

Highlights from the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

Informing data driven school and community health policies and practices

2014

Needham High School

GRADES 9-12



**METROWEST
HEALTH
FOUNDATION**

Funded by:
MetroWest Health Foundation

EDC Learning
transforms
lives.

Submitted by:
Education Development Center, Inc.
Health & Human Development Division

Spring 2015

Highlights from the 2014 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

Needham High School

Background and Methodology

The 2014 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey (MWAHS) marks a decade-long, ground-breaking initiative to support data-driven improvements in adolescent health in the 25 communities served by the MetroWest Health Foundation. Since 2006, the MWAHS has been administered every other year to middle and high schools in the region to monitor trends in risk behaviors and identify emerging health issues at the local and regional levels. Needham High School has participated in the MWAHS since 2006.

The 2014 high school survey was administered to a census of students in grades 9 through 12 in all 26 high schools in the region served by the MetroWest Health Foundation. In total, 24,355 high school students in the region participated in this voluntary and anonymous survey. At Needham High School, 1,490 students in grades 9 through 12 participated in the 2014 MWAHS, representing 92% of students.

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

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

Key Findings: Substance Use

Cigarette Smoking

2014 Patterns » **19% of students have smoked a cigarette in their lifetime, and 8% smoked recently (in the past 30 days).**

- » Males are somewhat more likely than females to smoke in their lifetime (21% compared with 17%) and in the past 30 days (9% compared with 6%).
- » Initiation of smoking increases from 9% in 9th grade to 30% in 12th grade.
- » 29% of youth have smoked an electronic cigarette (e-cigarette) in their lifetime, and 17% smoked an e-cigarette in the past 30 days. More males than females have smoked e-cigarettes. (E-cigarettes create a mist or vapor that you breathe in like smoke.)

2006-2014 Trends » **Overall, fewer youth are smoking in 2014 compared with 2006. Reports of lifetime smoking decreased from 29% in 2006 to 17% in 2012; in 2014, 19% of students reported lifetime smoking.**

- » Consistent with lifetime smoking, recent smoking decreased from 13% in 2006 to 5% in 2012, and is slightly higher in 2014 at 8%.
- » Both males and females are smoking considerably less in 2014 compared with 2006.
- » In the MetroWest region, reports of cigarette smoking have declined consistently since 2006.
- » E-cigarettes were first included on the survey in 2014, so trend data is not available.

Alcohol Use

2014 Patterns » **54% of students drank alcohol in their lifetime, and 35% drank in the past 30 days.**

- » 20% reported recent binge drinking (defined as consuming 5 or more drinks in a row on one or more occasions in the past 30 days).
- » Lifetime and current alcohol use are similar among females and males. For example, 36% of females and 34% of males report current drinking.
- » Reports of binge drinking are lower among females (17%) than males (22%); this does not take into account body weight or other factors that influence intoxication levels.
- » Alcohol use increases substantially by grade: Current drinking increases from 17% in 9th grade to 53% in 12th grade, and binge drinking increases from 6% to 32%.

2006-2014 Trends » **Fewer youth are drinking in 2014 compared with 2006. Binge drinking declined steadily over the five surveys (from 28% in 2006 to 20% in 2014), while lifetime and current drinking declined from 2006 to 2010 and have remained similar in recent surveys.**

- » For example, current drinking decreased from 45% in 2006 to 36% in 2010, and then remained steady at 35% from 2012 to 2014.
- » Drinking is notably lower among both females and males in 2014 compared with 2006.
- » Alcohol use has declined substantially in the MetroWest region since 2006.

Marijuana Use

2014 Patterns » **32% of youth have used marijuana in their lifetime, and 22% used marijuana in the past 30 days.**

- » Males are more likely than females to initiate marijuana use (35% compared with 29%) and report recent use (27% compared with 17%).
- » Marijuana use increases substantially by grade. For example, lifetime use increases from 8% in 9th grade to 54% in 12th grade.

