

Highlights from the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

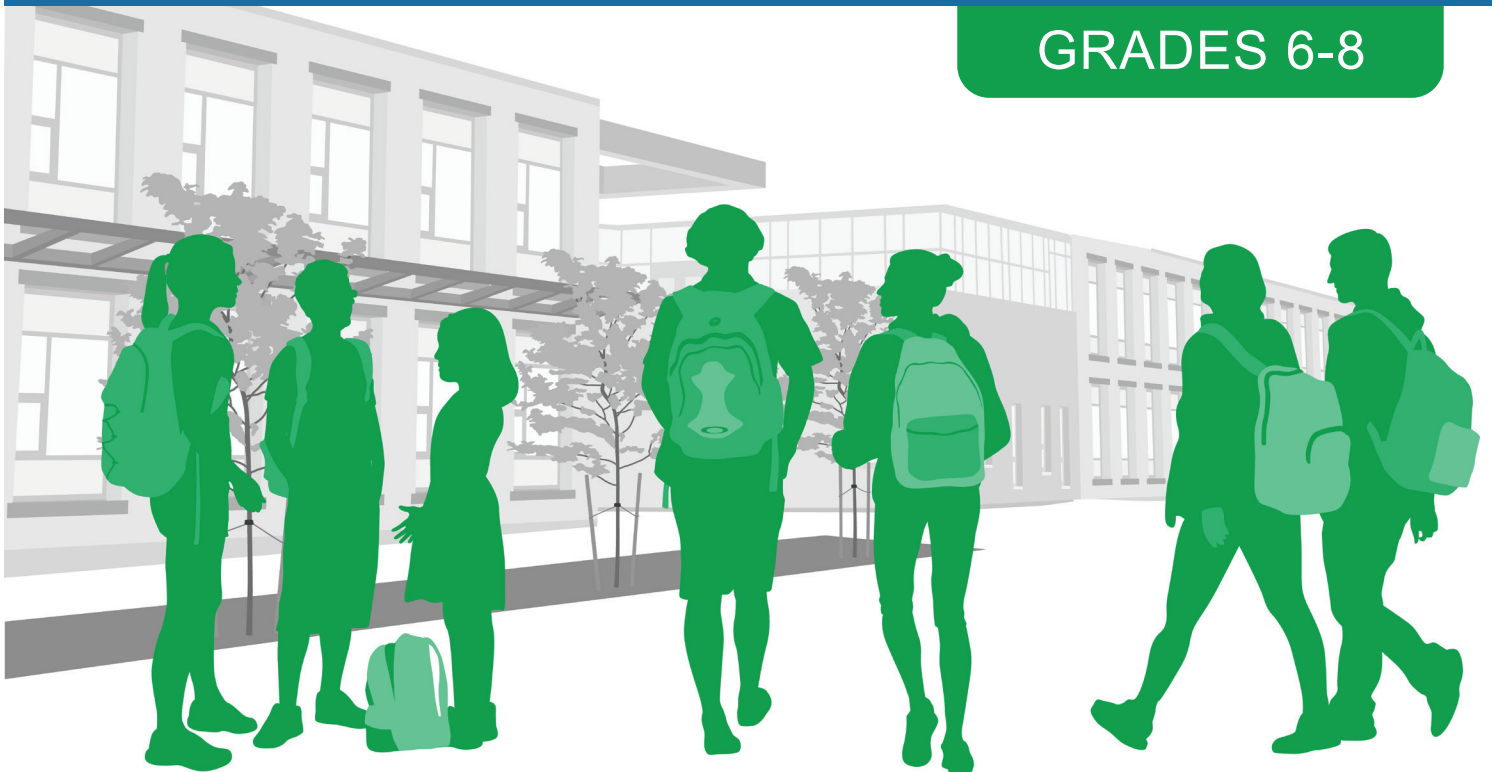
*Informing data-driven school and community
health policies and practices*



2021

Wellesley Middle School

GRADES 6-8



**METROWEST
HEALTH
FOUNDATION**



Spring 2022

Funded by:
MetroWest Health Foundation

Submitted by:
Education Development Center, Inc.

Highlights from the 2021 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

Wellesley Middle School Report

Background and Methodology

The MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey (MWHAS), an initiative of the MetroWest Health Foundation, has monitored trends in adolescent health and risk behaviors since 2006. The need for data to drive advancements in prevention efforts, programs, and policies has been made even more apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic. By providing timely, local data on pressing adolescent health issues, schools and communities are better equipped to understand, prioritize, and take action to address the challenges facing youth today.

