



**2018**

**Rhode Island Student Survey**

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W A R W I C K W E S T E R L Y W O O N S O C K E T

*Participating School Districts in 2018*

# Background

The Rhode Island Student Survey (RISS) is a collaboration among the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (RI BHDDH), the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), and the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE). The RISS is a risk and prevalence survey for youth in middle and high school. A risk and prevalence survey looks at set of factors or conditions to which youth may be exposed that are associated with negative behavioral health outcomes and the extent to which youth may report engaging in problem behavior. It explores substance use, bullying, depression, suicide and violence. The RISS, which is one of the three State agency surveys, is administered every other year to Rhode Island public high and middle schools.



# RISS Data Collection

In 2018 the RISS was administered in 25 school districts throughout Rhode Island and completed by 22, 294 students. The RISS currently has sixty- two (62 questions). There is NO personally identifiable information associated with the RISS. Local parent permission procedures were followed before administration, including informing parents that their child's participation was voluntary. The questions are arranged in a particular way and explore specific topic areas. The questions are also asked across several domains such as the individual him/herself, peers, family, school and community. Each student who participated in the RISS received an informational brochure with supportive resource information.

# Purpose

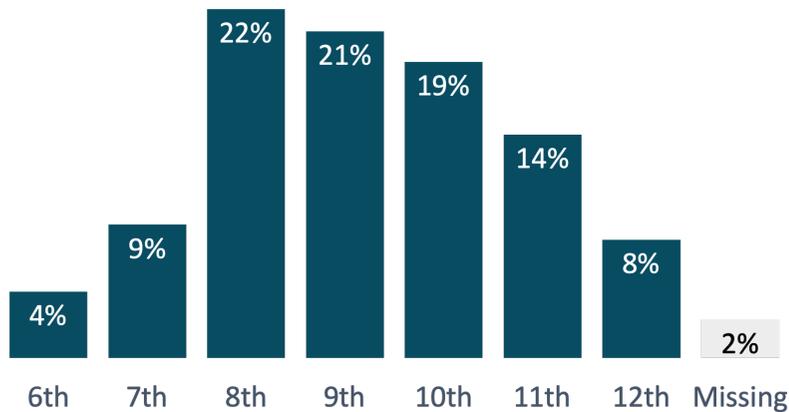
The intention and purpose of the RISS is to identify areas where there are strengths that can be built upon and to put additional resources to those areas that need improvement. The data is reviewed in aggregate, not at the individual level. The data is not meant to identify individuals. There are other surveys administered in schools but most do NOT allow for the ability to analyze data at the school district or community level. This data is crucial for planning prevention services especially when resources are so scarce.

# Demographics

**22,294** Students participated in the survey

## Grade

8th, 9th, and 10th grades had the most responses



## Sexual Orientation

**81%** Heterosexual (straight)

**7%** Bisexual

**6%** Not sure

**3%** Gay or Lesbian

**2%** Chose not to respond

## Gender

**48%** of respondents identified as male

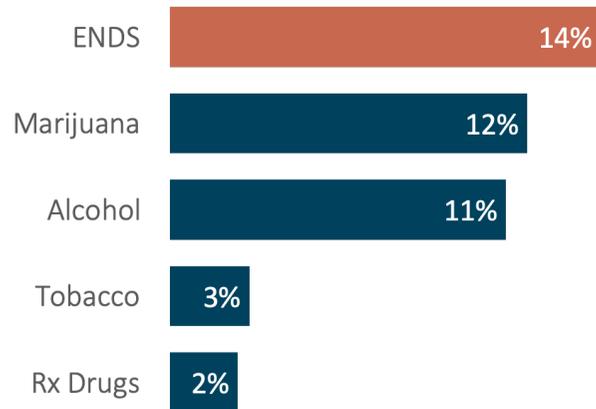
**47%** of respondents identified as female