2006-2014 Trends » **Marijuana use decreased steadily from 2006 to 2012; reports are slightly higher in 2014 but still lower than 2006 levels.**

- » For example, lifetime use decreased from 35% in 2006 to 28% in 2012; in 2014, 32% reported using marijuana in their lifetime.
- » Current marijuana use also decreased from 2006 (25%) to 2012 (19%), and then was slightly higher in 2014 (22%).
- » Marijuana use in the MetroWest region decreased from 2010 to 2014.

Prescription Drug Misuse

2014 Patterns » **7% of youth have misused prescription drugs in their lifetime (without a doctor's prescription), and 4% have misused prescription drugs in the past 30 days.**

- » More males than females have misused prescription drugs in their lifetime (8% compared with 5%).
- » Reports of recent prescription drug misuse are highest among students in grades 11 and 12.

2006-2014 Trends » **Prescription drug misuse decreased from 10% in 2006 to 5% in 2012; in 2014, 7% of youth reported lifetime misuse.**

- » There has been a decrease in prescription drug misuse in the region since 2006.

Key Findings: Violence

Physical Fighting

- 2014 Patterns** » **14% of youth have been in a physical fight in the past 12 months, and 4% have been in a fight on school property.**
- » Many more males than females report fighting (20% compared with 9%) and fighting on school property (6% compared with 2%).
 - » Reports of physical fighting vary from 10-18% by grade.
- 2006-2014 Trends** » **Fewer youth are involved in fighting. Reports of physical fighting in the past 12 months decreased from 20% in 2006 to 14% in 2014.**
- » Reports of fighting on school property also decreased from 7% in 2006 to 4% in 2014.
 - » The decrease in physical fighting is largely driven by a decrease in fighting among males. For example, reports of fighting among males decreased from 29% in 2006 to 20% in 2014; among females, fighting is slightly lower in 2014 (9%) compared with 2006 (11%).
 - » In the MetroWest region, physical fighting has decreased steadily since 2006.

Weapon Carrying

- 2014 Patterns** » **6% of youth carried a weapon in the past 30 days, and 3% carried a weapon on school property.**
- » Consistent with gender patterns for fighting, more males (9%) than females (3%) report carrying weapons.
 - » Reports of weapon carrying ranged from 4-7% during the high school years.
- 2006-2014 Trends** » **Weapon carrying has remained similar since 2006 at 4-6%.**
- » Reports of weapon carrying on school property were also steady at 2-3%.
 - » In the MetroWest region, weapon carrying has decreased slightly since 2006.

Key Findings: Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying

2014 Patterns

» **18% of high school youth have been bullied in the past 12 months, and 14% have been bullied on school property. 7% of students report bullying other students.**

- » More females than males are victims of bullying overall (21% compared with 14%) and on school property (16% compared with 12%).
- » Reports of bullying victimization range from 12-23% by grade.
- » Many bullying victims do not seek help from adults: Among students who were bullied at school in the past 12 months, 29% talked to a school adult about being bullied, and 41% talked to a parent or other adult outside of school.
- » 22% of youth have intervened as bystanders by trying to stop a student from bullying someone else at school in the past 12 months. 8% have told an adult at school that someone was being bullied.

2006-2014 Trends

» **School bullying has declined substantially since 2008: Reports of victimization on school property decreased from 27% in 2008 to 14% in 2014.**

- » Reports of overall bullying victimization in the past 12 months also decreased, from 32% in 2008 to 18% in 2014.
- » Bullying victimization is considerably lower among both females and males.
- » Reports of bullying victimization decreased in the MetroWest region from 2010 to 2014.

Cyberbullying

2014 Patterns

» **18% of youth report being victims of cyberbullying in the past 12 months, and 8% report cyberbullying someone else.**

- » Females are more likely to be victims of cyberbullying than males (21% vs. 14%).
- » Cyberbullying victimization is highest among 9th grade students.
- » The majority of cyberbullying victims do not seek help from adults: Among students who were cyberbullied in the past 12 months, only 18% talked to an adult at school and 31% talked to a parent or other adult outside of school.
- » 15% of youth have tried to stop a student from cyberbullying someone else in the past 12 months. 5% told an adult at school that someone was being cyberbullied, and 8% told a parent or other adult outside of school.