The 2021 survey is the 8th administration of the MWAHS and the first online survey administration, made possible by increased technological capabilities of schools and one-to-one device programs. While the survey was administered every other year from 2006 to 2018, there was a one-year delay in the administration of the most recent survey in the fall of 2021 due to the challenges of surveying youth during remote learning. In 2021, over 39,000 middle and high school students in all 25 communities in the region participated in the survey.

The 2021 middle school survey was administered to a census of students in grades 7 and 8 in all 24 school districts in the region served by the MetroWest Health Foundation. Eighteen school districts chose to include 6th grade in their surveys. In total, 18,548 middle school students in the region participated in this voluntary and anonymous survey. At Wellesley Middle School, 945 students in grades 6 through 8 participated in the 2021 MWAHS, representing 94% of students. Wellesley Middle School has participated in the MWAHS since 2006.

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.

This report summarizes current youth behaviors on key health indicators in the areas of substance use, violence, bullying, mental health, physical activity, and protective factors. Current data from 2021 are provided by sex and grade, and key behavioral trends are highlighted, with a focus on recent trends from 2018 to 2021. Reports of behaviors that reflect longer time periods (e.g., "past 12 months") and ask about risk behaviors "on school property" may include a period of time when some students were not attending school in person.

Findings from the MWAHS are used by schools and communities to improve health education, inform prevention and policy efforts, and determine priorities for improving the physical and emotional health of adolescents.

Key Findings: Substance Use

Cigarette Smoking (Conventional)

- 2021 Patterns** (Grades 6-8) » **1% of students have smoked a cigarette in their lifetime, and less than 1% smoked recently (in the past 30 days).**
- » Reports of lifetime smoking are low among females (2%) and males (1%).
 - » By 8th grade, 2% of youth have tried smoking.
- Recent Trends** (Grades 7-8) » **Youth smoking has declined substantially: Reports of lifetime smoking decreased from 7% in 2006 to 3% in 2018, with reports at 2% in 2021.**
- » Current smoking (in the past 30 days) has been steady at 1% since 2014, down from 3% in 2008.
 - » Cigarette smoking decreased considerably among both males and females since 2006.
 - » In the MetroWest region, reports of cigarette smoking in middle school have also declined steadily since the beginning of the MWAHS.

Electronic Vapor Products

- 2021 Patterns** (Grades 6-8) » **1% of youth have tried electronic vapor products (EVPs)* in their lifetime, and less than 1% used EVPs in the past 30 days.**
- » EVP use is similar among females and males. For example, lifetime use is reported by 2% of females and 1% of males.
 - » Lifetime EVP use increases from less than 1% in 6th grade to 3% in 8th grade.
 - » 17% of youth report it would be “fairly easy” or “very easy” to obtain EVPs if they wanted to, with ease of access increasing from 6th grade (8%) to 8th grade (22%).
 - » 96% of youth perceive moderate or great risk of harm of using EVPs, with similar reports by grade and sex.
- Recent Trends** (Grades 7-8) » **After a notable rise in EVP use from 2016 to 2018, lifetime EVP use decreased from 7% in 2018 to 2% in 2021.**
- » Current EVP use declined from 4% in 2018 to less than 1% in 2021.
 - » EVP use decreased more among males than females. For example, lifetime use decreased from 11% in 2018 to 1% in 2021 among males, and from 4% to 2% among females.
 - » Consistent with the decline in EVP use, perception of risk rose steadily, from 70% in 2014 to 84% in 2018, further increasing to 95% in 2021.
 - » Reports of EVP use in the MetroWest region also decreased substantially from 2018 to 2021.

* EVPs include electronic cigarettes like JUUL, Phix, Vuse, MarkTen, and blu, and other products like vapes, vape pens, e-cigars, e-hookahs, hookah pens, and mods. They also include disposable products that can only be used once, such as Puff Bars, Stig, or Viigo.

