	87.2	83.8	78.7	79.9	83.0	51.9	43.0	47.5	51.8
10th	75.7	73.0	75.4	76.8	87.0	83.0	82.0	86.4	81.2	77.7	77.9	77.3	44.2	38.2	41.6	45.7
12th	79.4	78.4	77.7	80.4	86.4	84.4	84.4	86.4	85.0	80.4	75.8	79.6	45.1	40.0	42.4	49.2
All	77.4	73.7	75.5	78.5	86.0	83.8	83.5	86.5	83.7	79.9	79.6	82.0	49.0	42.8	46.4	51.8

INVOLVEMENT IN PRO-SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

When young people participate in pro-social activities that foster healthy development, they are more likely to develop connections with peers and members of the community who engage in prosocial behaviors. Being engaged in pro-social activities provides opportunities for bonding with adult role models—such as community leaders, neighbors, police, or clergy—who can offer moral guidance and emotional support.

83.7% of students in this county reported participating in at least one pro-social activity, compared to 84.3% at the state level.

Students most frequently participated in school sponsored activities (57.1% of students). The second and third most frequent pro-social activities were family supported activities or hobbies (39.6%) and job or employment (27.2%).

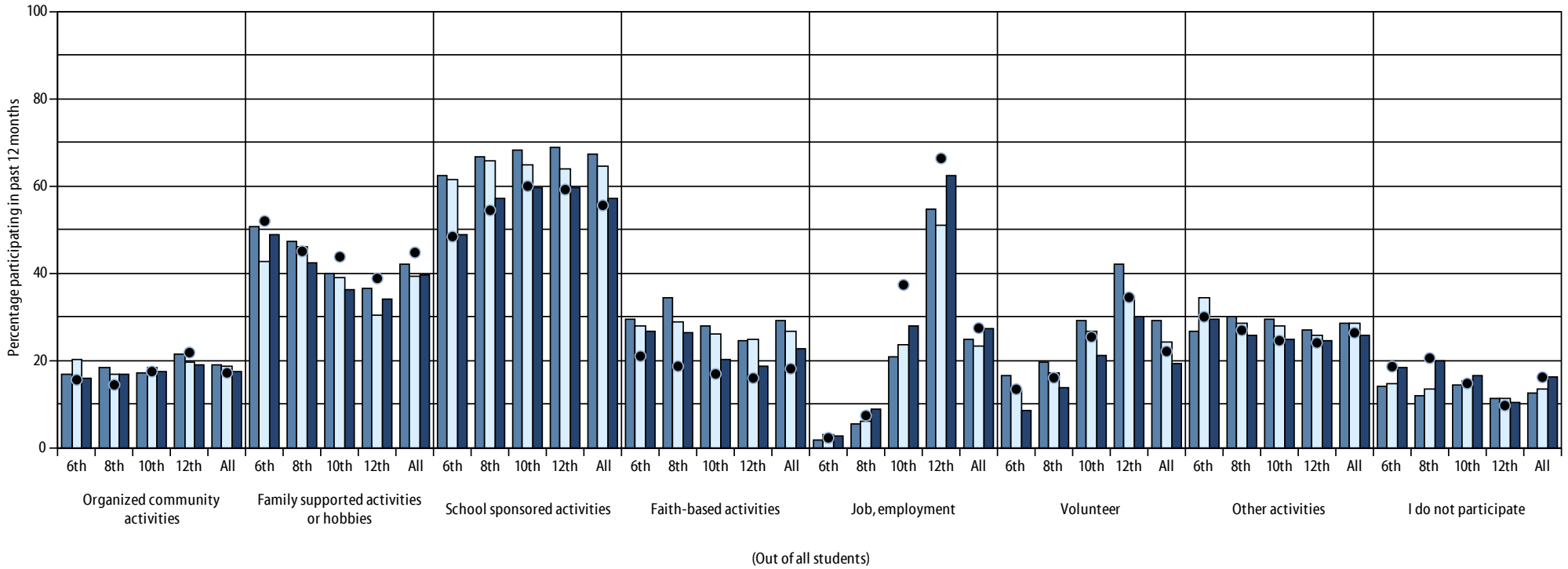
PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

Involvement in pro-social activities

In the past 12 months, in which of the following activities did you participate? (Mark all that apply.)

- Organized community activities (such as scouting, 4-H, service clubs, YMCA, etc)*
- Family supported activities or hobbies (such as dance, gymnastics, hiking, biking, skating, etc.)*
- School sponsored activities (such as sports, music, clubs, after-school programs, etc.)*
- Faith-based activities (such as choir, youth group, mission, church leagues, etc)*
- Job, employment*
- Volunteer*
- Other activities*
- I do not participate.*

Involvement in pro-social activities Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



County 2017 County 2019 County 2021 State 2021

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Grade	Organized community activities				Family supported activities or hobbies				School sponsored activities				Faith-based activities				Job, employment				Volunteer				Other activities				I do not participate			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	16.9	20.4	16.0	15.6	50.8	42.6	48.9	52.0	62.3	61.4	48.9	48.4	29.5	27.9	26.8	21.0	1.6	3.1	2.8	2.3	16.4	13.2	8.6	13.4	26.8	34.5	29.5	30.0	14.2	14.7	18.5	18.6
8th	18.5	17.0	16.9	14.4	47.3	46.1	42.4	45.0	66.7	65.6	57.0	54.4	34.5	28.8	26.4	18.7	5.5	6.2	8.7	7.4	19.7	17.3	13.7	16.0	29.9	28.7	25.7	26.9	11.9	13.5	20.0	20.5
10th	17.3	18.5	17.6	17.5	39.9	39.1	36.1	43.8	68.2	64.8	59.6	59.9	28.0	26.0	20.4	16.9	20.8	23.7	28.0	37.3	29.1	26.7	21.1	25.4	29.3	27.9	24.8	24.6	14.4	15.3	16.7	14.7
12th	21.6	19.7	19.1	21.8	36.4	30.3	34.2	38.8	68.8	64.0	59.6	59.2	24.5	24.8	18.7	16.0	54.8	51.1	62.4	66.3	42.0	34.8	30.2	34.5	26.9	25.8	24.7	24.0	11.4	11.2	10.5	9.7
All	19.0	18.6	17.5	17.2	42.1	39.3	39.6	44.7	67.4	64.4	57.1	55.5	29.1	26.8	22.7	18.1	24.9	23.2	27.2	27.4	29.0	24.3	19.2	22.1	28.5	28.4	25.8	26.4	12.7	13.6	16.3	16.2

VIOLENCE/DRUGS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

Violence on school property is widely held to have become a serious problem in recent decades, especially where weapons such as guns or knives are involved. The presence of drugs on school property is also an area of concern.

Pennsylvania students were surveyed regarding the frequency with which they have been threatened or attacked on school property within the past year, and whether they were offered, given, or sold illegal drugs on school property within the past year.

In the past twelve months, 20.2% of students in this county reported being threatened with violent behavior on school property (compared to 16.7% at the state level). 9.3% of students reported having actually been attacked on school property (1.6% reported being attacked with weapons). 5.4% of students reported they had been threatened by someone with a weapon, compared to a state rate of 3.5%. 1.1% of students had brought a weapon to school in the past 30 days (state rate: 0.8%).

PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

Violence and drugs on school property

How many times in the past 12 months have you been offered, given, or sold an illegal drug on school property?

In the past 12 months, how often have you:

Been threatened to be hit or beaten up on school property?

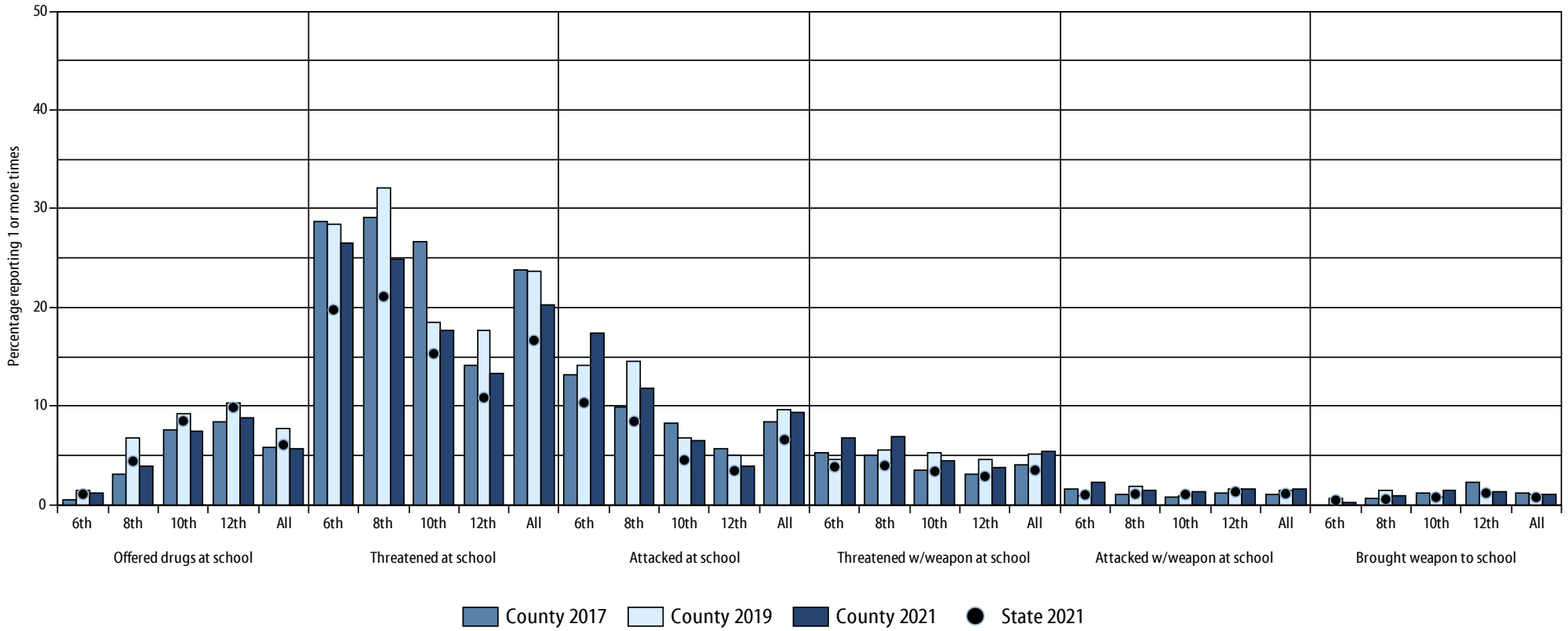
Been attacked and hit by someone or beaten up on school property?

Been threatened by someone with a weapon on school property?

Been attacked by someone with a weapon on school property?

How many times in the past 30 days have you brought a weapon (such as a gun, knife, or club) to school?

Violence and drugs on school property Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



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Grade	Offered drugs at school				Threatened at school				Attacked at school				Threatened w/weapon at school				Attacked w/weapon at school				Brought weapon to school			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	0.5	1.4	1.1	1.1	28.7	28.4	26.6	19.8	13.2	14.2	17.3	10.3	5.3	4.6	6.8	3.8	1.6	0.9	2.3	1.0	0.0	0.6	0.3	0.5
8th	3.1	6.7	3.9	4.4	29.1	32.1	24.8	21.1	9.9	14.5	11.8	8.4	4.9	5.5	6.9	4.0	1.0	1.9	1.4	1.1	0.6	1.4	0.9	0.6
10th	7.6	9.3	7.4	8.5	26.6	18.4	17.7	15.3	8.3	6.8	6.5	4.5	3.5	5.3	4.5	3.4	0.8	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.2	0.8	1.4	0.8
12th	8.4	10.3	8.9	9.9	14.1	17.6	13.4	10.9	5.7	5.1	3.9	3.4	3.1	4.6	3.8	2.9	1.2	1.6	1.6	1.3	2.3	1.2	1.4	1.2
All	5.8	7.7	5.7	6.1	23.7	23.7	20.2	16.7	8.4	9.7	9.3	6.6	4.0	5.1	5.4	3.5	1.1	1.4	1.6	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.1	0.8

BULLYING AND INTERNET SAFETY

While bullying is not a new phenomenon, the serious consequences for both students and schools continues to grow.

Bullying behavior contributes to lower attendance rates, lower student achievement, low self-esteem, and depression, as well as higher rates of both juvenile and adult crime. Although the problem of bullying continues to receive public attention, actual incidences of bullying often go undetected by teachers and parents. The most effective way to address bullying is through comprehensive, school-wide programs.

Increased public awareness of electronic or “cyber” bullying is due in part to high profile suicides linked to malicious use of social media services such as Twitter and Facebook. Bullies who operate electronically (that is, via text message, social media, or the Internet) can remain virtually anonymous, freeing them from normative social constraints on their behavior.

The modern teen’s social sphere is deeply intertwined with texting, social media, and the Internet. Invaded by bullying behavior, the harassment can feel inescapable, and traditional places of refuge such as the home no longer apply. The resulting isolation from simply “turning off the phone” has the unfortunate effect of further punishing the victim.

Overall, 30.4% of students in this county indicated experiencing bullying in the past 12 months (compared to 23.2% of students at the state level). Students who indicated experiencing bullying in the past 12 months reported that “the way I look [clothing, hairstyle, etc.]” (46.3% of students), “my size [height, weight, etc.]” (43.2% of students), and “some other reason” (36.1% of students) were the most frequent reasons they were bullied.

PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

Bullying behavior

Bullying is a student or students doing any of the following to another student on purpose repeatedly:

- making fun of
 - excluding
 - threatening
- spreading rumors about
 - hitting
 - shoving
 - hurting

It is not bullying if:

- two students argue or fight with each other
- friends tease each other.

Have you stayed home from school this year because you were worried about being bullied?

Do adults at your school stop bullying when they see/hear it or when a student tells them about it?

Please state whether you have been bullied during the past 12 months.

No • Yes, very rarely • Yes, now and then • Yes, several times per month • Yes, several times per week • Yes, almost daily

If you have been bullied in any way in the past 12 months, where were you bullied? (Mark all that apply.)

I was not bullied

On school property

At a school-sponsored event

While going to or from school

In the community

At home

If you have been bullied in the past 12 months by other students, why were you bullied? (Mark all that apply.)

I have not been made fun of by other students

The color of my skin

My religion

My size (height, weight, etc.)

My accent

The country I was born in

The country my family (parents, grandparents) was born in

The way I look (clothing, hairstyle, etc.)

How much money my family has or does not have

My gender

My grades or school achievement

My social standing

Social conflict

My sexual-orientation

I have a disability (learning or physical disability)

Some other reason

PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

Internet safety and other hurt or abuse

During the past 12 months, have you been bullied through texting and/or social media?

In the past 12 months, did anyone when using technology ever try to get you to talk online about sex, look at sexual pictures, or do something else sexual?

If you were hurt or abused by another person in the past 12 months, how were you hurt or abused? (Mark all that apply.)

Physical injury

Threats

Emotional abuse, insults, name-calling

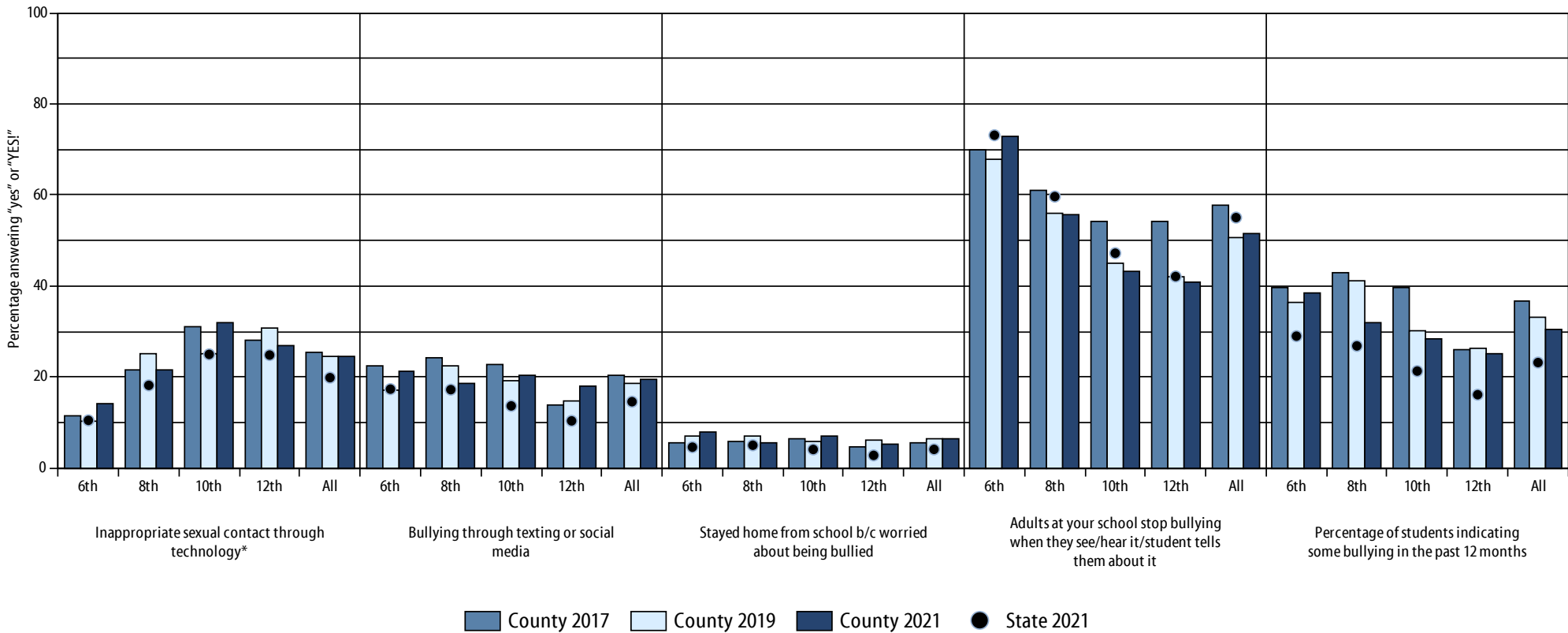
Isolation from friends and family

Control of what you were wearing

Control with whom you socialized

Other injury or abuse

Bullying and Internet safety Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

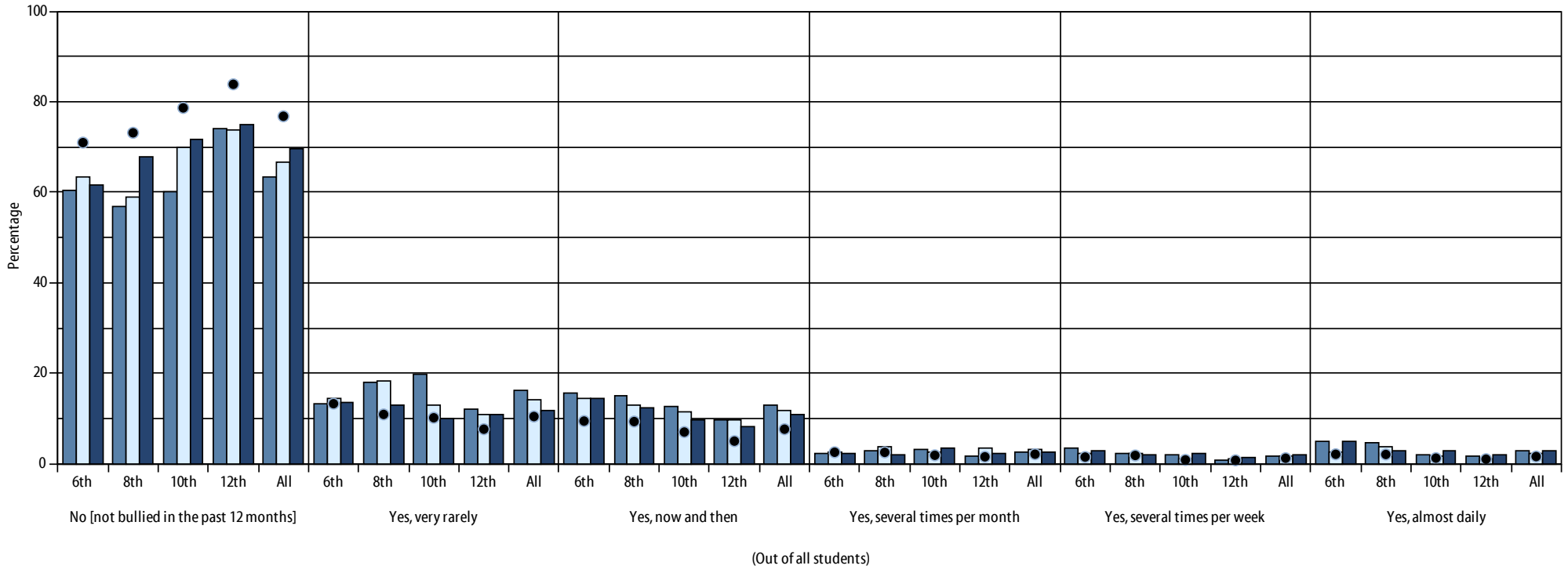


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Grade	Inappropriate sexual contact through technology*				Bullying through texting or social media				Stayed home from school b/c worried about being bullied				Adults at your school stop bullying when they see/hear it/student tells them about it				Percentage of students indicating some bullying in the past 12 months			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	11.5	10.3	14.2	10.5	22.3	17.1	21.4	17.4	5.6	7.2	7.8	4.6	70.1	67.9	72.8	73.1	39.7	36.5	38.5	29.0
8th	21.5	25.0	21.5	18.2	24.3	22.5	18.7	17.2	5.7	7.2	5.7	5.0	60.9	56.1	55.8	59.7	43.0	41.0	32.1	26.9
10th	31.1	25.3	31.9	25.0	22.7	19.1	20.3	13.7	6.5	6.0	7.1	4.1	54.3	44.9	43.3	47.2	39.7	30.1	28.3	21.3
12th	28.1	30.8	26.9	24.9	13.9	14.9	17.9	10.4	4.7	6.1	5.3	2.8	54.2	41.9	41.0	42.1	26.1	26.3	25.1	16.1
All	25.5	24.5	24.6	19.9	20.5	18.7	19.4	14.6	5.6	6.6	6.3	4.1	57.7	50.7	51.4	55.1	36.6	33.3	30.4	23.2

*Prior to 2017 PAYS, this question asked "In the past 12 months, did anyone on the Internet ever try to get you to talk online about sex, look at sexual pictures, or do something else sexual?" In 2017, the question was amended to replace "on the Internet" with "when using technology".