2006-2014 Trends

» **Cyberbullying victimization is slightly higher in 2014 (18%) compared with 2006 (15%); while reports have varied slightly since 2006, there is not a consistent trend.**

- » Reports of cyberbullying victimization among females are higher in 2014 (21%) compared with 2006 (16%), whereas cyberbullying was reported by 15% of males in both years.
- » Cyberbullying victimization has increased in the MetroWest region since 2006.

Key Findings: Impaired and Distracted Driving

Impaired Driving

- 2014 Patterns** » **16% of students report being a passenger in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol in the past 30 days.**
- » 7% of 11th and 12th grade students who drive report driving after drinking in the past 30 days, and 15% report driving after using marijuana.
 - » Males are more likely than females to report driving after using alcohol or marijuana.
 - » Older youth are more likely to report being passengers with high school drivers who are impaired. They are also more likely to report driving using marijuana; reports of driving after drinking are similar in 11th and 12th grades.

- 2006-2014 Trends** » **Reports of riding in a car driven by someone who had been drinking decreased from 24% in 2006 to 16% in 2014.**
- » Reports of driving after drinking among high school drivers decreased from 19% in 2006 to 7% in 2014.
 - » Reports of driving after using marijuana are similar over the last two surveys at 13-15%. (2012 was the first year that driving after marijuana use was included in the survey.)
 - » Drinking and driving among youth in the MetroWest region has declined since 2006.

Distracted Driving

- 2014 Patterns** » **31% of youth rode in a car with a high school driver who was texting in the past 30 days, and 35% of 11th and 12th grade drivers report texting while driving.**
- » Reports of texting while driving are similar among females and males.
 - » Many more 12th grade drivers report texting while driving (45%) compared with 11th grade drivers (24%).

- 2006-2014 Trends** » **Reports of texting while driving decreased from 39% in 2010 to 33% in 2012, but in 2014, 35% of high school drivers reported texting while driving. (2010 was the first year that the survey asked about texting while driving.)**
- » In the MetroWest region, texting while driving has decreased over recent surveys.

Key Findings: Mental Health

Stress

- 2014 Patterns** » **32% of students report that their life was very stressful in the past 30 days.**
- » Females are much more likely to report stress than males (45% compared with 18%).
 - » Reports of stress increase substantially by grade, from 22% in 9th grade to 43% in 12th grade.
 - » The most common source of stress is worrying due to school issues (63%).
- 2006-2014 Trends** » **Reports of stress decreased from 32% in 2006 to 25% in 2010, but returned to earlier levels in 2014 (32%).**
- » The recent increase in stress is driven by a considerable increase in reports among females, from 34% in 2010 to 45% in 2014; among males, stress increased only slightly (from 16% to 18%).
 - » In the MetroWest region, stress has also increased in recent years.

Depressive Symptoms, Self-Injury, and Suicidality

- 2014 Patterns** » **19% of students report depressive symptoms in the past 12 months (defined as feeling sad or hopeless for two or more weeks in a row).**
- » 12% of youth report self-injury (defined as cutting, burning, or bruising oneself on purpose) in the past 12 months.
 - » 11% of youth report that they had seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months, and 3% had made a suicide attempt.
 - » Females are more likely than males to report mental health problems.
 - » Reports of mental health problems do not show a consistent pattern by grade.
- 2006-2014 Trends** » **Reports of self-injury and suicidality have remained similar since 2006.**
- » However, after decreasing from 19% in 2006 to 14% in 2012, reports of depressive symptoms returned to 19% in 2014.
 - » There have been small increases in mental health problems in the MetroWest region since 2006.

Key Findings: Sexual Behavior

Sexual Intercourse and Condom Use

2014 Patterns » **22% of youth have engaged in sexual intercourse during their lifetime, and 18% are currently sexually active (had intercourse within the past three months).**

- » Among sexually active youth, 69% used a condom the last time they had intercourse.
- » Reports of sexual intercourse are similar among males and females.
- » The proportion of youth who have had intercourse in their lifetime increases from 6% in 9th grade to 43% in 12th grade. 39% of 12th grade youth are currently sexually active.