Alcohol Use

- 2021 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **8% of students drank alcohol in their lifetime, and 2% drank in the past 30 days.**
- » No middle school youth report recent binge drinking.*
 - » Reports of drinking are similar by sex. For example, 8% of females and 8% of males report using alcohol in their lifetime.
 - » Lifetime alcohol use increases from 7% in 6th grade to 9% in 8th grade, and current drinking is steady at 2% across grades.
 - » 2% of students report ever being a passenger in a car driven by a high school student who had been drinking alcohol.
 - » 91% of youth perceive that having five or more drinks once or twice a week is of moderate or great risk, with higher perceptions of risk among females than males.
- Recent Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **After declining steadily in earlier years of the survey, reports of alcohol use in middle school continued to decrease. For example, lifetime use decreased from 18% in 2006 to 12% in 2018, with 9% of youth reporting lifetime use in 2021.**
- » Current use decreased from 4% in 2018 to 2% in 2021.
 - » Binge drinking has been steady at 1% or less since 2014, with no students reporting binge drinking in 2021.
 - » Drinking has declined substantially among females and males since earlier surveys. However, the recent decrease is driven by reports among males. For example, lifetime drinking decreased from 16% in 2018 to 9% in 2021 among males and was steady at 8% among females.
 - » In MetroWest, alcohol use has remained similar in recent surveys after an earlier decline.

Marijuana Use

- 2021 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **Less than 1% of middle school youth have ever used marijuana[†] in their lifetime, and no students used marijuana in the past 30 days.**
- » Marijuana use is similar by sex with fewer than 1% of males and females reporting lifetime use.
 - » By 8th grade, 1% of youth report ever using marijuana.
 - » 2% of youth have ever ridden in a car driven by a high school student who had been using marijuana.
 - » 11% of youth report that it would be “fairly easy” or “very easy” to obtain marijuana if they wanted to, with reports increasing from 7% in 6th grade to 14% in 8th grade.
 - » 83% of youth perceive that using marijuana once or twice a week is of “moderate” or “great risk,” with higher perceptions of risk among females and younger students.

* Binge drinking is defined as consuming 4 or more drinks in a row for females, or 5 or more drinks in a row for males in the past 30 days. This does not take into account body weight or other factors that influence intoxication levels.

† Does not include CBD only or hemp products

- Recent Trends** (Grades 7-8) » **Lifetime marijuana use decreased from a high of 4% in 2012 to 1% in 2018, with less than 1% of youth reporting lifetime use in 2021.**
- » Lifetime use in 2021 is lower among males compared with earlier surveys, whereas reports have been consistently low among females.
 - » Current marijuana use was steady at 1% from 2014 to 2018, with no students reporting current use in 2021.
 - » Marijuana use among MetroWest middle school youth has also been similar in recent surveys.

Key Findings: Violence

Physical Fighting

- 2021 Patterns** (Grades 6-8) » **30% of youth have been in a physical fight in their lifetime, and 8% have been in a fight on school property.**
- » Many more males than females report fighting overall (45% compared with 15%) and on school property (14% compared with 3%).
 - » The proportion of youth who have engaged in physical fighting in their lifetime ranges from 27-34% by grade.
- Recent Trends** (Grades 7-8) » **After declining in earlier years of the survey, reports of physical fighting dropped from 37% in 2018 to 28% in 2021.**
- » Fighting declined recently among females (from 21% in 2018 to 12% in 2021) and males (from 52% to 44%).
 - » Reports of fighting on school property decreased from 10% in 2018 to 7% in 2021.
 - » In the MetroWest region, physical fighting has been similar in recent surveys.

Weapon Carrying

- 2021 Patterns** (Grades 6-8) » **8% of youth carried a weapon in their lifetime, and less than 1% carried a weapon on school property.**
- » Consistent with patterns for physical fighting, many more males (11%) than females (5%) report carrying weapons in their lifetime.
 - » Lifetime reports of weapon carrying range from 7-10% by grade.

- Recent Trends** » **Overall reports of lifetime weapon carrying decreased from 12% in 2018 to 9% in 2021, down from a high of 18% in 2008.**
- (Grades 7-8)** » Weapon carrying on school property has been consistently low at 1% or under since 2014.
- » Reports of weapon carrying declined notably among males since the early years of the MWAHS (from 30% in 2008 to 12% in 2021), whereas they have varied from 3-6% among females.
- » In the MetroWest region, weapon carrying has also remained steady in recent surveys.