Frequency of bullying by students indicating some bullying in the past year* Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

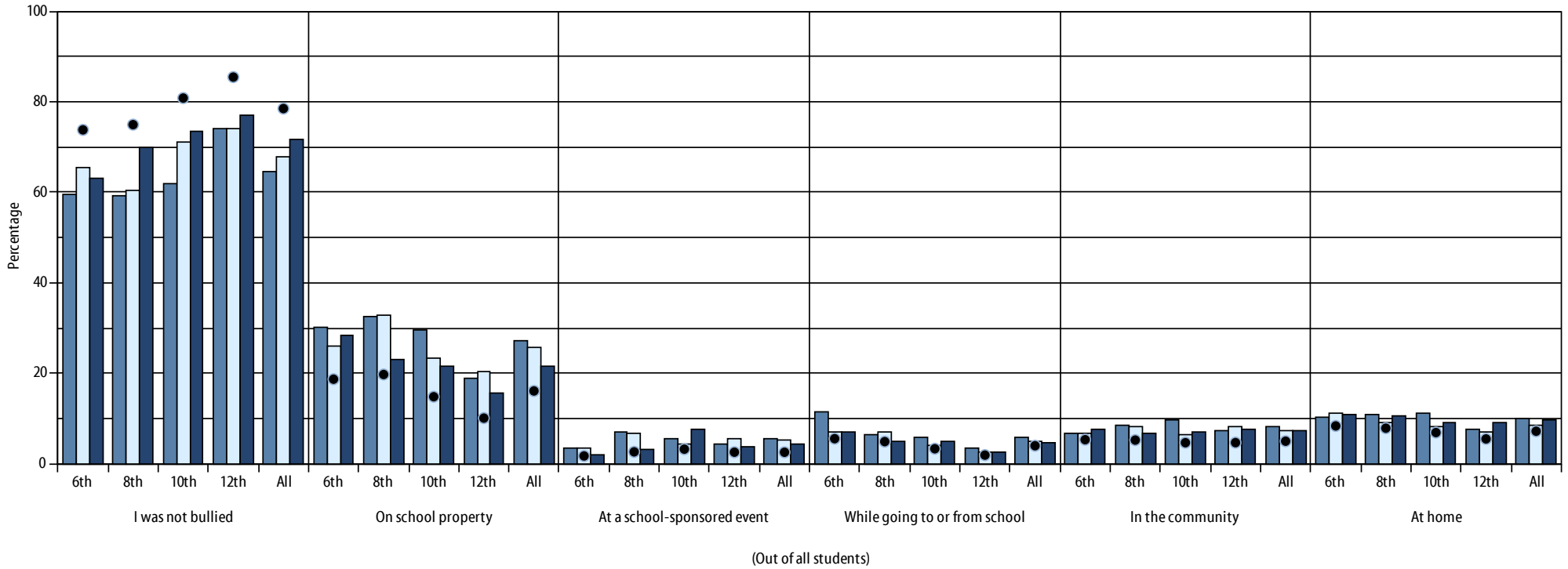


County 2017 County 2019 County 2021 State 2021

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Grade	No [not bullied in the past 12 months]				Yes, very rarely				Yes, now and then				Yes, several times per month				Yes, several times per week				Yes, almost daily			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	60.3	63.5	61.5	71.0	13.4	14.6	13.7	13.3	15.6	14.6	14.6	9.5	2.2	2.5	2.3	2.6	3.4	2.2	2.9	1.5	5.0	2.5	5.0	2.1
8th	57.0	59.0	67.9	73.1	17.9	18.2	12.9	10.9	15.2	13.0	12.3	9.4	3.0	3.9	2.1	2.6	2.4	2.2	1.9	1.9	4.5	3.7	2.8	2.1
10th	60.3	69.9	71.7	78.7	19.9	13.0	10.1	10.2	12.7	11.5	9.9	7.0	3.3	2.5	3.4	1.9	2.0	1.2	2.2	0.9	2.0	1.9	2.8	1.3
12th	73.9	73.7	74.9	83.9	12.0	10.8	11.0	7.7	9.8	9.7	8.2	5.0	1.7	3.4	2.4	1.6	0.8	1.3	1.4	0.8	1.7	1.1	2.2	1.1
All	63.4	66.7	69.6	76.8	16.3	14.2	11.8	10.5	12.8	11.9	11.0	7.7	2.6	3.2	2.6	2.1	1.9	1.7	2.0	1.3	3.0	2.3	3.0	1.6

Location of bullying Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

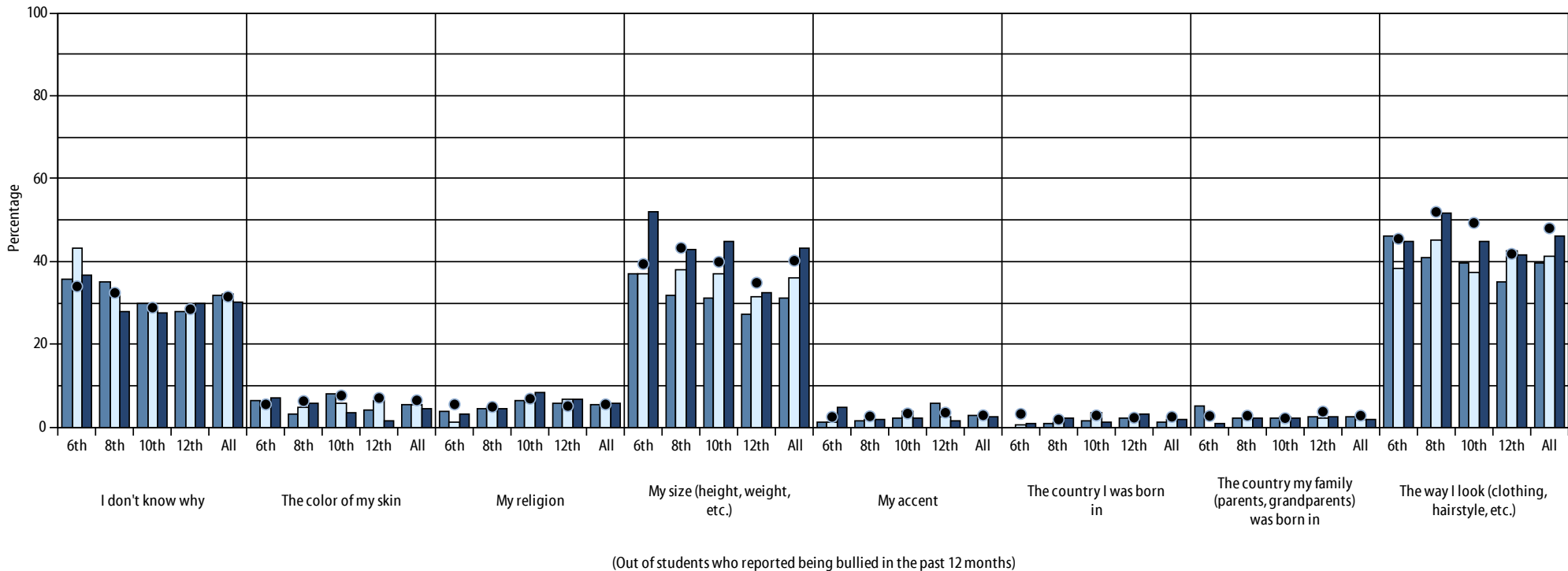


County 2017 County 2019 County 2021 State 2021

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Grade	I was not bullied				On school property				At a school-sponsored event				While going to or from school				In the community				At home			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	59.4	65.3	63.2	73.8	30.3	26.1	28.4	18.7	3.4	3.4	2.0	1.8	11.4	7.2	7.0	5.6	6.9	6.9	7.6	5.4	10.3	11.2	10.8	8.4
8th	59.1	60.5	70.1	74.9	32.5	32.8	23.0	19.8	7.0	6.7	3.2	2.7	6.5	7.1	5.0	4.9	8.7	8.2	6.8	5.3	10.8	9.2	10.7	7.9
10th	61.9	71.0	73.6	80.8	29.5	23.5	21.5	14.8	5.5	4.4	7.7	3.3	5.8	4.2	5.1	3.4	9.6	6.4	7.1	4.7	11.3	8.2	9.2	6.9
12th	74.1	74.0	77.0	85.5	18.8	20.4	15.7	10.1	4.4	5.6	3.9	2.6	3.5	2.7	2.6	1.9	7.3	8.1	7.7	4.7	7.6	7.2	9.0	5.5
All	64.5	67.9	71.6	78.5	27.3	25.8	21.6	16.1	5.5	5.2	4.4	2.6	5.8	5.1	4.7	4.0	8.4	7.5	7.2	5.0	9.9	8.6	9.9	7.2

Perceived reasons for bullying Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

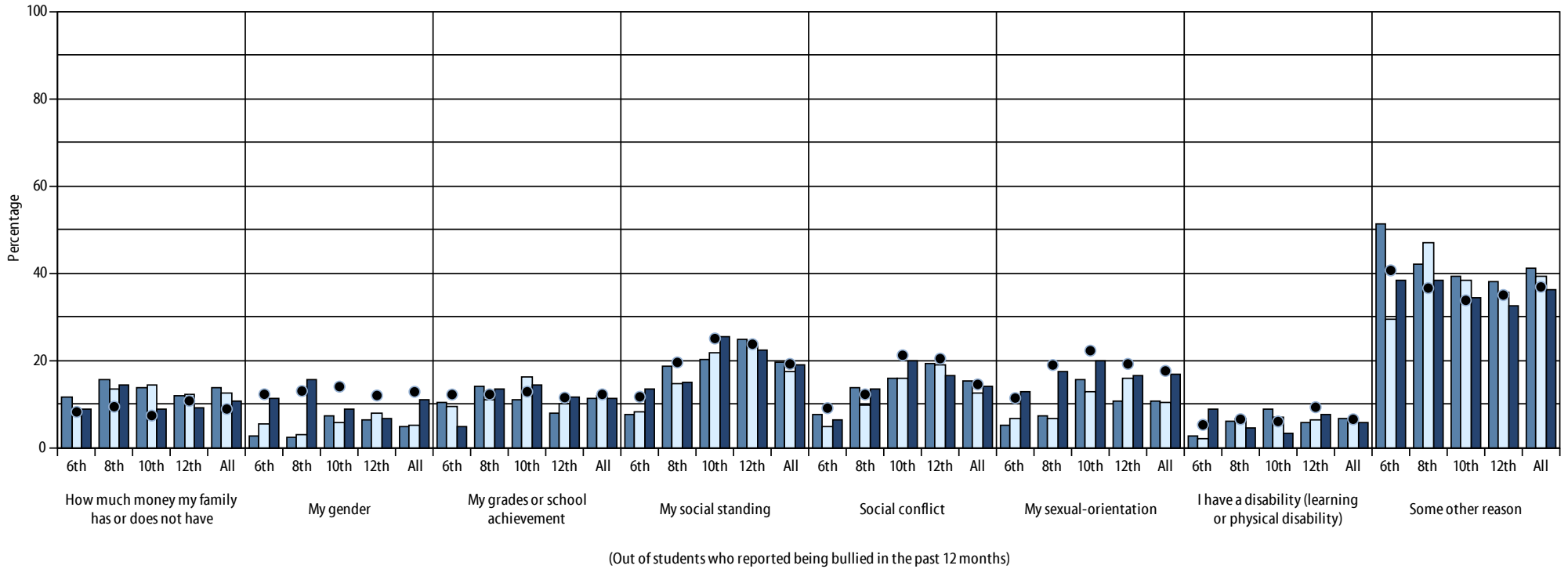


County 2017 County 2019 County 2021 State 2021

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Grade	I don't know why				The color of my skin				My religion				My size (height, weight, etc.)				My accent				The country I was born in				The country my family (parents, grandparents) was born in				The way I look (clothing, hairstyle, etc.)			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	35.9	43.2	36.8	34.0	6.4	6.2	7.2	5.6	3.8	1.4	3.2	5.6	37.2	37.0	52.0	39.4	1.3	1.4	4.8	2.5	0.0	0.7	0.8	3.2	5.1	0.0	0.8	2.7	46.2	38.4	44.8	45.5
8th	35.2	32.1	27.9	32.5	3.4	4.7	5.8	6.3	4.4	4.7	4.7	4.9	31.9	38.1	43.0	43.3	1.7	1.9	1.7	2.7	1.0	1.3	2.3	1.9	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.8	40.9	45.3	51.7	52.0
10th	29.8	29.0	27.6	28.9	8.0	5.8	3.4	7.7	6.5	6.2	8.3	6.9	31.3	37.1	44.8	39.9	2.3	3.9	2.1	3.4	1.5	3.5	1.4	2.9	2.3	2.7	2.1	2.2	39.7	37.5	44.8	49.3
12th	28.0	28.2	30.0	28.5	4.3	6.4	1.7	7.1	5.9	6.9	6.7	5.1	27.4	31.4	32.5	34.9	5.9	2.7	1.7	3.5	2.2	1.6	3.3	2.3	2.7	2.1	2.5	3.8	34.9	42.6	41.7	41.9
All	31.9	32.2	30.2	31.5	5.3	5.6	4.6	6.5	5.3	5.0	5.7	5.5	31.2	36.2	43.2	40.2	2.8	2.5	2.5	2.9	1.3	1.9	2.0	2.5	2.7	2.0	2.0	2.8	39.7	41.4	46.3	48.0

Perceived reasons for bullying (cont'd) Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

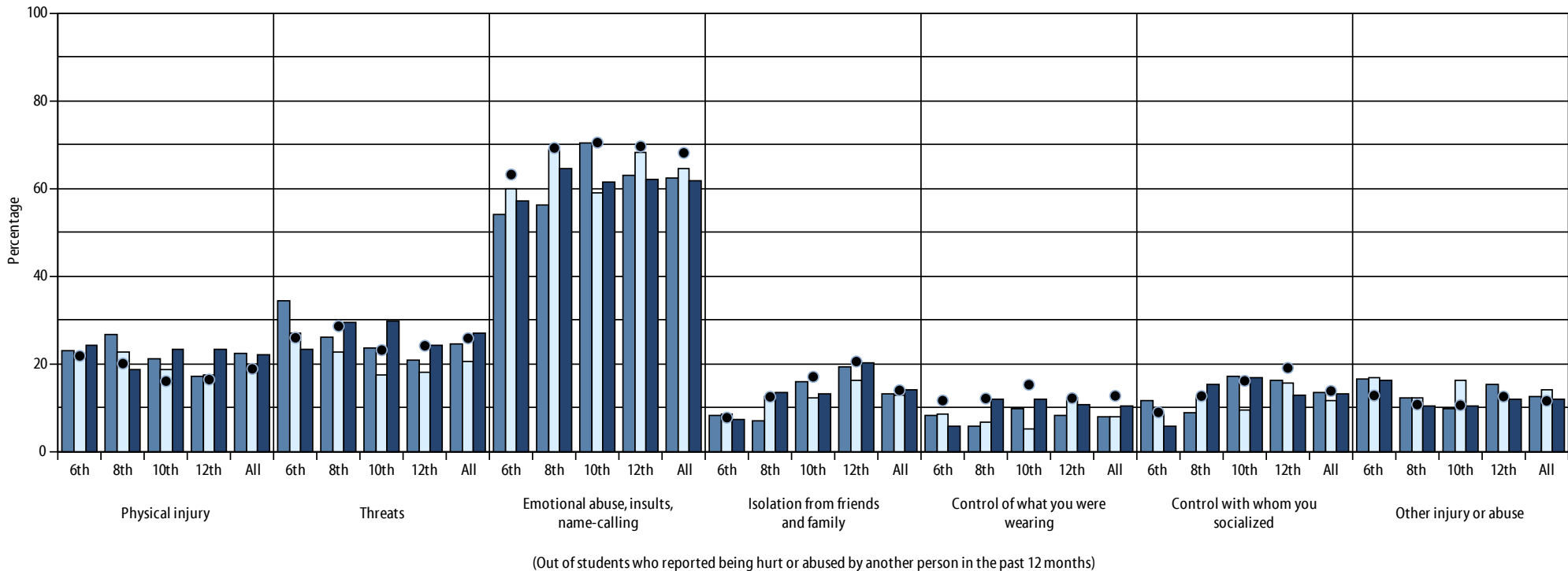


County 2017 County 2019 County 2021 State 2021

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Grade	How much money my family has or does not have				My gender				My grades or school achievement				My social standing				Social conflict				My sexual-orientation				I have a disability (learning or physical disability)				Some other reason			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	11.5	8.2	8.8	8.2	2.6	5.5	11.2	12.3	10.3	9.6	4.8	12.2	7.7	8.2	13.6	11.7	7.7	4.8	6.4	9.1	5.1	6.8	12.8	11.4	2.6	2.1	8.8	5.3	51.3	29.5	38.4	40.6
8th	15.8	13.5	14.5	9.4	2.3	3.1	15.7	13.0	14.1	11.0	13.4	12.2	18.8	14.8	15.1	19.6	13.8	9.7	13.4	12.2	7.4	6.6	17.4	19.0	6.0	6.6	4.7	6.6	41.9	46.9	38.4	36.6
10th	13.7	14.3	9.0	7.4	7.3	5.8	9.0	14.0	11.1	16.2	14.5	12.9	20.2	21.6	25.5	25.0	16.0	15.8	20.0	21.2	15.6	12.7	20.0	22.3	8.8	6.9	3.4	6.0	39.3	38.2	34.5	33.8
12th	11.8	12.2	9.2	10.8	6.5	8.0	6.7	12.0	8.1	10.1	11.7	11.5	24.7	23.9	22.5	23.7	19.4	19.1	16.7	20.4	10.8	16.0	16.7	19.2	5.9	6.4	7.5	9.3	38.2	35.6	32.5	35.0
All	13.8	12.6	10.7	8.9	4.9	5.3	11.0	12.9	11.4	12.1	11.4	12.2	19.5	17.6	19.0	19.2	15.2	12.6	14.2	14.5	10.6	10.3	16.9	17.6	6.6	5.9	5.9	6.5	41.1	39.3	36.1	36.9

How students were hurt or abused Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



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Grade	Physical injury				Threats				Emotional abuse, insults, name-calling				Isolation from friends and family				Control of what you were wearing				Control with whom you socialized				Other injury or abuse			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	23.0	21.5	24.2	21.8	34.4	27.1	23.4	25.9	54.1	59.8	57.3	63.2	8.2	8.4	7.3	7.7	8.2	8.4	5.6	11.6	11.5	8.4	5.6	9.0	16.4	16.8	16.1	12.8
8th	26.8	22.7	18.8	20.1	26.1	22.7	29.3	28.6	56.3	68.8	64.4	69.2	7.0	12.6	13.6	12.5	5.9	6.7	12.0	12.1	8.8	12.3	15.2	12.7	12.1	12.3	10.5	10.7
10th	21.2	18.7	23.4	16.1	23.5	17.6	29.9	23.1	70.2	59.0	61.4	70.4	16.1	12.1	13.0	17.1	9.8	5.1	12.0	15.3	17.3	9.5	16.8	16.1	9.8	16.1	10.3	10.6
12th	17.3	17.6	23.2	16.4	20.9	18.1	24.3	24.1	62.8	68.1	62.1	69.6	19.4	16.2	20.3	20.5	8.4	12.4	10.7	12.2	16.2	15.7	13.0	19.1	15.2	12.4	11.9	12.5
All	22.3	20.0	22.2	18.9	24.6	20.5	27.1	25.8	62.3	64.4	61.7	68.1	13.1	12.8	14.1	14.0	8.0	7.8	10.5	12.7	13.6	11.8	13.3	13.8	12.5	14.1	11.8	11.6

5. SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Stress, anxiety, loneliness, and frustration are all emotions that can negatively impact student health. Outcomes such as suicide underscore the necessity of tracking student emotional health.

Mental Health

Important mental health habits—including coping, resilience, and good judgment—help adolescents to achieve overall wellbeing and set the stage for positive mental health in adulthood. Although mood swings are common during adolescence, around 20% of adolescents have a diagnosable mental disorder, such as depression or oppositional defiant disorder. Friends and family can watch for warning signs of social and emotional distress and urge young people to get help. Effective treatments may include a combination of therapy and medication. Unfortunately, less than half of adolescents who need mental health services receive them.

Mental Health Disorders

Approximately one out of five adolescents has a diagnosable mental health disorder, and nearly one third show symptoms of depression. Warning signs aren't always obvious, but more common symptoms include persistent irritability, anger, or social withdrawal, as well as major changes in appetite or sleep. Mental health disorders can disrupt school performance, harm relationships, and lead to suicide (the second leading cause of death among adolescents). Unfortunately, an ongoing stigma regarding mental health disorders inhibits some adolescents and their families from seeking help. Effective treatments for mental health disorders, especially if they begin soon after symptoms appear, can help reduce its impact on an adolescent's life.

Access to Mental Health Care

Less than half of the adolescents who need mental health care receive treatment. A social stigma continues to surround mental health disorders, and

mental health care is frequently difficult to access. Initially identifying a mental health disorder is also challenging—issues are often first identified at school. Researchers have documented a number of disparities in access: among adolescents, those who are homeless; served by state child welfare and juvenile justice systems; and are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender are often the least likely to receive services.

Positive Mental Health: Resilience

“Resilient” adolescents are those who have managed to cope effectively, even in the face of stress and other difficult circumstances, and are poised to enter adulthood with a good chance of positive mental health. A number of factors promote resilience in adolescents—among the most important are caring relationships with adults and an easy-going disposition. Adolescents themselves can use a number of strategies, including exercising regularly, to reduce stress and promote resilience. Schools and communities are also recognizing the importance of “emotional intelligence” in adolescents' lives—a growing number of courses and community programs focus on adolescents' social-emotional learning and coping skills.

MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS AND SUICIDE RISK

A number of scientific studies have identified a link between mental health problems, such as depression, and the use of ATODs during adolescence. Depression is the number one risk factor for suicide by teens, a risk amplified in teens self-medicating with ATODs. For youth between the ages of 10 and 24, suicide is the second leading cause of death, resulting in nearly 6,500 lives lost each year. While suicide is a public health concern, suicidal thoughts and attempts are even more common among youth.

PAYS includes one question about self-harm and four questions that ask students about feelings—sadness, hopelessness, and worthlessness—that can be symptoms of depression. PAYS also asks five questions specific to suicide, measuring depressed behavior, suicidal intention, actual suicide attempts, and the seriousness of those attempts (by asking about resulting medical intervention).

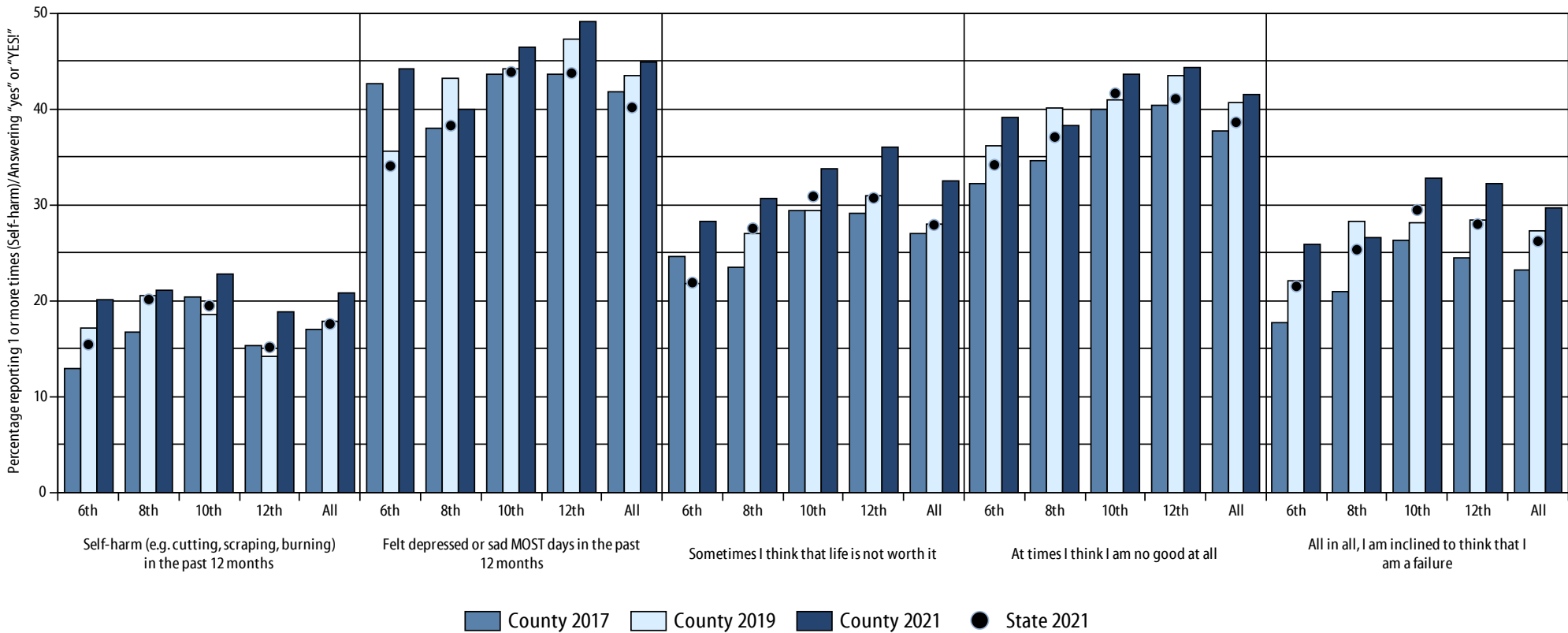
The most common depressed thought was “at times I think I am no good at all,” reported by 41.4% of students in this county. 44.9% of students reported they felt sad or depressed MOST days in the past 12 months. Overall, 22.8% of students had seriously considered attempting suicide, compared to 18.6% of students at the state level.

