



Adolescent Health and Well-being in Washington County

A view from the 2013 Minnesota Student Survey

**Prepared by the Washington County
Department of Public Health and Environment
December 2014**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report is possible because teachers, Minnesota Student Survey (MSS) coordinators, administrators and superintendents across Washington County and the state of Minnesota agreed to support the administration of the student survey in the spring of 2013. We are grateful for their unwavering support. We especially thank the students who shared information on their attitudes, beliefs and behaviors with us through this survey and the parents and guardians who support them.

This work is meant to be shared – with students and families, with each school’s team of educators and staff, administrators and school board members, social services staff, law enforcement and others who work with youth. It is made available so that the data can inform decisions about how to improve the school and community environments in which youth learn, grow and develop.

Washington County Minnesota Student Survey Workgroup

We wish to thank the Minnesota Student Survey Workgroup of the CONNECT Chemical Health Action Collaborative in Washington County for their help coordinating the MSS within their districts:

- Carolyn Carr Latady, Forest Lake Schools
- Lisa Hoogheem, North St Paul/ Maplewood/Oakdale Schools
- Tom LaBounty, South Washington County Schools
- Paul Lee, Stillwater Schools
- Bethany Sneden, Mahtomedi Schools

Washington County MSS Project Team:

- Dave Brummel, Washington County Department of Public Health and Environment
- Chris Fennern, Washington County Department of Public Health and Environment
- Tommi Godwin, Washington County Department of Public Health and Environment
- Cathy Mackiewicz, Washington County Department of Public Health and Environment
- Jean Stretar, Washington County Department of Public Health and Environment

For more information call (651) 430-6655 or email PHE@co.washington.mn.us.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	1
Introduction	3
Demographics	6
Academics and School Connectedness.....	7
School Safety and Violent Behavior	9
Family, Sexual, and Dating Violence	12
Mental Health	15
Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs.....	18
Obesity, Physical Activity, and Nutrition.....	23
Sexual Behavior.....	26
Social and Emotional Wellbeing	28
Other Health Risk Behaviors	29
Community-based Efforts in Washington County	31
Technical Notes.....	32
References	34

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Minnesota Student Survey has been administered since 1989, providing educators, prevention program staff, administrators, community members and youth with an opportunity to identify trends in the behaviors and attitudes of young people. Examining these trends together allows us to determine where collaborative work appears to be successful, and where emerging needs among youth demand new attention.

In the United States, 70 percent of all deaths among youth and young adults aged 10 to 24 years result from four causes: motor vehicle crashes (23%), other unintentional injuries (18%), homicide (15%), and suicide (15%) (CDC, 2014). Among adults aged ≥ 25 years, 57 percent of all deaths in the United States result from cardiovascular disease (33%) and cancer (24%) (CDC, 2010). These leading causes of morbidity and mortality among youth and adults in the United States are related to six categories of health-risk behaviors:

1. Behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence;
2. Tobacco use;
3. Alcohol and other drug use;
4. Unhealthy dietary behaviors;
5. Physical inactivity; and
6. Sexual behaviors that contribute to unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

The Minnesota Student Survey includes questions about a wide variety of youth behaviors, including these six categories of health-risk behaviors, as well as protective factors such as positive connections to family, school and community. This report is focused on Washington County students, and it highlights key indicators of youth health status, comparing to Minnesota state data when possible.

Positive Trends

- Low obesity rate and flat trend, lower in Washington County than the state average
- High percentage of students who feel safe at school
- Reduced smoking and drinking (past 30 days) rates over time
- Reduced violent behavior toward others
- High perception of parental disapproval of substance use
- Downward trend in past year suicidal thoughts
- Daily nutrition – higher percentage of student eating recommended fruits, vegetables than the statewide average of their peers

Ongoing Challenges

- Substance use: Alcohol and Marijuana remain top past year substances used among youth
- Trend is flat (no improvement) for students who report ever experiencing physical/sexual abuse
- Past 30 day alcohol, marijuana, and cigarette smoking higher for Washington County youth than the state average of their peers

Emerging Issues

- Percentage of 5th graders experiencing physical bullying: over 20%
- Low physical activity among 9th and 11th grade girls: 41.9% and 30.6%, respectively, achieve national standard of past-week activity, compared to 50 percent or higher among male peers
- At least 50 percent of all students report daily consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages
- Past 30 day marijuana use: increased from 10.6% to 13.6% among 9th graders since 2010
- Portion of students perceiving “moderate” or “great” risk of harm from using alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana decreased from 91%, 84%, and 77% respectively to 84%, 76%, and 60%
- Between 40 and 44 percent of 9th grade females report experiencing significant problems with depression, anxiety, and sleep trouble during the past year compared to 22 to 24 percent of their male peers
- At least 1 in 10 males, grade 8, 9, and 11, report intentional self-harm during the past year, and more than 1 in 5 of their female peers
- Among students who drive: the portion who drive distracted by phone calls or messaging is high: 34% of 9th graders, 70% of 11th graders
- Past year tanning device use: 10.0% of Washington County 9th graders compared to 7.6% of 9th graders across the state; past year tanning is highest in Washington County among 11th grade girls, 31% report tanning one or more times during the past 12 months

INTRODUCTION

About the Minnesota Student Survey

The Minnesota Student Survey (MSS) is a statewide school-based survey conducted every three years. It is a valuable source of information about issues vital to the health, safety, and academic success of young people. The MSS is used by school districts, county and state agencies, community organizations, students and parents to understand the world of young people and develop effective ways of supporting students and families.

The survey asks students questions about their activities, opinions, behaviors and experiences. Survey topics include school climate, bullying, out-of-school activities, healthy eating, emotional health, substance use, and connections with school and family. High school students are also asked questions about sexual activity.

The survey is administered to students in selected grades in regular public schools, charter schools and tribal schools. It is also offered to students in alternative learning centers and juvenile correctional facilities, although the results for the alternative learning centers and correctional facilities are reported separately. In 2013, nearly 165,000 public school students participated in the survey statewide. In Washington County, 9,363 students took the survey in 2013.

The MSS is the primary source of comprehensive data on youth at the county and local level in Minnesota, and is the only consistent source of statewide data on the health and well-being of youth from smaller population groups, such as race or ethnic groups. School districts, local public health agencies, and community groups use local data to hold community forums and stimulate discussion about the needs of youth, plan programs, and obtain grant funding. State agencies use the results to monitor trends in health and risk behaviors, to assess the extent of health disparities among population groups, design programs, measure progress, obtain federal and state funding and assist local communities and schools.

Survey Administration

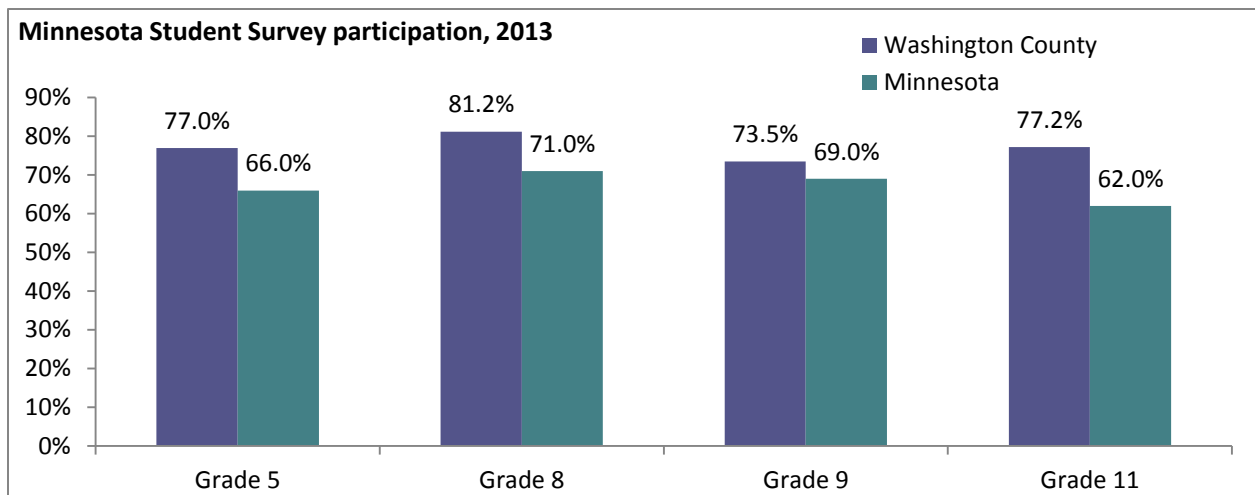
The MSS is a collaboration between local schools and four state agencies: the Minnesota Departments of Education, Health, Human Services and Public Safety. The state agencies develop the survey content, monitor data quality, analyze data and report results. Local school districts and correctional facilities administer the survey to their students.

The survey is anonymous and voluntary for school districts and students. School districts have the option of not participating in the survey. Parents can choose not to have their children participate. Students themselves can decide not to take the survey. Once they begin the survey, they can decide to skip any question or stop entirely at any point. No names or identifying code numbers at the student level are used on the survey materials. Answers cannot be traced to an individual student.

School District and Student Participation

The 2013 Minnesota Student Survey was administered in the first half of 2013 to public school students. All public school districts in Minnesota were invited to participate. Once a school district agrees, all students in the selected grades are then invited to participate. In 2013, 84 percent of Minnesota’s geographically-based, operating school districts participated (280 districts), down from 91 percent in 2007 and 88 percent in 2010.

Student participation is of course affected by participation decisions of school districts and is also affected by illness, truancy, dropping out, schedule conflicts and parent or student decisions not to take the survey. For the 2013 survey in the state of Minnesota, 66 percent of all fifth grade students in regular public schools participated, 71 percent of eighth grade students, 69 percent of ninth grade students and 62 percent of eleventh grade students.



In 2013, in Washington County regular public schools, 77 percent of all fifth grade students (2,245), 81 percent of eighth grade students (2,495), 74 percent of ninth grade students (2,269) and 77 percent of eleventh grade students (2,345) participated. In the 2013 survey administration, approximately 2% of surveys were omitted from the statewide final data set of 165,000 students because of missing data or response patterns that were frequently inconsistent or highly improbable.

Standard Tables

This report is available for download from the Washington County Department of Public Health and Environment website: www.co.washington.mn.us/publichealth, Reports and Studies, Health Data.

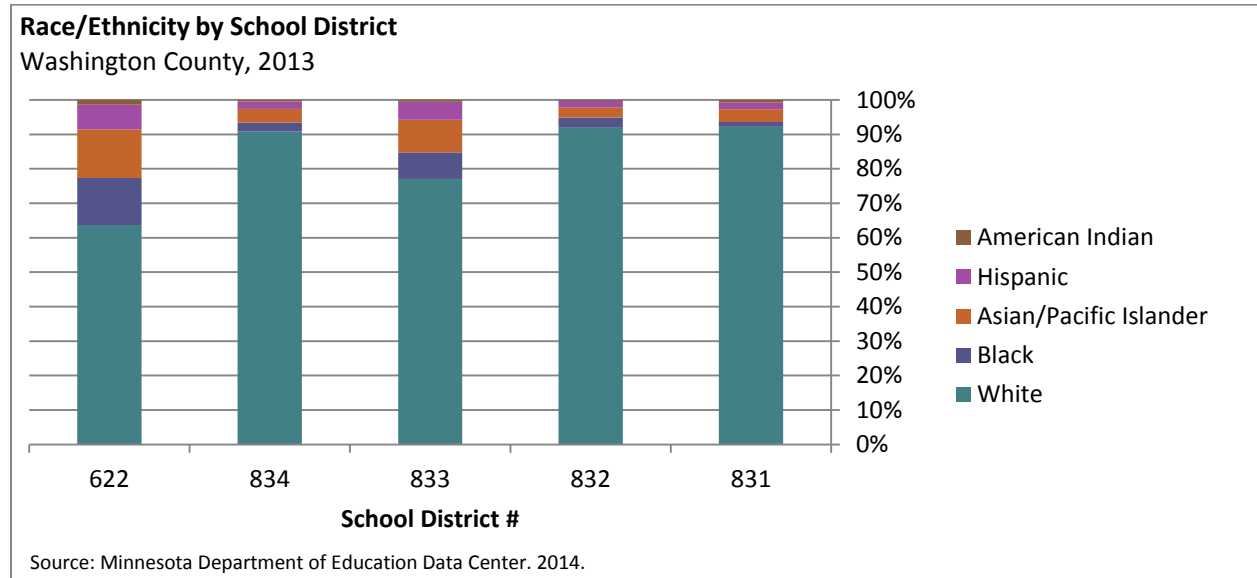
Standard tables showing student responses to all survey questions have been prepared for school districts, counties, regions, and the state as a whole. There are separate statewide tables for regular public schools, alternative learning centers, and juvenile correctional facilities. Each state agency’s website includes a combination of these standard tables and special reports.

- View statewide and district tables, as well as special reports, on the **Minnesota Department of Education** website:
<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/StuSuc/SafeSch/MNStudentSurvey/>
- View statewide, county, and regional tables, as well as special reports, on the **Minnesota Department of Health** website: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/>
- View special reports on the **Minnesota Department of Human Services** website:
<http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/mss>
- View special reports on the **Minnesota Department of Public Safety** website:
<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/statistical-analysis-center/Pages/youth-juvenile-justice-reports.aspx>

DEMOGRAPHICS

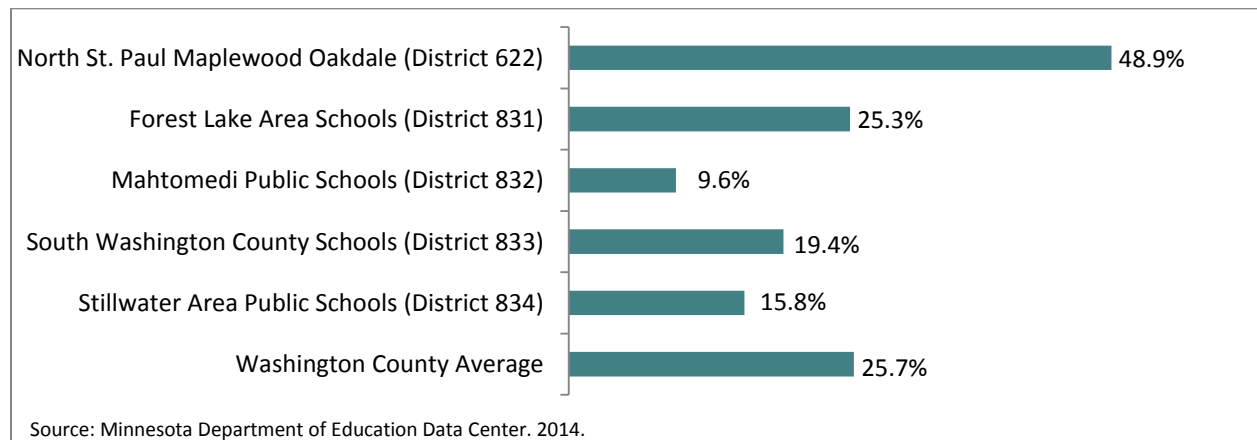
Race and Ethnicity

Since 1995, the Minnesota Student Survey has asked a question allowing students to identify themselves by race and ethnicity. Washington County youth are rapidly becoming more diverse; the fastest increasing populations are among Asian/Pacific Islanders, followed by youth who identify as Hispanic.