Key Findings: Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying

- 2021 Patterns** » **27% of middle school youth have been bullied in the past 12 months, and 19% have been bullied on school property. 9% of students report bullying other students.**
- (Grades 6-8)** » Bullying victimization is higher among females than males overall (31% compared to 23%) and on school property (22% compared to 16%).
- » Reports of bullying at school range from 15-25% by grade.
- » LGBTQ middle school youth are more likely to be bullied at school than heterosexual cisgender youth (27% vs. 17%).
- » Youth with learning and/or physical disabilities are also more likely to be bullied at school than youth without disabilities (31% vs. 17%).
- » 8% of middle school youth reported being bullied or verbally harassed at school in the past 12 months due to their race or ethnicity, 5% due to their religion or culture, 7% due to their gender, 4% due to their sexual orientation, 4% due to a disability, and 23% due to their appearance (height, weight, or how they look).
- » Many bullying victims do not seek help from adults: Among students bullied at school, 33% had talked to a school adult, and 57% had talked to a parent/adult outside of school.
- Recent Trends** » **After declining substantially in earlier years of the survey, bullying victimization decreased from 24% in 2018 to 20% in 2021.**
- (Grades 7-8)** » This decrease in school bullying was driven by a decline among females (from 30% in 2018 to 21% in 2021), whereas reports were similar among males at 18-19% over the last two surveys.
- » School bullying victimization has been steady in the MetroWest region since 2018.

Cyberbullying

- 2021 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **15% of youth report being victims of cyberbullying in the past 12 months, and 5% report cyberbullying someone else.**
- » Females are more likely to be victims of cyberbullying than males (18% vs. 13%).
 - » Cyberbullying increases from 12% in 6th grade to 17% in 8th grade.
 - » LGBTQ youth are much more likely to be cyberbullied than heterosexual cisgender youth (21% vs. 14%).
 - » Youth with disabilities are also at elevated risk of being victimized online compared to youth without disabilities (27% vs. 13%).
 - » The majority of cyberbullying victims do not seek help from adults: Among students who were cyberbullied in the past 12 months, only 13% had talked to an adult at school and 32% had talked to a parent or other adult outside of school.
- Recent Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Cyberbullying victimization has been similar at 16-17% since 2016.**
- » Since the last survey, reports of victimization were slightly higher among males (from 11% in 2018 to 14% in 2021) but slightly lower among females (from 21% to 19%).
 - » Cyberbullying victimization increased substantially in the MetroWest region since 2018.

Key Findings: Mental Health

Stress and Anxiety

- 2021 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **13% of students report that their life was very stressful in the past 30 days.**
- » Females are much more likely to report this level of stress than males (18% vs. 7%).
 - » Reports of stress increase substantially by grade, from 7% in 6th grade to 19% in 8th grade.
 - » School is the most common source of stress, reported by 48% of youth. This is followed by stress related to appearance issues (26%), social issues (24%), and physical and/or emotional health (23%).
 - » 24% of students report feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge on at least half the days in the past two weeks, and 20% report feeling unable to stop or control worrying. Reports of anxiety symptoms are about three times higher among females than males and increase from grade 6 to grades 7 and 8.
 - » Many students experience symptoms of being stressed, anxious, or worried: 27% of youth report feeling tired or having little energy, 22% report sleep problems (trouble falling asleep or sleeping too much), 22% report having trouble concentrating in school, and 17% report eating problems (poor appetite or eating too much) due to feeling stressed, anxious, or worried often or very often in the past two weeks.

Recent Trends » **After rising steadily from 9% in 2006 to 24% in 2018, overall reports of life being very stressful were lower in 2021 at 16%.**

- (Grades 7-8)**
- » Reports of stress declined recently among females (from 31% in 2018 to 22% in 2021) and males (from 17% to 10%).
 - » However, while overall stress is lower, stress due to certain issues did increase from 2018 to 2021, including: appearance issues (from 23% to 29%), and physical and/or emotional health (from 19% to 26%).
 - » Stress due to school issues decreased from 63% in 2018 to 55% in 2021.
 - » Reports of generalized anxiety symptoms did not change substantially from 2018 to 2021. There was a slight increase in feeling unable to stop or control worrying (from 19% to 22%), but reports of feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge on more than half the days in the past two weeks were steady at 27%.
 - » In the MetroWest region, overall stress decreased slightly from 2018 to 2021, but there were substantial increases in reports of generalized anxiety symptoms.