PAYS 2021 category:	<i>PAYS 2021 question text:</i>
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<p>Mental health concerns <i>(self-harm and depression)</i></p>	<p><i>In the past 12 months have you felt depressed or sad MOST days, even if you feel OK sometimes?</i></p> <p><i>At times I think I am no good at all.</i></p> <p><i>All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a failure.</i></p> <p><i>Sometimes I think that life is not worth it.</i></p> <p><i>How many times in the past 12 months have you:</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><i>Done anything to harm yourself (such as cutting, scraping, burning) as a way to relieve difficult feelings, or to communicate emotions that may be difficult to express verbally?</i></p>
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<p>Suicide risk</p> <p>The next questions ask about sad feelings and attempted suicide.</p> <p>Sometimes people feel so depressed about the future that they may consider attempting suicide, that is, taking some action to end their own life.</p>	<p><i>During the past 12 months:</i></p> <p><i>Did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?</i></p> <p><i>Did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide?</i></p> <p><i>Did you make a plan about how you would attempt suicide?</i></p> <p><i>How many times did you actually attempt suicide?</i></p> <p><i>If you attempted suicide during the past 12 months, did any attempt result in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse?</i></p>
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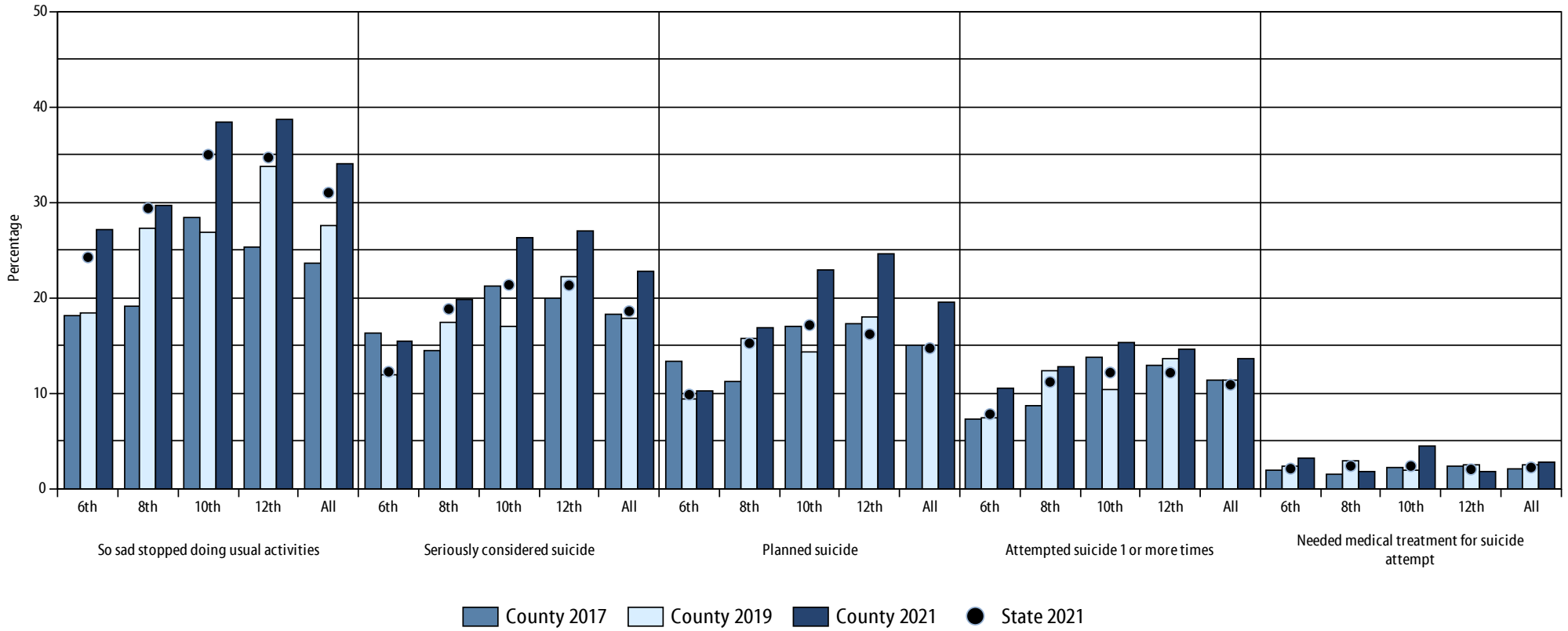
Mental Health Concerns Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



4_26_2022

Grade	Self-harm (e.g. cutting, scraping, burning) in the past 12 months				Felt depressed or sad MOST days in the past 12 months				Sometimes I think that life is not worth it				At times I think I am no good at all				All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a failure			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	12.9	17.2	20.1	15.4	42.6	35.6	44.2	34.0	24.5	21.7	28.3	21.9	32.2	36.2	39.2	34.2	17.6	22.1	25.9	21.5
8th	16.7	20.5	21.1	20.1	38.0	43.2	40.0	38.2	23.5	26.9	30.6	27.5	34.5	40.0	38.2	37.1	20.9	28.2	26.6	25.3
10th	20.4	18.6	22.7	19.5	43.5	44.2	46.5	43.8	29.4	29.4	33.8	30.9	39.9	40.9	43.6	41.6	26.3	28.1	32.8	29.4
12th	15.3	14.2	18.8	15.1	43.6	47.3	49.1	43.7	29.0	31.0	36.0	30.7	40.4	43.4	44.3	41.0	24.4	28.4	32.2	28.0
All	17.0	17.8	20.8	17.6	41.7	43.4	44.9	40.1	27.0	27.9	32.5	27.9	37.6	40.6	41.4	38.6	23.2	27.3	29.6	26.2

Suicide risk Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



4_26_2022

Grade	So sad stopped doing usual activities				Seriously considered suicide				Planned suicide				Attempted suicide				Needed medical treatment for suicide attempt			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	18.1	18.3	27.1	24.2	16.3	12.0	15.4	12.2	13.3	9.3	10.3	9.9	7.3	7.4	10.5	7.8	1.9	2.4	3.2	2.1
8th	19.1	27.2	29.6	29.4	14.4	17.4	19.7	18.8	11.3	15.7	16.9	15.2	8.6	12.4	12.8	11.2	1.6	3.0	1.8	2.4
10th	28.4	26.9	38.3	35.0	21.2	17.0	26.2	21.4	17.0	14.3	23.0	17.1	13.8	10.4	15.4	12.2	2.2	1.9	4.5	2.4
12th	25.2	33.8	38.6	34.7	19.9	22.3	27.0	21.3	17.2	17.9	24.7	16.2	12.9	13.7	14.6	12.2	2.4	2.6	1.8	2.0
All	23.7	27.6	34.0	31.0	18.3	17.8	22.8	18.6	15.0	15.0	19.6	14.7	11.3	11.4	13.6	10.9	2.0	2.5	2.8	2.2

DEPRESSION AND SUBSTANCE USE

The substance use rate of youth who reported depressive symptoms is much greater than those who have a much more positive outlook on life.

The four depressive symptoms that were asked on the survey questionnaire were: 1) *Sometimes I think that life is not worth it*, 2) *At times I think I am no good at all*, 3) *All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a failure*, and 4) *In the past year, have you felt depressed or sad MOST days, even if you felt OK sometimes?* The questions were scored on a scale of 1 to 4 (NO!, no, yes, YES!). The survey respondents were divided into three groups.

The high depressive symptoms group scored at least a mean of 3.75 on the depressive symptoms. This meant that those individuals marked “YES!” to all four items or marked “yes” to one item and “YES!” to three. The no depressive symptoms group marked “NO!” to all four of the items, and the moderate depressive symptoms group comprised the remaining respondents. Of the statewide sample, 30.8% of students scored no depressive symptoms on this scale; 62.1% scored moderate symptoms; and 7.1% scored high symptoms.

The table below shows the relationship between youth who report depressive symptoms and ATOD use.

When compared to the non-depressed group, youth in the state of Pennsylvania with high depressive symptoms indicate 30-day alcohol use rates that are four times higher than non-depressed students. Statewide, depressed students indicate use rates that are ten times higher for past-month cigarette use and seven times higher for past month marijuana use in comparison to non-depressed students.

The ATOD use rates of the moderate depressive symptoms group (62.1% of Pennsylvania youth), were closer to the rates of the non-depressed group than they were to the depressed. For the three substances, the past month usage rates for the this group were higher than those without depressive symptoms but lower than the high depressive symptoms group. Even with some depressive symptoms, individuals with a positive outlook tend to use fewer substances than peers with high levels of depressive symptoms.

	No Depressive Symptoms		Moderate Depressive Symptoms		High Depressive Symptoms	
	County 2021	State 2021	County 2021	State 2021	County 2021	State 2021
Depressive symptom alone	27.4	28.4	61.7	63.8	10.9	7.8
Alcohol Lifetime	22.2	19.8	44.3	39.7	65.0	57.3
Alcohol 30-Day	6.3	6.6	16.5	15.0	30.7	25.9
Cigarettes Lifetime	6.0	2.9	12.2	8.5	37.8	23.4
Cigarettes 30-Day	2.0	0.8	2.7	2.2	11.0	7.9
Marijuana Lifetime	6.6	5.4	15.8	14.4	37.0	30.6
Marijuana 30-Day	2.7	2.5	8.7	7.5	21.3	18.8

BULLYING AND DEPRESSION/SUICIDE

PAYS data show a strong relationship between being bullied and depression and suicidal behaviors.

When PAYS data for bullying measures (*Have you stayed home from school this year because you were worried about being bullied?* and *During the past 12 months, have you been bullied through texting and/or social media?*) are analyzed alongside measures of depression (*Did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?*) and of suicidal ideation (*During the past 12 months did you: seriously consider attempting suicide? Make a plan of how you would attempt suicide? Actually attempted suicide?*) a compelling relationship emerges.

For example, students at the state level who indicated they hadn't been bullied through texting or social media in the past year, 25.8% reported that they felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities.

Of students who indicated they *had* been cyberbullied, 61.2% indicated feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for at least two weeks in past year that they stopped doing usual activities. In the past year, 41.5% of those students had seriously considered suicide, 33.8% had made a suicide plan, and 30.1% had attempted suicide.

Similar relationships exist for students who indicated they had skipped school due to bullying fears in the past year. Of those students, 73.9% had felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for at least two weeks in past year that they stopped doing usual activities, 53.1% had seriously considered suicide, 43.5% had made a suicide plan, and 42.0% had attempted suicide.

	Bullied through texting/social media in the past year?				Skipped school due to bullying fears in the past year?			
	NO/no		YES/yes		NO/no		YES/yes	
	County 2021	State 2021	County 2021	State 2021	County 2021	State 2021	County 2021	State 2021
Felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for at least 2 weeks in past year that stopped doing usual activities	27.1	25.8	63.0	61.2	31.1	29.1	77.0	73.9
Seriously considered suicide in the past year	17.2	14.7	46.2	41.5	20.5	17.1	57.5	53.1
Made suicide plan in the past year	14.8	11.5	39.9	33.8	17.8	13.5	47.5	43.5
Attempted suicide one or more times in the past year	9.7	7.6	29.7	30.1	11.7	9.5	40.8	42.0

To create other crosstabs at the state and county level for other comparisons, visit www.bach-harrison.com/PAYSWebTool.

TRANSITIONS AND MOBILITY, SLEEP, GRIEF, AND OTHER STRESSFUL EVENTS

Death of friends or family members, personal injury, moving homes, and worrying about having enough food are stressful events that can negatively affect a student's life.

Psychological trauma and stress can occur as a result of a severely distressing event. A traumatic or stressful event involves a single experience, or an enduring or repeating event or events, that completely overwhelm the individual's ability to cope or integrate the ideas and emotions involved with that experience. PAYS asks about the death of close friends or family, and transitions in housing.

Changing homes often means losing one's friends and learning the way around a new neighborhood or school. Neighborhoods with high rates of migration are also less cohesive and stable.

43.4% of students in this county reported the death of close friend or family member in the past twelve months, compared to 37.9% at the state level. 12.7% of students reported changing homes once or twice within the past 12 months, and 6.2% of students reported having changed homes three or more times in the past three years.

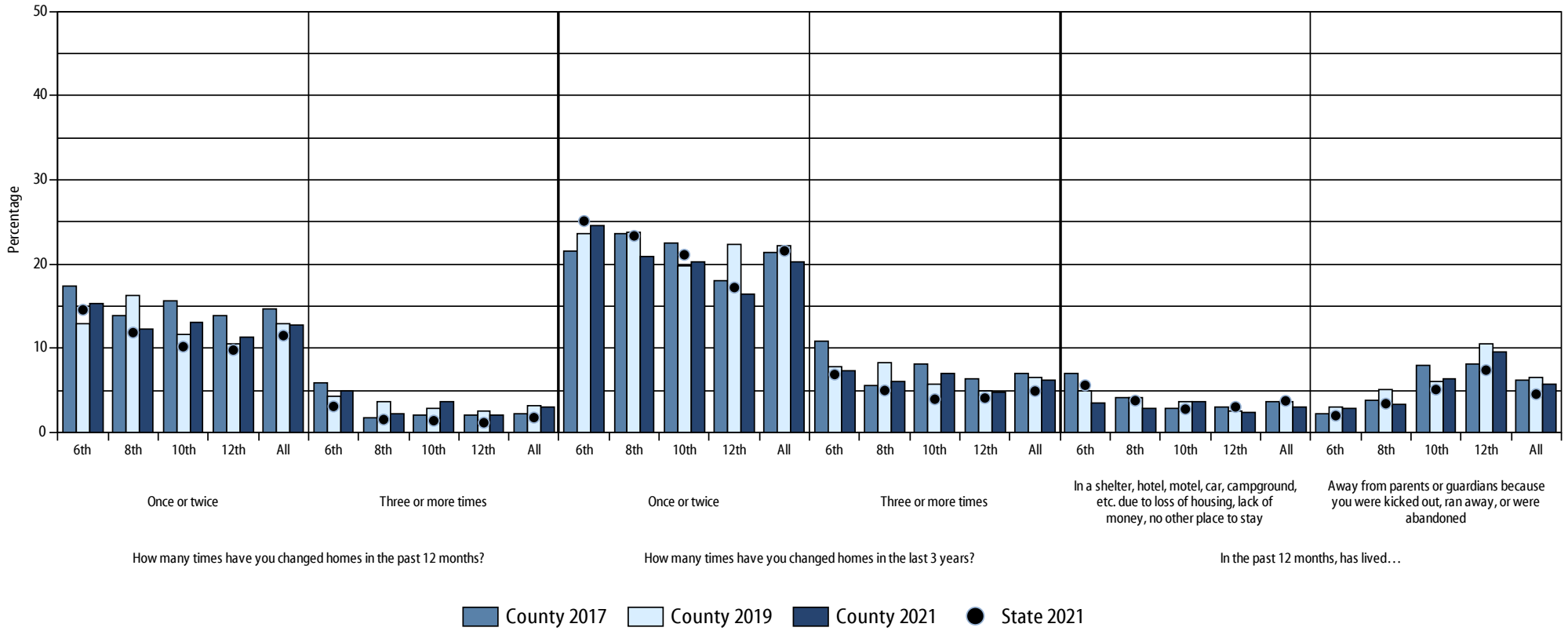
Students also said "they were worried they would run out of food at home due to money issues" (reported by 12.1% of students in this county), "they had skipped a meal because their family didn't have enough money for food" (reported by 6.2% of students), and "they had lived away from parents or guardians because you were kicked out, ran away, or were abandoned" (reported by 5.7% of students).

PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

Transitions and mobility *How many times have you changed homes:
in the past 12 months?
including the past 12 months, in the last 3 years?
During the past 12 months, have you or your family
lived in a shelter, hotel, motel, car, campground, or
someone else's home, etc. due to loss of housing, lack
of money, or did not have another place to stay?
In the past 12 months, did you ever live away
from your parents or guardians because you were
kicked out, ran away, or were abandoned?*

Sleep, Grief, and Stressful Events *On an average school night, how many hours of sleep do you get?
In the last two weeks, how often have you
felt tired or sleepy during the day?
In the past 12 months, have any of your friends
or family members close to you died?
How many times have you:
Worried that food at home would run out before
your family got money to buy more?
Skipped a meal because your family didn't
have enough money to buy food?*

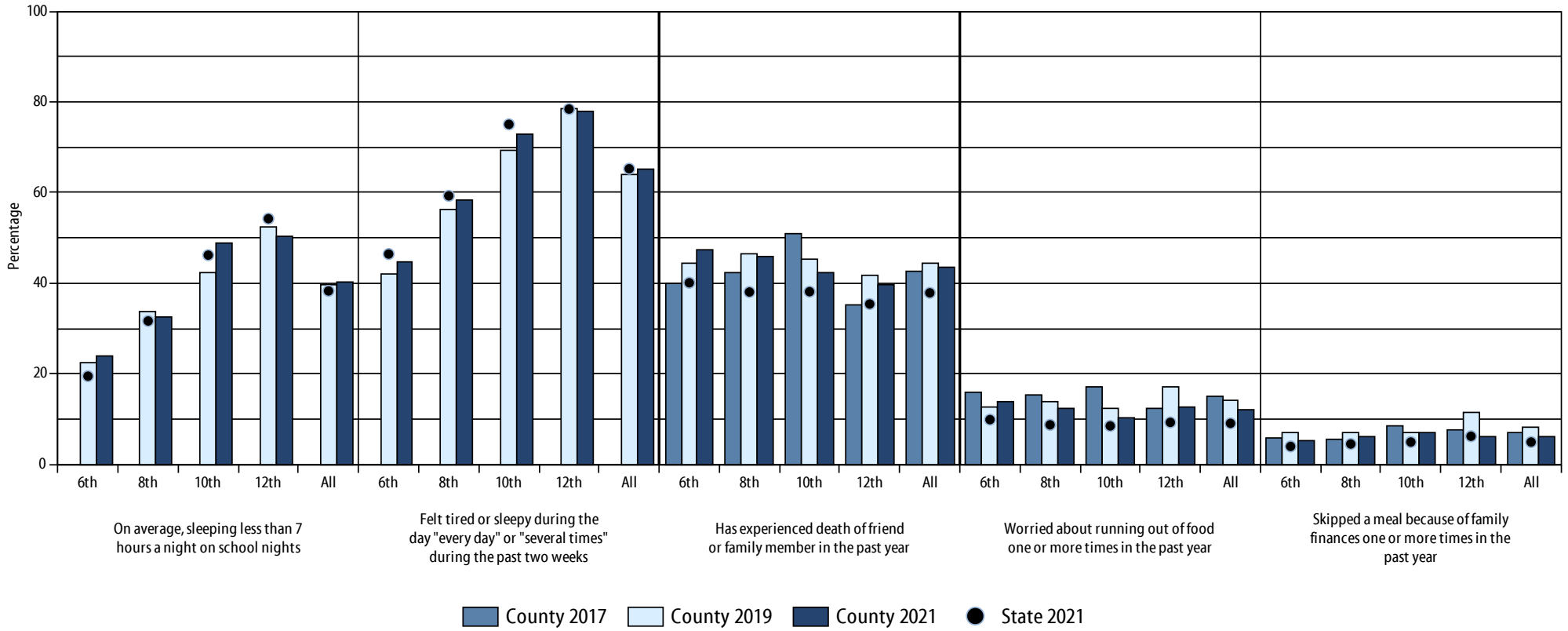
Transitions and mobility Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



4_26_2022

Grade	How many times have you changed homes in the past 12 months?				How many times have you changed homes in the last 3 years?				In the past 12 months, has lived ...															
	Once or twice in the last year		Three or more times in the last year		Once or twice in last 3 years		Three or more times in last 3 years		In a shelter, hotel, motel, car, campground, etc. due to loss of housing, lack of money, no place to stay		Away from parents or guardians because you were kicked out, ran away, or were abandoned													
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021				
6th	17.3	13.0	15.2	14.5	5.9	4.3	4.9	3.1	21.5	23.6	24.5	25.1	10.8	7.9	7.3	6.9	7.0	4.8	3.5	5.6	2.2	3.0	2.9	2.0
8th	13.8	16.2	12.2	11.8	1.7	3.7	2.2	1.5	23.6	23.7	20.9	23.3	5.5	8.2	6.0	5.0	4.1	4.1	2.9	3.8	3.8	5.1	3.4	3.4
10th	15.5	11.7	13.0	10.2	2.0	2.9	3.7	1.4	22.5	19.8	20.3	21.1	8.1	5.7	7.0	3.9	2.9	3.6	3.7	2.8	8.0	6.1	6.4	5.1
12th	13.9	10.5	11.3	9.8	2.0	2.5	2.0	1.1	18.1	22.2	16.4	17.2	6.4	4.9	4.8	4.1	3.1	2.5	2.4	3.0	8.1	10.5	9.5	7.4
All	14.6	12.9	12.7	11.5	2.3	3.2	3.0	1.7	21.4	22.1	20.2	21.6	7.0	6.5	6.2	4.9	3.7	3.6	3.1	3.7	6.2	6.6	5.7	4.5

Sleep, grief, and stressful events Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



4_26_2022

Grade	On average, sleeping less than 7 hours a night on school nights				Felt tired or sleepy during the day "every day" or "several times" during the past two weeks				Has experienced death of friend or family member in the past year				Worried about running out of food one or more times in the past year				Skipped a meal because of family finances one or more times in the past year			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	n/a	22.5	23.9	19.5	n/a	41.9	44.6	46.4	39.9	44.4	47.3	40.1	16.0	12.8	13.8	9.9	5.7	7.0	5.3	4.0
8th	n/a	33.8	32.6	31.7	n/a	56.1	58.3	59.3	42.5	46.5	45.8	38.1	15.3	13.9	12.3	8.8	5.7	6.9	6.1	4.5
10th	n/a	42.4	48.9	46.2	n/a	69.3	72.9	75.0	51.1	45.2	42.2	38.1	17.1	12.4	10.4	8.5	8.4	7.0	7.0	5.0
12th	n/a	52.3	50.5	54.2	n/a	78.5	77.8	78.4	35.2	41.7	39.7	35.4	12.3	17.1	12.6	9.3	7.8	11.5	6.2	6.2
All	n/a	39.8	40.2	38.3	n/a	64.0	65.1	65.3	42.5	44.6	43.4	37.9	15.0	14.2	12.1	9.1	7.1	8.2	6.2	5.0

6. SYSTEMIC FACTORS

Systemic factors are measures of the attitudes and perceptions students hold about substances. It measures the perceived risks of use for individual substances and how acceptable these substances are perceived to be from a peer, parental and community standpoint.

These measures concentrate on four primary substances: regular use of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana, and the use of prescription drugs not prescribed to the user.

Examples of some of the systemic factors covered here are student's perception of risk, that is, how much the student thinks people risk harming themselves if they regularly use the substance in question; perception of disapproval (parental and peer), that is, the student's perception of how wrong his or her parents/friends would feel it was if the student regularly used the substance; and attitudes toward peer use, that is, a measure of the student's level of approval or disapproval if someone their age regularly used the substance.

These factors have been chosen as a common set of measures to fulfill the reporting requirements of several national drug prevention grants. Because all grantees collect these same core measures, evaluators use them to assess the compliance and effectiveness of the programs. Drug Free Community grantees and STOP Act grantees will find these data repeated in Appendix A, formatted for ease of reporting.

PERCEPTION OF RISK

Perception of risk is an important determinant in the decision-making process young people go through when deciding whether or not to use alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.

Data analysis shows a consistent negative correlation between perception of risk and the level of reported ATOD use. That is, generally when the perceived risk of harm is high, reported frequency of use is low.