Free and Reduced-Price Lunch

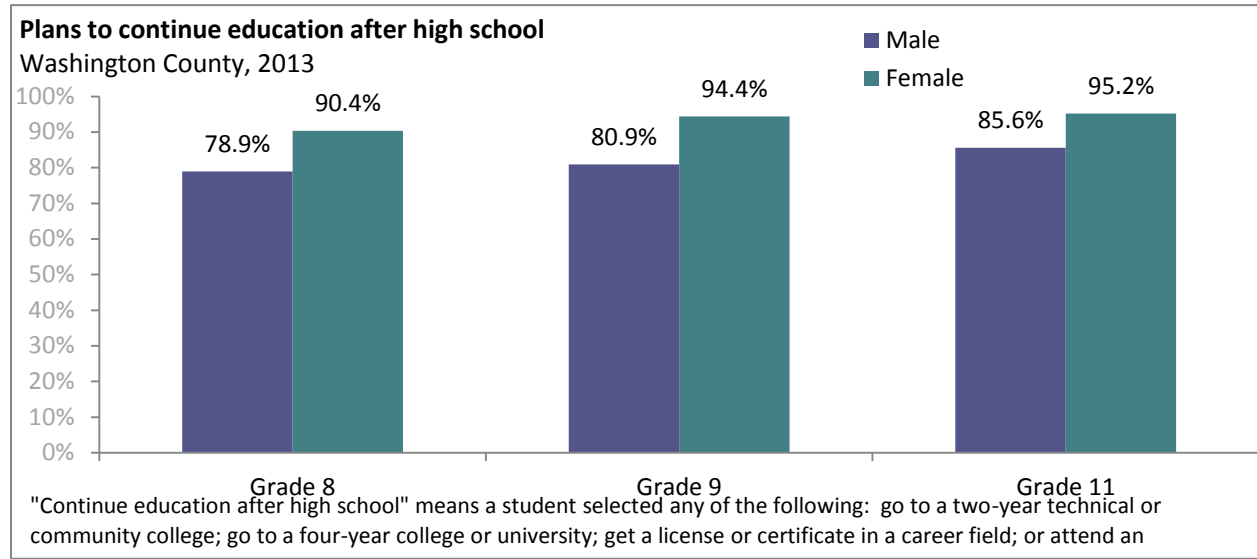
Washington County, 2012-13 School Year



ACADEMICS AND SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS

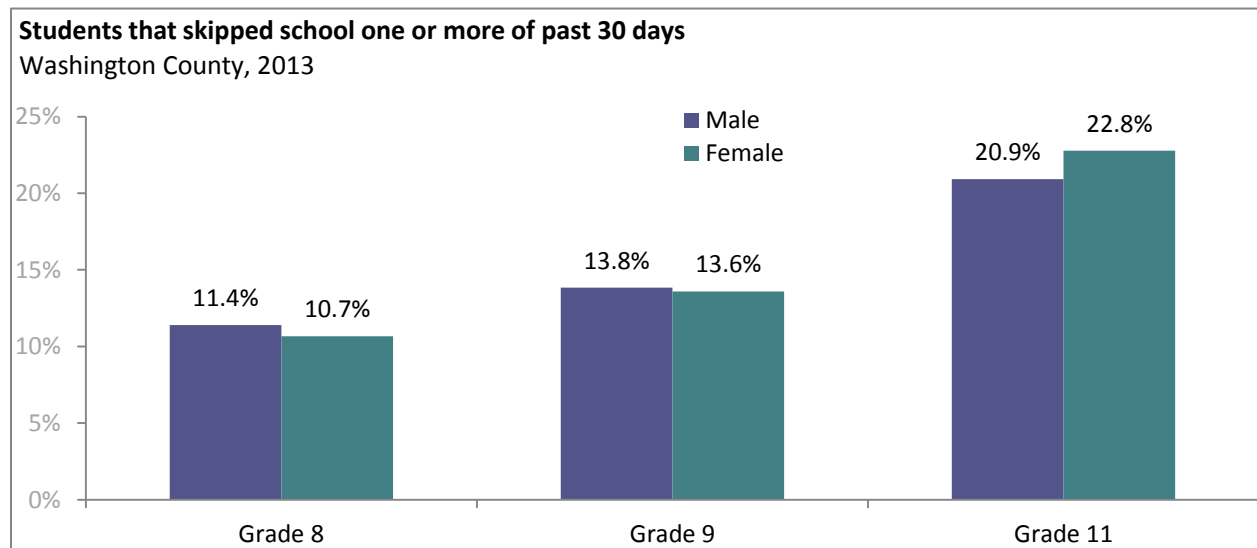
Plans to continue education after high school

Plans to attend college have been consistently above 90 percent among Washington County students over time. Overall, in 2013, 87.6 percent of 9th grade students and 90.3 percent of 11th grade students plan to attend college after high school. College plans are more prevalent among females than males, which is consistent with statewide trends.



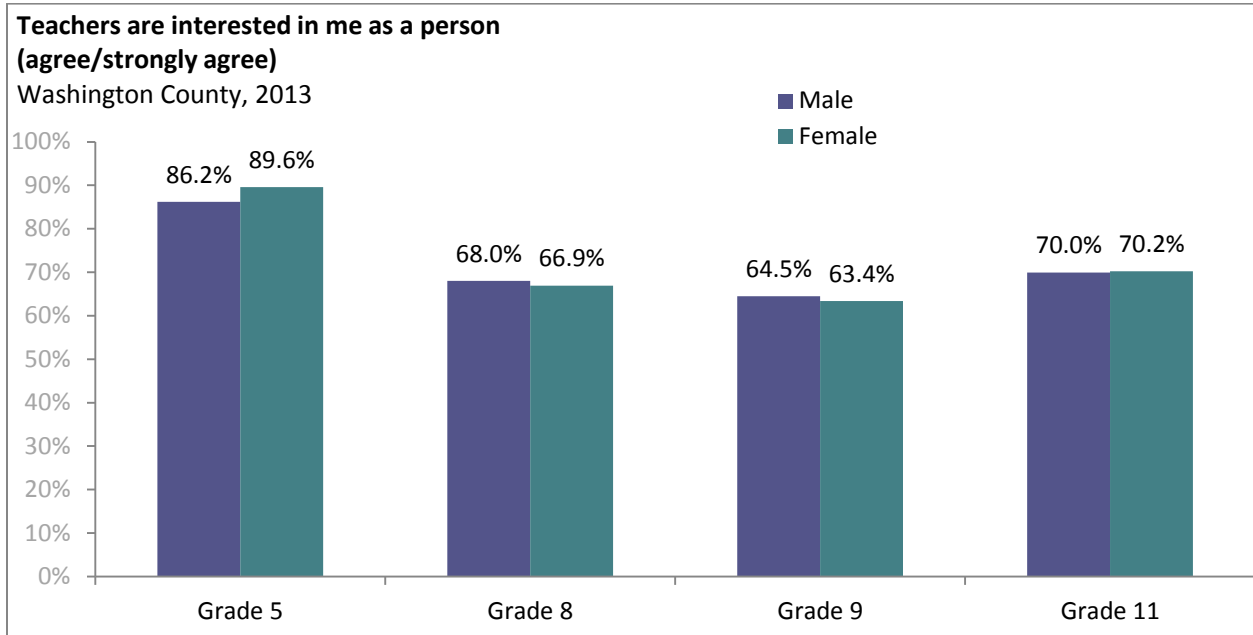
Skipping School

In 2013, one tenth of 8th graders (11%), less than one-fifth of 9th graders (13.7%), and nearly one-quarter of 11th graders (21.8%) reported skipping school one or more days during the past 30 days. Comparison is available for 9th grade students, for whom skipping school has decreased from 21 percent in 2010.



Teachers are interested in you as a person

Feeling connected to educators promotes school achievement and emotional wellbeing. Student perceptions of teachers' interest in them as an individual are about the same between males and females within each grade. More 5th grade students agree or strongly agree with this statement than all of their high school counterparts.

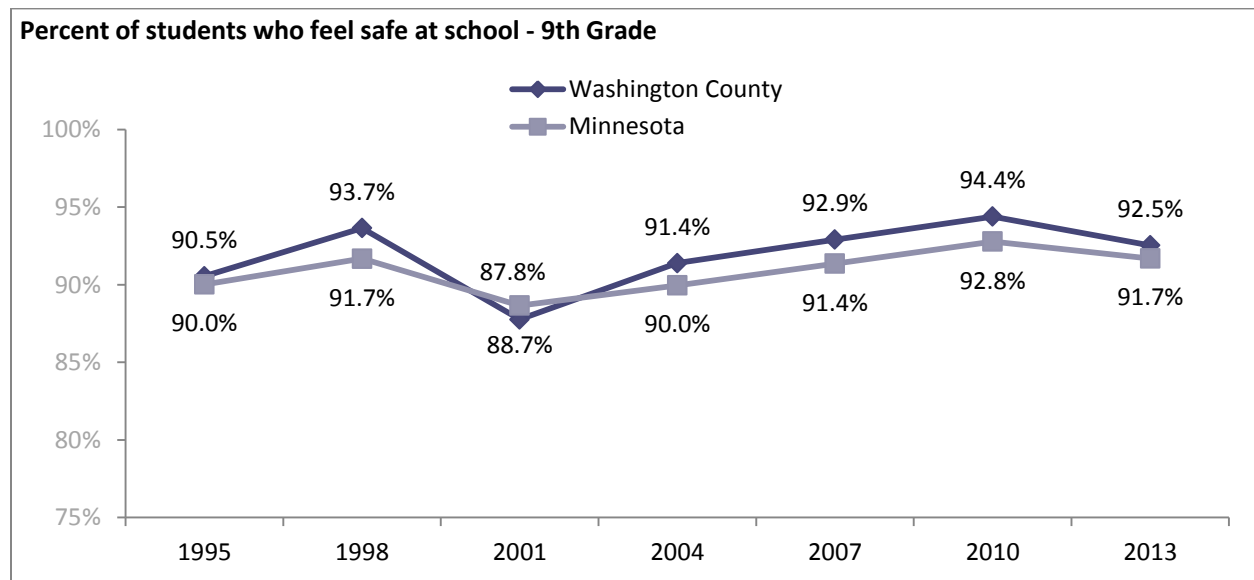
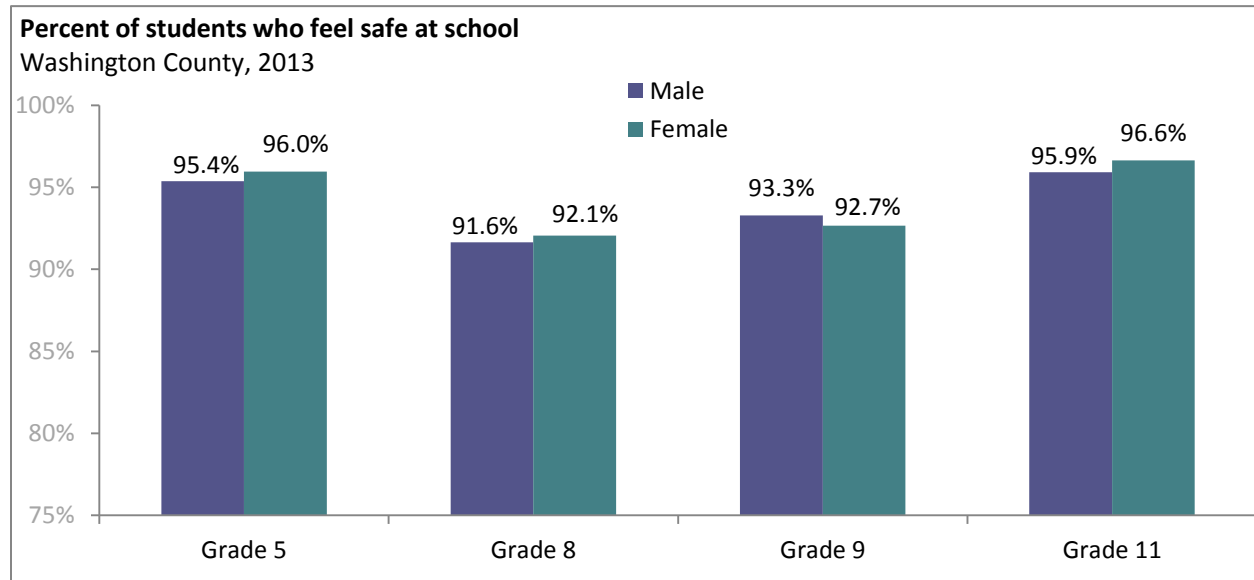


SCHOOL SAFETY AND VIOLENT BEHAVIOR

Students' sense of safety at school influences their ability to learn, to adopt healthy social norms, and their opportunity to be healthy as they grow into adults.

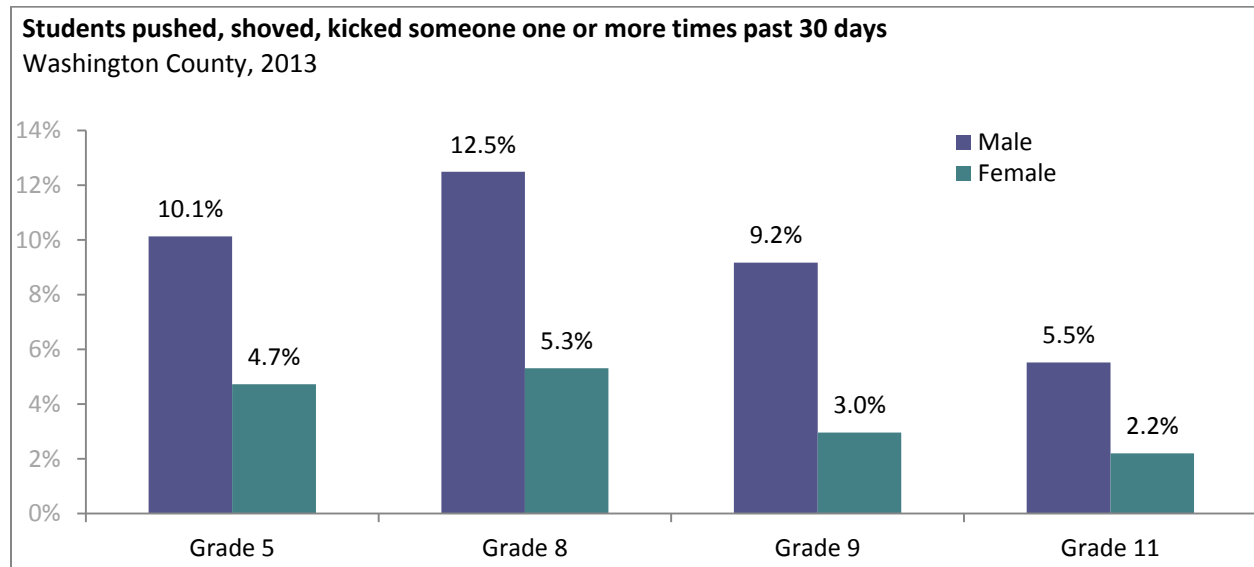
Feel Safe at School

Since 2004, more than 90 percent of Washington County students in all surveyed grades have reported feeling safe at school. The portion of 9th grade students who report feeling safe at school has remained fairly steady over the past 10 years. A slightly higher percentage of Washington County students report feeling safe at school compared to the statewide average in their respective grades. Overall, more 5th and 11th graders feel safe at school than their 8th and 9th grade counterparts.



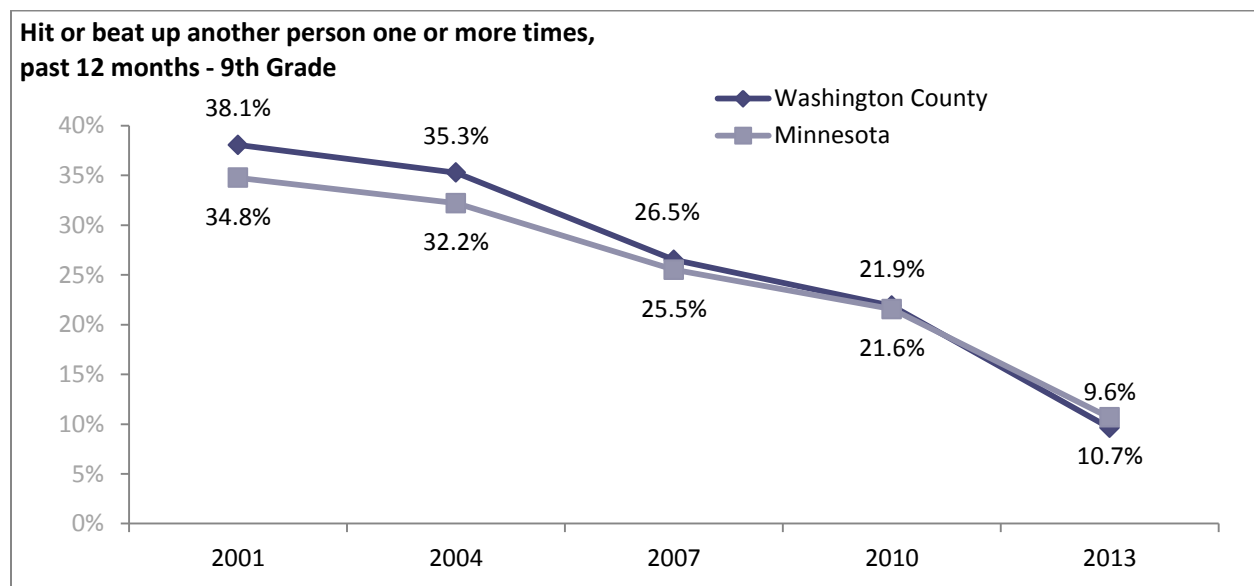
Bullied another student

The highest portion of students who report they pushed, shoved, or kicked someone at school one or more times during the past 30 days is among 8th graders (8.9%), followed by 5th graders (7.6%), 9th graders (6.1%), and 11th graders (3.9%). Reports of bullying in physically violent ways are higher among males, whereas emotional or verbal bullying such as “electronic bullying” tends to be more common among females.