Depressive Symptoms, Self-Injury, and Suicidality

2021 » **14% of students reported depressive symptoms* in the past 12 months.**

Patterns » **11% of youth reported intentional self-injury† in the past 12 months.**

- (Grades 6-8)**
- » **12% of youth have seriously considered suicide in their lifetime, and 2% have made a suicide attempt.**
 - » Females are much more likely than males to report mental health issues. For example, 19% of females and 9% of males report depressive symptoms.
 - » Reports of depressive symptoms in the past 12 months increase from 6th grade to 8th grade. Lifetime reports of suicidal thoughts and attempts also increase by grade.
 - » LGBTQ youth are more likely than heterosexual youth to report mental health problems, including depressive symptoms (29% vs. 10%) and self-injury (29% vs. 6%) in the past 12 months, and seriously considering suicide in their lifetime (34% vs. 8%).
 - » Youth with disabilities also report more mental health problems than youth without disabilities, including depressive symptoms (26% vs. 12%), self-injury (18% vs. 10%) and seriously considering suicide (23% vs. 11%).
 - » Many youth who report mental health issues are not receiving mental health services: Among students reporting depressive symptoms, 36% talked to a school counselor, therapist, or psychologist at school, 6% talked to a school nurse, and 39% of students talked to a therapist, psychologist, or other mental health professional outside of school in the past 12 months.
 - » 17% of youth experienced poor mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic most of the time or always (24% of females and 10% of males). 38% of youth said their mental health became a little worse or a lot worse since the beginning of the pandemic (45% of females and 30% of males).

* Depressive symptoms are defined as feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for two or more weeks during the past 12 months.

† Self-injury is defined as cutting, burning, or bruising oneself on purpose in the past 12 months.

- Recent Trends**
(Grades 7-8)
- » **Reports of mental health issues increased from 2018 to 2021: 12-month reports of depressive symptoms increased from 10% to 16% and self-injury increased from 8% to 13%. Lifetime reports of seriously considering suicide increased from 12% to 14%, but reports of lifetime suicide attempts were steady at 3%.**
 - » The increases in mental health issues are driven by increases among females. For example, depressive symptoms increased from 12% in 2018 to 20% in 2021 among females, and were similar among males at 9-10%. Suicidal ideation increased from 13% to 18% among females and remained steady among males at 10%.
 - » Reports of mental health issues among MetroWest middle school youth also show concerning increases from 2018 to 2021.

Key Findings: Physical Activity, Weight, and Sleep

Physical Activity

- 2021 Patterns**
(Grades 6-8)
- » **70% of youth report moderate physical activity in the past week,* and 85% of youth report vigorous physical activity.†**
 - » Males are more likely than females to report moderate physical activity (78% compared to 63%) and vigorous physical activity (89% compared with 81%).
 - » Reports of moderate physical activity decrease from 74% in 6th grade to 67% in 8th grade.
 - » 3% of youth report no days of moderate physical activity in the past 7 days.
- Recent Trends**
(Grades 7-8)
- » **The overall proportion of youth who exercise vigorously on at least 3 days in the past week decreased was similar from 2018 to 2021 at 84-85%.**
 - » However, reports of moderate physical activity increased from 61% to 69% since the last survey.
 - » Reports of vigorous physical activity decreased slightly in the MetroWest region from 2018 to 2021.

* Moderate physical activity is defined as activity that increases heart rate and makes you breathe hard for ≥60 min on 5+ of the past 7 days.

† Vigorous physical activity is defined as exercising for at least 20 minutes that makes you sweat and breathe hard on 3+ of the past 7 days.

Overweight/Obesity

- 2021** » **12% of youth are overweight or obese.***
- Patterns** » Males are more likely than females to be overweight or obese (17% compared with 7%).
(Grades 6-8) » Overweight/obesity is similar across grades at 11-14%.
- Recent Trends** » **Overweight/obesity has ranged from 10-14% since 2006, with 2021 reports at 12%.**
(Grades 7-8) » In the MetroWest region, overweight/obesity in middle school has not changed notably since the beginning of the MWAHS.