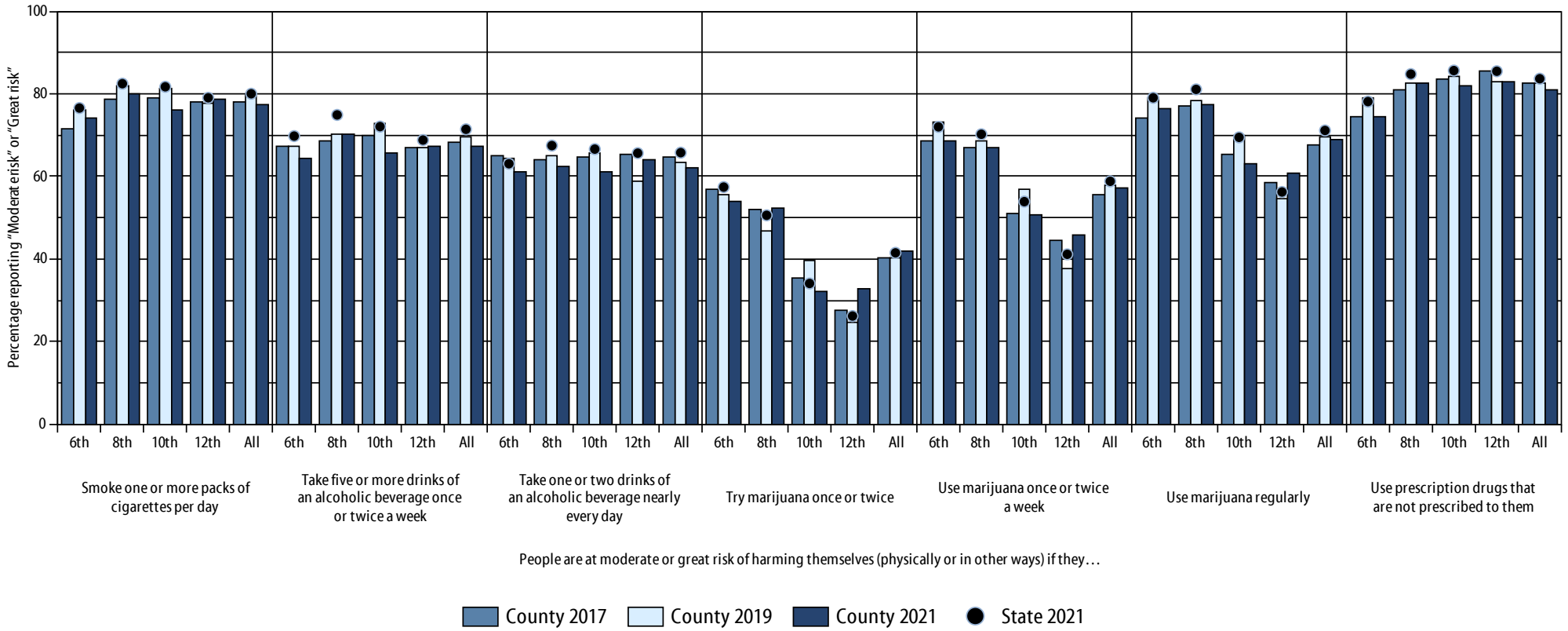
Evidence also suggests that perceptions of the risks and benefits associated with drug use sometimes serve as a leading indicator of future drug use patterns in a community. These are presented as prevalence rates for surveyed youth assigning “moderate risk” or “great risk” of harm to four drug use behaviors: binge use of alcohol (five or more drinks once or twice a week), regular use of alcohol (one or two drinks nearly every day), regular use of cigarettes (a pack or more daily), using marijuana once or twice a week, and use of prescription drugs.

PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

Perception of Risk *How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they:*

- Take one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage (beer, wine, hard liquor) nearly every day?*
- Take five or more drinks of an alcoholic beverage (beer, wine, hard liquor) once or twice a week?*
- Smoke one or more packs of cigarettes per day?*
- Try marijuana once or twice?*
- Use marijuana once or twice a week?*
- Use marijuana regularly?*
- Use prescription drugs that are not prescribed to them?*

Perception of risk Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



4_26_2022

People are at moderate or great risk of harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they ...

Grade	Smoke one or more packs of cigarettes per day				Take five or more drinks of an alcoholic beverage once or twice a week				Take one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day				Try marijuana once or twice				Use marijuana once or twice a week				Use marijuana regularly				Use prescription drugs that are not prescribed to them			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	71.5	76.2	74.0	76.6	67.3	67.4	64.4	69.8	65.1	64.2	61.0	63.1	56.9	55.7	54.0	57.4	68.5	73.3	68.5	72.0	74.0	79.0	76.4	79.0	74.4	79.0	74.6	78.1
8th	78.8	82.1	79.9	82.5	68.5	70.2	70.3	74.9	64.2	65.1	62.4	67.5	52.1	46.9	52.3	50.6	66.8	68.7	67.1	70.2	76.9	78.4	77.3	81.1	81.1	82.7	82.5	84.8
10th	78.9	81.4	76.1	81.7	69.9	72.7	65.8	72.1	64.8	65.8	61.3	66.6	35.3	39.6	32.2	34.1	51.1	56.9	50.6	53.9	65.4	69.8	63.1	69.5	83.6	84.1	81.9	85.6
12th	78.0	77.8	78.8	79.1	66.9	66.8	67.2	68.8	65.2	58.9	64.0	65.6	27.5	24.8	32.8	26.2	44.6	37.7	45.9	41.2	58.4	54.7	60.9	56.2	85.6	83.1	83.1	85.5
All	77.9	79.9	77.5	80.0	68.3	69.6	67.2	71.4	64.8	63.6	62.3	65.8	40.1	40.2	41.9	41.5	55.7	57.8	57.2	58.8	67.7	69.7	68.9	71.2	82.5	82.7	81.1	83.7

PERCEPTION OF PARENTAL DISAPPROVAL

Parents influence the attitudes and behavior of their children, including their perceptions on drug and alcohol use.

For example, parental approval of moderate drinking, even under parental supervision, substantially increases the likelihood of the young person using alcohol. Further, in families where parents involve children in their own drug or alcohol behavior, there is an increased likelihood that their children will use drugs in adolescence.

Parental attitudes were measured by asking surveyed youth “how wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to” drink alcohol regularly, smoke cigarettes, use marijuana, and use prescription drugs. The rates are the percentages of surveyed youth who reported that their parents feel it would be “wrong” or “very wrong” to use the substance.

PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

Perception of parental disapproval *How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to:*

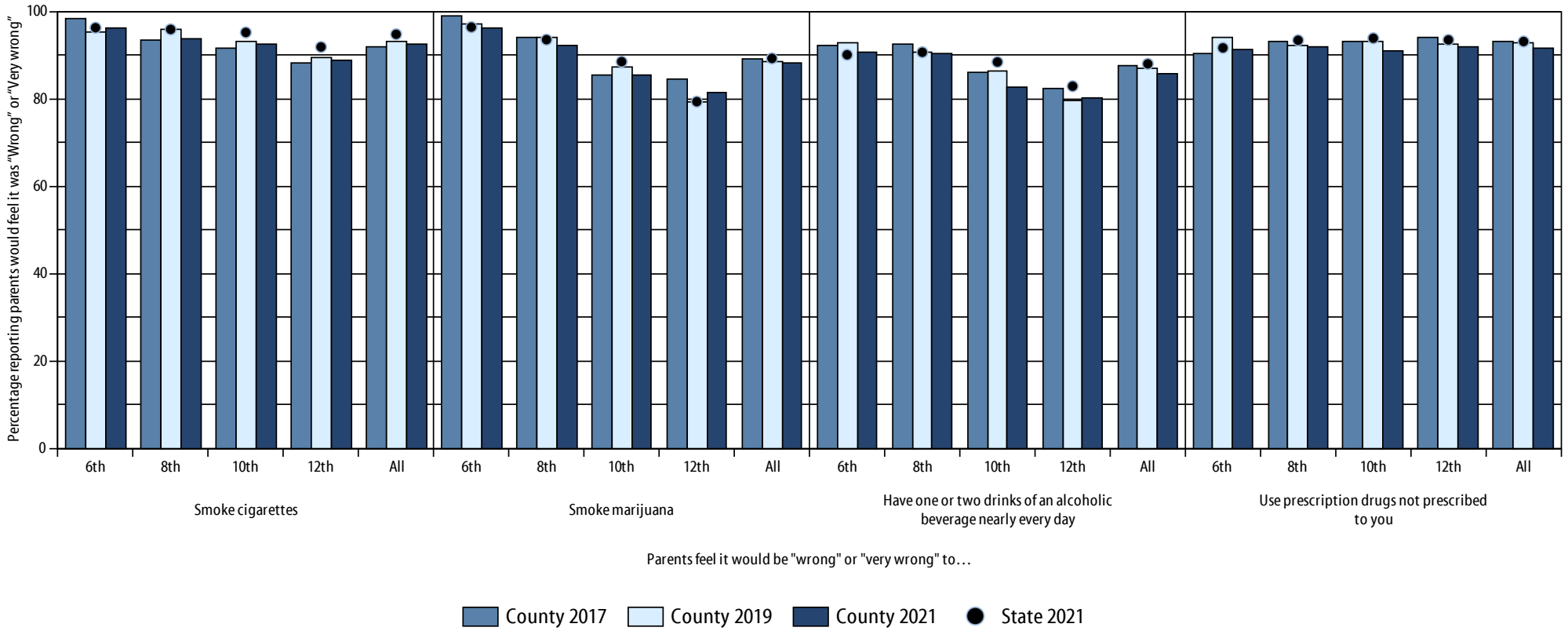
Have one or two drinks of alcoholic beverage such as beer, wine, or hard liquor (vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum) nearly every day?

Smoke cigarettes?

Use marijuana?

Use prescription drugs not prescribed to you?

Perception of parental disapproval Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



4_26_2022

Parents feel it would be "wrong" or "very wrong" to...

Grade	Smoke cigarettes				Smoke marijuana				Have one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day				Use prescription drugs not prescribed to you			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	98.4	95.1	96.0	96.2	98.8	97.2	96.3	96.4	92.2	92.9	90.5	90.0	90.4	94.0	91.3	91.6
8th	93.5	95.7	93.9	95.9	93.9	94.1	92.1	93.5	92.6	90.7	90.4	90.6	93.2	92.2	91.8	93.4
10th	91.6	93.1	92.4	95.2	85.4	87.2	85.5	88.5	86.0	86.3	82.5	88.4	93.0	93.0	90.9	93.8
12th	88.1	89.6	88.9	91.8	84.5	79.2	81.6	79.3	82.2	79.7	80.1	82.9	94.1	92.5	91.9	93.4
All	91.8	93.2	92.5	94.7	89.0	88.5	88.3	89.2	87.6	87.0	85.7	88.0	93.1	92.8	91.4	93.1

PERCEPTION OF PEER DISAPPROVAL

Parent influences tend to be more salient for younger students, whereas peer influences are more predominant for eighth graders. The older the student is, the more influence a student's peers exert on the student's behavior.

Researchers have identified a positive correlation between the amount of peer disapproval of alcohol and other drug use and the level of alcohol and other drug use among students. Thus, the greater the peer disapproval, the less likely students are to use alcohol and other drugs. The rates are the percentages of surveyed youth who reported that their friends feel it would be "wrong" or "very wrong" for them to use the substance.

PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

Perception of peer disapproval *How wrong do your friends feel it would be for you to:*

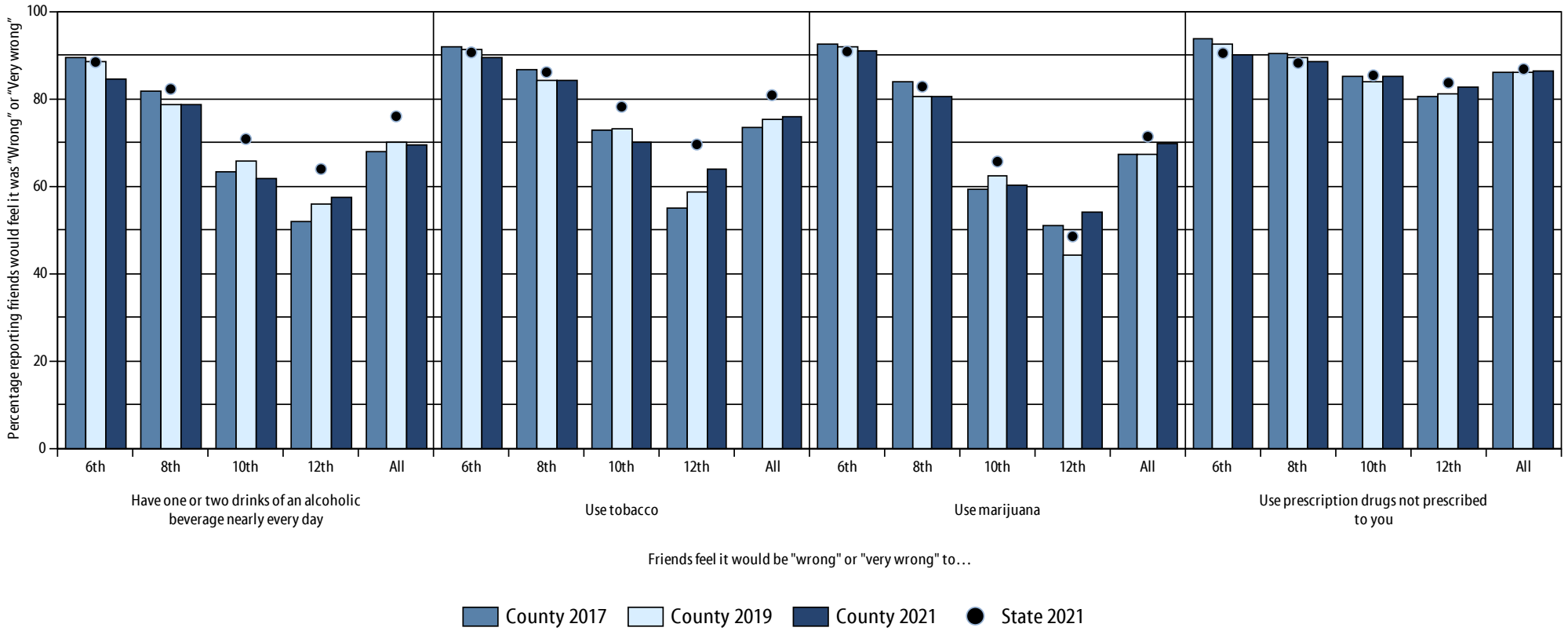
Have one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day?

Use tobacco?

Use marijuana?

Use prescription drugs not prescribed to you?

Perception of peer disapproval Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



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Friends feel it would be "wrong" or "very wrong" to...

Grade	Have one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day				Use tobacco				Use marijuana				Use prescription drugs not prescribed to you			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	89.3	88.6	84.3	88.4	92.0	91.3	89.4	90.6	92.3	92.0	90.9	90.8	93.6	92.5	90.1	90.4
8th	81.7	78.6	78.5	82.2	86.6	84.2	84.2	86.1	83.8	80.4	80.5	82.8	90.2	89.5	88.6	88.2
10th	63.4	65.8	61.8	70.8	72.8	73.0	70.2	78.2	59.3	62.3	60.1	65.6	85.0	84.0	85.0	85.3
12th	51.9	55.7	57.4	63.9	55.1	58.7	63.8	69.5	50.9	44.3	54.0	48.5	80.6	81.1	82.8	83.6
All	68.0	70.2	69.3	76.0	73.4	75.1	75.9	80.8	67.4	67.2	69.7	71.3	86.1	86.1	86.3	86.8

ATTITUDES TOWARD PEER USE

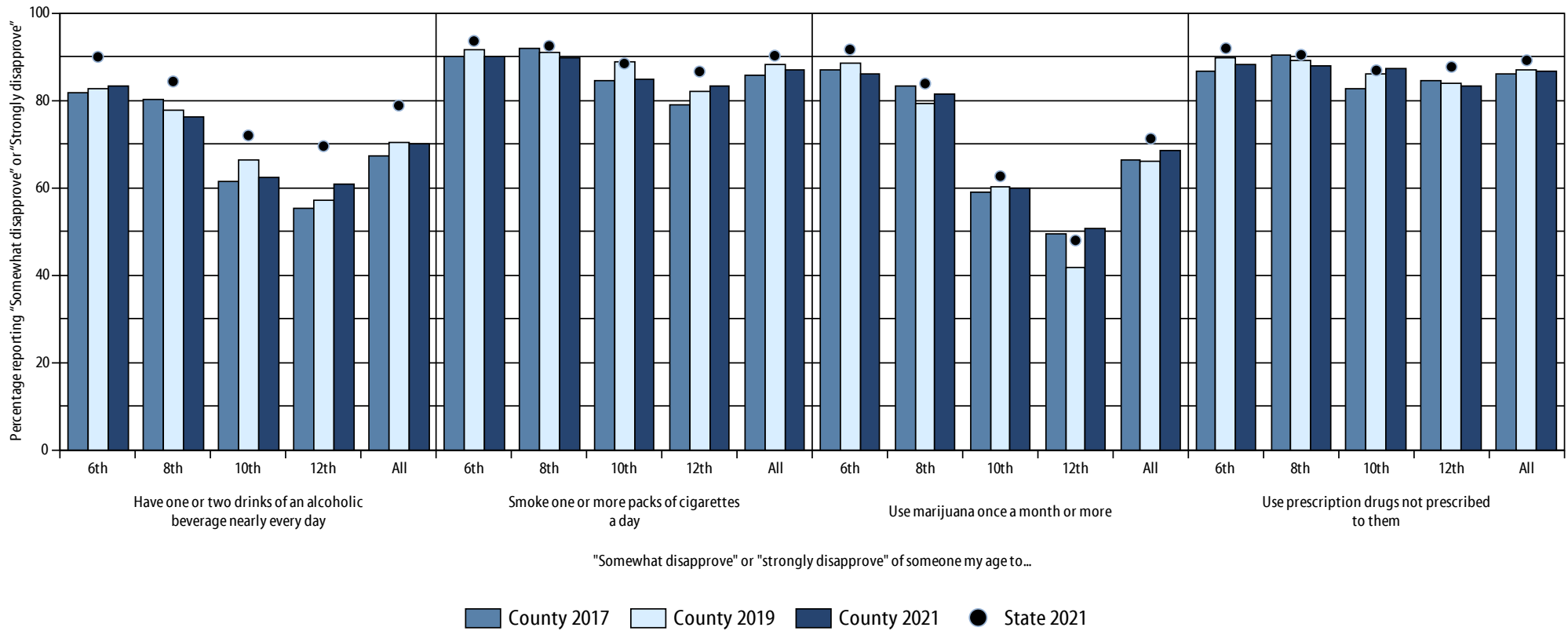
Personal approval or disapproval is another key attitudinal construct that influences substance use behavior.

Like the perceived risk of harm, disapproval is negatively correlated with the level of reported ATOD use across a range of Communities That Care Youth Survey communities. Personal disapproval was measured by asking surveyed youth how wrong it would be for someone their age to regularly drink alcohol or smoke cigarettes, use marijuana once a month, or misuse prescription drugs. Rates are the percentages of surveyed youth who “somewhat disapprove” or “strongly disapprove” of regular use of each substance.

PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

Attitudes toward peer use *How do you feel about someone your age:*
Having one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage (beer, wine, hard liquor) nearly every day?
Smoking one or more packs of cigarettes a day?
Using marijuana once a month or more?
Using prescription drugs not prescribed to them?

Attitudes toward peer use Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



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"Somewhat disapprove" or "strongly disapprove" of someone my age to...

Grade	Have one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day				Smoke one or more packs of cigarettes a day				Use marijuana once a month or more				Use prescription drugs not prescribed to them			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	81.9	82.6	83.2	89.9	90.0	91.5	90.0	93.6	86.8	88.3	86.1	91.6	86.5	89.6	88.2	91.9
8th	80.0	77.7	76.3	84.3	91.9	91.0	89.8	92.4	83.3	79.4	81.3	83.8	90.2	89.0	87.8	90.4
10th	61.3	66.3	62.4	72.0	84.6	88.9	84.9	88.4	58.8	60.1	59.9	62.6	82.6	86.0	87.4	86.8
12th	55.2	57.2	60.7	69.5	78.9	82.0	83.4	86.6	49.5	41.9	50.7	48.0	84.5	83.9	83.4	87.6
All	67.4	70.2	70.0	78.8	85.7	88.2	86.9	90.2	66.5	66.1	68.6	71.2	85.9	87.0	86.6	89.1

COMMUNITY RISK ASSOCIATED WITH AVAILABILITY

Students' perceptions of the rules and regulations in their community related to alcohol and other drug use are related to the extent of problem behaviors during adolescence.

The attitudes and policies a community holds about drug use and other antisocial behaviors are communicated through laws, written policies, informal social practices, and expectations by parents and community members of young people. When laws and community standards are unclear or perceived as favorable toward drug use, violence, and crime, young people are more likely to engage in negative behaviors.

The perceived availability of drugs, alcohol, or handguns in a community is directly related to the prevalence of delinquent behaviors. In schools where youth believe that drugs are available, a higher rate of drug use has been found to occur. If students believe that acquiring a handgun is or would be difficult, they are less likely to become involved with the unauthorized and unsupervised use of firearms.

66.3% of students in this county think that if a kid drank alcohol, he or she would not be caught by the police (state rate: 61.9%).

24.4% of students report that most adults in their neighborhood would think it was “a little bit wrong” or “not at all wrong” for kids their age to drink alcohol (compared to 20.8% at the state level) and 16.1% of students reports that adults would think it was “a little bit wrong” or “not at all wrong” for kids their age to use marijuana (compared to 15.0% at the state level).

39.0% of students reported that alcohol would be “sort of easy” or “very easy” to get, and 19.3% reported that a handgun would be “sort of easy” or “very easy” to get (compared to state rates of 37.7% and 12.3%, respectively).

PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

Community Risk Associated with Availability

If a kid drank some beer, wine, or hard liquor (for example: vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum) in your neighborhood would he or she be caught by the police?

How wrong would most adults (over 21) in your neighborhood think it was for kids your age:

To drink alcohol?

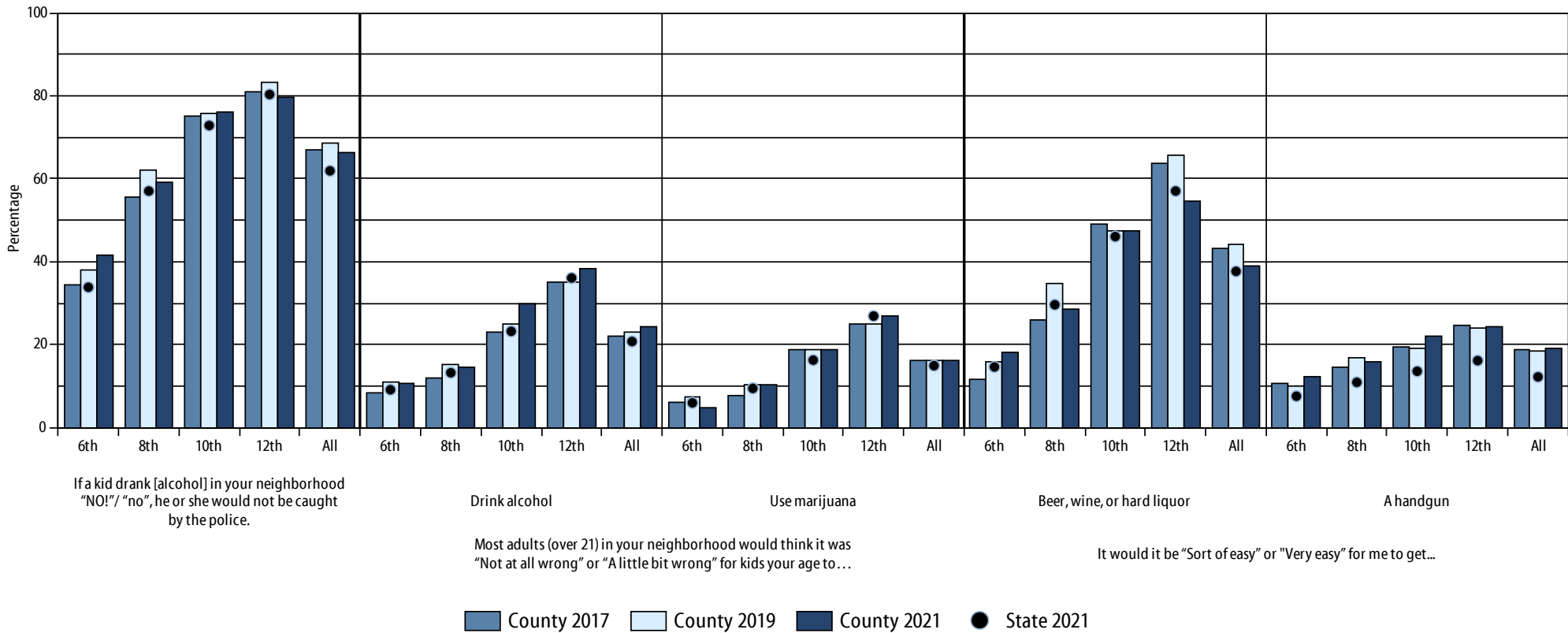
To use marijuana?