2% of respondents identified as other  
2% preferred not to answer  
2% missing

**374 (2%) students identified as transgender**

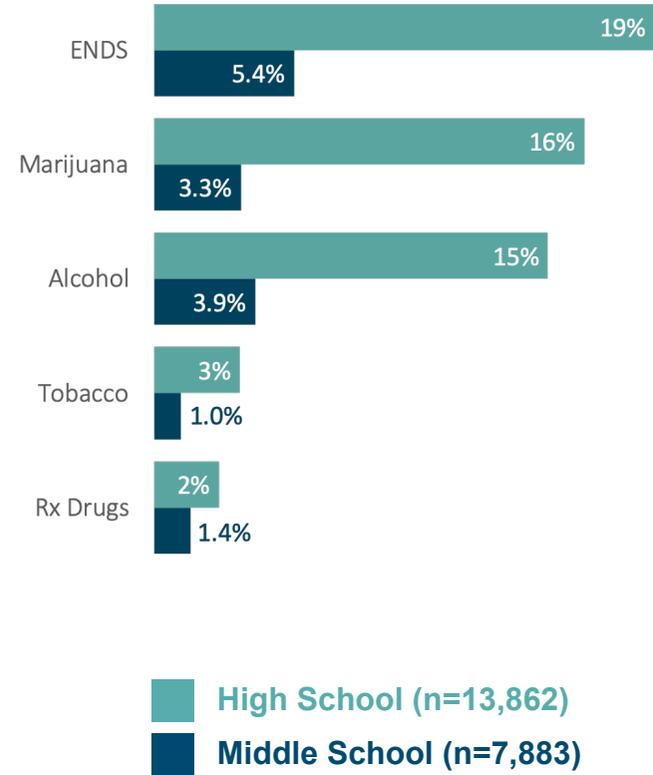
# Substance Use

## Past 30 Day Use



**Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS), also known as e-cigarettes or vape pens or devices, were most used followed closely by marijuana and alcohol**

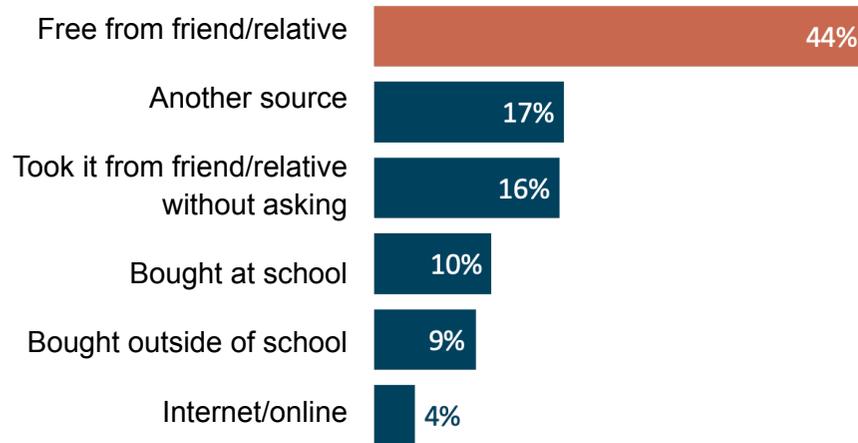
## High School vs. Middle School



## Prescription Drugs

Among the 1,292 (6.9%) students who reported having ever used a prescription drug not prescribed for them...

### 44% got it from a friend or relative for free



**Students reporting use of prescription drugs not prescribed to them listed pain relief pills, ADHD medications, and sedatives**

## Count It! Lock It! Drop It!®



### Don't Be An Accidental Drug Dealer

#### Count It!

Count your pills once every two weeks. This will prevent theft and ensure that medications are taken properly.