Sleep

- 2021** » **Only 64% of youth get 8 or more hours of sleep on an average school night.**
- Patterns** » More males than females get 8 hours of sleep per night (67% compared to 60%).
(Grades 6-8) » Reports of getting 8 or more hours of sleep decrease substantially as students get older, from 76% in 6th grade to 53% in 8th grade.
» As noted earlier, 22% of youth (31% of females and 12% of males) report sleep issues related to being stressed, anxious, or worried.
» Youth who sleep less than eight hours per night are more likely to report poor mental health, including depressive symptoms (25% vs. 8%), self-injury (16% vs. 8%) and seriously considering suicide (19% vs. 9%).
- Recent Trends** » **The proportion of youth sleeping 8 or more hours on an average school night was steady at 58-59% from 2018 to 2021.**
(Grades 7-8) » Reports of sleep are lower among both females and males since it was first measured in 2014.
» Youth in the MetroWest region report getting less sleep in 2021 than in earlier surveys.

* Overweight/obesity is based on self-reported height and weight, which is used to calculate body mass index. Overweight/obesity is defined as being in the 85th percentile or above for body mass index by age and sex, based on reference data.

Key Findings: Online Behavior

Time Spent Online, Social Media Use, and Gaming

- 2021 Patterns (Grades 6-8)**
- » **40% of youth spend three or more hours on screen time and 30% spent three or more hours online on the average school day** (These numbers do not include time spent on schoolwork or homework.)
 - » **13% spend three or more hours per day on social media specifically, and 13% spend three or more hours gaming.**
 - » Females are more likely than males to spend three or more hours on social media daily (18% vs. 9%), and males are more likely to spend three or more hours gaming (18% vs. 8%).
 - » Youth report both positive and negative attitudes towards social media. On the positive side, social media helps youth feel more connected to peers (61%), helps them find people with common interests and hobbies (62%), and provides a source of social support (27%). On the negative side, social media makes a sizeable minority of students feel badly about themselves or excluded (19%), keeps them from doing important things like homework or family responsibilities (23%), and has hurt relationships with peers (10%).
 - » 31% of all youth feel they spend too much time on social media (37% of females and 25% of males).
 - » Youth who spend three or more hours on social media daily are more likely to report cyberbullying victimization (29% vs. 13%) and perpetration (12% vs. 4%).
 - » Youth who spend more time on social media are more likely to report substance use and mental health problems. For example, high users of social media are more likely to report lifetime alcohol use (18% vs. 6%) than lower users. They are also more likely to report depressive symptoms in the past 12 months (29% vs. 12%) and seriously considering suicide in their lifetime (22% vs. 11%).
- Recent Trends (Grades 7-8)**
- » **The proportion of youth spending three or more hours on screen time on an average school day increased substantially from 29% in 2018 to 42% in 2021.**
 - » Reports of spending 3 or more hours daily on social media increased only slightly, from 13% in 2018 to 15% in 2021, and reports of gaming for 3 or more hours daily increased from 9% in 2018 to 12% in 2021.
 - » In the MetroWest region, the proportion of youth spending three or more hours on screen time, social media, and gaming also increased from 2018 to 2021.

Key Findings: Protective Factors

School Connectedness and Engagement

- 2021 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **About two-thirds of 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” (63%), “I am happy to be at this school” (65%), and “I feel safe in my school” (82%).
- » While a majority of both males and females report high levels of school connectedness, reports are higher among males across all measures.
 - » School connectedness is higher in 6th grade than in 7th and 8th grades.
- Recent Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Several indicators of school connectedness are lower in 2021, which may be related to the COVID-19 pandemic and remote learning.**
- » For example, the proportion of students reporting that they feel close to people at school decreased from 77% in 2018 to 62% in 2021, and the proportion of youth who report being happy to be at their school decreased from 64% to 60%.
 - » Declines in these indicators of school connectedness were reported by females and males.
 - » Reports of feeling safe at school did not change substantially (80% in 2018 and 82% in 2021).
 - » Several indicators of school connectedness are also lower in 2021 in the MetroWest region compared with prior years.

Peer Support

- 2021 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **57% of youth have a friend they can talk to about a personal problem often or very often.**
- » Having peer support is reported by 61% of females and 53% of males and increases from 6th grade (53%) to 8th grade (60%).
 - » 17% of youth report feeling lonely often or very often (24% of females and 10% of males), and 13% feel left out or excluded by others (16% of females and 9% of males).
- Recent Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Reports of having a friend to talk to about a personal problem decreased from 68% in 2018 to 59% in 2021.**
- » Feelings of frequent loneliness increased from 13% in 2018 to 19% in 2021, and feelings of being left out or excluded increased from 10% to 14%.
 - » In the MetroWest region, there was also a decrease in peer support and an increase in feelings of loneliness.