2006-2014 Trends » **The proportion of youth reporting lifetime sexual intercourse has varied in the range of 19-22% since 2006. Current sexual activity has also been similar at 15-18%. While recent reports are at the higher ends of these ranges, there is not a consistent trend over time.**

- » Condom use among sexually active youth has ranged from 65-75% over the five surveys; in 2014, 69% of sexually active youth used a condom at last intercourse.
- » Regional data shows a recent decrease in sexual intercourse.

Key Findings: Physical Activity, Sleep and Overweight/Obesity

Physical Activity and Sleep

2014 Patterns » **56% of youth meet national recommendations for physical activity, defined as exercising moderately for 60 minutes on 5 or more occasions in the past week. Only 31% of youth get 8 or more hours of sleep on an average school night.**

- » Males are more likely than females to report this level of physical activity (60% compared with 54%). They are also more likely to get the recommended amount of sleep (36% vs. 25%).
- » Reports of physical activity are highest among 9th grade youth. Reports of getting 8 or more hours of sleep decrease as students get older (from 39% in 9th grade to 22% in 12th grade).

2006-2014 Trends » **The proportion of youth exercising moderately on five or more days per week increased from 34% in 2006 to 58% in 2012 and then remained steady in 2014.**

- » In the MetroWest region, physical activity levels have been similar since 2010.
- » No trend data is available regarding sleep as it was first included in the survey in 2014.

Overweight/Obesity

- 2014 Patterns** » **17% of youth are overweight or obese (based on self-reported height and weight, which is used to calculate body mass index).**
- » Males are more likely than females to be overweight or obese (21% compared with 14%).
 - » Overweight/obesity ranges from 14-20% by grade.
- 2006-2014 Trends** » **Overweight/obesity has been similar at 15-17% since 2006.**
- » In the MetroWest region, overweight/obesity has not changed notably over the five surveys.

Key Findings: Protective Factors

School Attachment and Engagement

- 2014 Patterns** » **About seven out of ten youth report being engaged in and connected with their school.**
- This is indicated by agreement with statements such as “I feel close to people at this school” (73%), “I am happy to be at this school” (67%), and “I feel safe in my school” (85%).
- » While a majority of both males and females report high levels of school attachment, reports are slightly higher among males.
- 2006-2014 Trends** » **Reports of school attachment have not changed notably since 2006.**
- » School attachment has also been similar in the MetroWest region in the last decade.

Adult Support

- 2014 Patterns** » **68% of youth have at least one teacher or other adult at school to talk to if they have a problem, and 91% of youth have a parent or other adult outside of school to talk to about things that are important to them.**
- » Adult support at school is similar among both genders and increases during the high school years, from 62% in 9th grade to 78% in 12th grade. Reports of adult support outside of school are similar across genders and grades.
- 2006-2014 Trends** » **Reports of adult support at school were steady at 60% from 2006 to 2010 and then increased to 68% in 2014.**
- » Adult support outside of school has been similar at 88-91% since 2006.
 - » In MetroWest, there has been a small increase in adult support at school since 2006.

Conclusions

Over the last decade, the MWAHS has provided insight into adolescent health trends, driving key decisions on health-related practices in local communities and across the region. With each survey wave, the data paints a more resounding picture of advances to address risk behaviors. It also continues to identify emerging risks that demand greater attention. The 2014 data show that Needham is making important advances in some behavioral health areas, such as physical fighting and school bullying. While these demand continued attention, the data also highlight other areas of concern, including stress and mental health. Continued use of the MWAHS data to drive decisions around programs, policies, and practices will ensure that the greatest adolescent health challenges continue to be targeted in communities across the region.