How easy would it be for you to get any, if you wanted to get any of the following:

Beer, wine, or hard liquor (for example: vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum)?

A handgun

Community risk associated with availability Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



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Grade	If a kid drank [alcohol] in your neighborhood... "NO!" / "no", he or she would not be caught by the police.				Most adults (over 21) in your neighborhood would think it was "Not at all wrong" or "A little bit wrong" for kids your age to...				It would be "Sort of easy" or "Very easy" for me to get...											
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021				
6th	34.5	38.1	41.7	33.9	8.5	11.0	10.8	9.2	6.1	7.5	4.9	6.0	11.5	16.0	18.1	14.7	10.6	10.2	12.2	7.6
8th	55.5	62.3	59.1	57.1	11.9	15.3	14.6	13.3	7.8	10.2	10.2	9.5	25.9	34.8	28.7	29.7	14.6	16.7	15.8	11.0
10th	75.2	75.6	76.2	72.9	23.2	25.1	29.9	23.2	18.7	18.8	18.9	16.3	49.1	47.5	47.4	46.1	19.5	19.0	22.2	13.6
12th	80.8	83.4	79.8	80.3	35.2	35.2	38.3	36.1	25.1	25.0	26.9	26.9	63.8	65.6	54.7	57.1	24.6	24.0	24.5	16.2
All	67.1	68.5	66.3	61.9	22.0	22.9	24.4	20.8	16.1	16.3	16.1	15.0	43.1	44.2	39.0	37.7	18.8	18.4	19.3	12.3

RULES AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Observed behaviors and perceptions of standards regarding drug use and other antisocial behaviors are important aspects of risky behaviors.

Children who experience unclear expectations for behavior or are given excessively severe, harsh, or inconsistent punishment are at a higher risk of developing problems with drug use, delinquency, violent behavior, and dropping out of school. Youth raised where there is a history of addiction to alcohol or other drugs are at a higher risk for having alcohol or other drug problems themselves.

The questions, “My family has clear rules about alcohol and drug use” and “The rules in my family are clear,” are set within other questions that reinforce the context for each question to improve the difference in the responses about family rules related to alcohol and drug use and general family rules about behavior.

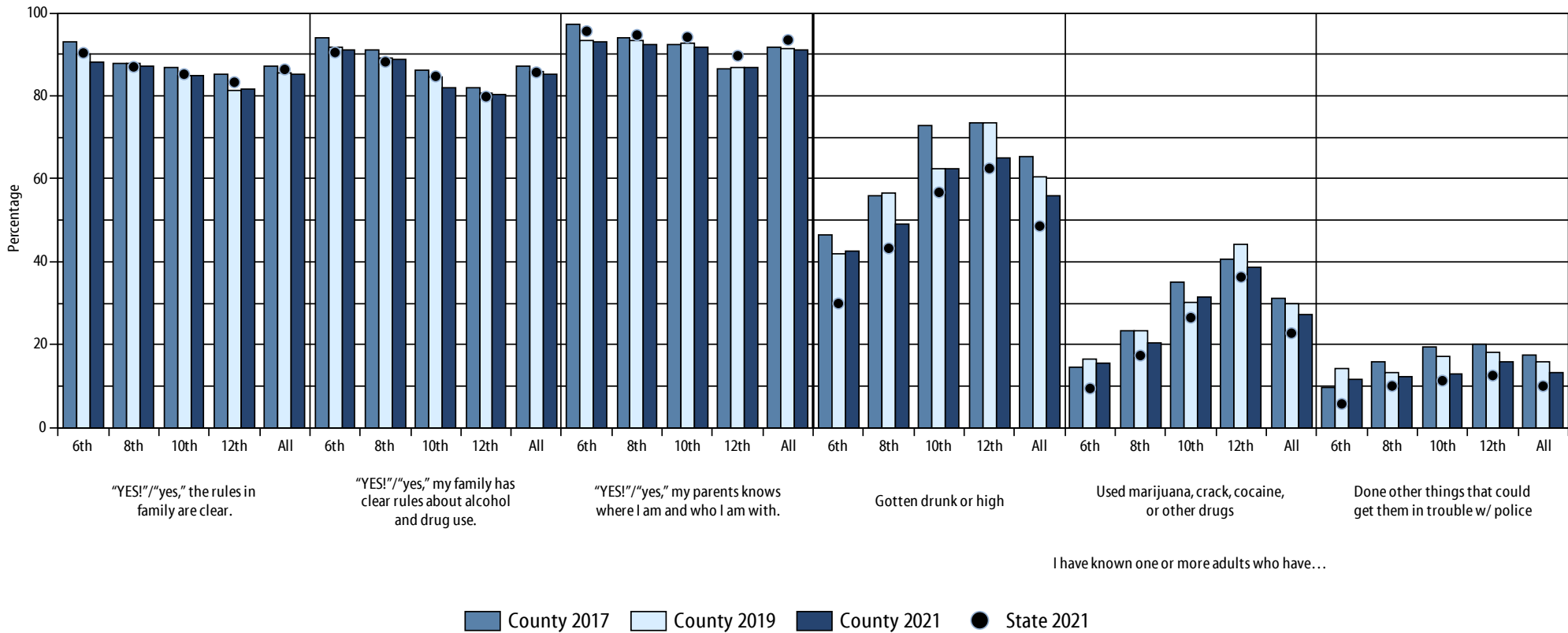
85.2% of students in this county say the rules in their family are clear (compared to 86.4% at the state level), with 85.2% reporting their families have clear rules about drugs and alcohol (state rate: 85.7%). When the students are not home, 91.0% of students stated their parents know where they are and who they are with.

Adult actions influence youth. Students reported they have personally known someone over 21 who has: gotten high or drunk (55.8%, compared to 48.6% at the state level); used marijuana, crack, cocaine, or other drugs (27.3%, compared to 22.8% at the state level); or has done other antisocial behaviors (13.2%, compared to 10.1% at the state level).

PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

- Rules and antisocial behavior** *My family has clear rules about alcohol and drug use.*
- When I am not at home, one of my parents knows where I am and who I am with.*
- The rules in my family are clear.*
- About how many adults (over 21) have you known personally who in the past 12 months have:*
 - Gotten drunk or high?*
 - Used marijuana, crack, cocaine, or other drugs?*
 - Done other things that could get them in trouble with the police, like stealing, selling stolen goods, mugging or assaulting others, etc.?*

Rules and antisocial behavior Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



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Grade	"YES!"/"yes," the rules in family are clear.				"YES!"/"yes," my family has clear rules about alcohol and drug use.				"YES!"/"yes," my parents knows where I am and who I am with.				Gotten drunk or high				Used marijuana, crack, cocaine, or other drugs				Done other things that could get them in trouble w/ police			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	92.9	90.1	88.2	90.3	93.9	91.7	91.2	90.5	97.4	93.3	93.2	95.6	46.4	41.9	42.5	30.0	14.7	16.5	15.6	9.5	9.8	14.1	11.7	5.8
8th	88.0	87.7	87.0	87.0	91.1	89.2	88.8	88.2	94.0	93.4	92.5	94.7	56.1	56.5	49.2	43.3	23.5	23.4	20.5	17.4	15.8	13.3	12.3	10.1
10th	86.9	84.9	84.8	85.2	86.3	84.5	82.1	84.7	92.2	92.5	91.8	94.1	73.0	62.4	62.6	56.8	35.3	30.2	31.4	26.5	19.4	17.0	12.9	11.4
12th	85.0	81.4	81.7	83.3	82.1	80.8	80.5	79.8	86.6	86.8	87.0	89.7	73.4	73.6	65.1	62.5	40.5	44.1	38.7	36.3	20.3	18.2	15.8	12.6
All	87.3	85.6	85.2	86.4	87.2	85.9	85.2	85.7	91.6	91.4	91.0	93.5	65.3	60.6	55.8	48.6	31.2	29.9	27.3	22.8	17.6	15.8	13.2	10.1

FAVORABLE ATTITUDES TOWARD DRUG USE

Youth in families where parents use illegal drugs, are heavy users of alcohol, or are tolerant of their children’s use are at a higher risk for using substances during adolescence.

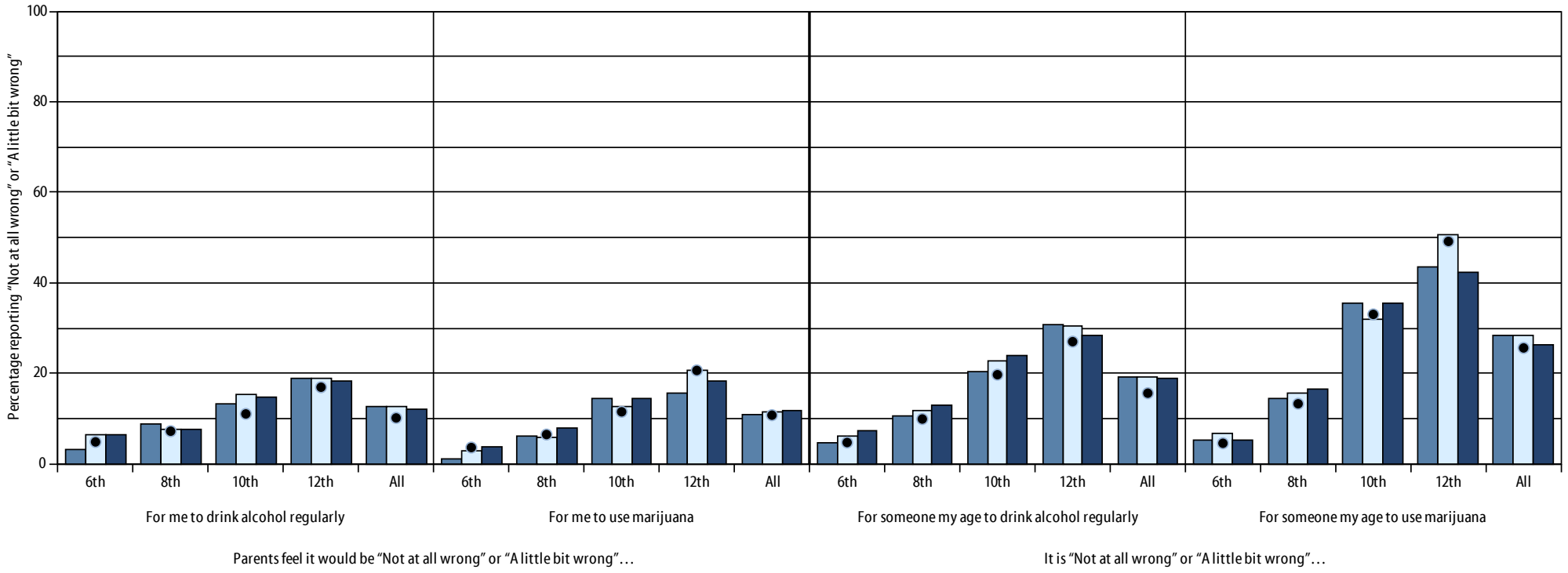
During the elementary school years, children usually express anti-drug attitudes. They often have difficulty imagining why people use drugs. During the middle school years, as others they know participate in these activities, their attitudes shift toward greater acceptance of these behaviors. This acceptance increases their risk for trying and using drugs.

12.2% of students in this county stated their parents felt it “a little bit wrong” or “not at all wrong” to drink alcohol (state rate: 10.2%) and 11.7% stated that their parents felt it was “a little bit wrong” or “not at all wrong” to use marijuana (state rate: 10.8%). 19.0% of the students thought it was “a little bit wrong” or “not at all wrong” for someone their age to use alcohol (state rate: 15.6%) and 26.5% thought it was “a little bit wrong” or “not at all wrong” for someone their age to use marijuana (state rate: 25.6%).

PAYS 2021 category: PAYS 2021 question text:

Favorable attitudes toward drug use *How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to:*
Drink beer, wine or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum) regularly?
Use marijuana?
How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to:
Drink beer, wine or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum) regularly?
Use marijuana?

Attitudes favorable toward drug use Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



County 2017 County 2019 County 2021 State 2021

4_26_2022

Grade	Parents feel it would be "Not at all wrong" or "A little bit wrong"...				It is "Not at all wrong" or "A little bit wrong"...											
	For me to drink alcohol regularly				For me to use marijuana				For someone my age to drink alcohol regularly				For someone my age to use marijuana			
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021
6th	3.1	6.5	6.5	4.9	1.2	2.8	3.8	3.6	4.8	6.3	7.3	4.8	5.2	6.6	5.2	4.6
8th	9.0	7.5	7.7	7.2	6.1	5.9	7.9	6.5	10.7	11.8	12.9	9.9	14.4	15.7	16.5	13.3
10th	13.2	15.4	14.9	11.1	14.6	12.8	14.5	11.5	20.3	22.8	24.1	19.7	35.5	31.8	35.5	33.0
12th	18.8	19.1	18.3	17.0	15.5	20.8	18.4	20.7	30.9	30.4	28.3	27.0	43.5	50.7	42.2	49.2
All	12.7	12.8	12.2	10.2	11.0	11.5	11.7	10.8	19.1	19.1	19.0	15.6	28.5	28.4	26.5	25.6

7. RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Prevention is a science. The Risk and Protective Factor Model of Prevention is a proven effective way of reducing substance use and its related consequences.

This model is based on the simple premise that to prevent a problem from happening, we need to identify the factors that increase the risk of that problem developing and then find ways to reduce the risks. Just as medical researchers have found risk factors for heart disease such as diets high in fat, lack of exercise, and smoking, a team of researchers at the University of Washington have defined a set of risk factors for youth problem behaviors.

Known to predict increased likelihood of drug use, delinquency, school dropout, and violent behaviors among youth, risk factors are characteristics of community, family, and school environments, and of students and their peer groups. For example, children who live in families with high levels of conflict are more likely to become involved in delinquency and drug use than children who live in families characterized by lower levels of conflict.

Protective factors exert a positive influence and buffer against the negative influence of risk, thus reducing the likelihood that adolescents will engage in problem behaviors.

Bonding confers a protective influence only when there is a positive climate in the bonded community. Peers and adults in these neighborhoods, families, and schools must communicate healthy values and

set clear standards for behavior in order to ensure a protective effect. For example, strong bonds to anti-social peers would not be likely to reinforce positive behavior.

Risk factors are conditions that increase the likelihood of a young person becoming involved in drug use, delinquency, school dropout, and/or violence.

	Substance Misuse	Delinquency	Teen Pregnancy	School Drop-Out	Violence	Depression & Anxiety
Community	Low Neighborhood Attachment	✓	✓		✓	
	Perceived Availability of Drugs	✓			✓	
	Perceived Availability of Handguns		✓		✓	
	Community Laws and Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use, Firearms and Crime	✓	✓		✓	
Family	Family History of Antisocial Behavior	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Poor Family Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Family Conflict	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Parental Attitudes Favorable Toward Drugs and Antisocial Behavior	✓	✓		✓	
School	Academic Failure	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Low Commitment to School	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Rebelliousness	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Gang Involvement	✓	✓		✓	
Peer / Individual	Perceived Risk of Drug Use	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Attitudes Favorable Toward Antisocial Behavior and Drug Use	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Friend's Use of Drugs	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Interaction with Antisocial Peers	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Depressive Symptoms	✓			✓	✓

Protective factors identified through research include strong bonding to community, family, school, and peers, and healthy beliefs and clear standards for behavior. Protective bonding depends on three conditions:

- Opportunities for young people to actively contribute

- Skills to be able to successfully contribute
- Consistent recognition or reinforcement for their efforts and accomplishments

Research on risk and protective factors has important implications for children’s academic success, positive youth development, and prevention of health and behavior problems. In order to promote

academic success and positive youth development and prevent problem behaviors, it is necessary to address the factors that predict these outcomes. By measuring risk and protective factors in a population, specific risk factors that are elevated and widespread can be identified and targeted by policies, programs, and actions shown to reduce those risk factors and to promote protective factors.

Protective factors, also known as “assets,” are conditions that buffer youth from risk by reducing the impact of the risks or changing the way they respond to risks.

		Healthy Beliefs and Clear Standards	Bonding	Opportunities	Skills	Recognition
Community	Rewards for Prosocial Involvement		✓			✓
	Family Attachment		✓			
Family	Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement		✓	✓		
	Rewards for Prosocial Involvement	✓	✓			✓
School	Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement		✓	✓		
	Rewards for Prosocial Involvement		✓			✓
Peer / Individual	Interaction with Prosocial Peers		✓		✓	
	Prosocial Involvement		✓		✓	
	Rewards for Prosocial Involvement		✓			✓
	Belief in the Moral Order	✓				
	Religiosity	✓				

Each risk and protective factor can be linked to specific types of interventions that have been shown to be effective in either reducing risk(s) or enhancing protection(s). The steps outlined here will help your county make key decisions regarding allocation of resources, how and when to address specific needs, and which strategies are most effective and known to produce results.

In addition to helping assess current conditions and prioritize areas of greatest need, data from the Pennsylvania Youth Survey can be a powerful tool in applying for and complying with several federal programs, such as Drug Free Communities grants, outlined later in this report. The survey also gathers valuable data which allows state and local agencies to address other prevention issues related to academic achievement, mental health, and gang involvement.

RISK AND PROTECTIVE SCALES DEFINED

To access data at the state and county level for individual risk and protective factor questions, visit www.bach-harrison.com/PAYSWebTool.

Community Domain

Risk Factors

Low Neighborhood Attachment

Low neighborhood bonding is related to higher levels of juvenile crime and drug selling.

- A20** I like my neighborhood.
- A21** I'd like to get out of my neighborhood.
- A22** If I had to move, I would miss the neighborhood I now live in.

Perceived Availability of Drugs and Handguns

The availability of cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, and other illegal drugs has been related to the use of these substances by adolescents. The availability of handguns has also been related to a higher risk of crime and substance use by adolescents.

- A24** How easy would it be for you to get any, if you wanted to get any of the following:
 - a** Beer, wine, or hard liquor (for example: vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum)?
 - b** Cigarettes?
 - e** Marijuana?
 - d** A drug like cocaine, LSD, heroin, or amphetamines, how easy would it be for you to get some?
 - c** A handgun?

Laws and Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use

Research has shown that legal restrictions on alcohol and tobacco use, such as raising the legal drinking age, restricting smoking in public places, and increased taxation have been followed by decreases in consumption. Moreover, national surveys of high school seniors have shown that shifts in normative attitudes toward drug use have preceded changes in prevalence of use.

- A25** If a kid drank some beer, wine, or hard liquor (for example: vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum) in your neighborhood would he or she be caught by the police?
- A26** If a kid smoked marijuana in your neighborhood would he or she be caught by the police?
- A27** How wrong would most adults (over 21) in your neighborhood think it was for kids your age:
 - a** To drink alcohol?
 - b** To smoke cigarettes?
 - c** To use marijuana?

Protective Factors

Rewards for Prosocial Involvement

Rewards for positive participation in activities help youth bond to the community, thus lowering their risk for substance use.

- A17** My neighbors notice when I am doing a good job and let me know.
- A18** There are people in my neighborhood who are proud of me when I do something well.
- A19** There are people in my neighborhood who encourage me to do my best.

Family Domain

Risk Factors

Family History of Antisocial Behavior

When children are raised in a family with a history of problem behaviors (e.g., violence or ATOD use), the children are more likely to engage in these behaviors.

- B21** How many of your brothers or sisters ever:
- a** Drink beer, wine or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum) regularly?
 - b** Smoked cigarettes?
 - c** Smoked marijuana?
 - d** Took a handgun to school?
 - e** Been suspended or expelled from school?
- B20** About how many adults (over 21) have you known personally who in the past year have:
- a** Gotten drunk or high?
 - b** Used marijuana, crack, cocaine, or other drugs?
 - c** Sold or dealt drugs?
 - d** Done other things that could get them in trouble with the police, like stealing, selling stolen goods, mugging or assaulting others, etc.?
- B22** Has anyone in your family ever had a severe alcohol or drug problem?

Poor Family Management

Inconsistent and/or unusually harsh or severe punishments inflicted by parents increases the likelihood that their children will be at higher risk for substance use and other problem behaviors. Also, a failure to provide clear expectations and to monitor children's behavior makes it more likely that they will engage in substance misuse.

- B19** My family has clear rules about alcohol and drug use.
- B12** Would your parents know if you did not come home on time?
- B10** If you skipped school, would you be caught by your parents?
- B14** If you carried a handgun without your parent's permission, would you be caught by them?
- B9** When I am not at home, one of my parents knows where I am and who I am with.
- B13** The rules in my family are clear.
- B11** My parents ask if I've gotten my homework done.
- B18** If you drank some beer, wine, or liquor (for example vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum) without your parent's permission, would you be caught by them?

Family Conflict

Children raised in families high in conflict, whether or not the child is directly involved in the conflict, appear at risk for both delinquency and drug use.

- B15** People in my family often insult or yell at each other.
- B16** We argue about the same things in my family over and over.
- B17** People in my family have serious arguments.

Family Domain (cont'd)

Risk Factors (cont'd)

Parental Attitudes Favorable Toward Drugs and Antisocial Behavior

In families where parents use illegal drugs, are heavy users of alcohol, or are tolerant of children's use, children are more likely to use substances during adolescence. The risk is further increased if parents involve children in their own drug (or alcohol) using behavior.

- B23** How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to:
- a** Pick a fight with someone?
 - b** Steal anything worth more than \$5
 - c** Draw graffiti, or write things or draw pictures on buildings or other property (without the owner's permission)?
 - d** Drink beer, wine or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum) regularly?
 - e** Smoke cigarettes?
 - f** Use marijuana?

Protective Factors

Family Attachment

Young people who feel that they are a valued part of their family are less likely to engage in substance use and other problem behaviors.

- B6** Do you feel very close to your:
- a** Mother?
 - b** Father?
- B7** Do you share your thoughts and feelings with your:
- a** Mother?
 - b** Father?

Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement

Young people who are exposed to more opportunities to participate meaningfully in the responsibilities and activities of the family are less likely to engage in substance use and other problem behaviors.

- B1** My parents ask me what I think before most family decisions affecting me are made.
- B2** If I had a personal problem, I could ask my mom or dad for help
- B3** My parents give me lots of chances to do fun things with them.

Rewards for Prosocial Involvement

When parents, siblings, and other family members praise, encourage, and attend to things done well by youths, the youth are less likely to engage in substance use and problem behaviors.

- B8** Do you enjoy spending time with your:
- a** Mother?
 - b** Father?
- B4** My parents notice when I am doing a good job and let me know about it.
- B5** How often do your parents tell you they're proud of you for something you've done?

School Domain

Risk Factors

Academic Failure

Academic failure that occurs between late elementary school (grades 4-6) and high school increases the risk of both substance misuse and delinquency. It appears that the experience of failure itself, for whatever reasons, increases the risk of problem behaviors.

- A4** Putting them all together, what were your grades like last year?
- A7** Are your school grades better than the grades of most students in your class?

Low Commitment to School

Surveys of high school seniors have shown that the use of drugs is significantly lower among students who expect to attend college than among those who do not. Factors such as liking school, spending time on homework, and perceiving the coursework as relevant are also negatively related to drug use.

- A1** During the LAST FOUR WEEKS, how many whole days of school have you missed because you skipped or "cut"?
- A2** How important do you think the things you are learning in school are going to be for your later life?
- A3** How interesting are most of your courses to you?
- A5** How often do you feel that the schoolwork you are assigned is meaningful and important?
- A6** Now, thinking back over the past year in school, how often did you:
 - a** Enjoy being in school?
 - b** Hate being in school?
 - c** Try to do your best work in school?

Protective Factors

Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement

When young people are given more opportunities to participate meaningfully in important activities at school, they are less likely to engage in substance use and other problem behaviors.

- A8** Teachers ask me to work on special classroom projects.
- A9** There are lots of chances for students in my school to talk one-on-one with a teacher.
- A10** I have lots of chances to be part of class discussions or activities.
- A11** In my school, students have lots of chances to help decide things like class activities and rules.
- A12** There are lots of chances for students in my school to get involved in sports, clubs, and other school activities outside of class.

Rewards for Prosocial Involvement

When young people are recognized and rewarded for their contributions at school, they are less likely to be involved in substance use and other problem behaviors.