Adult Support

- 2021 Patterns (Grades 6-8)** » **71% of youth have at least one teacher or other adult at school to talk to if they have a problem, and 90% 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 lower among females (68%) than males (74%) and ranges from 68-73% by grade.
 - » Reports of adult support outside of school are also lower among females (87%) than males (94%) and range from 88-92% by grade.
- Recent Trends (Grades 7-8)** » **Reports of adult support at school decreased from 75% in 2018 to 71% in 2021. Reports of adult support outside of school were similar from 2018 to 2021 at 90-91%.**
- » The decline in adult support at school was due to a decrease among females (from 75% in 2018 to 66% in 2021) while reports among males were similar at 74-75%.
 - » Adult support outside of school decreased among females (from 92% in 2018 to 85% in 2021) and increased among males (from 91% to 95%).
 - » In the MetroWest region, there have been declines in adult support both at school and outside of school.

Conclusions

The MWAHS is an invaluable tool in providing data to drive school and community actions to improve adolescent physical and emotional health. The data is particularly important in light of the many challenges adolescents have faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2021 data highlights important progress that has been made in recent years in areas like substance misuse and violence. These areas demand continued efforts, and it will be important to monitor whether these recent improvements will be sustained in the coming years. The 2021 data also identify areas of elevated concern, including increased and mental health issues and a decline in school protective factors. Continued use of the MWAHS data to identify priorities and drive local strategies will ensure that efforts are focused on the greatest challenges to adolescent wellness, leading to safer and healthier communities.

Middle School Key Indicators

2006–2021 Trends
2021 Patterns by Sex
2021 Patterns by Grade

Wellesley Middle School (Grades 7-8)

2006-2021 Trends in Key Indicators

MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

	Year of Survey (%)							
	2006 <i>(625)</i>	2008 <i>(656)</i>	2010 <i>(696)</i>	2012 <i>(733)</i>	2014 <i>(708)</i>	2016 <i>(714)</i>	2018 <i>(726)</i>	2021 <i>(650)</i>
SUBSTANCE USE								
Lifetime cigarette smoking	6.6	4.9	4.7	6.5	3.8	2.4	2.5	1.5
Current cigarette smoking (past 30 days)	2.1	2.9	1.3	2.5	0.9	1.1	0.6	0.2
Lifetime electronic vapor product use*	–	–	–	–	4.9	4.7	7.2	1.7
Current electronic vapor product use (past 30 days)*	–	–	–	–	2.6	2.0	3.9	0.3
Lifetime alcohol use	18.1	17.5	14.4	12.9	10.4	10.3	12.0	8.9
Current alcohol use (past 30 days)	5.6	8.1	4.3	6.3	5.0	3.2	4.2	2.2
Binge drinking (past 30 days) [†]	0.6	1.8	1.2	2.3	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.0
Lifetime marijuana use	1.8	3.4	3.8	4.4	2.5	1.4	1.3	0.5
Current marijuana use (past 30 days)	1.3	3.1	2.0	3.0	1.4	1.0	1.3	0.0
Lifetime inhalant use	5.1	4.1	3.6	5.1	2.3	3.3	4.1	2.5
VIOLENCE								
Physical fighting (lifetime)	38.2	50.2	41.4	43.4	36.9	31.7	36.5	27.7
Physical fighting on school property (lifetime)	13.2	19.8	14.6	12.8	11.5	10.3	9.6	6.9
Carried a weapon (lifetime)	14.4	17.8	12.0	13.9	13.1	13.3	11.8	8.5
Carried a weapon on school property (lifetime)	2.3	2.0	2.2	1.9	1.3	0.7	0.6	0.5
BULLYING VICTIMIZATION								
Bullying victim (past 12 months)	49.3	56.4	40.0	41.4	27.8	23.3	29.3	27.2
Bullying victim on school property (past 12 months)	41.6	48.8	35.0	34.9	22.2	17.8	24.3	19.6
Cyberbullying victim (past 12 months)	11.9	16.4	17.8	17.3	14.7	16.3	16.2	16.5
MENTAL HEALTH								
Life "very" stressful (past 30 days)	8.7	11.7	10.1	13.7	15.2	15.8	24.2	15.8
Depressive symptoms (past 12 months)	8.2	11.8	9.3	11.8	11.4	8.6	10.4	15.6
Self-injury (past 12 months)	3.9	6.6	5.2	7.3	7.0	6.0	8.3	12.5
Considered suicide (lifetime)	6.3	8.8	6.4	11.9	10.3	8.7	11.6	14.1
Attempted suicide (lifetime)	1.0	2.2	1.9	3.0	2.1	1.5	2.7	3.0
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND BODY WEIGHT								
Exercised for ≥20 minutes on 3 or more days/week	79.5	84.6	79.4	83.6	82.2	85.5	83.9	84.6
Overweight or obese [‡]	12.4	11.1	9.7	14.4	12.6	10.7	14.1	12.1