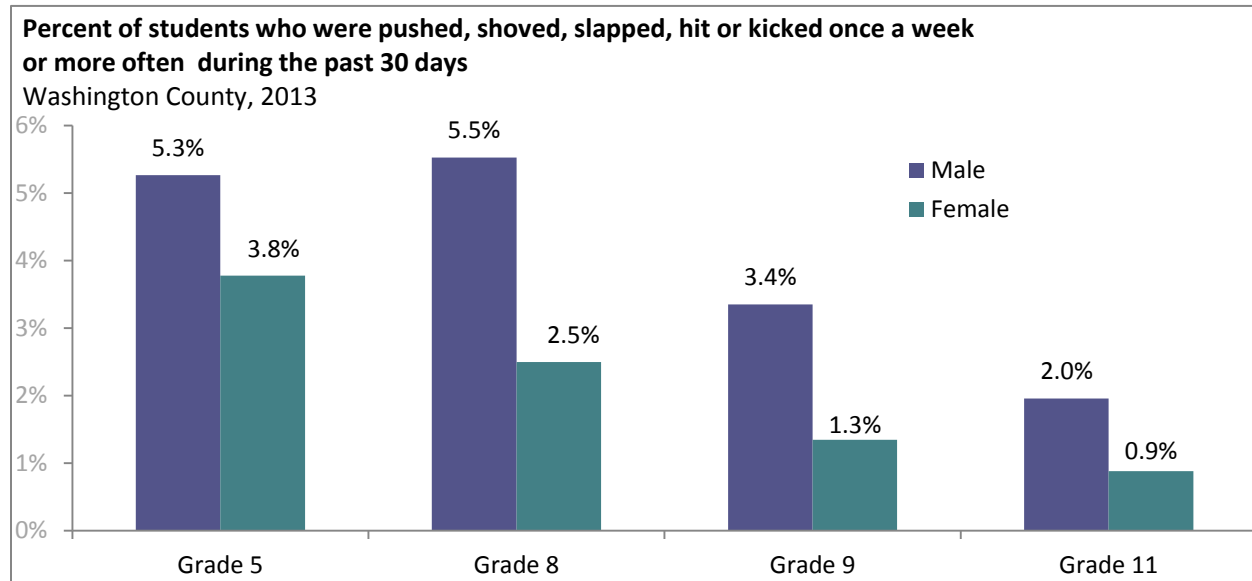
Hit or beat up another person

The percentage of students reporting that they hit or beat up another person in the past year (not limited to school grounds) has dropped by 50 percent since 2010. The trend of past 12-month violent behavior has dropped from 35.3% to 9.6% among ninth graders in just 10 years.



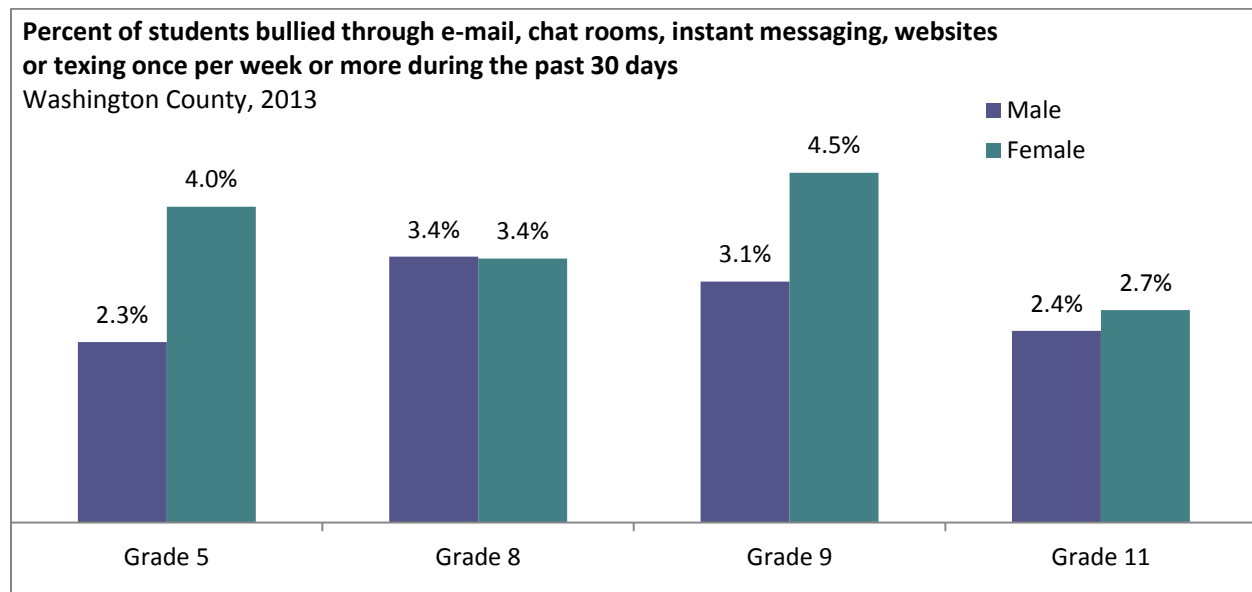
Bullied or harassed by others

Fifth grade students report the highest occurrence of experiencing violent behavior from other students, and the percentages decrease with age. Beginning in 2013, these questions were asked with more specific wording than previous versions, and the time period changed from past 12 months to past 30 days, so no trends are available.



Electronically bullied by others

Fewer than 5 percent of all students had been electronically bullied, including being bullied through e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, websites, or texting, once or more per week during the 30 days before the survey. Rates were highest among 5th and 9th grade girls, 4.0% and 4.5%, respectively.

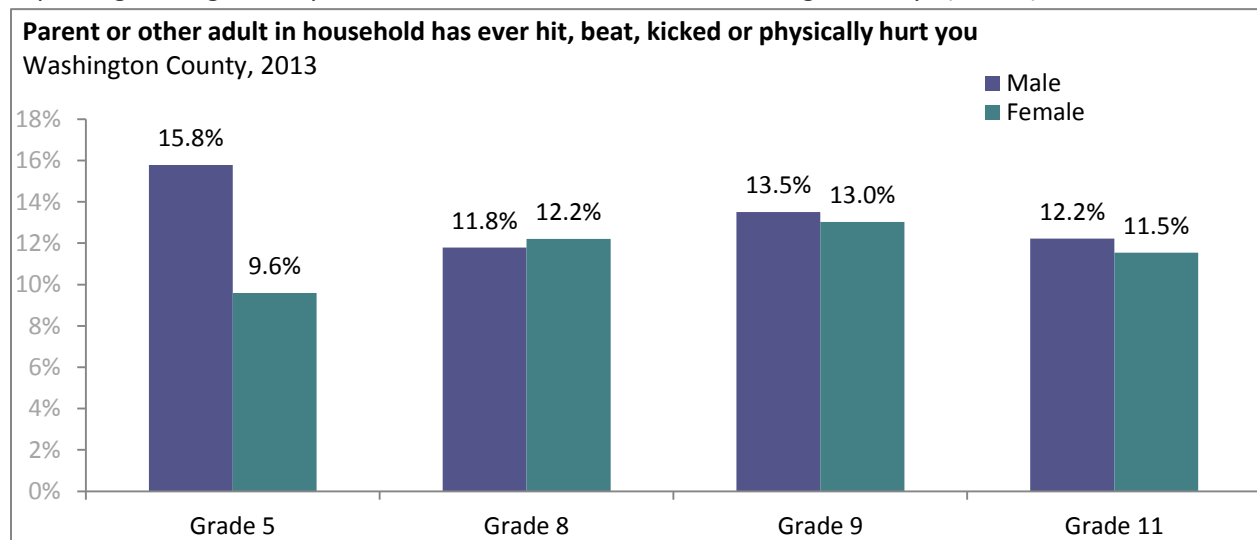


FAMILY, SEXUAL, AND DATING VIOLENCE

Traumatic experiences in childhood – such as being a witness or victim of violence – increase the likelihood of several health risk factors in adulthood, which contribute to the leading causes of death. For example, youth who have experienced trauma in childhood have a higher rate of tobacco use, chemical dependency, and incarceration as adults than their peers who have not faced such difficulties.

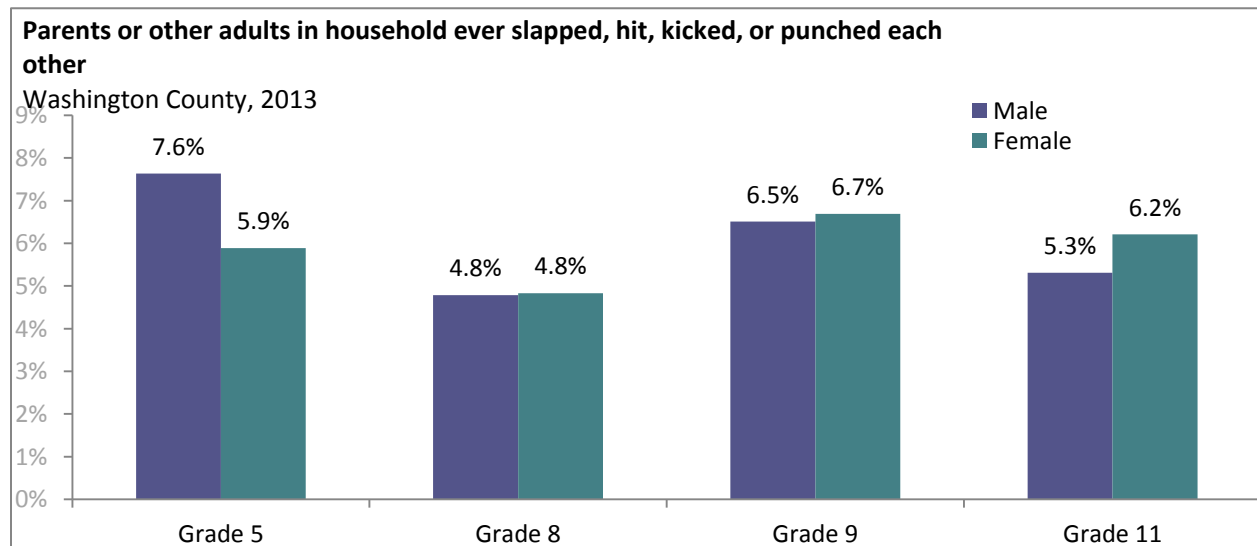
Victim of physical violence in family

Between 12 and 13 percent of students in Washington County report being hit, beaten, kicked, or physically hurt by an adult in their household one or more times in their lifetime. The group reporting the highest experience of this kind of violence are 5th grade boys (15.8%).



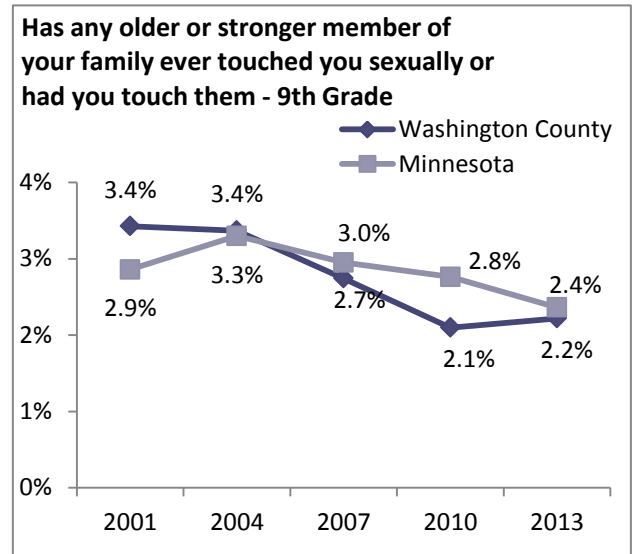
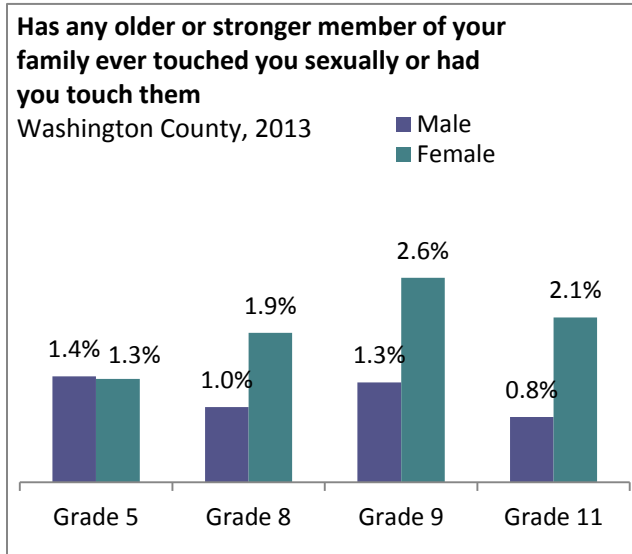
Witness of physical violence in family

The percentage of students reporting they have ever witnessed family violence is highest among 5th graders (6.8%) and lowest among 8th graders (4.8%).

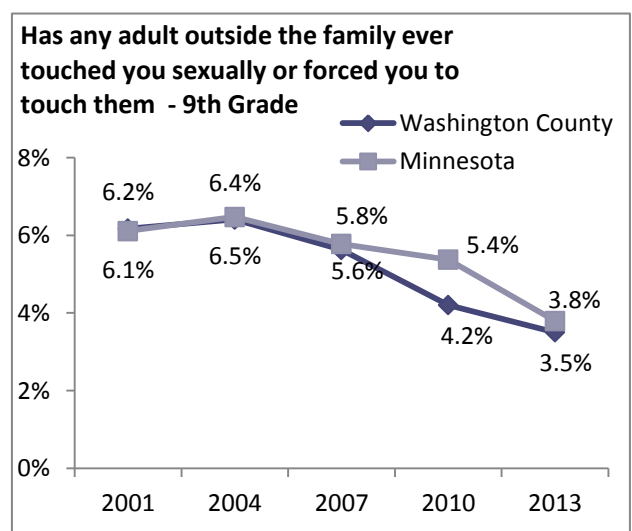
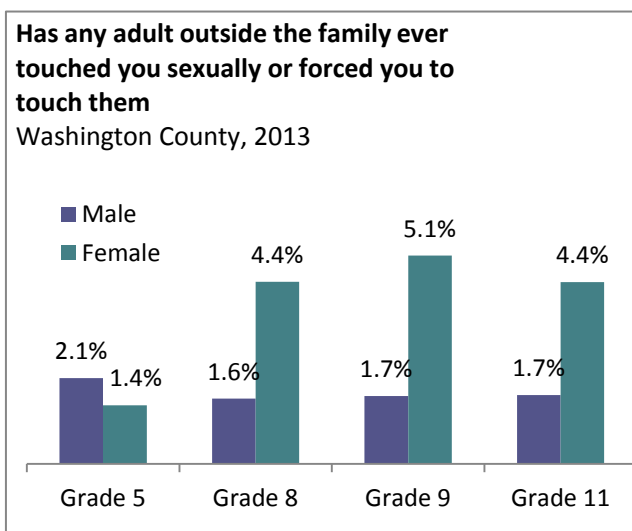


Victim of sexual violence

In 2013, between 30 and 45 students in each grade surveyed reported they had been sexually victimized by a family member, twice as common for girls as boys for all grades except 5th. Trend data for ninth graders shows a slightly declining trend in this type of violence during the past 10 years.



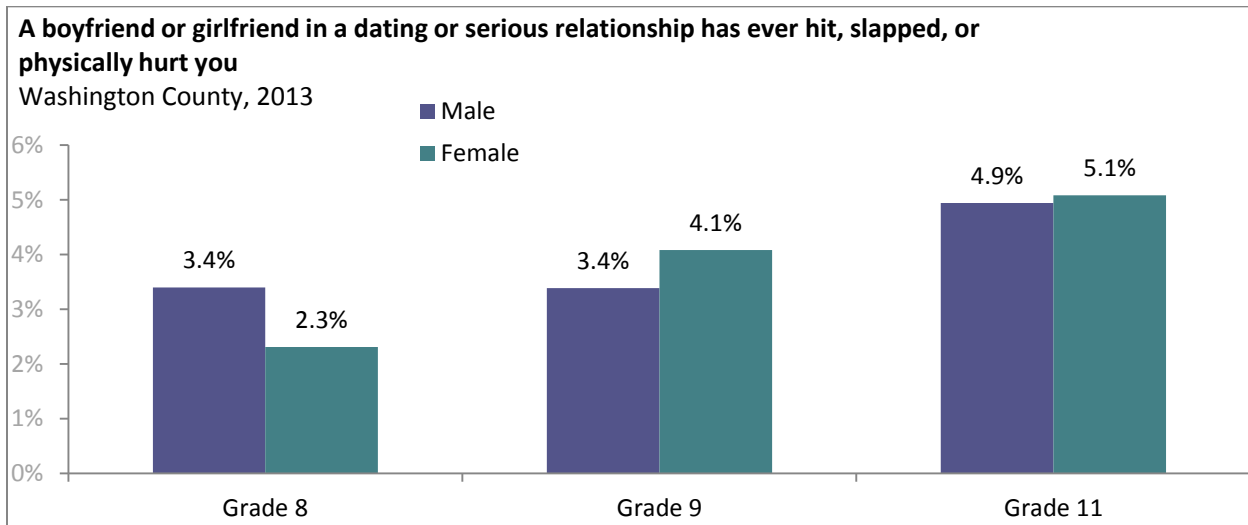
Students who report experiencing sexual violence from someone outside the family are low in number but more numerous than those experiencing in-family sexual violence. Between 35 and 75 Washington County students are in this category. Fifth-grade boys report more of this type of violence than their female peers. For all other grades twice as many girls as boys report experiencing sexual violence from someone outside the family. Reports of this type of violence have decreased over time among 9th graders, which is consistent with the state trend.