- A13** My teacher(s) notices when I am doing a good job and lets me know about it.
- A14** I feel safe at my school.
- A15** The school lets my parents know when I have done something well.
- A16** My teachers praise me when I work hard in school.

Peer-Individual Domain

Risk Factors

Rebelliousness

Young people who do not feel part of society, are not bound by rules, don't believe in trying to be successful or responsible, or who take an active rebellious stance toward society, are at higher risk of substance misuse. In addition, high tolerance for deviance, a strong need for independence, and normlessness have all been linked with drug use.

- C1** I like to see how much I can get away with.
- C2** I ignore the rules that get in my way.
- C3** I do the opposite of what people tell me, just to get them mad.

Gang Involvement

Youth who belong to gangs are more at risk for antisocial behavior and drug use.

- A28a** Have you ever belonged to a gang?
- A28b** If you have ever belonged to a gang, did that gang have a name?
- A29** How old were you when you first belonged to a gang?
- A30** Think of up to four of your best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past 12 months, how many of your best friends have been a member of a gang?

Perceived Risk of Drug Use

Young people who do not perceive substance use to be risky are far more likely to engage in substance use.

- C8** How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they:
 - a** Take one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage (beer, wine, liquor) nearly every day?
 - c** Smoke one or more packs of cigarettes per day?
 - d** Try marijuana once or twice?
 - f** Use marijuana regularly?

Attitudes Favorable Toward Antisocial Behavior and Drug Use

During the elementary school years, most children express anti-drug, anti-crime, and pro-social attitudes and have difficulty imagining why people use drugs or engage in anti-social behaviors. However, in middle school, as more youth are exposed to others who use drugs and engage in antisocial behavior, their attitudes often shift toward greater acceptance of these behaviors. Youth who express positive attitudes toward substance use and antisocial behavior are more likely to engage in a variety of problem behaviors.

- C10** How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to:
 - a** Stay away from school all day when their parents think they are at school?
 - b** Take a handgun to school?
 - c** Steal anything worth more than \$5?
 - d** Pick a fight with someone?
 - e** Attack someone with the idea of seriously hurting them?
 - f** Drink beer, wine or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum) regularly?
 - g** Smoke cigarettes?
 - h** Use LSD, cocaine, amphetamines or another illegal drug?
 - i** Use marijuana?

Peer-Individual Domain (cont'd)

Risk Factors (cont'd)

Sensation Seeking

Young people who seek out opportunities for dangerous, risky behavior in general are at higher risk for participating in substance use and other problem behaviors.

- C11** How many times have you done the following things?
- a** Done what feels good no matter what.
 - b** Done something dangerous because someone dared you to do it.
 - c** Done crazy things even if they are a little dangerous.

Rewards for Antisocial Behavior

Young people who receive rewards for their antisocial behavior are at higher risk for engaging further in antisocial behavior and substance use.

- C12** What are the chances you would be seen as cool if you:
- a** Carried a handgun?
 - b** Began drinking alcoholic beverages regularly, that is, at least once or twice a month?
 - c** Smoked cigarettes?
 - d** Used marijuana?

Friends' Use of Drugs

Young people who associate with peers who engage in substance use are much more likely to engage in the same behavior. Peer drug use has consistently been found to be among the strongest predictors of substance use among youth. Even when young people come from well-managed families and do not experience other risk factors, spending time with friends who use substances greatly increases the risk of that problem developing.

- C17** Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past 12 months, how many of your best friends have:
- f** Tried beer, wine, or hard liquor (for example, vodka, whiskey, gin, or rum) when their parents didn't know about it?
 - g** Smoked cigarettes?
 - i** Used LSD, cocaine, amphetamines, or other illegal drugs?
 - j** Used marijuana?

Peer-Individual Domain (cont'd)

Risk Factors (cont'd)

Interaction with Antisocial Peers

Young people who associate with peers who engage in problem behaviors are at higher risk for engaging in antisocial behavior themselves.

- C17** Think of your four best friends (the friends you feel closest to). In the past 12 months, how many of your best friends have:
- a** Been arrested?
 - b** Dropped out of school?
 - c** Stolen or tried to steal a motor vehicle such as a car or motorcycle?
 - d** Been suspended from school?
 - e** Carried a handgun?
 - h** Sold illegal drugs?

Depressive Symptoms

Young people who are depressed are overrepresented in the criminal justice system and are more likely to use substances. Survey research and other studies have shown a link between depression and other youth problem behaviors.

- C4** In the past 12 months have you felt depressed or sad MOST days, even if you feel OK sometimes?
- C5** Sometimes I think that life is not worth it.
- C6** At times I think I am no good at all.
- C7** All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a failure.

Protective Factors

Belief in the Moral Order

Young people who have a belief in what is “right” or “wrong” are less likely to use substances.

- C13** I think it is okay to take something without asking as long as you get away with it.
- C14** It is all right to beat up people if they start the fight.
- C15** I think sometimes it’s okay to cheat at school.
- C16** It is important to be honest with your parents, even if they become upset or you get punished.

Religiosity

Young people who regularly attend religious services are less likely to engage in problem behaviors.

- C9** How often do you attend religious services or activities?

UNDERSTANDING CUT-POINTS

It is important that the reader gain an understanding of the cut-points that are used to create the risk and protective factor scale scores presented in this section, and to understand how to interpret and analyze these results.

What are Cut-Points?

A cut-point is a way to represent the percentage of students whose answers reflect significant risk or protection on a given scale. Statistical analyses are conducted for each scale to determine the point that separates students at risk of engaging in problem behaviors from those not at risk. Similarly, protective cut-points separate students who are buffered against engaging in problem behaviors (due to the protective effects of positive behaviors and interactions) from those who are not. In this way, when you are provided a percentage for a particular scale, you will know that this percentage represents the population of your youth that are either at greater risk or higher level of protection than the national cut-point level. Cut-points also provide a standard for comparisons of risk and protection over time.

The PAYS questionnaire was designed to assess adolescent substance use, antisocial behavior, and the risk and protective factors that predict these adolescent problem behaviors. However, before the percentage of youth at risk or with protection on a given scale could be calculated, a scale value or cut-point needed to be determined that would separate the at-risk group from the group that was not at-risk. Because surveys measuring the risk and protective factors had been given to thousands of youth across the United States through federally funded

research projects, it was possible to select two groups of youth, one that was more at-risk for problem behaviors and another group that was less at-risk. A cut-point score was then determined for each risk and protective factor scale that best divided the youth into their appropriate group, more at-risk or less at-risk. The criteria for selecting the more at-risk and the less at-risk groups included academic grades (the more at-risk group received “D” and “F” grades, the less at-risk group received “A” and “B” grades); alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use (the more at-risk group had more regular use, the less at-risk group had no drug use and use of alcohol or tobacco on only a few occasions); and antisocial behavior (the more at-risk group had two or more serious delinquent acts in the past year, the less at-risk group had no serious delinquent acts).

How to use Cut-Points

The scale cut-points that were determined to best classify youth into the more at-risk and less at-risk groups have remained constant and are used to produce the profiles in this report. Because the cut-points for each scale will remain fixed, the percentage of youth above

the cut-point on each of the risk and protective factor scales provides a method for evaluating the progress of prevention programs over time. For example, if the percentage of youth at risk for family conflict in a community prior to implementing a community-wide family/parenting program was 60% and then decreased to 50% one year after the program was implemented, the program could be viewed as helping to reduce family conflict.

How does using Cut-Points affect my data?

Risk and Protective Factor data presented in this report use the scale cut-points discussed above. Instead of the percentile scores used prior to 2013, percentage of youth at-risk and with protection are presented in the report. For example:

- If your Community Laws and Norms Favorable toward Drug Use, Firearms, and Crime risk factor scale for 8th graders is at 35%, this means that 35% of 8th graders are at risk for engaging in problem behaviors due to Community Laws and Norms Favorable toward Drug Use, Firearms, and Crime.
- If your School Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement protective factor scale is at 60% for your 10th graders, the interpretation of this is that 60% of your 10th graders are protected against engaging in problem behaviors due to School Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement.

What is the Bach Harrison Norm and how do I use it?

The Bach Harrison Norm was developed by Bach Harrison L.L.C. to provide states and communities with the ability to compare their results on risk, protection,

and antisocial measures with more national results (see page 11 for more information on BH Norm development).

Information about other students in the state and the nation can be helpful in determining the seriousness of a given level of problem behavior in your county. Scanning across the charts, it is important to observe the factors that differ the most from the Bach Harrison Norm. This is the first step in identifying the levels of risk and protection that are higher or lower than the national sample.

The risk factors that are higher than the Bach Harrison Norm and the protective factors that are lower than the Bach Harrison Norm are probably the factors that your county should consider including in prevention planning programs. The Bach Harrison Norm is especially helpful when reviewing scales with a small percentage of youth at-risk such as the Rebelliousness scale. For example, even though a small percentage of youth are at-risk within this scale, if you notice that the percentage at risk on your Rebelliousness scale is higher than the Bach Harrison Norm, then that is probably an issue that should be considered for an intervention in your county. As you look through your data, we would encourage you to circle or mark risk scales that are higher than the BH Norm and protective factor scales that are lower than the BH Norm and add these items to your list of possible areas to tackle with prevention efforts.

OVERALL RISK AND PROTECTIVE SCORES

Overall risk and protective factor scales are a good way to review the health of Mercer County. Scales are grouped into four domains: community, family, school, and peer/individual. The charts show the overall percentage of students at risk and with protection for each of the scales.

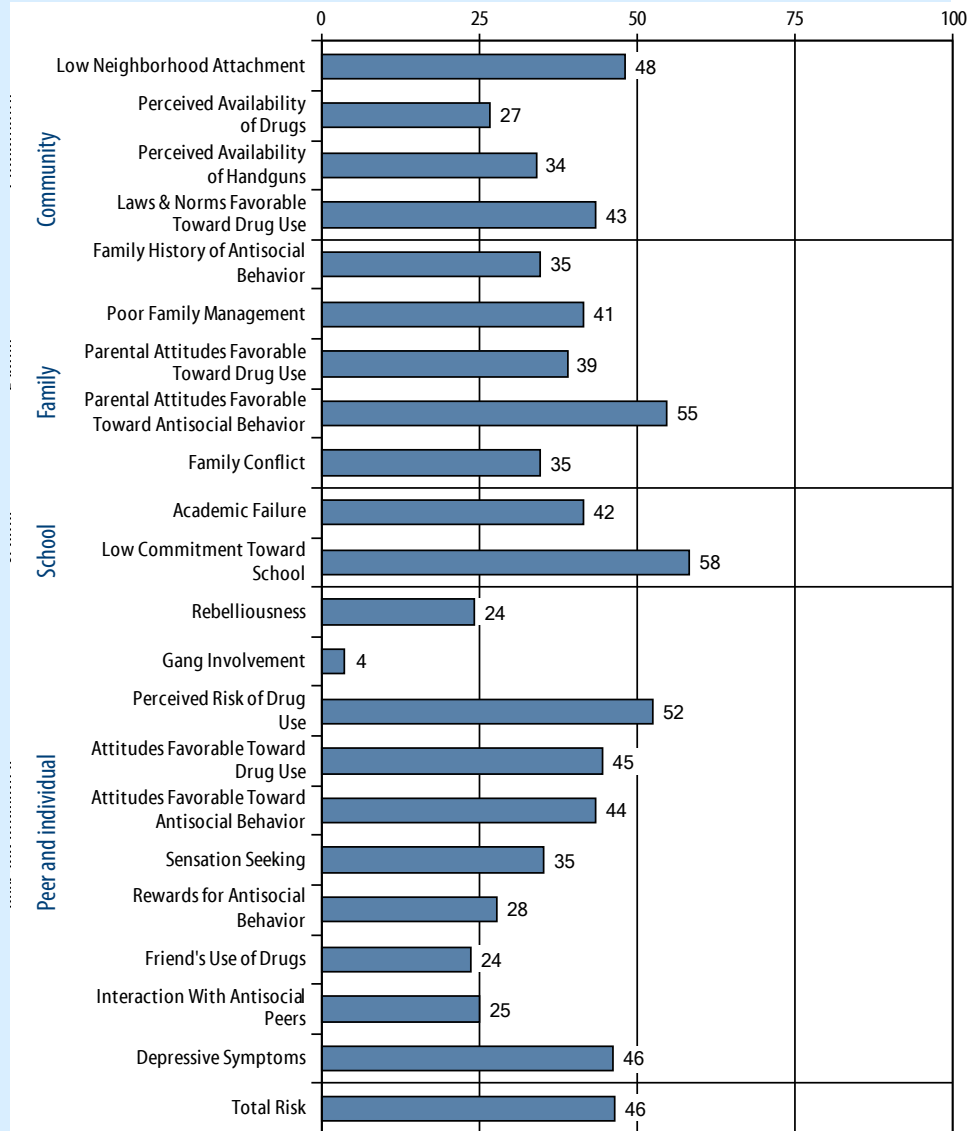
Students in Mercer County reported the three highest overall (all grades combined) scores for the following risk factor scales: Low Commitment Toward School (58.2% of students at risk), Parental Attitudes Favorable Toward Antisocial Behavior (54.6% at risk), and Perceived Risk of Drug Use (52.4% at risk).

The three lowest overall scale scores were Gang Involvement (3.7% at risk), Friend’s Use of Drugs (23.6% at risk), and Rebelliousness (24.3% at risk).

Of the eight protective factor scales, the highest scores in the overall sample of students in this county were reported for Family Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement (57.8% of students with protection), Family Rewards for Prosocial Involvement (54.6% with protection) and Family Attachment (54.0% with protection).

The lowest protective factor scales in the overall sample were Religiosity (34.8% with protection), School Opportunities for

**Mercer County
Risk Factors, 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey**

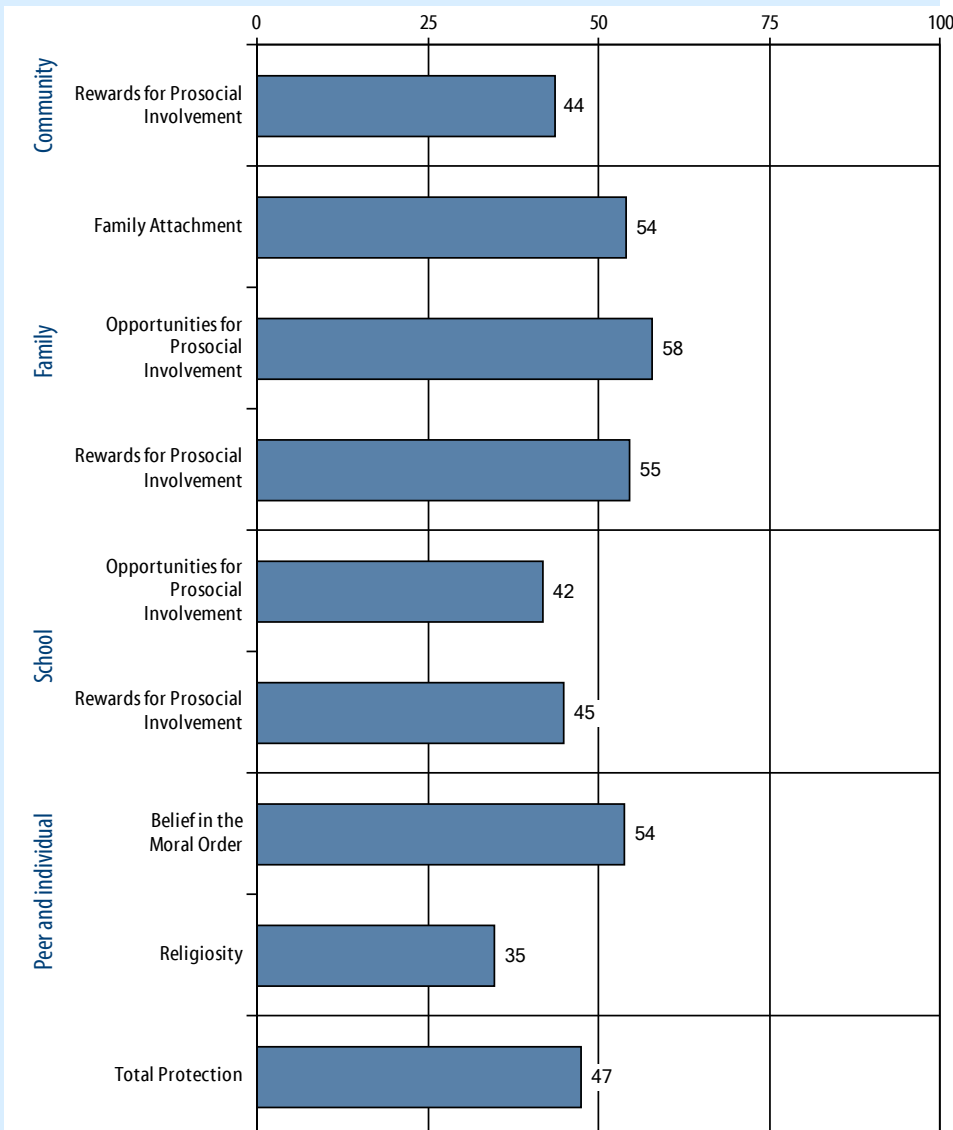


"TOTAL RISK" IS DEFINED AS THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE MORE THAN A SPECIFIED NUMBER OF RISK FACTORS OPERATING IN THEIR LIVES. (6TH AND 8TH GRADES: 5 OR MORE RISK FACTORS, 10TH AND 12TH GRADES: 7 OR MORE RISK FACTORS.)

Prosocial Involvement (41.9% with protection) and Community Rewards for Prosocial Involvement (43.5% with protection).

While policies that target any risk or protective factor could potentially be an important resource for students in this County, focusing prevention planning in high risk and low protection areas could be especially beneficial. Similarly, factors with low risk or high protection represent strengths that this County can build on. In conjunction with a review of community-specific issues and resources, this information can help direct prevention efforts for Mercer County.

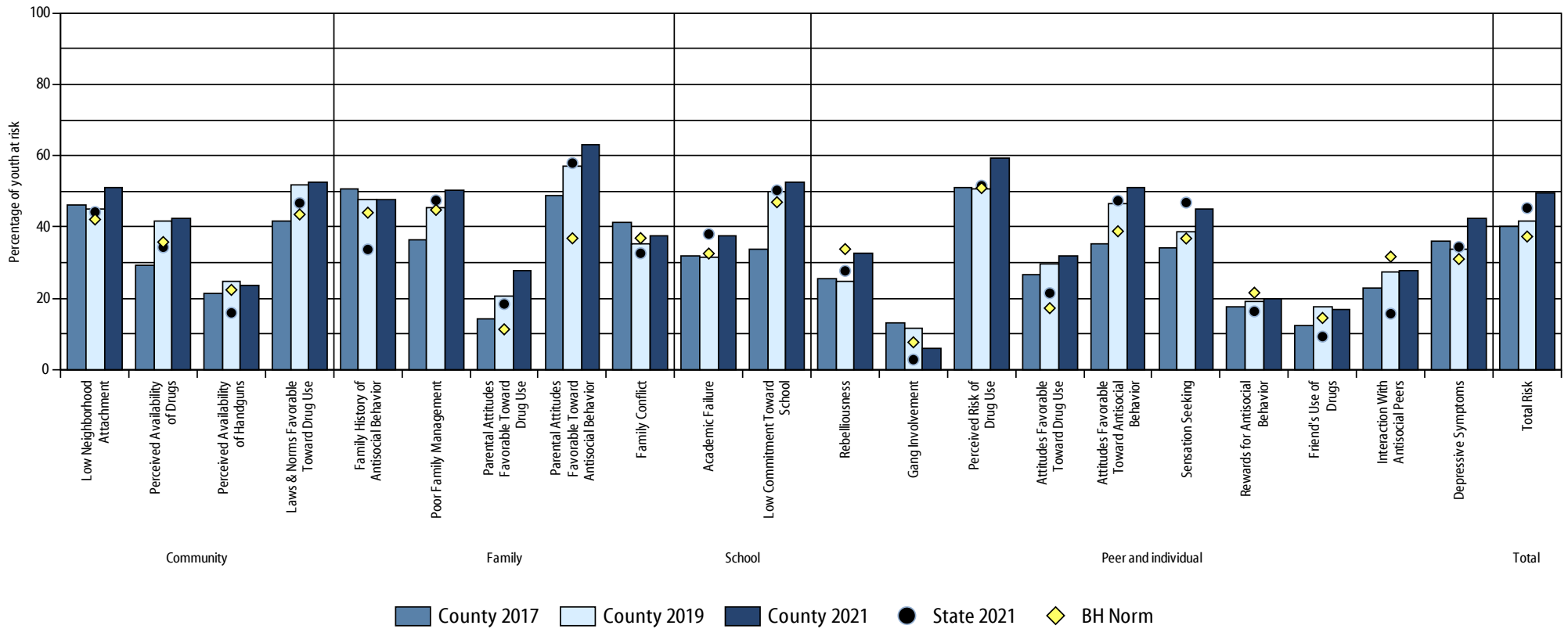
Mercer County Protective Factors, 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



Grade-Level Results

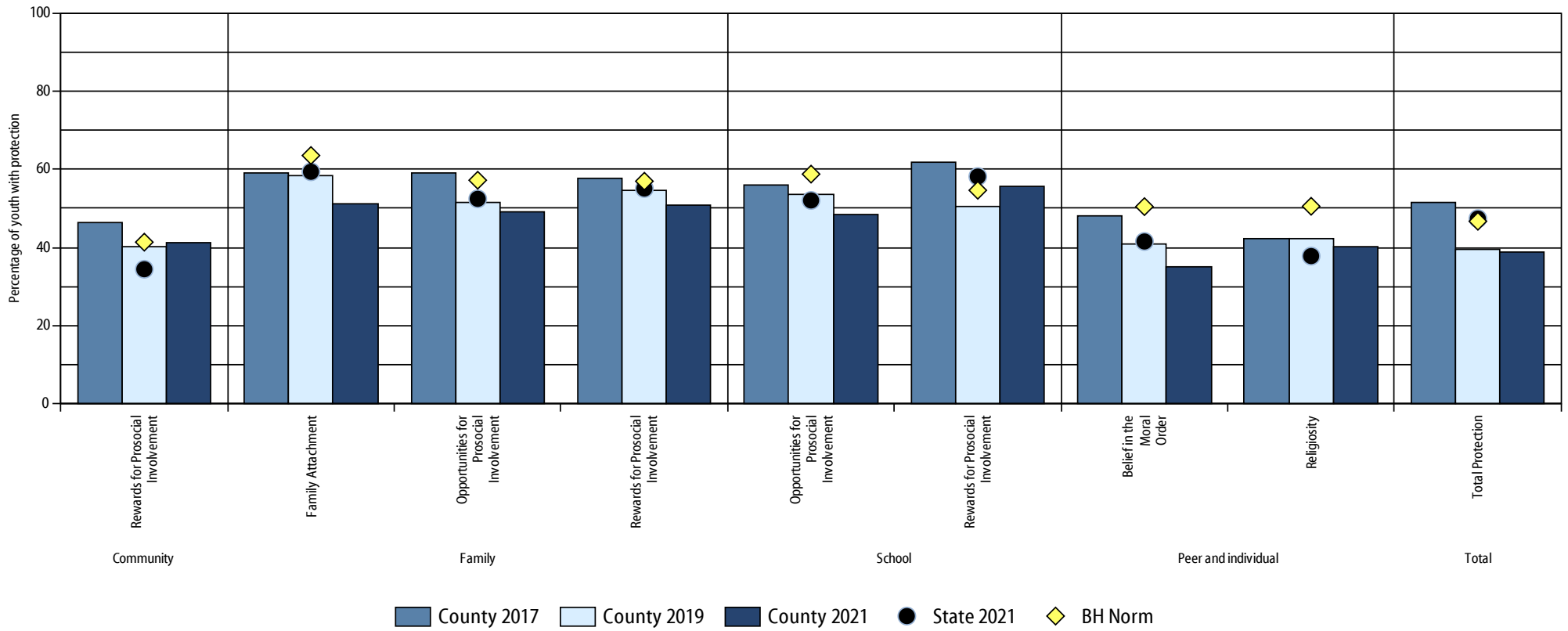
While grouped-grade scale scores provide a general picture of the risk and protective factor profile for this county, they can mask problems within individual grades. The next pages of this report present individual-grade data, where available, for risk and protective factor scale scores. This detailed information provides prevention planners with a snapshot revealing which risk and protective factor scales are of greatest concern by grade. It allows those prevention planners to focus on the most appropriate points in youth development for preventive intervention action—and to target their prevention efforts as precisely as possible.