#### Lock It!

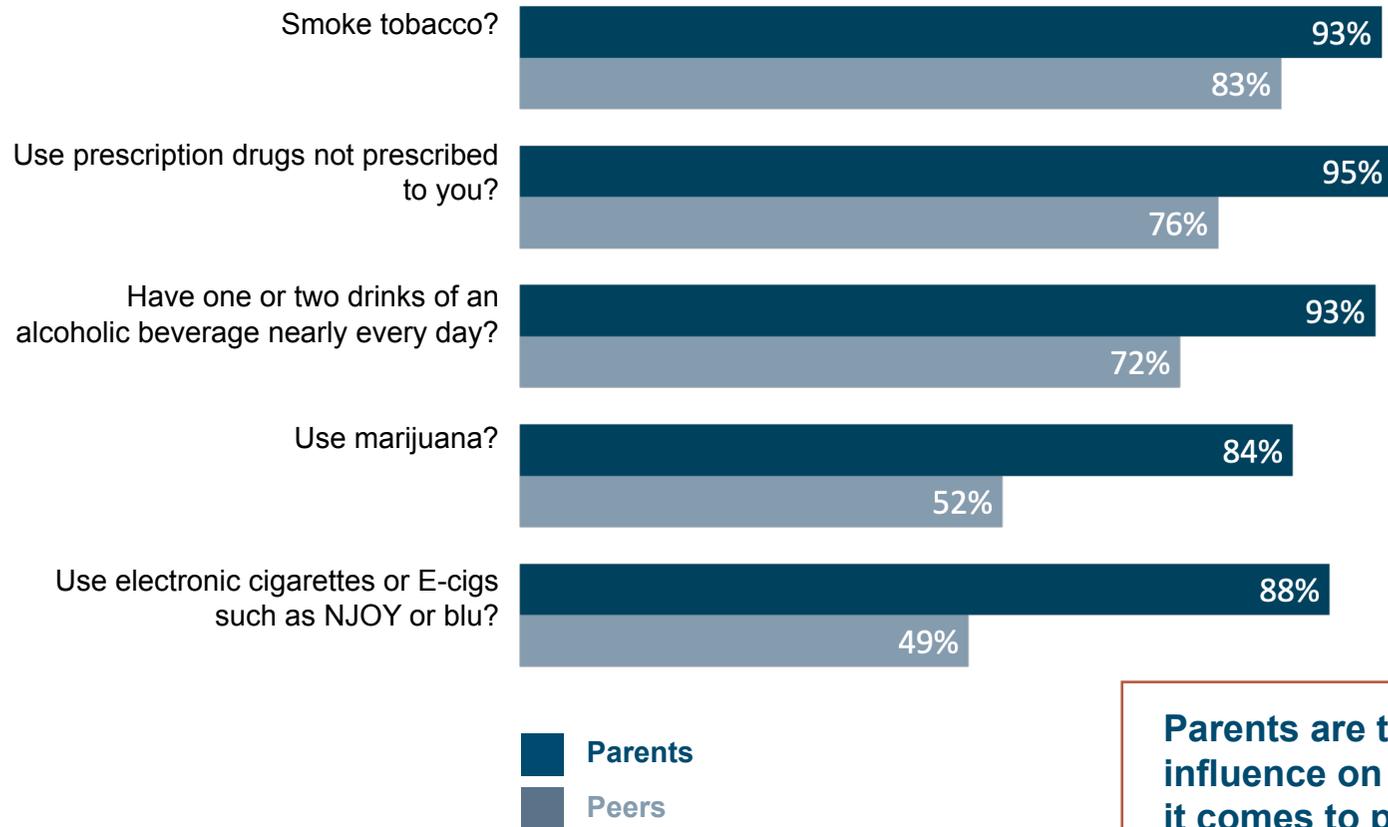
Lock up your medications and store them in a place that others would not think to look.

#### Drop It!

Drop off unused/expired medications for proper disposal. Police departments across Rhode Island have permanent drug disposal bins.

## Parent & Peer Disapproval

Percentage of students who believe parents/peers would disapprove of the following:

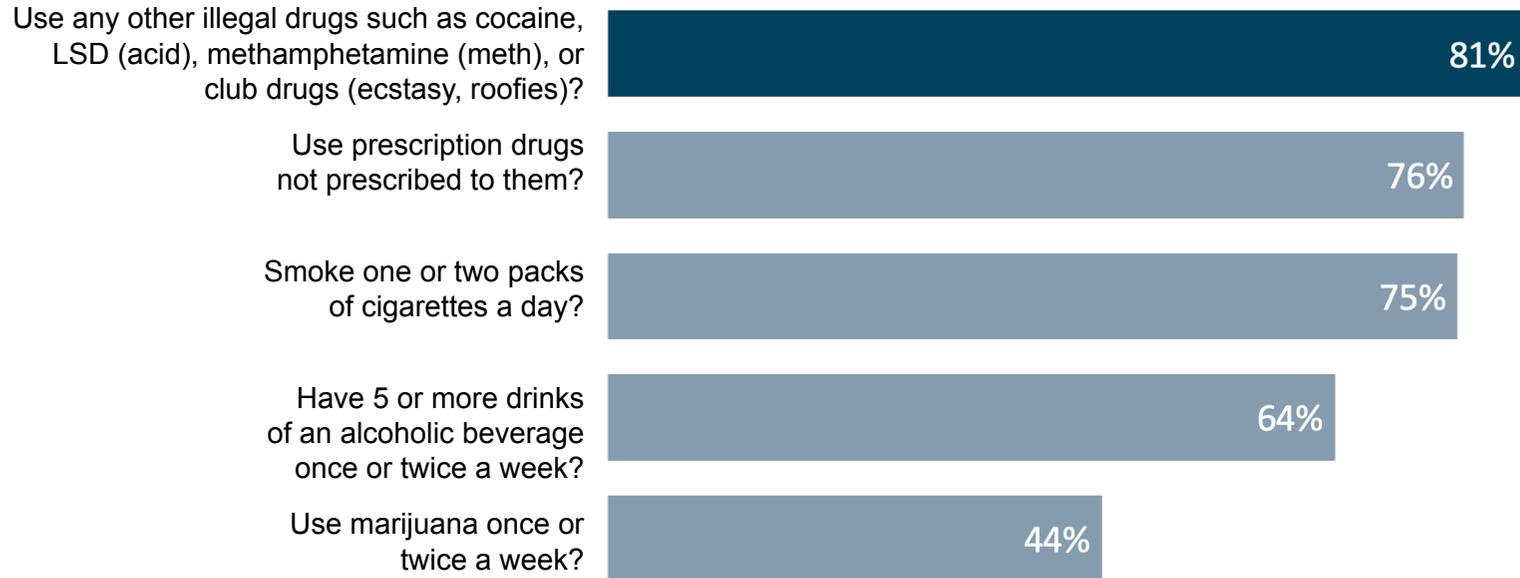


**Parents are the most powerful influence on their children when it comes to preventing alcohol and other drug misuse.**

**Talk early, talk often, listen.**

## Perception of Risk

Percentage of students who agree that people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they:



# What You Can Do

## Underage Tobacco Use Prevention

- **Enforce state laws** that ban all tobacco product use and possession on all school properties at all times—to everyone, everywhere, indoors and outdoors. This includes all e-cigarette devices and smokeless tobacco. To print enforcement signs, visit [health.ri.gov/tobacco](http://health.ri.gov/tobacco) and select “publications”.
- **Support Tobacco Free Youth Initiatives in your school**
- **Support teachers and staff** in learning about current trends in all tobacco product use, how flavored tobacco products target youth, and evidence-based prevention strategies.
- For **free technical assistance** from the Tobacco Control Program, call the Rhode Island Department of Health at 401-222-5960.

## Underage Marijuana & Alcohol Prevention

- **Get involved:** To address the issue of drug abuse in your area, it is important to get involved in prevention programs in your community. Find out about the local prevention coalition and share with students and families. Seek out activities you and your students can participate in together. Visit [riprevention.org/](http://riprevention.org/) to identify local prevention activities in your city or town or district.
- **Youth engagement:** Work with your school district to prevent use of substances at all school-related functions.
- **Develop routine monitoring of bathrooms and parking lots** for youth substance use.

- Communities for alcohol and Drug-Free Youth offer a **pre-prom and graduation planning** kit.

<https://cadyinc.org/resources/get-the-facts/keeping-your-child-safe-around-prom-and-graduation-time/>

It is aimed at establishing dialogue between school administrators, teachers, and students to create a safer and more positive environment in your school, and increase visibility and awareness in your community about the dangers of alcohol, other drugs, and impaired driving, especially during prom and graduation season.