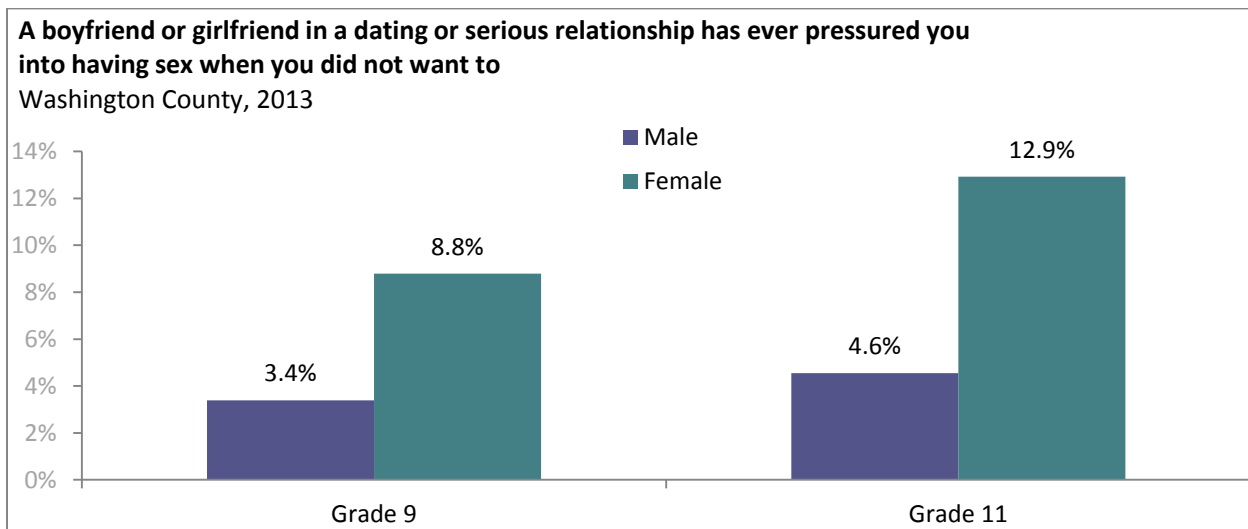
Dating and intimate partner violence

Students in 8th, 9th, and 11th grades were asked about their dating relationships. Questions about sex were asked of high school students only (9th and 11th grades).

Between 2.8 and 5.0 percent of students in each grade reported ever experiencing physical violence from a boyfriend or girlfriend. Over 100 Washington County 11th graders (5.0%) reported experiencing this type of violence.



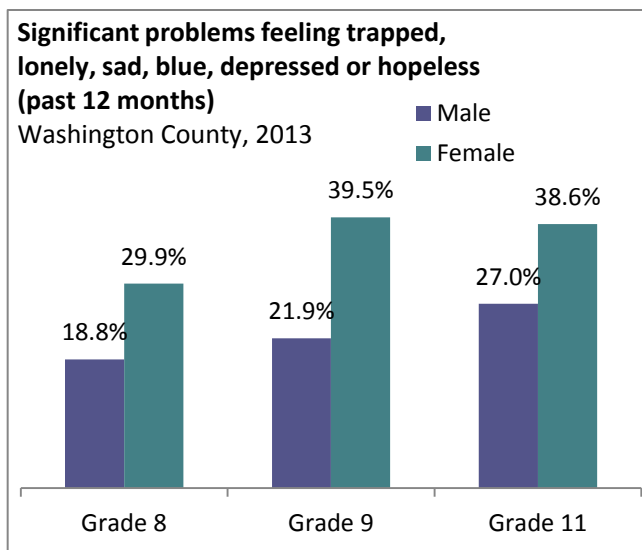
About 6.1 percent of 9th graders and 8.8 percent of 11th graders reported ever being pressured into having sex when they did not want to. Females outnumber males in this type of experience about 3 to 1, with 12.9 percent of 11th grade girls reporting being pressured into sex (140 students).



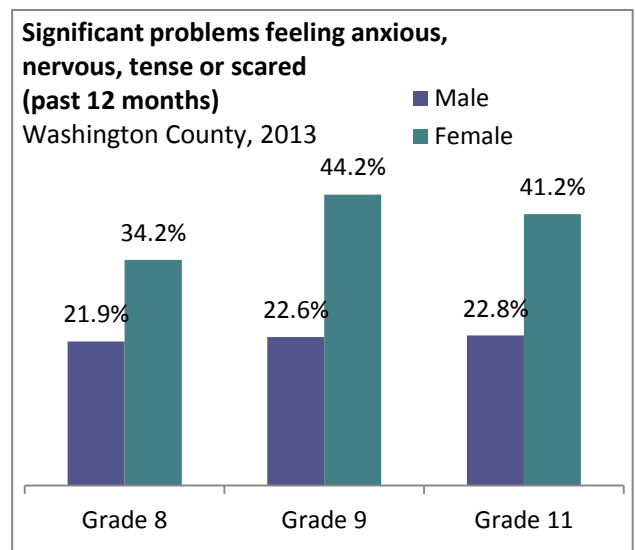
MENTAL HEALTH

Academic success requires students to be engaged in learning and invested in their futures. Mental and emotional conditions described below increase the likelihood that youth adopt health-risk behaviors, as well as make them more likely to face chronic illness later in life. The introduction to this section reads: *This question asks about SIGNIFICANT problems. Problems are considered significant when you have them for two or more weeks, when they keep coming back, keep you from meeting your responsibilities, or make you feel like you can't go on.* More 9th graders report experiencing depression, anxiety, and post-trauma than their 8th and 11th grade counterparts. Females experience mental health concerns at a **significantly** higher rate than their male peers.

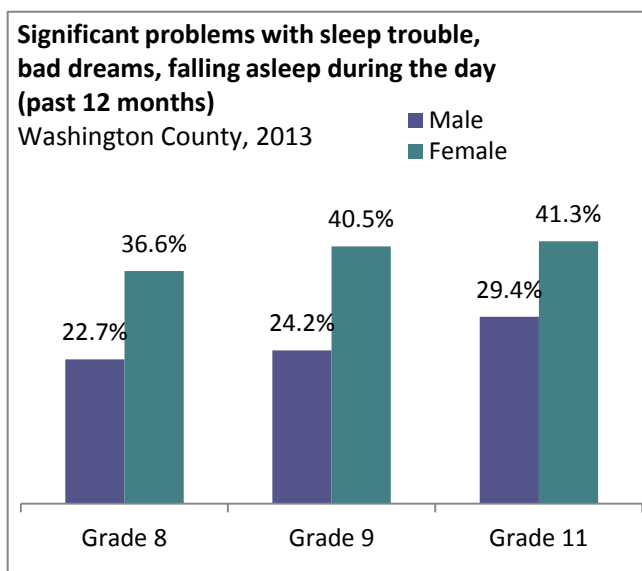
Depression



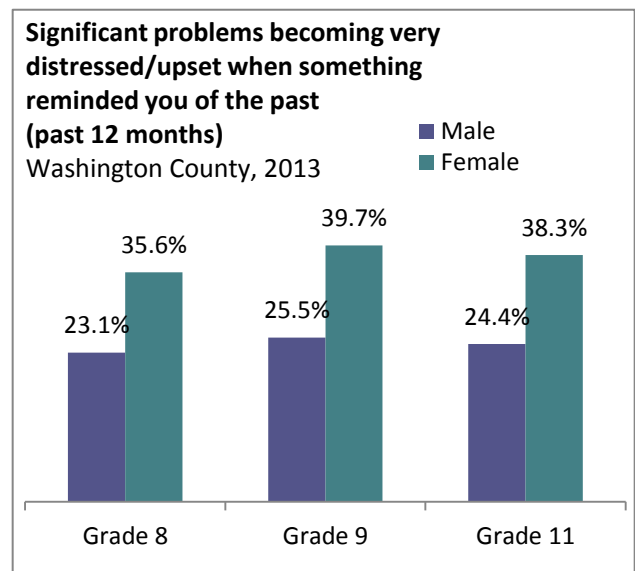
Anxiety



Sleep problems

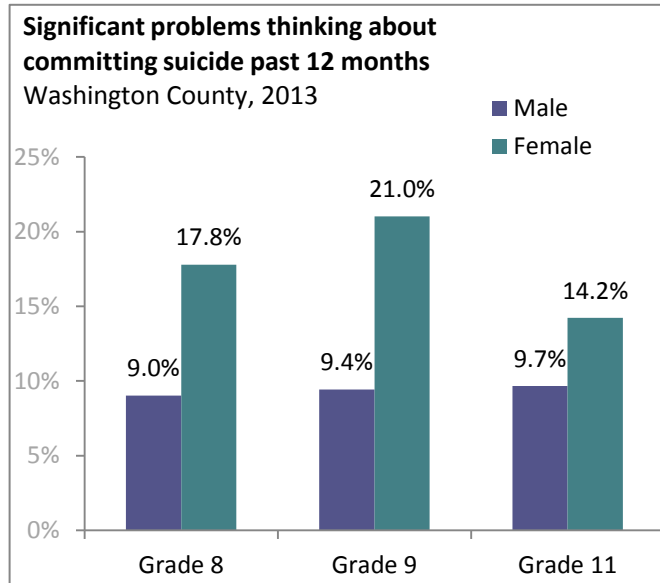


Trauma

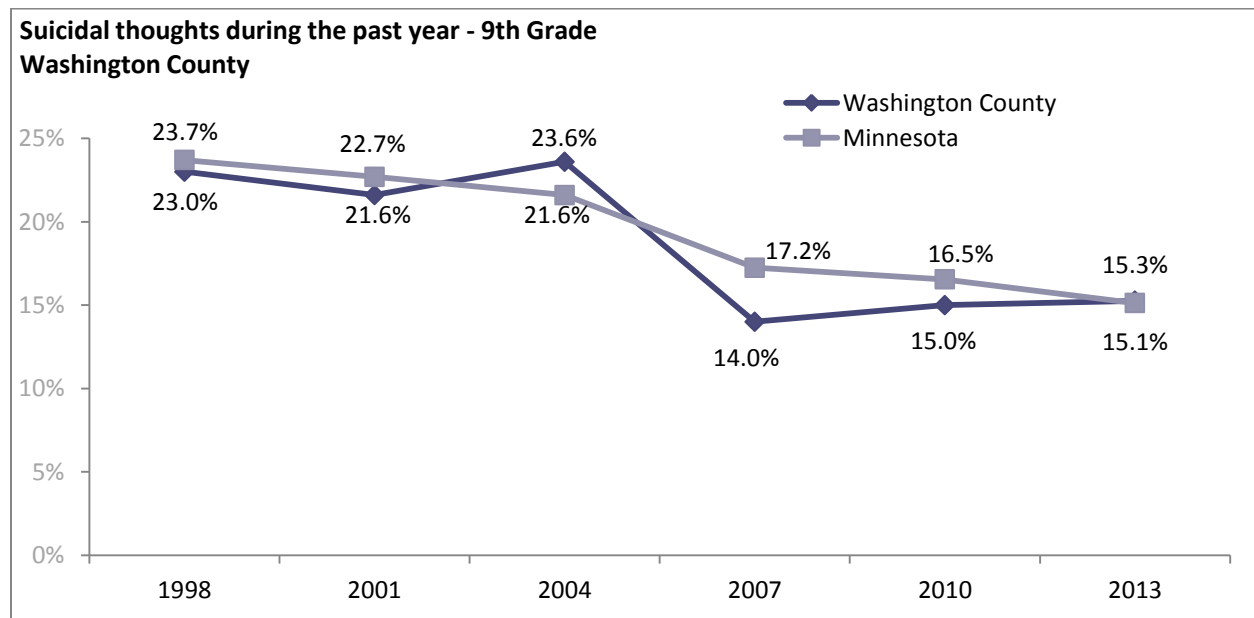


Suicidal thoughts

The percentage of youth reporting suicidal thoughts during the past year ranged from 12.0% among 11th graders to 15.3% among 9th graders. About one in every 10 males had significant problems contemplating suicide. Rates are higher for females: 8th, 9th, and 11th grade girls report significant problems with suicidal thoughts at 17.8%, 21.0%, and 14.2%, respectively.

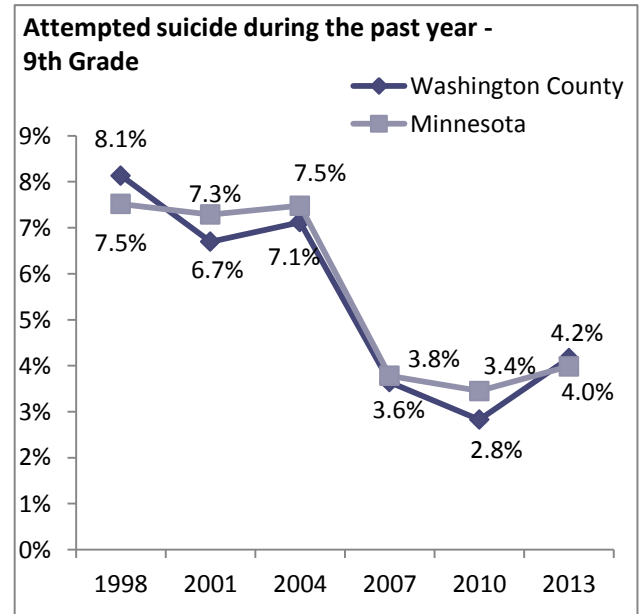
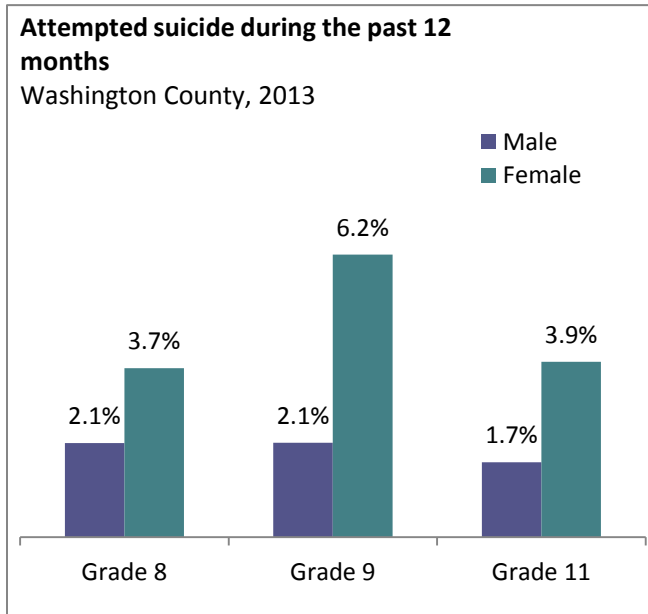


Over time, there has been a decline in past-year suicidal thoughts among Washington County ninth graders, 15.3% in 2013, down from 23.6% ten years ago.



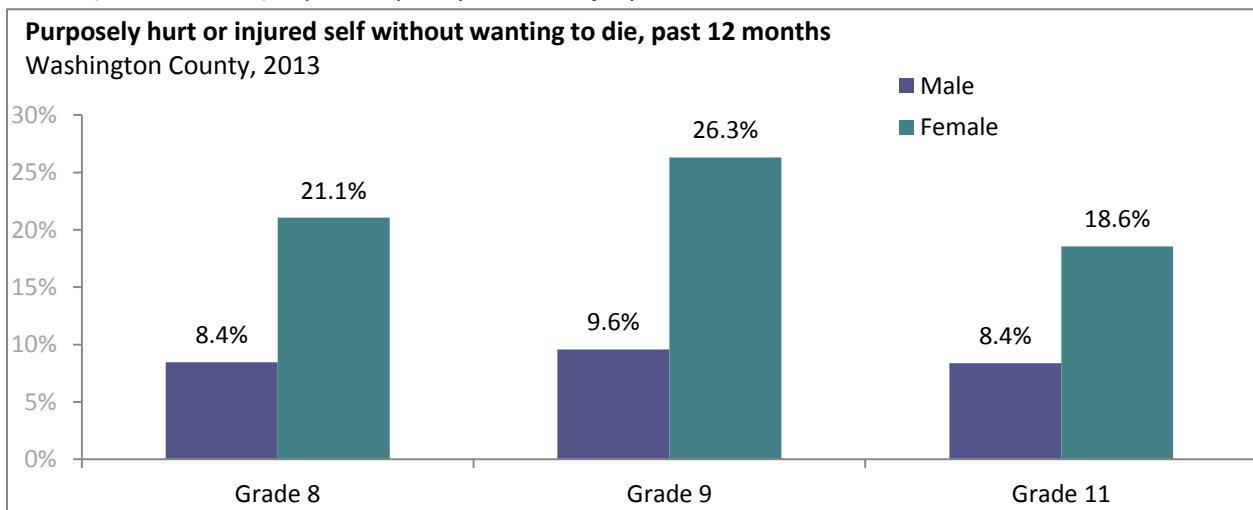
Suicidal behavior

Across 8th, 9th, and 11th grades, 221 Washington County students reported they had attempted suicide at least once during the previous 12 months. Across all grades, about 2 percent of males report a suicide attempt during the past year, compared to nearly 4 percent of 8th and 11th grade females, and 6.2 percent of 9th grade females. Past year suicide attempts show a downward trend: 4.2% in 2013 compared to 7.1% 10 years ago.