Risk factors, 6th grade Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



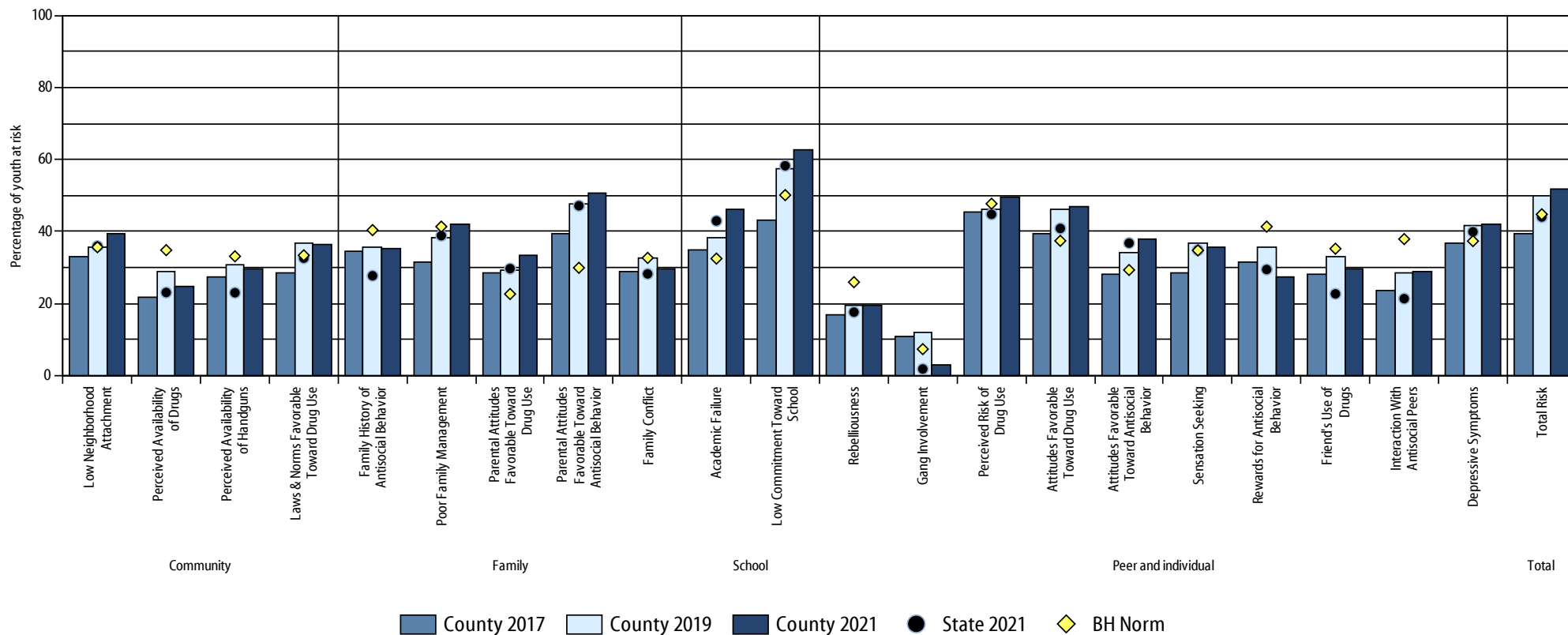
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Protective factors, 6th grade Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



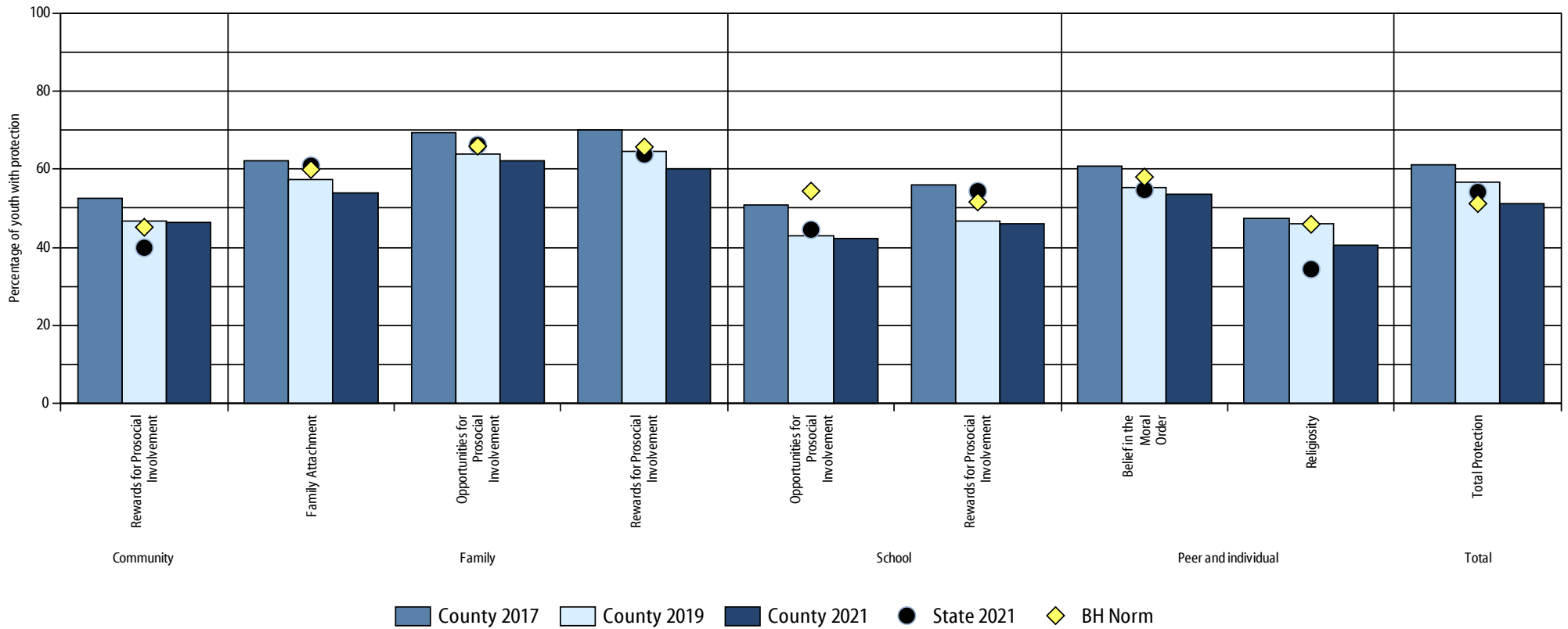
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Risk factors, 8th grade Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



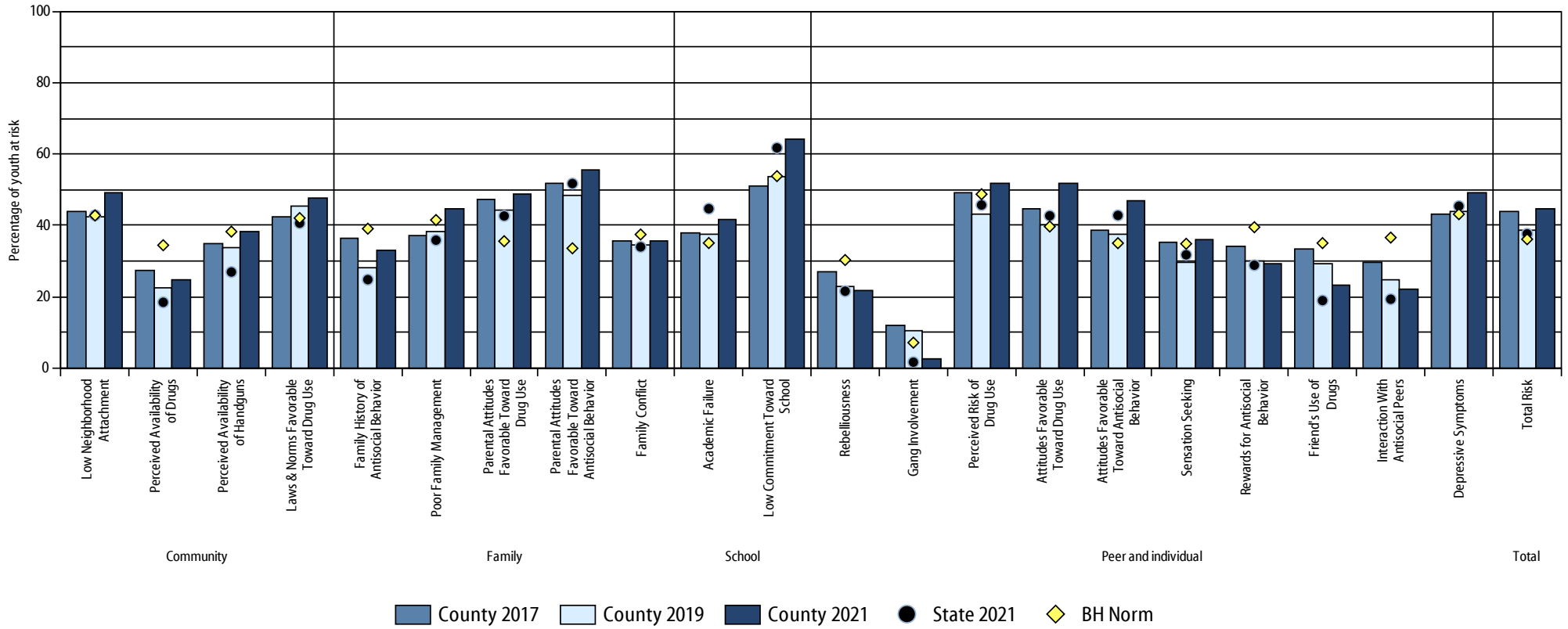
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Protective factors, 8th grade Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



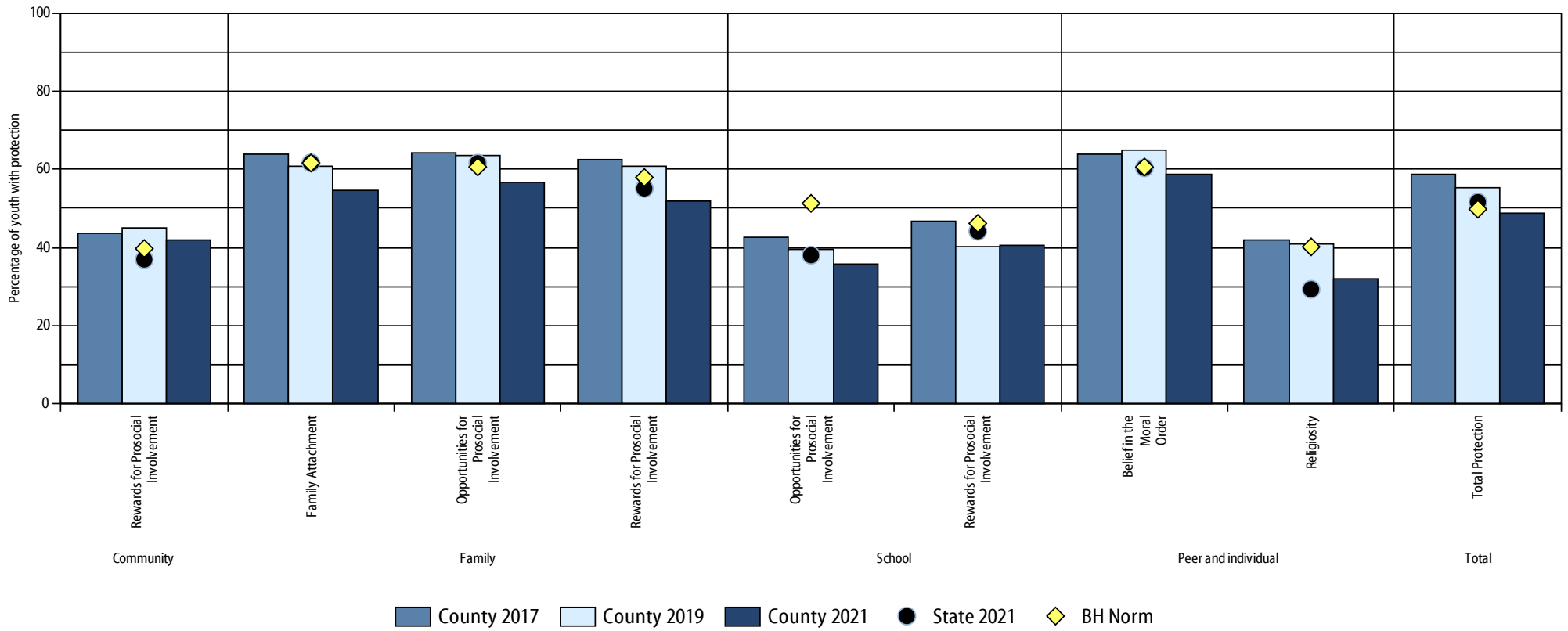
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Risk factors, 10th grade Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



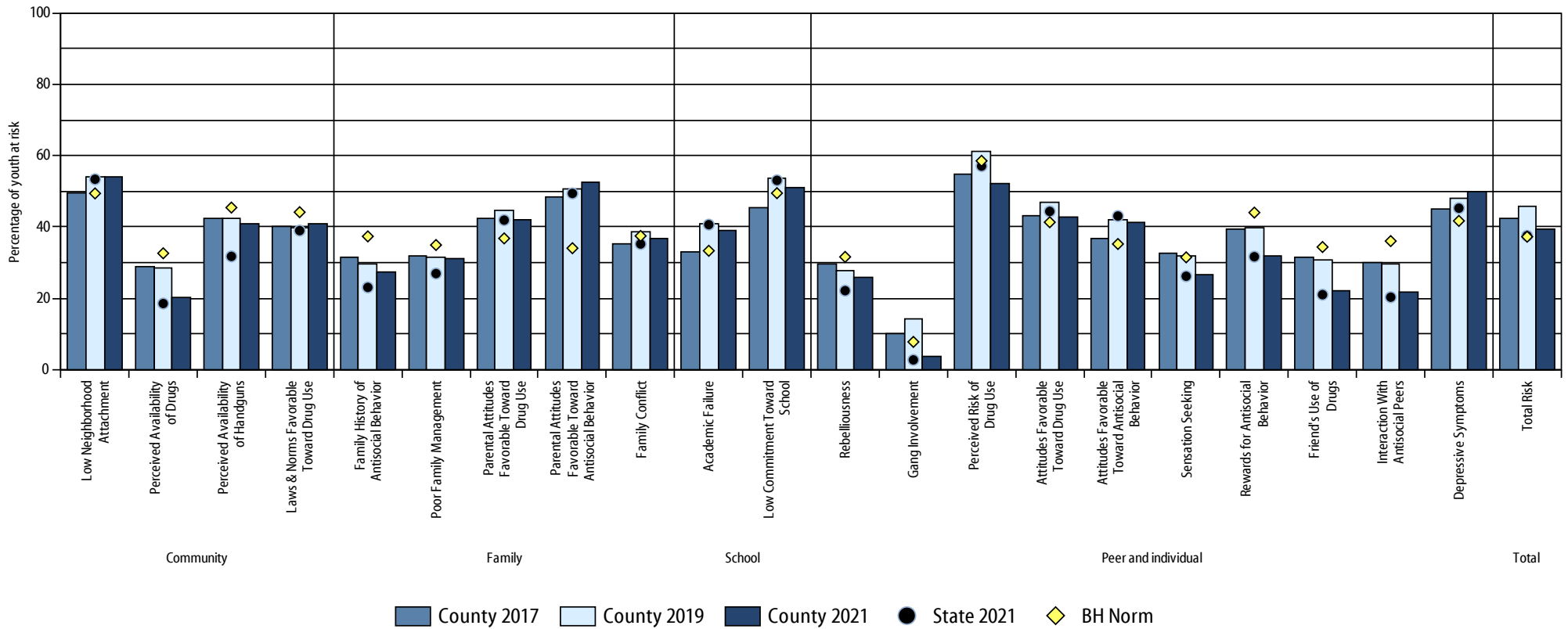
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Protective factors, 10th grade Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



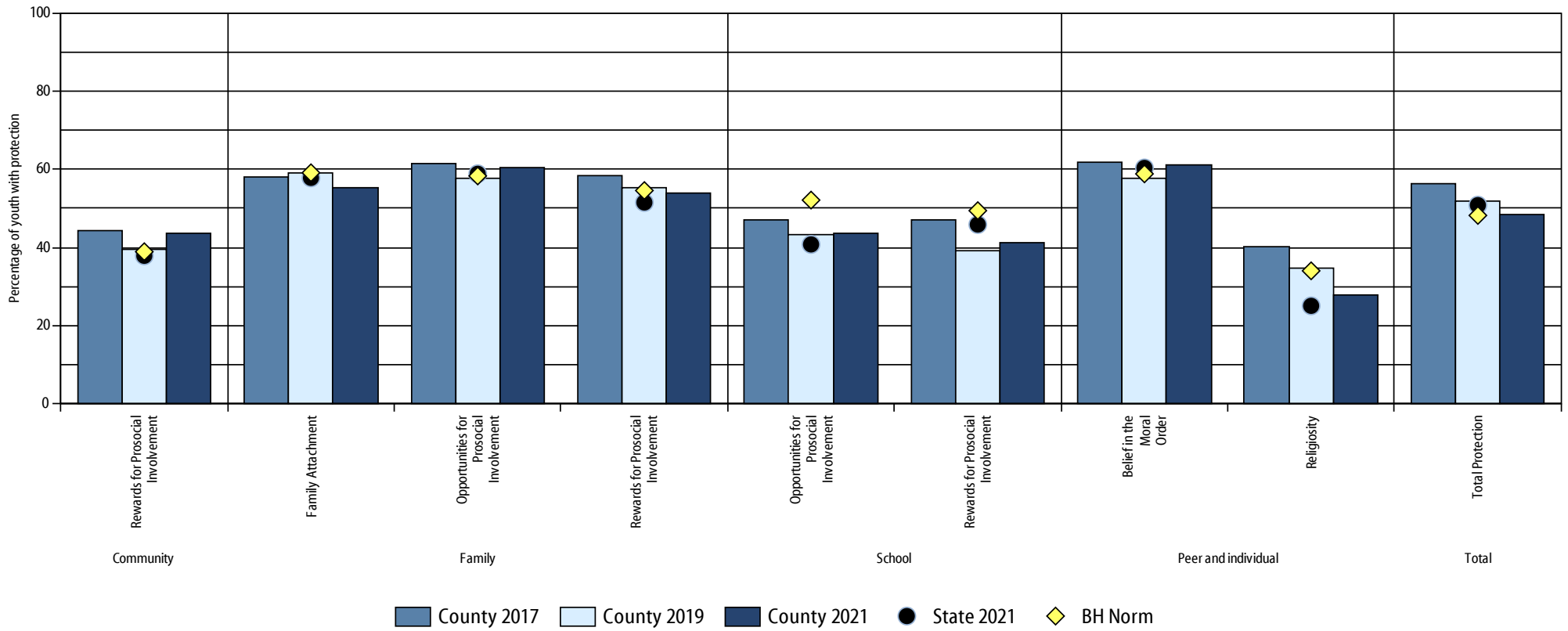
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Risk factors, 12th grade Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



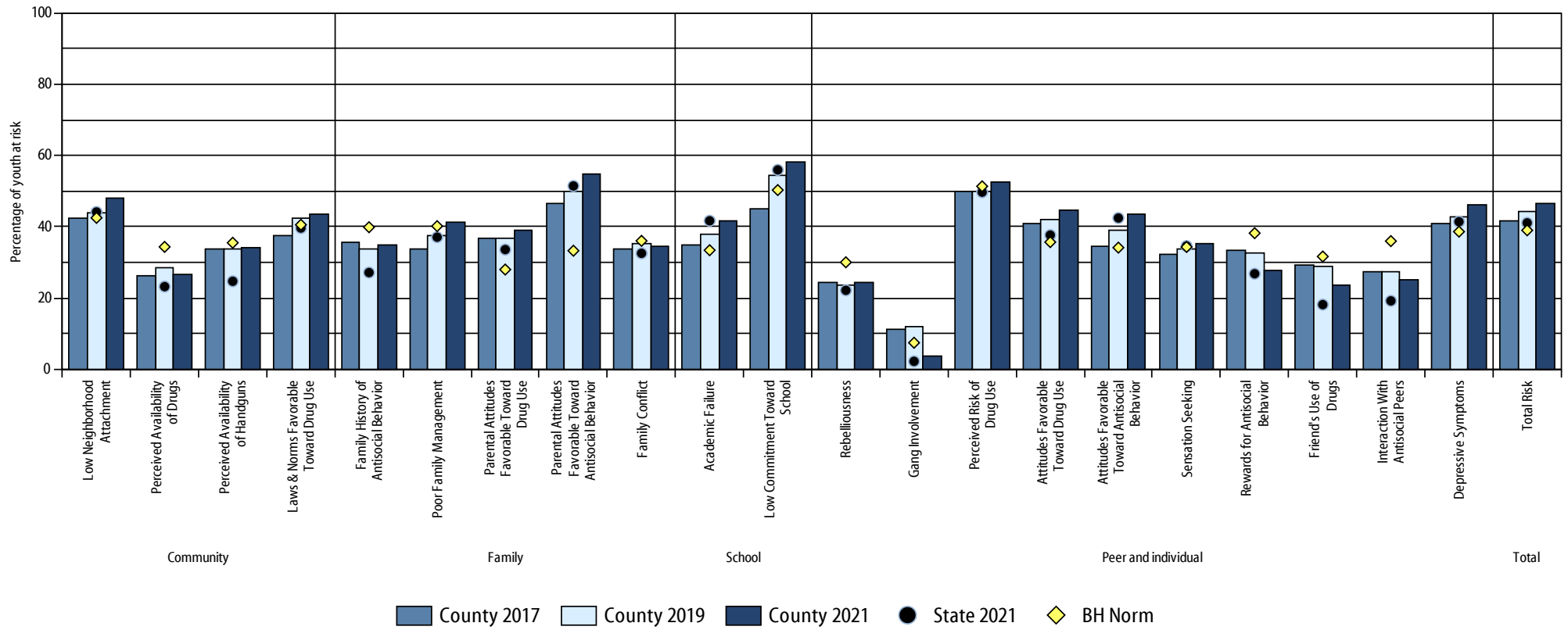
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Protective factors, 12th grade Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



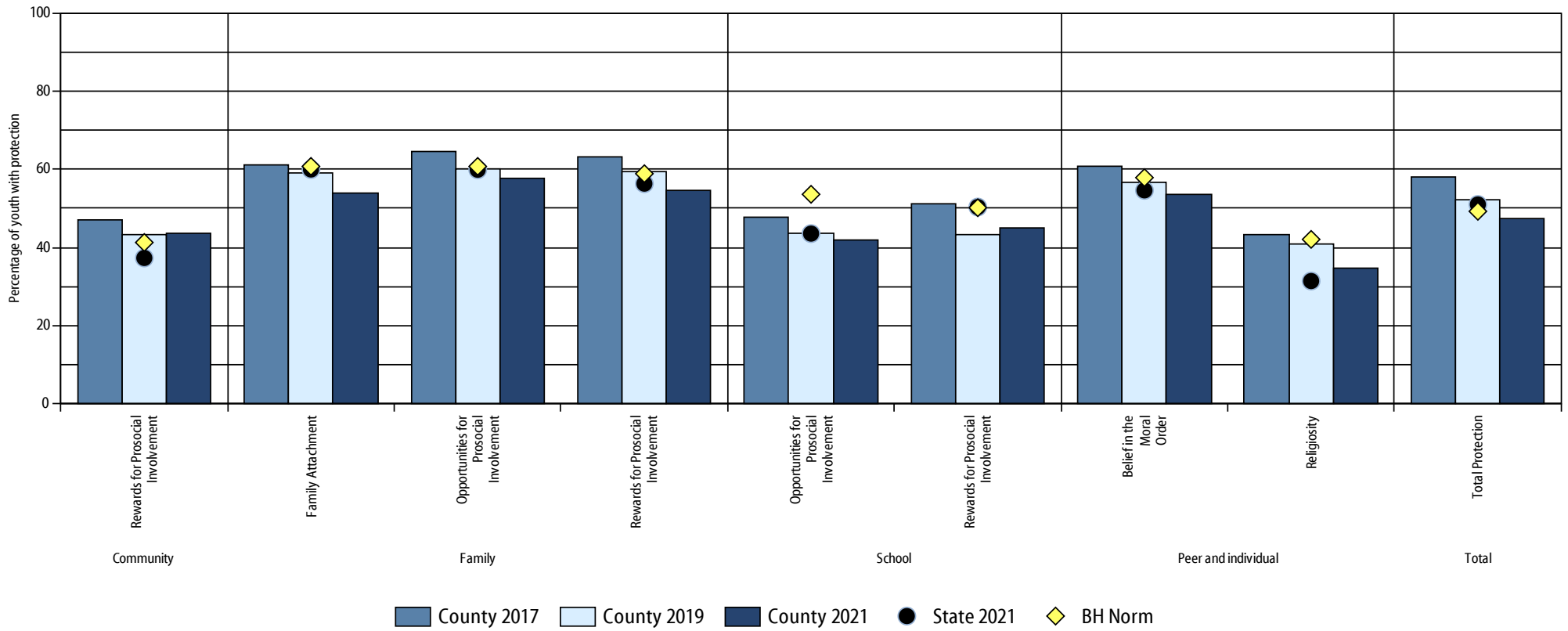
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Risk factors, All grades Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