Needham High School (Grades 9-12) 2006-2014 Trends in Key Indicators*

	Year of Survey (%)				
	2006 (1,281)	2008 (1,285)	2010 (1,326)	2012 (1,403)	2014 (1,490)
SUBSTANCE USE					
Lifetime cigarette smoking	29.1	28.3	17.9	16.8	19.3
Current cigarette smoking (past 30 days)	12.9	10.3	6.7	5.5	7.7
Lifetime alcohol use	66.1	63.5	55.8	55.1	54.0
Current alcohol use (past 30 days)	45.2	43.5	36.4	34.9	35.0
Binge drinking (past 30 days) [†]	27.7	25.0	23.0	21.3	19.7
Rode with driver who had been drinking (past 30 days)	23.5	21.1	17.7	15.1	16.3
Lifetime marijuana use	35.2	33.3	32.4	28.0	32.1
Current marijuana use (past 30 days)	24.8	23.7	22.9	19.4	21.8
Lifetime prescription drug misuse [‡]	10.5	7.4	6.5	4.6	6.7
VIOLENCE					
Physical fighting (past 12 months)	20.3	20.6	17.0	12.8	14.0
Physical fighting on school property (past 12 months)	6.9	6.3	5.0	4.1	4.2
Carried a weapon (past 30 days)	4.7	5.2	3.9	4.7	5.6
Carried a weapon on school property (past 30 days)	2.4	2.9	2.3	2.5	2.7
BULLYING VICTIMIZATION					
Bullying victim (past 12 months)	29.0	31.7	28.4	20.1	18.0
Bullying victim on school property (past 12 months)	25.1	27.3	24.2	15.7	13.9
Cyberbullying victim (past 12 months)	15.1	17.9	18.2	15.9	18.0
MENTAL HEALTH					
Life "very" stressful (past 30 days)	32.4	25.4	25.2	26.8	31.9
Depressive symptoms (past 12 months)	19.5	18.0	16.6	14.1	18.9
Self-injury (past 12 months)	11.4	12.2	12.0	12.5	12.3
Considered suicide (past 12 months)	11.2	9.5	10.2	10.3	11.0
Attempted suicide (past 12 months)	3.2	3.5	2.2	3.3	3.4
SEXUAL BEHAVIOR					
Lifetime sexual intercourse	21.3	21.1	20.3	18.8	22.5
Currently sexually active (past 3 months)	15.9	17.4	16.2	15.0	18.1
Condom use at last intercourse (among sexually active youth)	64.8	72.2	75.2	66.5	68.7
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND BODY WEIGHT					
Exercised for ≥60 minutes on 5 or more days/week	33.8	36.4	45.3	57.5	56.5
Overweight or obese [§]	16.8	16.8	14.9	15.7	17.5

* Source: MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

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

‡ Without a doctor's prescription

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

Needham High School (Grades 9-12) 2014 Gender Patterns for Key Indicators*

	Gender (%)		Total (%)
	Female (769)	Male (706)	(1,490)
SUBSTANCE USE			
Lifetime cigarette smoking	17.1	21.4	19.3
Current cigarette smoking (past 30 days)	6.4	8.9	7.7
Lifetime alcohol use	54.5	53.1	54.0
Current alcohol use (past 30 days)	35.6	34.3	35.0
Binge drinking (past 30 days) [†]	17.5	22.1	19.7
Rode with driver who had been drinking (past 30 days)	17.0	15.3	16.3
Lifetime marijuana use	28.7	35.5	32.1
Current marijuana use (past 30 days)	17.2	26.7	21.8
Lifetime prescription drug misuse [‡]	5.4	8.0	6.7
VIOLENCE			
Physical fighting (past 12 months)	8.6	19.6	14.0
Physical fighting on school property (past 12 months)	2.1	6.4	4.2
Carried a weapon (past 30 days)	2.7	8.7	5.6
Carried a weapon on school property (past 30 days)	2.0	3.4	2.7
BULLYING VICTIMIZATION			
Bullying victim (past 12 months)	21.2	14.3	18.0
Bullying victim on school property (past 12 months)	15.7	11.9	13.9
Cyberbullying victim (past 12 months)	21.4	14.0	18.0
MENTAL HEALTH			
Life "very" stressful (past 30 days)	45.0	17.8	31.9
Depressive symptoms (past 12 months)	25.8	11.3	18.9
Self-injury (past 12 months)	18.2	5.9	12.3
Considered suicide (past 12 months)	13.1	8.4	11.0
Attempted suicide (past 12 months)	3.9	2.7	3.4
SEXUAL BEHAVIOR			
Lifetime sexual intercourse	21.2	23.4	22.5
Currently sexually active (past 3 months)	17.0	19.1	18.1
Condom use at last intercourse (among sexually active youth)	67.4	70.5	68.7
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND BODY WEIGHT			
Exercised for ≥60 minutes on 5 or more days/week	53.6	59.9	56.5
Overweight or obese [§]	14.1	21.2	17.5