Non-suicidal self-harm

Nearly 10 percent of males in grades 8, 9, and 11 report harming or injuring themselves (e.g. cutting, burning, or bruising) during the past year without wanting to die. More than twice as many females as males report self-harming behavior in each grade surveyed, highest for 9th grade girls: 26.3% (292 students) reported past year self-injury.

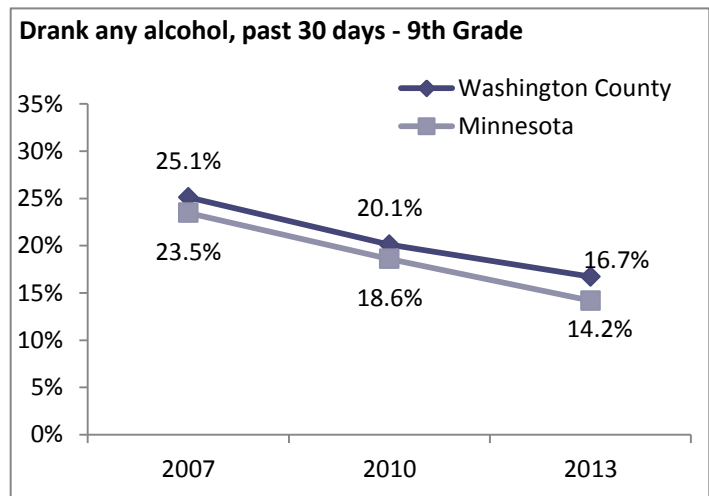
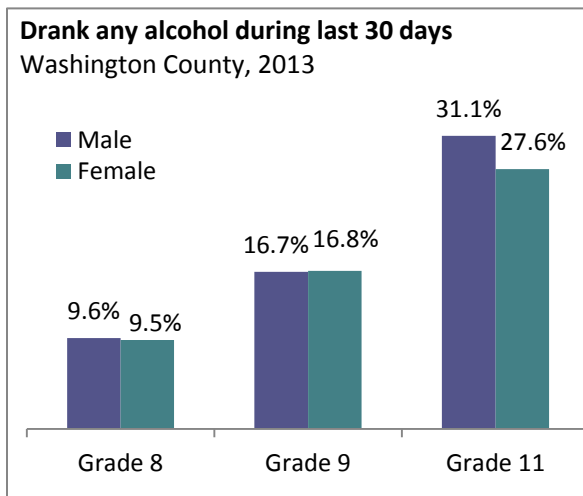


ALCOHOL, TOBACCO & OTHER DRUGS

Substance use among 8th, 9th, and 11th includes alcohol use – occasional and binge drinking – as well as marijuana, misuse of prescription medications, and other illegal substances. Substance use can affect brain development and increase risk for chronic disease as an adult. It also increases the risk of long-term addiction, serious mental illness, and incarceration.

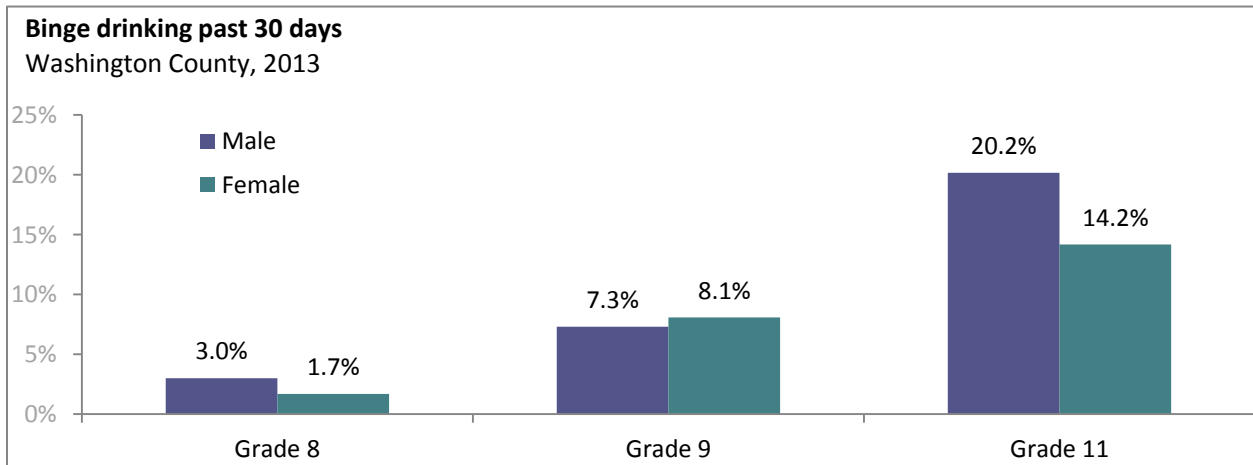
Alcohol use past 30 days

The portion of Washington County youth who consumed alcohol during the past 30 days is decreasing over time. In 2013, 16.7% of 9th graders reported consuming alcohol at least once during past 30 days, down from 20.1% in 2010 but still higher than the 2013 state average of 14.2% for 9th graders. Nearly one third of all 11th graders report drinking at least once during the past 30 days.



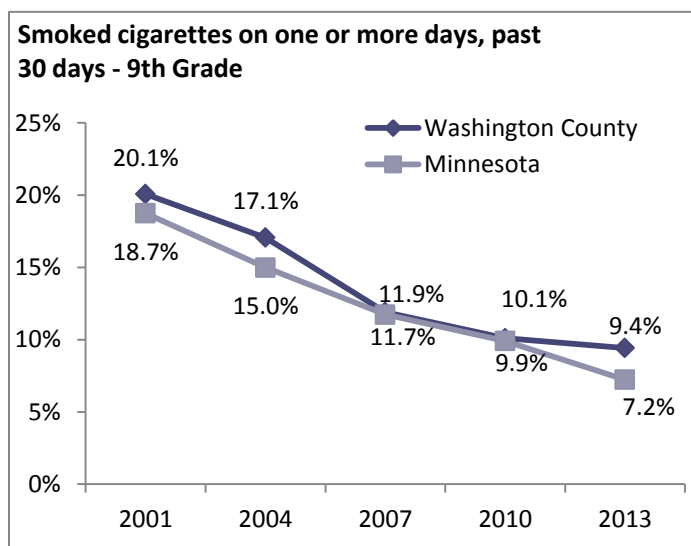
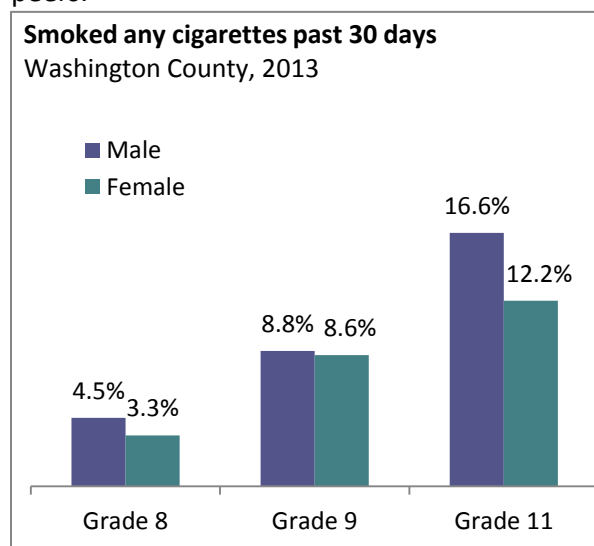
Binge drinking

Acute drinking, known as “binge” drinking, means 4 or more drinks in a row for females and 5 for males. It can cause immediate and lasting health impacts, including hospitalization and death in extreme cases. In 2013, nearly 10 percent of 9th graders and nearly 20 percent of 11th graders said they binge drank during the previous 30 days. Changes to the question make trends unavailable for this measure.



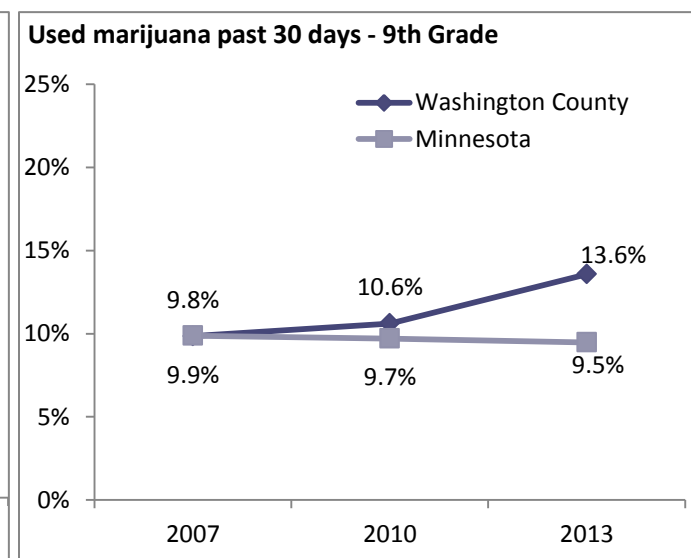
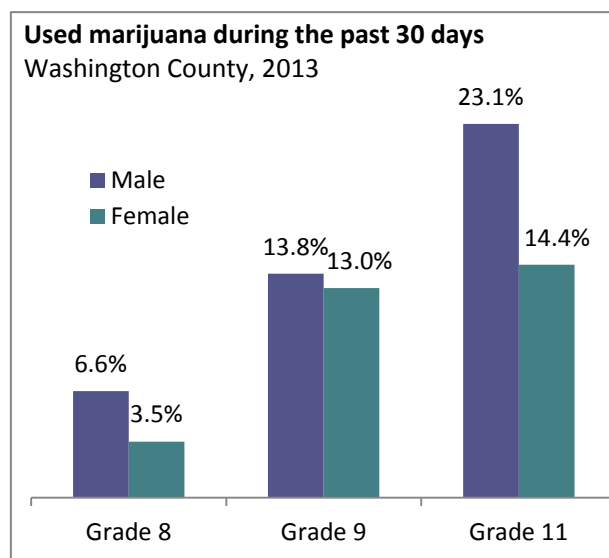
Cigarette use past 30 days

Cigarette smoking is at an all-time low among Washington County youth, a trend consistent with state and national figures, though Washington County youth smoke at a higher rate than the state average. Significant numbers of youth still report smoking at least one cigarette during the past 30 days: on average 3.9%, 8.7%, and 14.4% for 8th, 9th, and 11th graders, respectively. Nearly 17 percent of 11th grade males report smoking during the past 30 days, compared to 12.2% of their female peers.

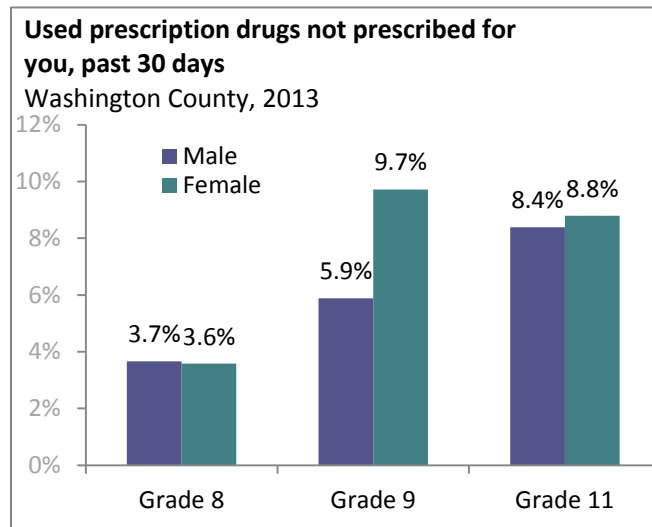


Marijuana use past 30 days

The portion of youth reporting past 30-day marijuana use has increased over a short period: 13.6% of 9th graders, up from 10.6% in 2010. This upward trend differs from the state's steady trend of fewer than 10 percent over the same period. Nearly one quarter of 11th grade boys report having used marijuana in the last 30 days.



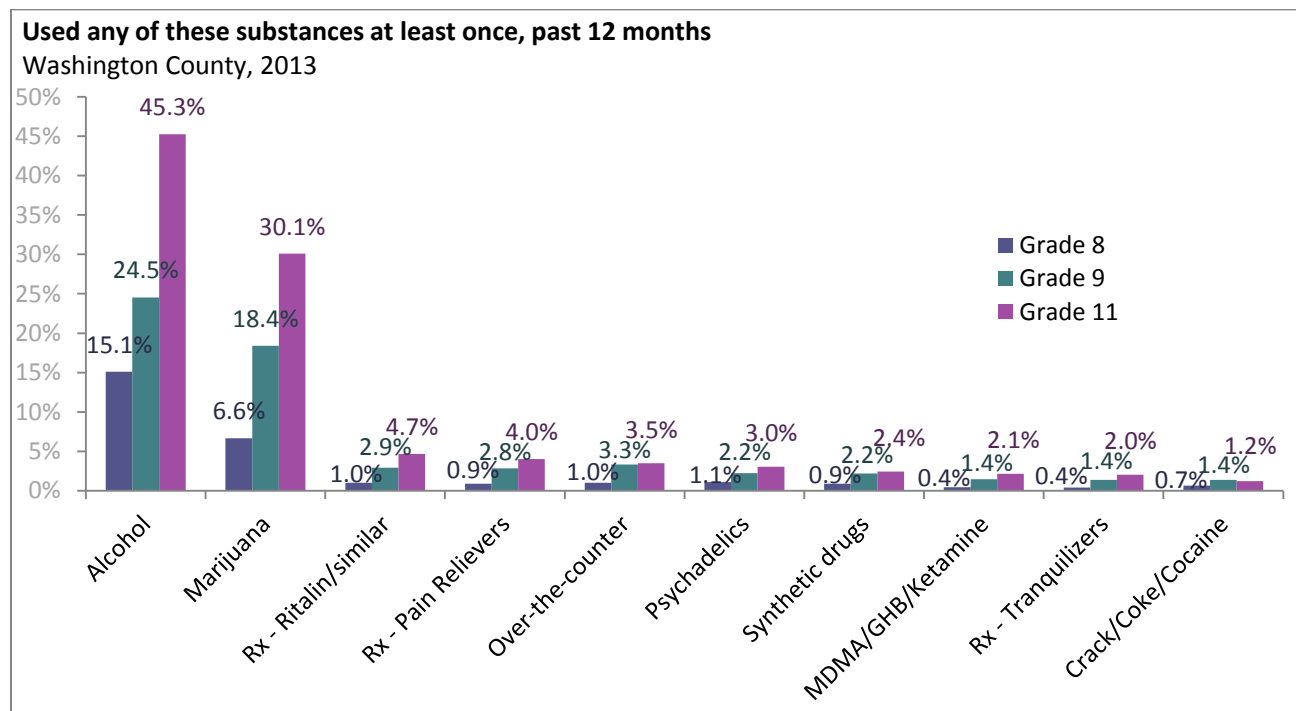
Prescription medication misuse past 30 days



In 2013, about 8 percent of 9th graders and nearly 10 percent of 11th graders said they had taken prescription drugs not prescribed for them during the previous 30 days. This practice is most common among 9th grade girls, 9.7% in 2013, (107 students).