- Hold athletes and participants in school organizations to a **no-use policy even when not in school**. Peer-leadership programs are available. Varsity Athletes Against Substance Abuse (VAASA) is a peer-leadership program in which high school varsity athletes pledge to remain alcohol and drug free. The athletes are trained to address younger students as positive role models. To collaborate with your school Student Assistance Counselor or for more information, call Rhode Island Student Assistance at 401-732-8680.

- **Educate students and adults**

Binge Drinking on Teen Brain Development  
<https://www.alcohol.org/teens/binge-drinking/>

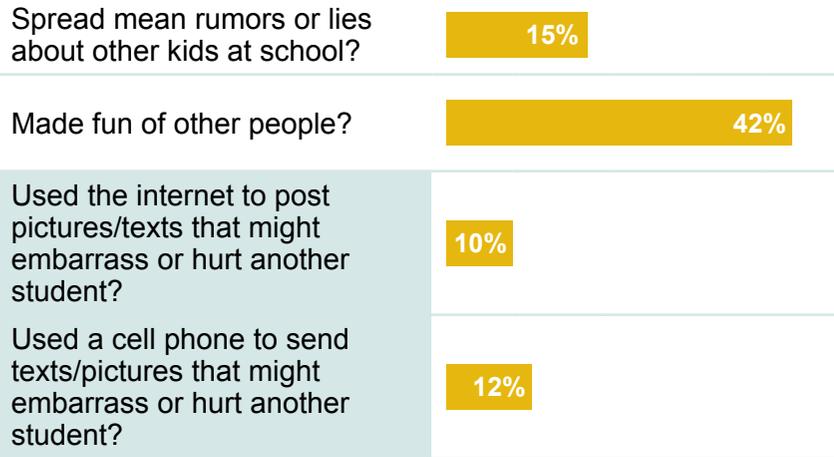
Marijuana and the Adolescent Brain  
[https://www.riprc.org/elearning/marijuana\\_adolescent\\_brain/#/](https://www.riprc.org/elearning/marijuana_adolescent_brain/#/)

What's Up with E-Cigarettes?  
[https://www.riprc.org/elearning/e-cigarettes/#/?\\_k=m4kq44](https://www.riprc.org/elearning/e-cigarettes/#/?_k=m4kq44)

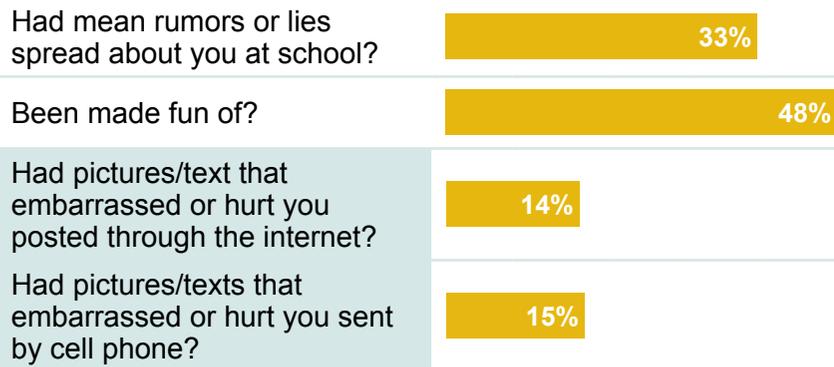
# Bullying

## Bullying (Perpetrated)

At least once in the last 3 months...