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Protective factors, All grades Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey



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Risk Factors

Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

	6th					8th					10th					12th				
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	BH Norm	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	BH Norm	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	BH Norm	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	BH Norm
Community																				
Low Neighborhood Attachment	46.2	45.2	51.1	44.2	42.1	33.0	35.6	39.6	36.0	35.7	44.1	42.5	49.3	42.9	42.8	49.6	54.2	54.1	53.4	49.4
Perceived Availability of Drugs	29.5	41.7	42.6	34.3	35.8	22.0	29.1	24.7	23.1	34.9	27.3	22.6	24.9	18.5	34.5	29.0	28.4	20.3	18.6	32.7
Perceived Availability of Handguns	21.3	24.8	23.6	16.0	22.4	27.6	31.0	29.7	23.1	33.2	34.9	33.7	38.3	27.0	38.3	42.3	42.3	40.8	31.8	45.5
Laws & Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use	41.5	51.9	52.6	46.7	43.6	28.6	36.7	36.4	32.6	33.5	42.3	45.3	47.6	40.7	42.1	40.3	39.9	40.9	39.0	44.2
Family																				
Family History of Antisocial Behavior	50.8	47.7	47.6	33.7	44.0	34.4	35.7	35.2	27.8	40.4	36.3	28.3	33.0	24.9	39.1	31.6	29.6	27.3	23.1	37.4
Poor Family Management	36.4	45.4	50.4	47.5	44.8	31.5	38.3	42.1	38.9	41.4	37.0	38.3	44.5	35.9	41.6	31.7	31.5	31.1	27.0	35.0
Parental Attitudes Favorable Toward Drug Use	14.3	20.7	27.8	18.5	11.4	28.6	29.4	33.3	29.7	22.7	47.4	44.4	48.9	42.7	35.6	42.3	44.6	41.9	41.9	36.8
Parental Attitudes Favorable Toward Antisocial Behavior	48.7	57.1	63.0	57.9	36.9	39.5	47.8	50.5	47.2	30.0	51.6	48.4	55.4	51.8	33.6	48.4	50.8	52.6	49.4	34.1
Family Conflict	41.4	35.4	37.5	32.7	36.9	28.8	32.7	29.7	28.3	32.7	35.6	34.7	35.9	34.0	37.5	35.1	38.6	37.0	35.3	37.5
School																				
Academic Failure	32.0	31.6	37.4	38.1	32.6	34.8	38.2	46.3	43.0	32.5	38.1	37.7	41.8	44.7	35.1	32.9	40.8	39.1	40.7	33.4
Low Commitment Toward School	33.8	50.1	52.5	50.3	47.0	43.0	57.6	62.7	58.3	50.1	50.9	53.6	64.1	61.7	53.8	45.6	53.9	51.1	53.1	49.5
Peer and individual																				
Rebelliousness	25.5	24.9	32.7	27.7	33.8	16.9	19.6	19.7	17.7	26.0	27.2	23.0	21.9	21.6	30.4	29.5	27.9	26.0	22.2	31.7
Gang Involvement	13.3	11.8	5.9	2.9	7.7	10.8	12.0	3.1	1.9	7.4	12.0	10.7	2.9	1.7	7.2	10.2	14.2	3.8	2.8	7.9
Perceived Risk of Drug Use	51.1	50.8	59.2	51.6	50.9	45.5	46.3	49.4	44.8	47.7	49.3	43.0	51.6	45.7	48.8	54.7	61.2	52.1	57.1	58.6
Attitudes Favorable Toward Drug Use	26.7	29.8	32.0	21.5	17.3	39.5	46.3	47.1	40.9	37.4	44.7	40.2	51.6	42.7	39.7	43.3	46.7	42.8	44.4	41.4
Attitudes Favorable Toward Antisocial Behavior	35.4	46.5	51.0	47.4	38.8	28.3	34.3	37.8	36.8	29.4	38.8	37.6	46.9	42.8	35.1	36.9	42.0	41.3	43.1	35.3
Sensation Seeking	34.2	38.8	45.0	46.9	36.8	28.7	36.7	35.8	34.9	34.8	35.1	29.8	36.2	31.8	34.9	32.5	32.0	26.6	26.2	31.5
Rewards for Antisocial Behavior	17.6	19.1	19.9	16.4	21.6	31.6	35.6	27.4	29.5	41.4	34.2	30.2	29.3	28.9	39.5	39.5	39.6	32.1	31.7	44.1
Friend's Use of Drugs	12.5	17.8	16.9	9.3	14.6	28.1	33.0	29.6	22.7	35.3	33.4	29.4	23.2	19.0	35.1	31.6	30.7	22.0	21.1	34.4
Interaction With Antisocial Peers	23.0	27.4	27.8	15.8	31.7	23.7	28.6	29.1	21.4	38.0	29.8	24.8	22.2	19.4	36.6	29.9	29.7	22.0	20.4	36.1
Depressive Symptoms	35.9	33.8	42.5	34.4	31.1	37.0	41.8	42.1	40.0	37.4	43.2	43.8	49.2	45.4	43.2	44.9	48.2	50.1	45.3	41.8
Total																				
Total Risk	40.1	41.5	49.6	45.3	37.4	39.5	50.1	51.8	44.1	44.8	43.8	38.7	44.7	37.7	36.2	42.3	45.6	39.5	37.6	37.3

Protective Factors Mercer County 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey

	6th					8th					10th					12th				
	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	BH Norm	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	BH Norm	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	BH Norm	County 2017	County 2019	County 2021	State 2021	BH Norm
Community																				
Rewards for Prosocial Involvement	46.3	40.1	41.2	34.4	41.4	52.5	46.6	46.5	39.9	45.1	43.7	44.9	41.9	36.9	39.7	44.3	39.6	43.7	37.9	38.9
Family																				
Family Attachment	58.9	58.2	51.3	59.4	63.5	62.1	57.5	54.1	60.9	59.9	63.9	60.9	54.5	61.6	61.6	58.0	58.9	55.4	57.8	59.1
Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement	59.0	51.6	49.0	52.4	57.2	69.5	63.7	62.2	66.2	65.9	64.2	63.4	56.7	61.6	60.6	61.4	57.7	60.6	58.8	58.3
Rewards for Prosocial Involvement	57.5	54.5	50.8	55.1	56.9	70.0	64.6	60.2	63.7	65.7	62.5	60.6	51.8	55.1	57.9	58.2	55.3	53.9	51.5	54.6
School																				
Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement	56.0	53.6	48.5	52.0	58.8	50.8	43.0	42.4	44.5	54.4	42.7	39.7	35.6	38.0	51.3	47.2	43.2	43.5	40.8	52.1
Rewards for Prosocial Involvement	61.8	50.6	55.8	58.1	54.6	55.8	46.9	46.0	54.4	51.6	46.8	40.2	40.6	44.2	46.2	46.9	39.2	41.3	45.9	49.4
Peer and individual																				
Belief In The Moral Order	48.1	40.9	34.9	41.5	50.5	60.7	55.4	53.6	54.7	58.0	64.0	64.9	58.8	60.4	60.6	61.8	57.6	61.1	60.3	58.8
Religiosity	42.2	42.4	40.1	37.8	50.5	47.4	46.0	40.5	34.4	45.9	41.8	41.0	32.1	29.3	40.2	40.3	34.8	27.7	25.1	34.0
Total																				
Total Protection	51.5	39.4	38.8	47.4	46.7	61.0	56.6	51.3	54.2	51.2	58.9	55.3	48.8	51.6	49.8	56.3	51.8	48.4	50.8	48.2

8. THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Social Development Strategy (SDS) promotes positive youth development from birth through every stage of development.



As described in the Risk and Protective Factors section, researchers have identified multiple protective factors that increase the likelihood of healthy outcomes for youth. The knowledge on what protects young people from developing health and behavior problems has been organized into this easy-to-use strategy. Providing young people of all ages with opportunities, skills, and recognition strengthens bonding with family, school, community, and even among peers. Bonding is one of the most vital components in protecting a child from risky behaviors. Strong bonds motivate young people to adopt healthy standards for behavior.

Interaction Strategies

When you use the SDS in daily interactions with young people, it helps keep them on track for healthy development. The strategy has these five key components:

Opportunities: Provide developmentally-appropriate opportunities to young people, for active participation and meaningful interaction with prosocial others

Skills: Teach young people the skills they need to succeed

Recognition: Provide consistent, meaningful, and specific praise and recognition for effort, improvement, and achievement

Bonding: Acknowledge a young person's effort and promote positive bonding — a sense of attachment, emotional connection, and commitment to the people and groups who provide that recognition. Bonding can occur within peer groups as well as with adults including family members, teachers, coaches, employers, or neighbors

Clear Standards for Behavior: Through the process of bonding, young people become motivated to live according to the healthy standards of the person or group to whom they are bonded

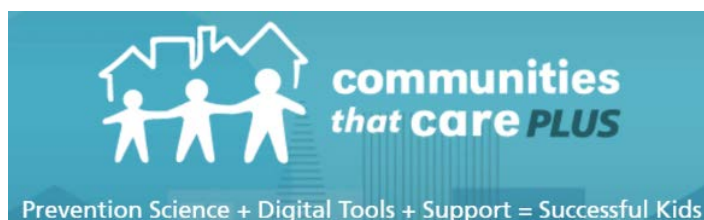
Programs that Target SDS are Effective for the Long-term Comprehensive programs and practices that are built on the components of the Social Development Strategy are effective at improving youth outcomes into adulthood! Research has demonstrated that when parents, teachers, and youth participate in intensive programs that incorporate SDS principles, those children have better outcomes¹. In a longitudinal study of 808 ten-year olds who received social competence training, their teachers who received instructional and classroom management skills, and their parents who received developmentally appropriate parenting classes – all based on the Social Development Strategy - had significantly better long-term outcomes 15 years later², including:

- Higher on-time graduation rates
- Better economic outcomes
- Better mental health in their 20's
- Fewer teen pregnancies

For more information and research articles, please visit: <https://www.communitiesthatcare.net/prevention-science/>

Interested in Learning More About SDS?

Visit www.CommunitiesThatCare.net to learn more about the theory and research behind the Social Development Strategy and to learn how communities have put SDS into action!



PennState
College of Health and
Human Development

**Evidence-based Prevention
and Intervention Support (EPIS)**

Edna Bennett Pierce
Prevention Research Center

Additionally, EPIS offers several SDS trainings that are open to anyone interested in improving youth outcomes including, but not limited to:

- coalition members, mobilizers, & stakeholders
- social service & program providers
- parents & caregivers
- school personnel

If you are interested in attending or hosting a SDS training, or would like more information about SDS training of facilitators, please contact the Systems Change team at <https://www.episcenter.psu.edu/index.php/paysquestion>, or visit www.episcenter.psu.edu.

This information was adapted from the Communities That Care Model developed by Drs. David Hawkins and Richard Catalano of the Social Development Research Group at the University of Washington.

1. Hawkins JD, Catalano RF, Kosterman R, Abbott R, Hill KG. Preventing Adolescent Health-Risk Behaviors by Strengthening Protection During Childhood. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.* 1999;153(3):226-234. doi:10.1001/archpedi.153.3.226

2. Hawkins JD, Kosterman R, Catalano RF, Hill KG, Abbott RD. Effects of Social Development Intervention in Childhood Fifteen Years Later. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.* 2008;162(12):1133-1141. doi:10.1001/archpedi.162.12.1133

APPENDIX A. DRUG FREE COMMUNITIES DATA

Core Measure	Definition	Substance	6th		8th		10th		12th		Male		Female	
			Percent	Sample	Percent	Sample	Percent	Sample	Percent	Sample	Percent	Sample	Percent	Sample
Perception of risk (People are at moderate or great risk of harming themselves if they...)	take five or more drinks of an alcoholic beverage (beer, wine, liquor) once or twice a week?	Binge drinking	64.4	404	70.3	657	65.8	638	67.2	604	63.4	1,074	70.3	1,135
	smoke one or more packs of cigarettes per day?	Tobacco	74.0	404	79.9	657	76.1	635	78.8	604	72.6	1,072	82.2	1,134
	smoke marijuana once or twice a week?	Marijuana	68.5	400	67.1	657	50.6	635	45.9	599	52.8	1,069	61.8	1,129
	use prescription drugs that are not prescribed to them?	Prescription drugs	74.6	401	82.5	657	81.9	634	83.1	597	79.7	1,063	82.4	1,133
Perception of parental disapproval (Parents feel it would be wrong or very wrong to...)	have one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day?	Alcohol	90.5	507	90.4	716	82.5	681	80.1	664	84.1	1,207	87.2	1,261
	smoke cigarettes?	Tobacco	96.0	402	93.9	651	92.4	634	88.9	592	91.0	1,061	94.5	1,123
	smoke marijuana?	Marijuana	96.3	400	92.1	649	85.5	635	81.6	591	87.2	1,062	90.3	1,118
	use prescription drugs not prescribed to you?	Prescription drugs	91.3	492	91.8	704	90.9	678	91.9	663	89.2	1,192	93.9	1,249
Perception of peer disapproval (Friends feel it would be wrong or very wrong to...)	have one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day?	Alcohol	84.3	396	78.5	651	61.8	628	57.4	599	64.9	1,063	73.9	1,119
	smoke tobacco?	Tobacco	89.4	398	84.2	650	70.2	627	63.8	600	72.6	1,063	79.6	1,120
	smoke marijuana?	Marijuana	90.9	396	80.5	647	60.1	627	54.0	600	67.6	1,061	72.3	1,117
	use prescription drugs not prescribed to you?	Prescription drugs	90.1	393	88.6	648	85.0	625	82.8	598	84.0	1,055	89.4	1,118
Stop act grantees: Somewhat or strongly disapprove of someone your age...	having one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage (beer, wine, liquor) nearly every day?	Alcohol	83.2	505	76.3	717	62.4	676	60.7	659	70.0	1,205	70.6	1,249
People are at moderate or great risk of harming themselves if they...	take one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage (beer, wine, liquor) nearly every day?	Regular alcohol use	61.0	405	62.4	663	61.3	635	64.0	602	56.8	1,071	67.1	1,139
Past 30-day use (at least one use in the past 30 days)	had beer, wine, or hard liquor	Alcohol	4.8	524	6.7	727	20.0	681	27.5	666	13.2	1,223	16.8	1,272
	smoked cigarettes?	Tobacco	1.5	520	2.4	721	4.7	683	5.2	667	3.9	1,223	3.1	1,264
	used marijuana	Marijuana	0.8	520	4.4	727	10.4	683	16.2	667	7.6	1,226	8.9	1,268
	combined results of prescription stimulant/tranquilizer/ pain reliever questions	Prescription drugs	1.2	512	2.1	726	0.9	684	1.2	669	1.8	1,226	0.8	1,263

APPENDIX B. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The Communities That Care Youth Survey (CTCYS) was adopted as the basis for PAYS. Based on the work of Dr. J. David Hawkins and Dr. Richard F. Catalano, the CTCYS is designed to identify the levels of risk factors related to problem behaviors such as ATOD use—and to identify the levels of protective factors that help guard against those behaviors. In addition to measuring risk and protective factors, the CTCYS also measures the actual prevalence of drug use, violence, and other antisocial behaviors among surveyed students. Three articles ([Pollard, Hawkins & Arthur, 1999](#); [Arthur, Hawkins, Pollard, Catalano & Baglioni, 2002](#); [Glaser, Van Horn, Arthur, Hawkins & Catalano, 2005](#)) describe the CTCYS, its uses and its ongoing development.

Comparability of the 2021 PAYS to Prior

Administrations

The 2021 PAYS instrument and administration enhanced the three-form design, first implemented in 2013 to address the difference in response rates for questions at the beginning of the survey versus those located at the end of the survey. Each of the three forms began with question section X, with sections A-F presented in different order on each of the three forms to offset the tendency for response rates to fall off in the later sections of the survey.

Further, while X, A, B, and C were present on all three survey forms, sections D, E, and F were each presented on two of three forms, which kept the amount of time required to administer the survey manageable while allowing approximately thirty additional questions for a total of 228 questions answered by students in the paper-based format.

For the online survey administration, question sections A, B, C, D, E, and F were presented in a random order. Efficiencies in the online survey and the increased speed of response allowed all survey questions to be presented to the respondents.

The survey retained its two column format to improve readability and speed of response. Focus groups were

held with students enrolled in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 during the 2014-2015 school year. These students were new to the survey and were not expected to be within the grades completing the survey during subsequent survey administrations. To enhance readability and reduce confusion related to the non-alphabetic order of the presentation of the survey sections, each section of the survey contains a label indicating the topic of the questions within the section. A heading was placed on the page of the 30-day and lifetime use questions to encourage honest responses by reassuring the students they would not be punished for their responses.

A comparative analysis of the enhanced survey and the 2013 survey was completed. No differences in question responses were determined based upon which form of the survey a student completed, indicating that the students were not primed to answer a particular way due to having seen a set of questions prior to another set.

2021 Question changes and additions

Changes and adjustments to the survey are made to reflect the ongoing needs of prevention specialists and schools. Questions are edited to improve readability and understanding of the question. Changes and edits were minimized to ensure consistency in data collection and comparability from year to year to determine the effectiveness of programs.

In the 2021 PAYS, the questions remained the same as in the 2019 PAYS. An additional response option, Other, was added to the gender identity question.

The 2019 PAYS added two questions related to the amount of sleep during the week and frequency of feeling tired during the day. These questions allow for an assessment of the amount of restorative rest and daytime sleepiness. Being tired during the day is a condition with the potential to have a direct relationship to scholastic outcomes. The edits to the survey were informed by prevention specialists and agencies.

The Spanish online survey form presented each question in English and Spanish to help with understanding of terms that might be unfamiliar to the students.

The data for questions not included in the 2021 PAYS instrument that appeared on the 2013, 2015, or 2017 survey instruments will still be available for those years in the PAYS online reporting tool (www.bach-harrison.com/PAYSWebTool).

County and state-level reports are available on the PCCD PAYS website, www.pays.pa.gov.

2021 PAYS changes and additions

Gender

added the "Other" option

APPENDIX C. FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Prevention Web Sites

- The Center for Communities That Care: www.communitiesthatcare.net/
- Social Development Research Group: www.sdr.org
- Evidence-Based Prevention and Intervention Support: <https://www.episcenter.psu.edu/index.php/paysquestion>
- Commonwealth Prevention Alliance: www.commonwealthpreventionalliance.org
- Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System: www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm
- National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH): www.samhsa.gov/data/population-data-nsduh
- Monitoring the Future: www.monitoringthefuture.org
- The Partnership to End Addiction: www.drugfree.org
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD): www.madd.org
- Drug Free Workplace PA: www.drugfreeworkplacepa.org
- PA DUI Association: www.padui.org
- The Commonwealth Prevention Alliance Campaign to Stop Opiate Misuse: pastop.org
- CPA Campaign to Start Building Healthy Families: pastart.org
- Prevent Suicide PA: www.preventsuicidepa.org
- Youth Suicide Warning Signs: www.youthsuicidewarningsigns.org
- Overdose Free PA: www.overdosefreepa.org

Guides to Prevention Programs

- Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development: www.blueprintsprograms.com
- National Institute of Justice: www.crimesolutions.gov

- Federal OJJDP Model Programs Guide: www.ojjdp.gov/mpg
- SAMHSA Evidence-Based Practices Resource Center: www.samhsa.gov/ebp-resource-center
- Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP): www.wsipp.wa.gov
- WSIPP Benefit/Cost Results: www.wsipp.wa.gov/BenefitCost

State Resources

- Pennsylvania General Assembly: www.legis.state.pa.us
- DDAP – PA Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs: www.ddap.pa.gov
- DOH – PA Department of Health: www.health.pa.gov
- PLCB – PA Liquor Control Board: www.lcb.pa.gov
- PCCD – PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency: www.pccd.pa.gov
- PDE – PA Department of Education, Office for Safe Schools (Elementary and Secondary): www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/Pages/default.aspx
- CCAP – County Commissioners Association of PA: www.pacounties.org
- Pennsylvania Association of County Drug and Alcohol Administrators: www.pacdaa.org
- Safe2Say Something www.safe2saypa.org

Federal Resources

- Office of National Drug Control Policy: www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp
- National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information: www.store.samhsa.gov
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): www.samhsa.gov

- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA): www.drugabuse.gov
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA): www.niaaa.nih.gov
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC): www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/alcoholdrug/index.htm
www.cdc.gov/alcohol/index.htm
- National Resource Center for Domestic Violence and Child Abuse:
1-800-932-4632

If You Need Assistance

With bullying:

- US Department of Health and Human Services: www.stopbullying.gov
- PA Bullying Prevention Toolkit: bptoolkit.safeschools.info/
- PA Department of Education: www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/bullying/Pages/default.aspx
- Bullying Prevention Consultation Line:
1-866-716-0424

With drugs and alcohol:

- PA Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs: Find Drug & Alcohol Treatment 1-800-662-HELP apps.ddap.pa.gov/gethelpnow
- Alcoholics Anonymous: www.aa.org
- Pennsylvania Area Al-Anon: www.pa-al-anon.org

With smoking cessation:

- pa.quitlogix.org/en-US/ or 1-800 QUIT NOW (784-8669)
- Youth Tobacco and Vaping Cessation Program: mylifemyquit.com or 1-855-891-9989

With gambling:

- Pennsylvania Gambling Addiction 24 Hour Hotline: 1-800-GAMBLER

Talking with a child about drugs and alcohol:

- SAMHSA – Talk. They Hear You: www.samhsa.gov/underage-drinking
- MADD – Power of Parents: www.madd.org/the-solution/power-of-parents/

With child/parent coaching:

- Partnership to End Addiction: drugfree.org/
- NIDA Resources for Parents: teens.drugabuse.gov/parents/drugs-and-your-kids
www.drugabuse.gov/parents-educators

With depression or suicidal thoughts:

For immediate help, call a hotline or check the phone book under “suicide,” “crisis” or “mental health.” In an emergency, call 911. If you call for someone else, stay with the person until help arrives.

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Crisis Text Line: Text PA to 741-741
- TrevorLifeline for LGBTQ+ youth: 1-866-488-7386

APPENDIX D. SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS IN THIS REPORT

As follows is a list of school districts, charter schools, and private schools which participated in the 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey and are also represented in this profile report. If this report is intended for a school district, charter school, or private school, you will find that only the district/school in question is included. However, County and Community reports will include two or more districts, charter schools, or private schools. In the instance of those reports, this appendix will provide key information for understanding the participants represented in your data.

Commodore Perry School District
Farrell Area School District
Greenville Area School District
Grove City Area School District
Jamestown Area School District
Kennedy Catholic Middle School
Keystone Education Center Charter School

Lakeview School District
Mercer Area School District
Reynolds School District
Sharon City School District
Sharpsville Area School District
West Middlesex Area School District