Substance use past 12 months

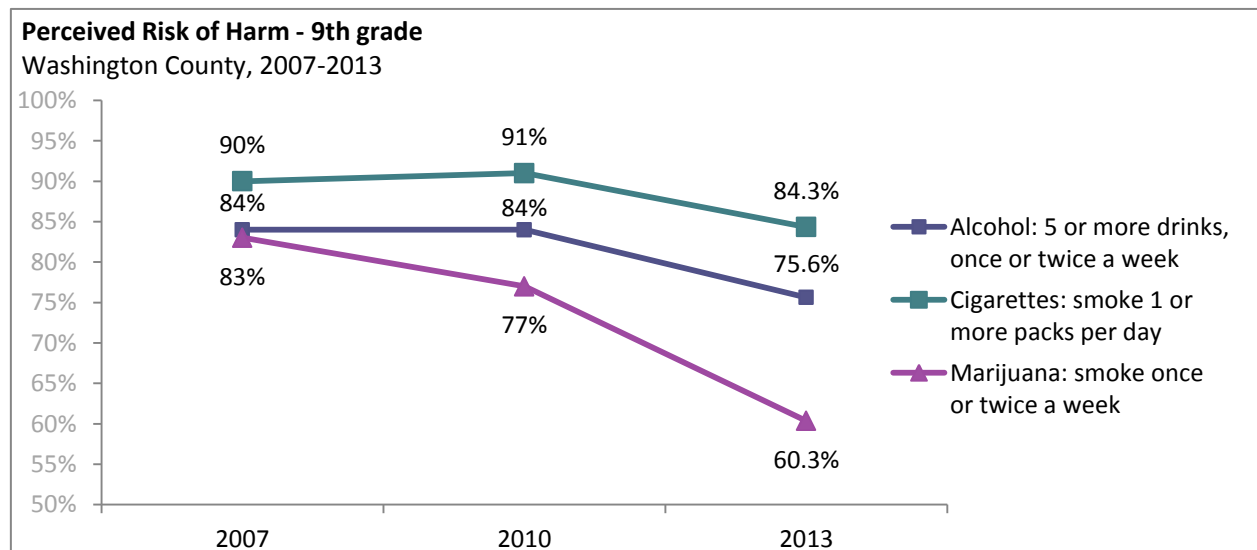
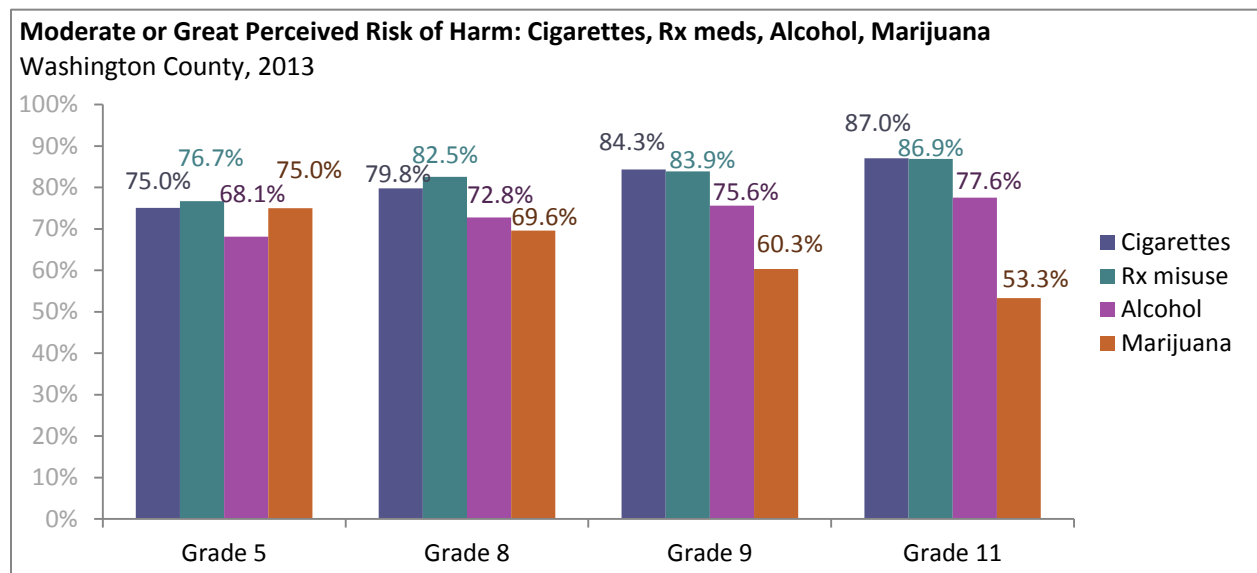
Alcohol and marijuana are the most common substances used by Washington County youth, followed by misuse of prescription medication (particularly drugs to address attention deficit hyperactivity disorders (ADHD) such as Ritalin and narcotic pain relievers such as Oxycodone), which is the case across Minnesota as well. Nearly half of all 11th graders (45.3%) and one quarter of 9th graders (24.5%) reported consuming alcohol at least once during the past 12 months. Almost one third of 11th graders (30.1%) and one fifth of 9th graders (18.4%) have used marijuana during the past year.



Perceived risk of harm

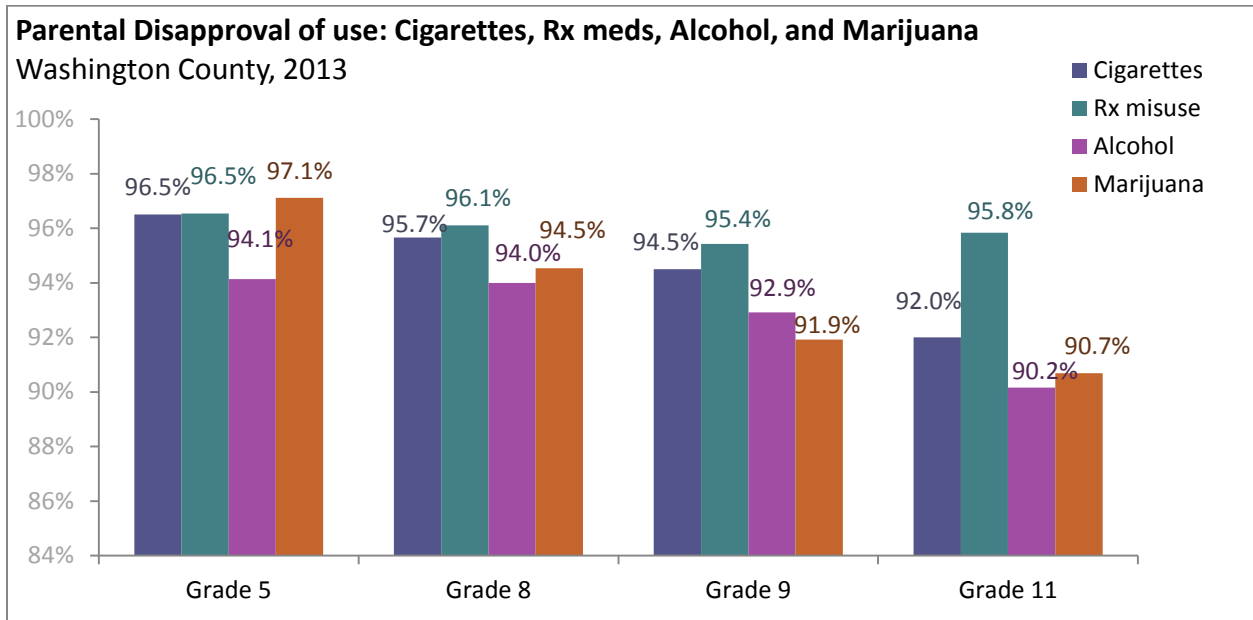
Students answered a series of questions regarding their opinion of how much a person risks harming oneself with frequent use of cigarettes, prescription medications, alcohol, and marijuana. The chart indicates which portion of students believes the risk to be moderate or great for each substance. The portion of 5th graders who perceive risk of harm is generally equal for cigarettes, marijuana, and prescription drug misuse (about 75%), and slightly lower for alcohol (68%). By 9th grade, the highest portion of youth perceive cigarettes to be harmful, followed by prescription medication, alcohol and marijuana. Only about half of 11th graders perceive moderate to great risk of regular marijuana use.

Over time, a decreasing portion of students perceive use of alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana to be harmful. For example, 60.3% of 9th graders perceived moderate or great risk of harm from using marijuana in 2013, compared to 77% of 9th graders in 2010.



Parental disapproval

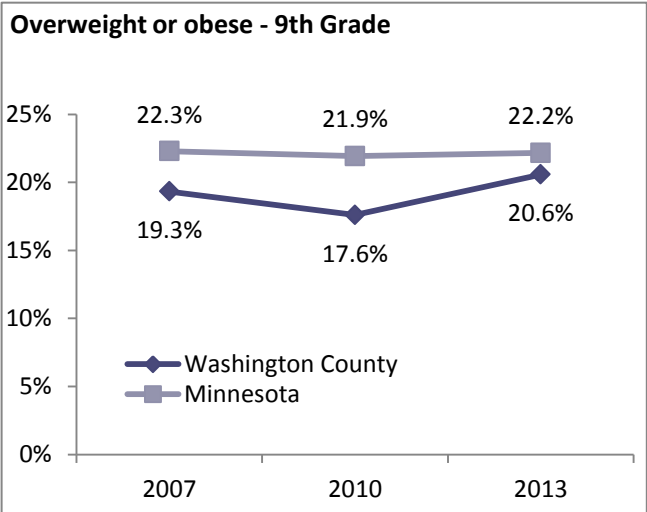
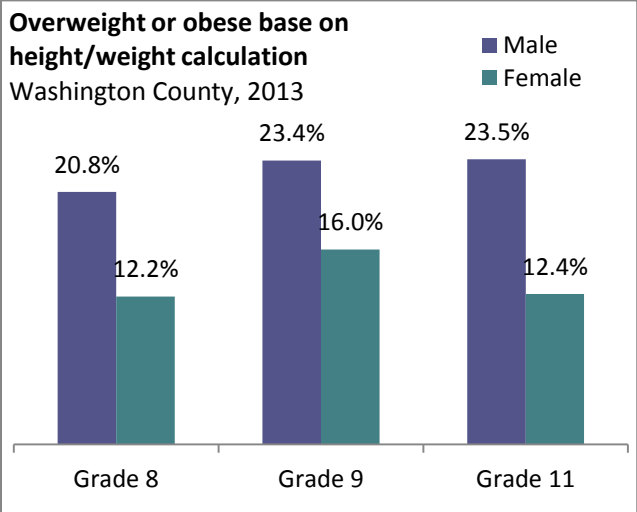
More than 90 percent of students in all grades said their parents would say it is wrong or very wrong for them to use cigarettes, prescription medication not prescribed to them, alcohol, and marijuana. Perceived parental disapproval of marijuana was highest among 5th graders (97.1%) and lowest among 11th graders (90.7%). More than 95 percent of students in all grades believe parents feel it's wrong or very wrong to misuse prescription medication, and more than 90 percent of all students report their parents disapprove of using alcohol and cigarettes.



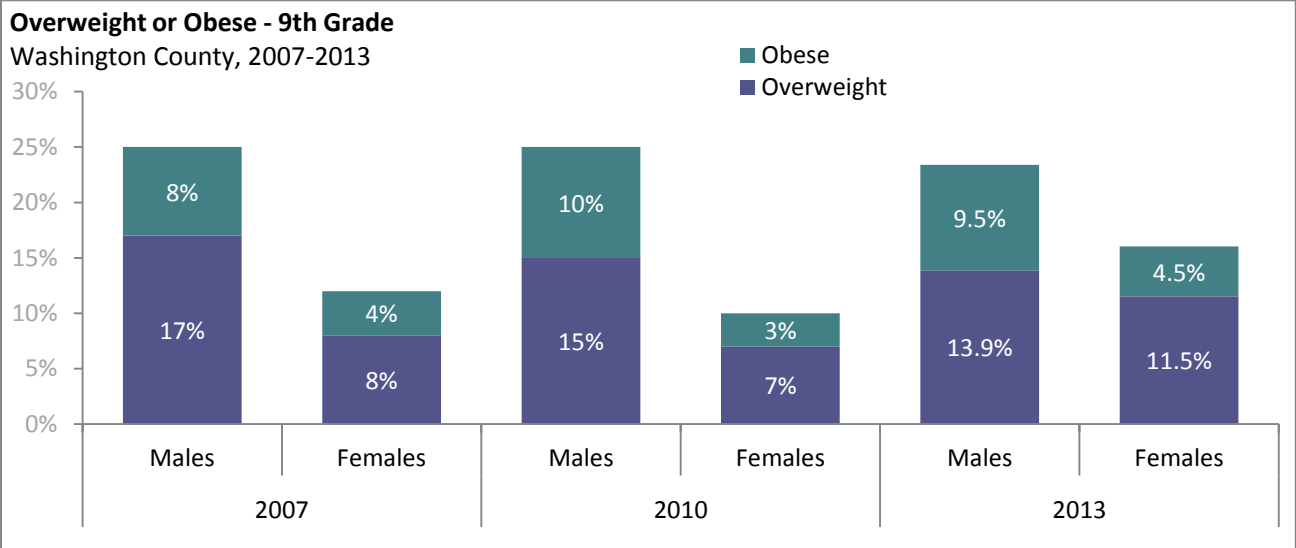
OBESITY, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, AND NUTRITION

Overweight and obesity

Weight status among youth is the calculated body mass index (BMI) by self-reported height and weight. Children whose BMI is below the 85th percentile of their peers are considered healthy weight. More Washington County youth have reported healthy BMI than the state average since 2007 when this question was first asked, though 2013 showed an increase of unhealthy weight in Washington County compared to a steady trend for the state average. Between 20 and 25 percent of boys in grades 8, 9 and 11 were overweight or obese in 2013. Between 12 and 16 percent of their female peers were overweight or obese. The total portion of 9th grade males who are overweight or obese has decreased since 2010, while the portion of females who are overweight or obese increased during the same period.

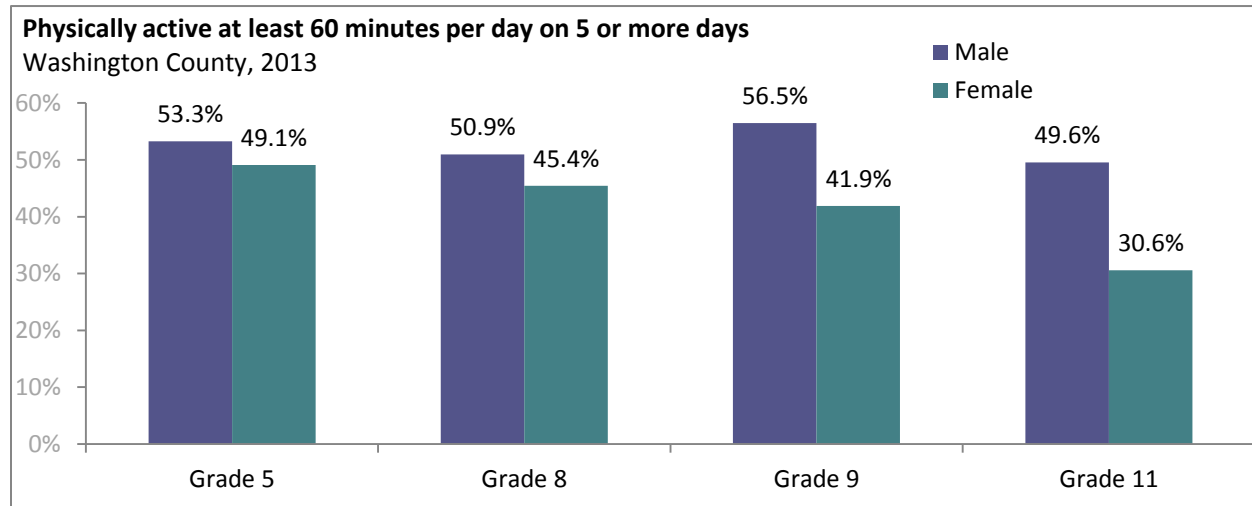


Weight status by gender over time



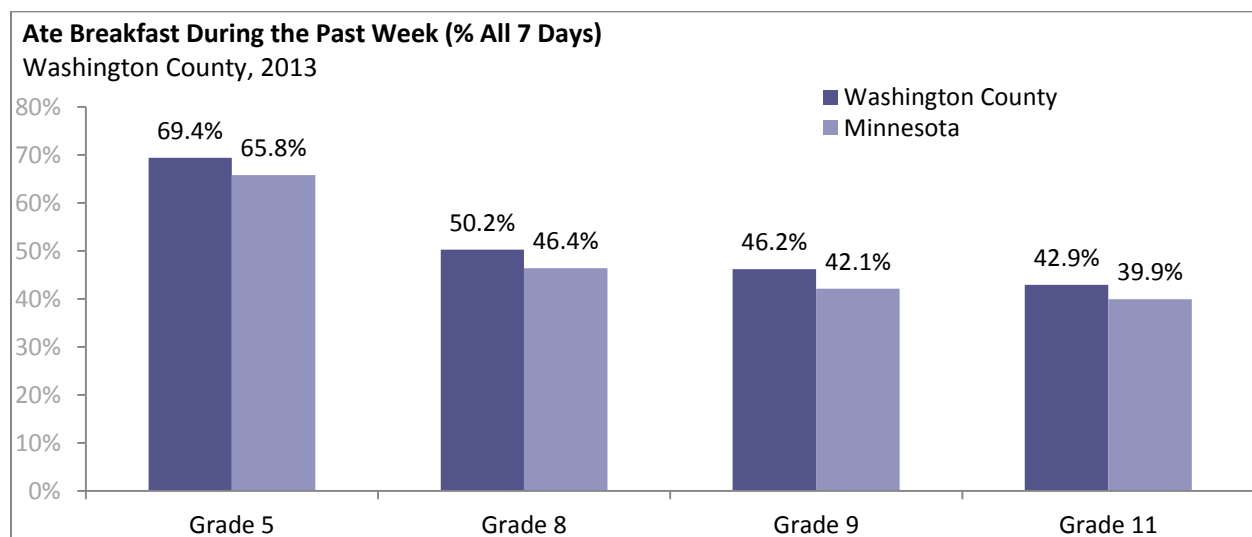
Physical activity

According to the CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity, children aged 6 to 17 should get at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day. About half of Washington County's youth achieve that standard 5 or more days per week. For 5th and 8th graders, small differences exist between amount of physical activity among boys and girls. For 9th and 11th graders, boys are more physically active than their female peers. By 11th grade, only 30.6% of girls report getting 60 minutes of physical activity at least 5 days per week.