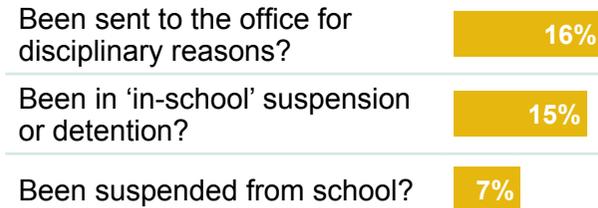


## Bullied (Experienced)

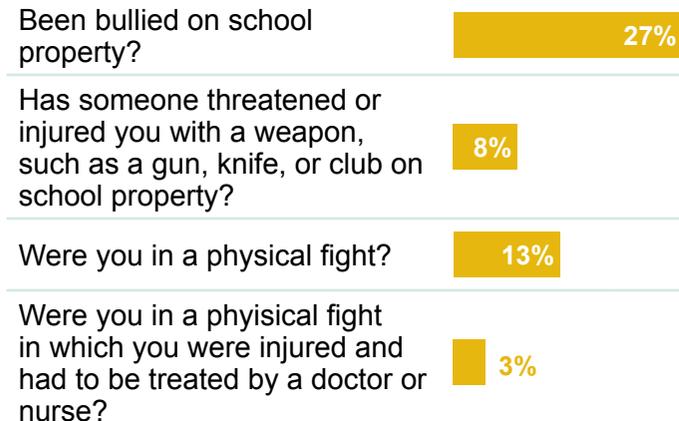


## Disciplinary action

At least once in the last 3 months...



## At least once in the last year...



# What You Can Do

## Bullying

When adults respond quickly and consistently to bullying behavior they send the message that it is unacceptable.

- **Research shows this can stop bullying behavior.** For resources visit:

<https://www.stopbullying.gov/>

- **The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) is committed to ensuring safe and supportive learning environments for all Rhode Island Youth.** RIDE developed a Guidance for Rhode Island Schools on Transgender and Gender Nonconforming students

<http://www.thriveri.org/documents/Guidance.for.RhodeIsland.Schools.on.Transgender.and.Gender.Nonconforming.Students-2016.pdf>



# Mental Health



In the last 30 days...

Were you very sad? **23%**

Did you feel hopeless about the future? **19%**

**24.6%**

of those who attempted suicide during the past 12 months reported that *the attempt resulted in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse*

**13%** of students *ever considered attempting suicide*

**54%** of students that considered suicide *made a plan* about how they would attempt suicide

**39%**

of students who made a plan *attempted suicide* at least once in the past year

# What you can do

## Behavioral Health Crises/Depression/ Suicidal Ideation

- **If someone you love is going through a mental health or substance use crisis, there is help** through Kids' Link RI™. Kids' Link RI™ is a hotline for children in emotional crisis. A program offered in collaboration with Gateway Healthcare, Lifespan, Hasbro Children's Hospital and Bradley Hospital, Kids' Link RI is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for children suffering from behavioral problems or psychiatric illness. Call 1-855-543-5465.
- **Train your faculty and school staff to recognize the signs of suicidal ideation/mental health distress using an evidence-based curriculum:** Question, Persuade, Refer or Mental Health First Aid are both recommended by the Rhode Island Department of Health. South County Healthy Bodies, Health Minds offers this training. Please contact the Director of the project Dr. Robert Harrison at robharrison63usna@gmail.com for more information.
- **Annually perform a walk-through of your school's suicide prevention protocol/policy** as a part of your district's mandatory School Safety Plan. The RI Department of Education and RI Emergency Management Agency have made a model School Safety Plan available to school districts at: [ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/HealthSafety/EmergencyPreparedness.aspx](http://ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/HealthSafety/EmergencyPreparedness.aspx).
- Ensure your school meets the requirements for health education in Rhode Island, specifically by **addressing the required topics of mental health and suicide prevention within the curriculum** and ensuring they know which school staff to speak to if they or their friends are experiencing suicidal thoughts. You can access a free mental health curriculum guide for high school students at: [bit.ly/2LhcuUx](http://bit.ly/2LhcuUx).
- As a school, take the Campaign to Change Direction pledge to learn and recognize the five Signs of Emotional Pain and the Healthy Habits of Emotional Well-being. Learn more about how to spread the word and make the pledge at: [changedirection.org](http://changedirection.org).

# What you can do: By sector

## Business

- **Attend Coalition events.** We bring experts in the fields of adolescent development, addiction and prevention to inform and mobilize the community to focus on the dangers kids face and how we, as a community, can reduce those risks they face every day.
- **Become an active Coalition member.** If you would like to be an active member of the coalition at the regional or community level contact your local coalition and they can let you know about opportunities to serve.
- **Make a donation to your local Coalition program** or sponsor an event.
- **If someone you love is going through a mental health or substance use crisis, there is help** through Kids' Link RI™. Kids' Link RI™ is a hotline for children in emotional crisis. A program offered in collaboration with Gateway Healthcare, Lifespan, Hasbro Children's Hospital and Bradley Hospital, Kids' Link RI is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for children suffering from behavioral problems or psychiatric illness. Call 1-855-543-5465.