* Source: MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

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

‡ Without a doctor's prescription

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

Needham High School (Grades 9-12) 2014 Grade Patterns for Key Indicators*

	Grade (%)				Total (%) (1,490)
	9 th (382)	10 th (385)	11 th (365)	12 th (344)	
SUBSTANCE USE					
Lifetime cigarette smoking	9.3	16.8	22.4	29.9	19.3
Current cigarette smoking (past 30 days)	2.1	4.2	11.3	13.2	7.7
Lifetime alcohol use	34.7	49.1	62.4	71.6	54.0
Current alcohol use (past 30 days)	17.1	32.1	39.8	52.6	35.0
Binge drinking (past 30 days) [†]	5.5	17.4	25.0	31.9	19.7
Rode with driver who had been drinking (past 30 days)	10.3	16.4	22.3	15.2	16.3
Lifetime marijuana use	8.4	27.9	39.9	54.1	32.1
Current marijuana use (past 30 days)	6.3	19.7	24.5	38.1	21.8
Lifetime prescription drug misuse [‡]	2.9	4.5	10.5	9.1	6.7
VIOLENCE					
Physical fighting (past 12 months)	18.4	10.4	15.7	10.6	14.0
Physical fighting on school property (past 12 months)	5.2	2.1	6.3	2.3	4.2
Carried a weapon (past 30 days)	3.9	5.2	7.4	5.6	5.6
Carried a weapon on school property (past 30 days)	1.3	2.1	4.4	2.6	2.7
BULLYING VICTIMIZATION					
Bullying victim (past 12 months)	23.0	14.9	21.0	11.7	18.0
Bullying victim on school property (past 12 months)	17.2	11.8	17.3	8.5	13.9
Cyberbullying victim (past 12 months)	21.7	17.3	18.0	14.4	18.0
MENTAL HEALTH					
Life "very" stressful (past 30 days)	21.6	30.4	35.1	42.6	31.9
Depressive symptoms (past 12 months)	18.9	18.3	19.3	19.4	18.9
Self-injury (past 12 months)	12.9	12.6	13.3	10.0	12.3
Considered suicide (past 12 months)	8.9	10.8	13.4	10.9	11.0
Attempted suicide (past 12 months)	2.7	3.3	4.5	2.7	3.4
SEXUAL BEHAVIOR					
Lifetime sexual intercourse	6.4	12.2	30.0	43.3	22.5
Currently sexually active (past 3 months)	3.5	9.1	23.2	38.9	18.1
Condom use at last intercourse (among sexually active youth)	69.2	70.6	65.9	71.5	68.7
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND BODY WEIGHT					
Exercised for ≥60 minutes on 5 or more days/week	65.9	59.5	47.1	53.0	56.5
Overweight or obese [§]	16.8	18.1	20.1	14.2	17.5

* Source: MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

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

‡ Without a doctor's prescription

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

This report was prepared by the Health and Human Development Division at
Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) in Waltham, MA.

For technical assistance in interpreting and utilizing the MWAHS data, please contact:
Shari Kessel Schneider, MSPH, MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey Project Director
617-969-7100 or MetroWestSurvey@edc.org

For information about EDC, visit our website at www.edc.org.