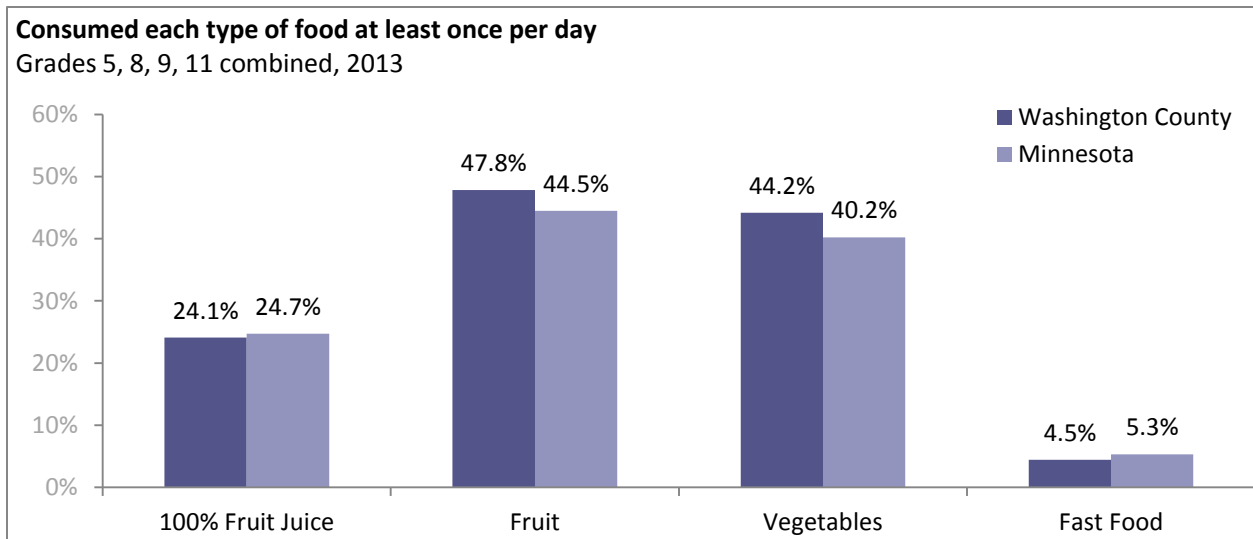
Healthy eating

Nearly 70 percent of Washington County 5th graders report that they ate breakfast all seven days of the previous week. That number decreases slightly for each next higher grade; 42.9% of 11th graders in Washington County ate breakfast every day the previous week. There is negligible difference between the portion of girls eating breakfast every day and their male peers. A higher percentage of Washington County students ate breakfast every day than the state average in every grade surveyed.



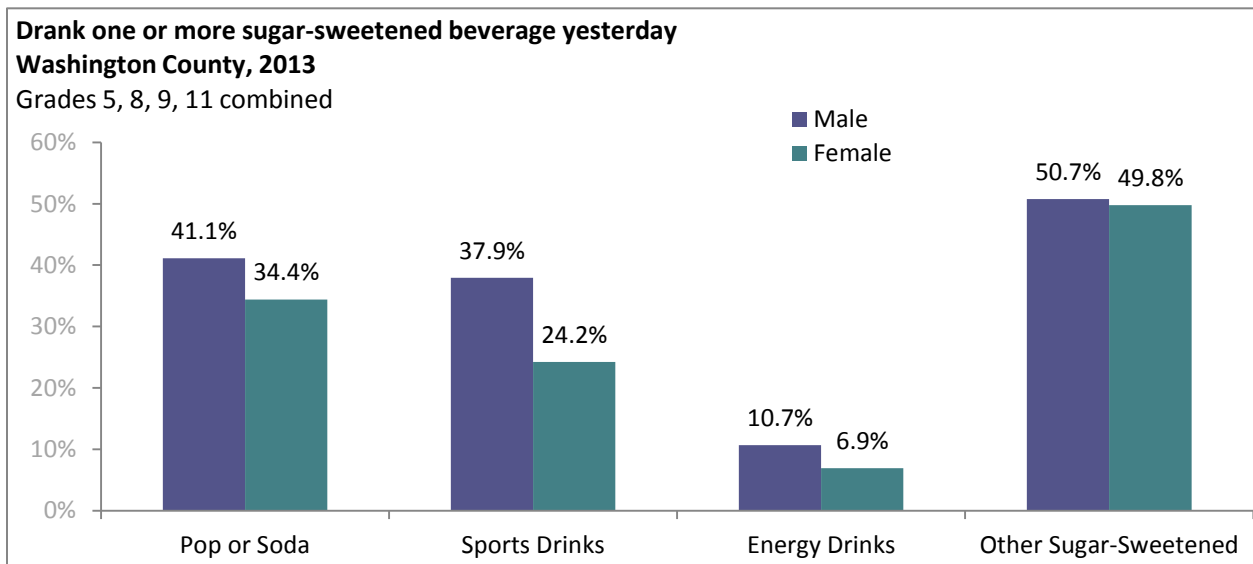
Daily nutrition

About one quarter of Washington County youth report consuming at least one serving of fruit juice daily. Nearly half say they eat one or more servings each of fruit and vegetables. Almost 5 percent of kids grades 5, 8, 9 and 11 report they ate fast food at least once daily during the past week (402 students). A higher portion of Washington County students reported eating fruits and vegetables daily compared to the state average. Eating behaviors for each type of food did not vary significantly across grades or between genders.



Sugar-sweetened beverages

The largest category of sugar-sweetened beverages consumed by students is “other sugar-sweetened drinks, such as sweet tea, lemonade, coffee drinks or juice drinks,” followed by pop/soda, sports drinks, and energy drinks. No significant difference exists across grades for beverage consumption, but between genders more males report consuming sugar-sweetened beverages overall than their female peers.

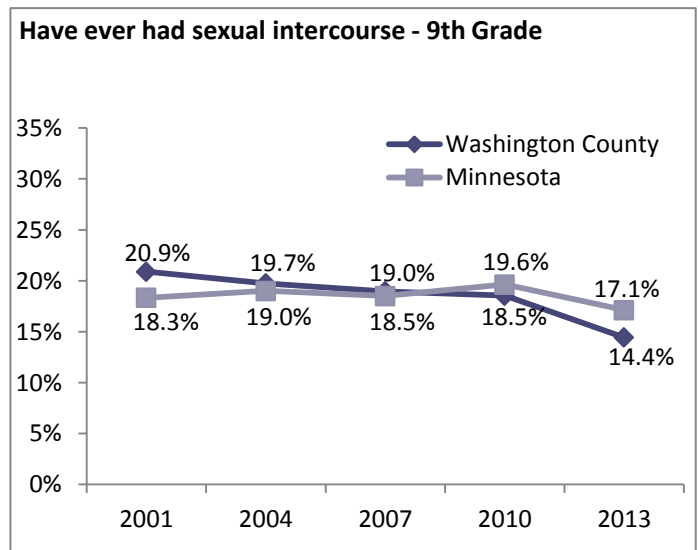
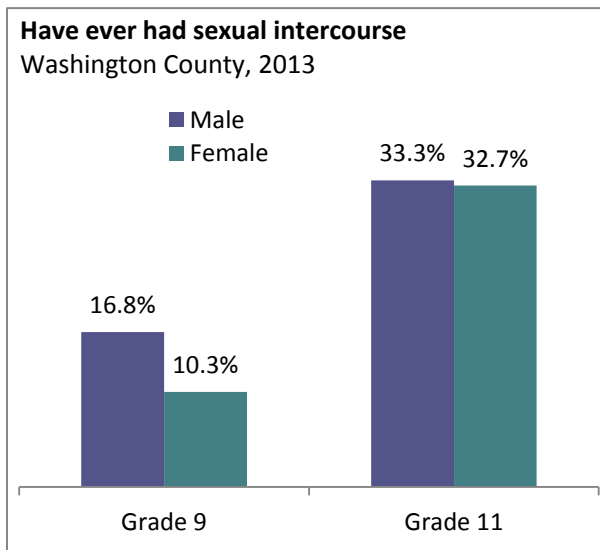


SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

Adolescent sexual behavior affects health outcomes such as teen pregnancy, birth, and sexually transmitted diseases. These outcomes, in turn, can influence individual opportunity to be healthy in adulthood.

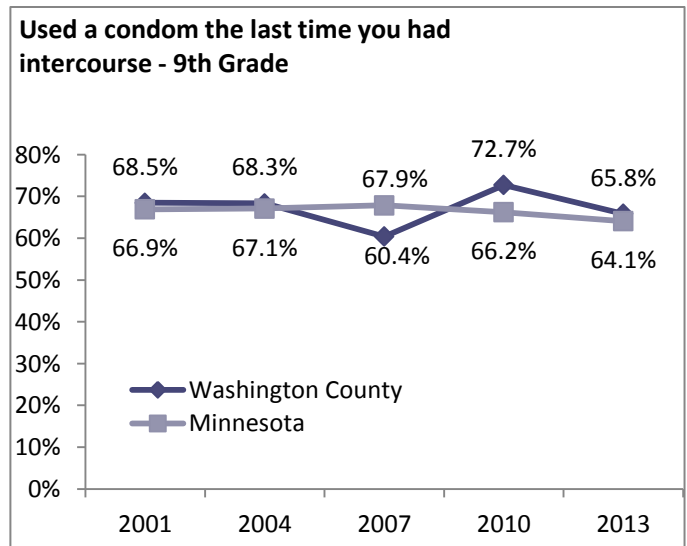
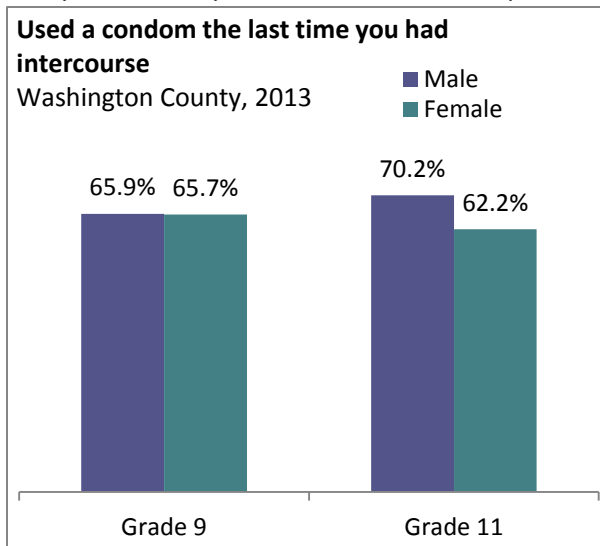
Sexual intercourse

The portion of Washington County youth (9th grade) who have ever had sex has decreased from 20.9% in 2001 to 14.4% in 2013. About one third of 11th graders reported that they had ever had sex in 2013.



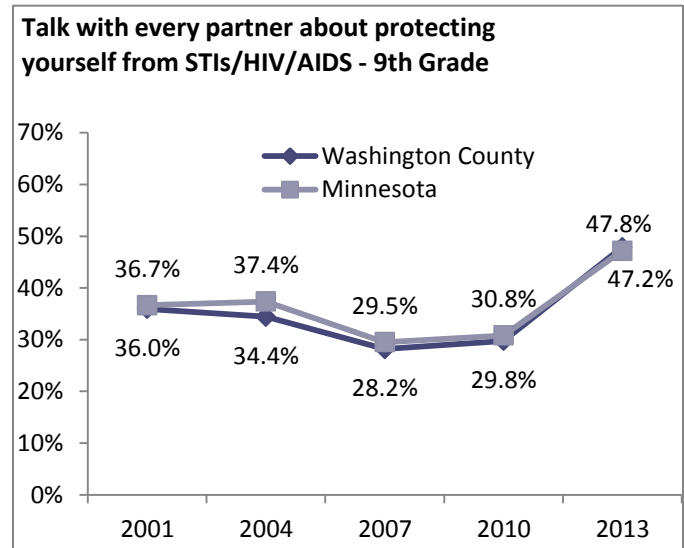
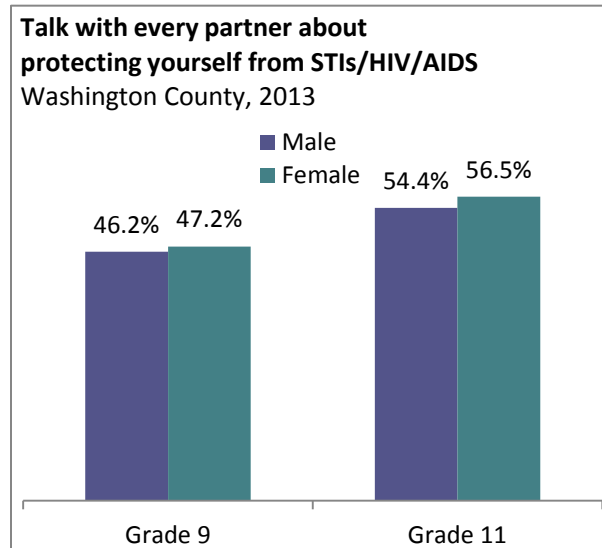
Condom use

Of the students who have had sexual intercourse, between 65 and 70 percent report using a condom the last time they had sex. For 9th graders, males and females report condom use at the same rate. About 70 percent of 11th grade males who have had sex report using a condom compared to 62 percent of their female peers.



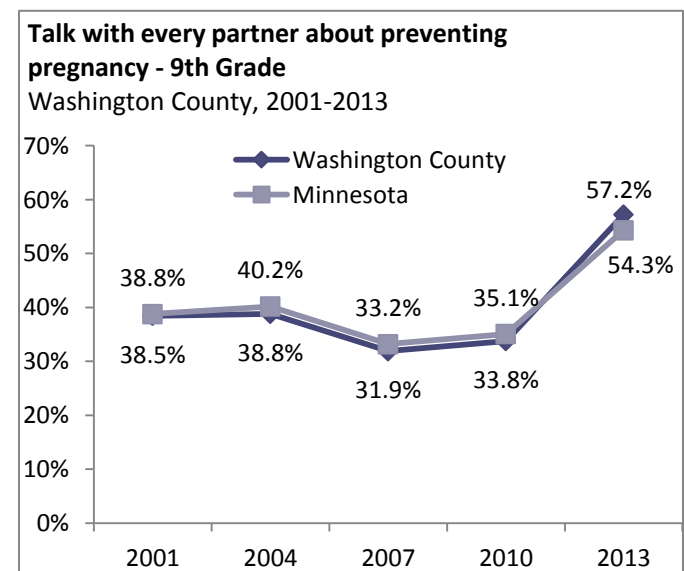
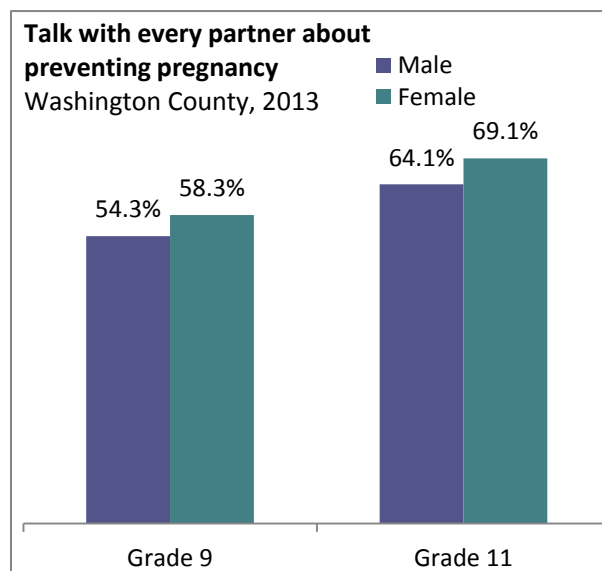
Talk with every partner about STIs/HIV/AIDS

Among students who have ever had sex, about 46 percent of 9th graders and 55 percent of 11th graders report talking with every partner about protecting themselves from getting sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV and AIDS. Where trend data is available (9th grade), the portion of sexually active youth who talk with every partner about STIs is increasing in Washington County. This trend matches the upward trend of the state average.



Talk with every partner about preventing pregnancy

Of the students who have ever had sex, nearly 60 percent of 9th graders and 70 percent of 11th graders say they talk with every partner about preventing pregnancy. Where trend data is available (9th grade), this portion of sexually active students is much higher than past years, 57 and 54 percent for Washington County and statewide averages, respectively.