## Education

- **Enforce state laws** that ban all tobacco product use and possession on all school properties at all times—to everyone, everywhere, indoors and outdoors. This includes all e-cigarette devices and smokeless tobacco. To print enforcement signs, visit [health.ri.gov/tobacco](http://health.ri.gov/tobacco) and select “publications”.
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- **Have school policies on anti-bullying. The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) is committed to ensuring safe and supportive learning environments for all Rhode Island Youth.** RIDE developed a Guidance for Rhode Island Schools on Transgender and Gender Nonconforming students <http://www.thriveri.org/documents/Guidance.for.RhodeIsland.Schools.on.Transgender.and.Gender.Nonconforming.Students-2016.pdf>.
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## Safety

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- **Participate in compliance checks**- perform checks at retail alcohol, tobacco and e-cigarette outlets.
- **Other enforcement activities include** crackdowns on false identification, programs to deter older youth or adults from providing alcohol, tobacco or marijuana or e-cigarette products to minors, party patrols to prevent drinking at large gatherings, “cops in shops” to keep minors from purchasing alcohol, youth-focused campaigns to enforce impaired driving laws, and investigations to determine the source of alcohol and hold the responsible party accountable for their role in alcohol related incidents.
- **Attend Coalition events.** We bring experts in the fields of adolescent development, addiction and prevention to inform and mobilize the community to focus on the dangers kids face and how we, as a community, can reduce those risks they face every day.
- **Become an active Coalition member.** If you would like to be an active member of the coalition at the regional or community level please contact your local coalition and they can let you know about opportunities to serve.
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## Medical/Health

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## Government

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## Community/Family Supports

- **Attend Coalition events.** We bring experts in the fields of adolescent development, addiction and prevention to inform and mobilize the community to focus on the dangers kids face and how we, as a community, can reduce those risks they face every day.
- **Boost Protective Factors.** Evidence-based prevention programs show that we can create an environment that protects kids from alcohol and substance abuse. Effective parenting, eating meals together, building self-esteem, extracurricular school programs, faith-based youth programs and community-sponsored youth programs are all proven to help “protect” kids from alcohol and substance abuse. The more wholesome, supervised activities kids have to choose from, the less likely they are to become victims of alcohol and substance use.
- **Talk to kids about alcohol and drugs.** And the earlier you start talking, the better! According to DrugFree.org, of those teens who reported alcohol use, a majority (62 percent) said they had their first full alcoholic drink by age 15, not including sipping or tasting alcohol. Of those teens who reported alcohol use, one in four (25 percent), said they drank a full alcoholic drink for the first time by age 12 or younger. Talk early. Talk often. It’s great prevention.
- **Become an active Coalition member.** If you would like to be an active member of the coalition at the regional or community level please contact your local coalition and they can let you know about opportunities to serve.
- **Parents and other adults must respond quickly** and consistently to bullying behavior to send a message that it is unacceptable
- **Encourage strategies to promote healthy teen relationships.** Explore resources on Dating Matters website [https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/dating-matters-toolkit/?deliveryName=USCDC\\_1104-DM9553#/](https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/dating-matters-toolkit/?deliveryName=USCDC_1104-DM9553#/).
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- **Maintain strong bonds with your teens** as they move towards independence by having family meal time. Get involved and stay involved- ask about homework and school projects. Learn what websites and apps your teen is using. Get to know your teen’s friends. Set clear limits. Tell your teen that you love them.
- **Encourage your child** to talk about their feelings, thoughts and fears.

# Thank you!

The Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals would like to acknowledge the cooperation and effort of all the schools and students who participate in the Rhode Island Student Survey each administration year.



**Gina M. Raimondo**  
*Governor*



**Womazetta Jones**  
*Secretary*



**Dr. Nicole Alexander-Scott**  
*Director*



**Angelica Infante-Green**  
*Commissioner*



Promoting Positive Change in Rhode Island Communities