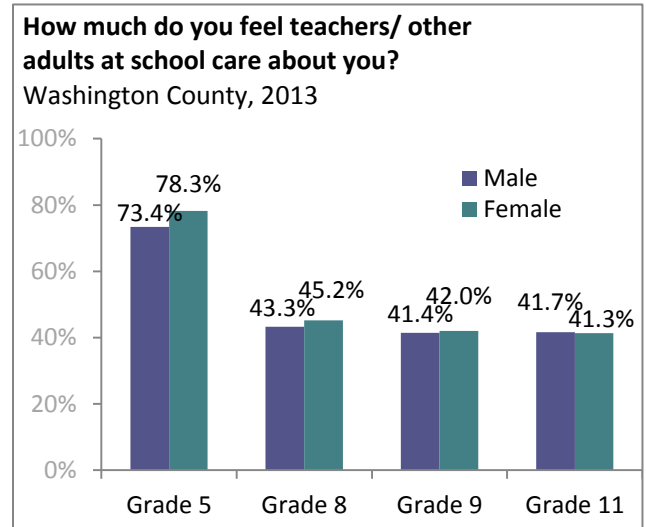
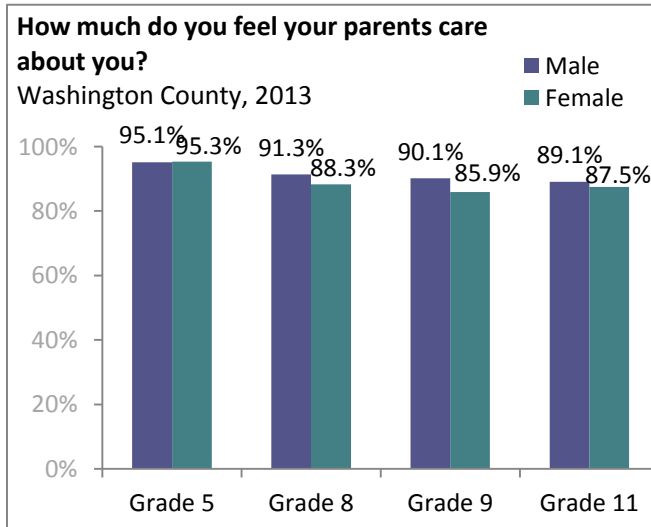


SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Parents and Teachers: care about me quite a bit or very much

Students in all grades surveyed were asked how much they feel parents care about them and similarly how much they feel teachers care about them. Students' perception of caring adults affects risk behaviors; if they do not perceive that adults around them care, students have a higher likelihood to engage risky or unhealthy behavior.

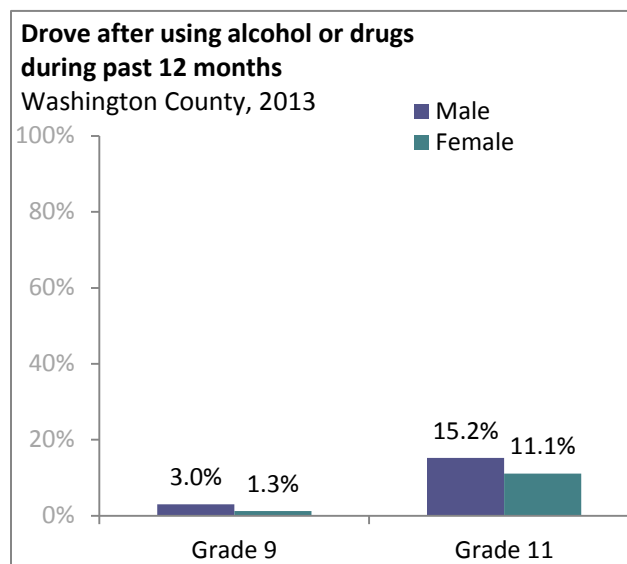
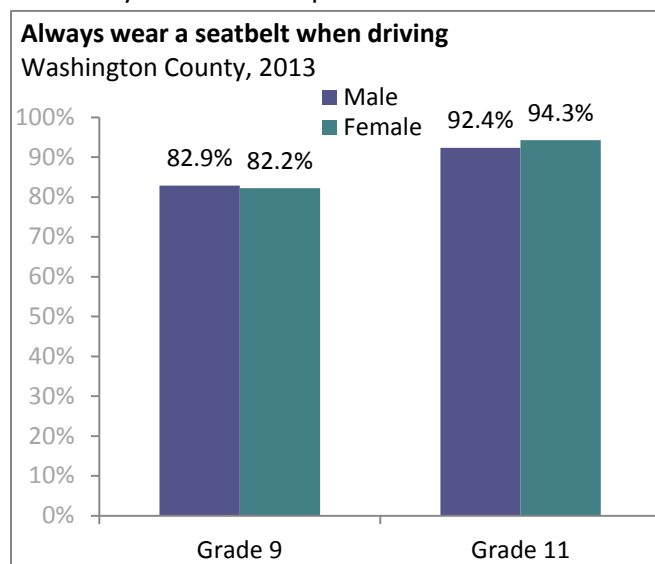
The percent of students answering "Quite a bit" or "Very much" is highest among 5th graders for both questions. About 90 to 95 percent of all students perceive that parents care about them quite a bit or very much. Among 5th graders, about three quarters of students believe teachers care about them quite a bit or very much. For grades 8, 9, and 11, between 40 and 45 percent of students perceive that teachers care about them.



OTHER HEALTH RISK BEHAVIORS

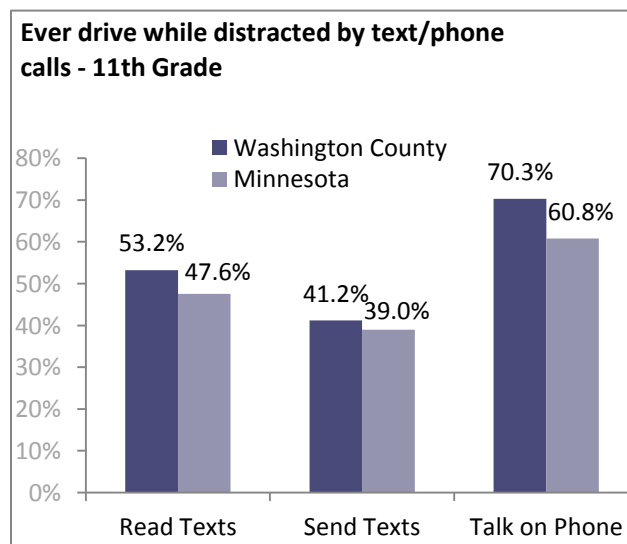
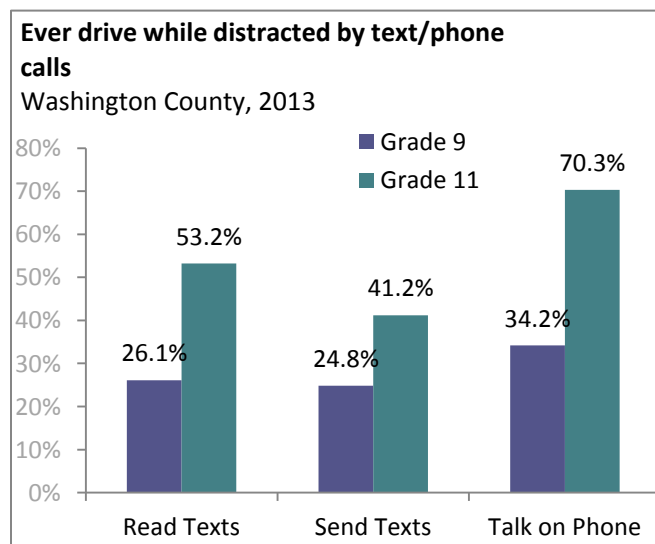
Vehicle safety

Among students who drive, more than 80 percent of 9th graders and nearly 95 percent of 11th graders say they always wear a seatbelt when driving. Among the same group – students who drive – 2 percent of 9th graders and 13 percent of 11th graders report driving after using alcohol or drugs at least once during the past 12 months. Due to change in question wording or format, 2013 is a baseline year for these questions.



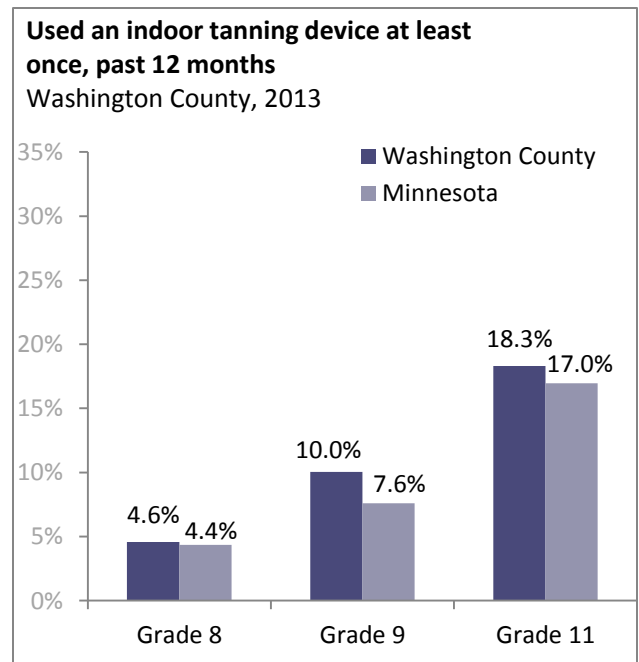
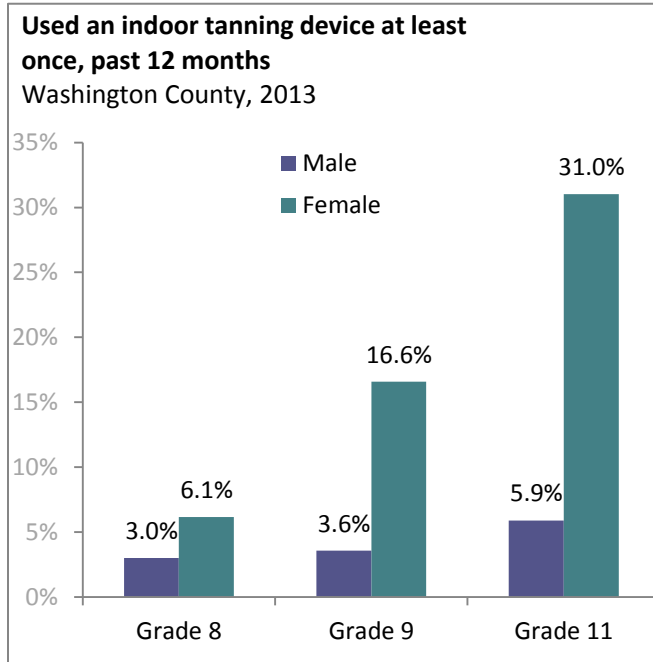
Distracted driving

Among Washington County students who drive, more than one third (34.2%) of 9th graders and nearly three quarters (70.3%) of 11th graders report driving while operating their phone to make calls or send/receive text messages. Looking at 11th grade drivers, Washington County students report a higher rate of each type of distracted driving than the average of their peers across the state.



Use of tanning device

The percent of students who report using an indoor tanning device at least once during the past 12 months is highest among 11th grade females. By comparison to the state average for each grade, a higher portion of Washington County students report past year tanning device use than their peers across the state.



COMMUNITY-BASED EFFORTS IN WASHINGTON COUNTY

Promoting and protecting health among adolescents is not a new endeavor in Washington County. Efforts have been established to address emerging trends or needs and are carried out by community partnerships and multiple county departments. These efforts are based on best practices designed to be responsive to new information about youth concerns and behaviors. Several of these include:

School Initiatives

- Bullying and Violence Prevention;
- Chemical Health Prevention curriculum (Forest Lake);
- Depression and Suicide screenings and education;
- Lifelines suicide prevention/intervention/postvention initiative;
- Mentoring Programs in Forest Lake and Mahtomedi;
- MOST FL Positive Community Norms;
- School-based Mental Health Services;
- School Health Councils;
- School Resource Officer;
- Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) Safe Prom and Graduation awareness campaigns; and
- Wellness Programs in Stillwater Schools.

Community Collaboration

- CONNECT Chemical Health Action Collaborative;
- Forest Lake Teen Center;
- Mental Health Partnership;
- Social host ordinances developed in some Washington County communities;
- Suicide Prevention Collaborative – East Metro and Forest Lake;
- Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP);
- Youth Service Bureaus in Forest Lake, Stillwater, Woodbury;
and
- Community Coalitions such as Forest Lake Area Partnership for Families, MOST FL and HealthUp in Forest Lake; and PowerUp and Youth Matters in Stillwater.

TECHNICAL NOTES

County data

County School District Superintendents granted permission to the Washington County Department of Public Health and Environment to collect and analyze district Minnesota School Survey (MSS) results. Data was provided to the Washington County Department of Public Health and Environment upon request to the Department of Education and to the Department of Health. The county trend data in this booklet consists of data from participating schools in the following school districts: District 831 (Forest Lake), District 832 (Mahtomedi), District 833 (South Washington County) and District 834 (Stillwater). District 622 (North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale) data is compiled with Ramsey County data. Trend data is presented from the following school survey periods when available: 1995, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010, and 2013. The trend data is compiled from all schools participating in the survey during each of those years. A weighting procedure was not used for the analysis of county data.

Changes to the Minnesota Student Survey in 2013

In 2013, the MSS underwent the largest overhaul in its history. There were three major kinds of changes in the survey, and all three have an effect on the reporting of trend results.

Grades surveyed

Prior to 2013, the survey was offered to students in grades 6, 9 and 12. For several reasons, the interagency team responsible for the survey decided to move the survey up one year so that it would cover grades 5, 8 and 11. In addition, grade 9 was included to retain some possibility of monitoring trends. The new grade configuration means that *trend* results – changes over time – will be available only for 9th grade students.

Mode of administration

In 2013, for the first time, schools could choose to administer the survey by computer or by using the traditional paper and pencil survey. Each participating school had to choose one method or the other. Overall, 35% of students took the survey by computer and 65% used the paper survey. The survey questions that students saw on their computer screens were the same as those in the paper survey booklets.

Researchers find that the mode of administration (in this case, computer or paper) may sometimes influence survey results in subtle ways. Students may feel that one method offers more privacy or anonymity than the other, or they may simply feel more comfortable with one method. An extensive analysis was conducted by Dr. Eunkyung Park of the Minnesota Department of Human Services. She found that, with some exceptions, the mode of administration did not have serious effects on the survey results and that the combined results (paper and online) for 2013 could be used in trend analysis.

Content of questions

In response to interest in emerging issues, many new questions were added to the 2013 survey. New or greatly expanded topic areas include experiences of homelessness and economic hardship, eating and sleeping habits, distracted driving, indoor tanning, educational engagement, bullying and relationship violence. Questions on positive youth development were also added. To accommodate these important additions, other questions were dropped. In addition, many questions were reworded or changed extensively so they would have stronger validity or could be compared with questions on prominent national surveys.

Impact of changes on trend reporting

As a result of this large-scale overhaul, the MSS has strengthened its ability to cover current conditions but has weakened its ability to follow trends over time, at least for the time being. The combined impact of all these changes is that this trend data for 1992-2013 is more limited than previous reports. Because of the change in grades surveyed, trends can be reported only for 9th grade students. Changes to the wording of some questions and the removal of other questions reduce the pool of questions that can be tracked over many years.

While potential differences due to mode of administration (paper vs. online) appear not to be serious, some caution should be taken when interpreting very small differences between 2013 and previous years. Despite these limitations and cautions, the trends presented here offer useful information on developments in the adolescent world over the past 10 to 20 years.

Methods for reporting state trends

To compare state results over the years, this report includes data only from those school districts that have participated in each of the last eight survey administrations – from 1992 to 2013—at the 9th grade level. Using only these districts helps to ensure that trends from year to year are not due simply to changes in the set of schools that participated in the survey. While some surveys are lost through this procedure, the school districts that have participated consistently since 1992 represent about three-fourths (73.5 percent) of all ninth graders who have taken the survey in that time span.

Do students tell the truth?

One question sometimes raised about student surveys is whether students' responses are honest and accurate. Researchers use a variety of data analysis techniques to examine the likely accuracy of surveys and these were applied to the student survey as well. Surveys with numerous inconsistencies or improbable answers were excluded from data analysis. On a state level in 2013, approximately 2% of the surveys were eliminated from analysis because gender was missing, responses were highly inconsistent, or there was a pattern of likely exaggeration.

The majority of students exhibit patterns of responses that are reasonable and consistent across similar questions. In addition, as results have demonstrated, percentages for many answers are consistent over time across the seven Minnesota Student Survey administrations studied for this

report (1995 to present, where available). Such similarities are likely to occur only if the survey responses reflect the actual perceptions of Minnesota and county youth; it is extremely unlikely that these patterns could be replicated by chance over time. Furthermore, the survey findings are often consistent with findings in similar states and with national trend lines of increasing or decreasing behaviors.

This combination of individual response patterns, plausible relationships among answers, consistency over time within the state, and consistency with other research and with national studies, all attest to the overall credibility of student responses.

REFERENCES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Mortality data file for 2010 with all state identifiers. 2013.

---. Division of Violence Prevention. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Study. 2014.

Park, Eunkyung. Web versus paper administration of a school-based survey: mode effect analysis for the 2013 Minnesota Student Survey. Minnesota Department of Human Services website.

<http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/mss>