* Includes electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) like JUUL, Phix, Vuse, MarkTen, and blu, and other electronic vapor products, like vapes, vape pens, e-cigars, e-hookahs, hookah pens, and mods; in 2021, disposable products like Puff Bars, Stig, and Viigo were added to the definition.

† From 2006 to 2014, binge drinking was defined as 5 or more drinks in a row on one or more occasion for all students. Since 2016, binge drinking has been defined as 4 or more drinks in a row for females and 5 or more drinks in a row for males.

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

Wellesley Middle School (Grades 6-8) 2021 Key Indicator Patterns by Sex

MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

	Sex (%)		Total (%)
	Female (477)	Male (461)	(945)
SUBSTANCE USE			
Lifetime cigarette smoking	2.1	0.7	1.4
Current cigarette smoking (past 30 days)	0.0	0.2	0.1
Lifetime electronic vapor product use*	1.7	0.9	1.3
Current electronic vapor product use (past 30 days)*	0.2	0.2	0.2
Lifetime alcohol use	8.1	8.3	8.2
Current alcohol use (past 30 days)	1.9	2.2	2.0
Binge drinking (past 30 days) [†]	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lifetime marijuana use	0.6	0.2	0.4
Current marijuana use (past 30 days)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lifetime inhalant use	2.3	2.6	2.5
VIOLENCE			
Physical fighting (lifetime)	14.6	45.1	29.6
Physical fighting on school property (lifetime)	2.5	13.8	8.0
Carried a weapon (lifetime)	5.1	11.4	8.1
Carried a weapon on school property (lifetime)	0.2	0.4	0.3
BULLYING VICTIMIZATION			
Bullying victim (past 12 months)	30.6	23.2	27.0
Bullying victim on school property (past 12 months)	22.0	16.2	19.1
Cyberbullying victim (past 12 months)	17.5	12.7	15.2
MENTAL HEALTH			
Life "very" stressful (past 30 days)	18.3	7.2	12.9
Depressive symptoms (past 12 months)	19.1	8.6	14.2
Self-injury (past 12 months)	13.9	6.6	10.6
Considered suicide (lifetime)	15.8	8.2	12.3
Attempted suicide (lifetime)	3.0	1.5	2.3
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND BODY WEIGHT			
Exercised for ≥20 minutes on 3 or more days/week	81.5	89.3	85.0
Overweight or obese [‡]	7.3	17.0	12.2

* Includes electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) like JUUL, Phix, Vuse, MarkTen, and blu, and other electronic vapor products, like vapes, vape pens, e-cigars, e-hookahs, hookah pens, and mods; in 2021, disposable products like Puff Bars, Stig, and Viigo were added to the definition.

† From 2006 to 2014, binge drinking was defined as 5 or more drinks in a row on one or more occasion for all students. Since 2016, binge drinking has been defined as 4 or more drinks in a row for females and 5 or more drinks in a row for males.

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

Wellesley Middle School (Grades 6-8) 2021 Key Indicator Patterns by Grade

MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey

	Grade (%)			Total (%) (945)
	6 th (295)	7 th (308)	8 th (342)	
SUBSTANCE USE				
Lifetime cigarette smoking	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.4
Current cigarette smoking (past 30 days)	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.1
Lifetime electronic vapor product use*	0.3	0.3	2.9	1.3
Current electronic vapor product use (past 30 days)*	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.2
Lifetime alcohol use	6.8	9.1	8.6	8.2
Current alcohol use (past 30 days)	1.7	2.3	2.1	2.0
Binge drinking (past 30 days) [†]	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lifetime marijuana use	0.3	0.0	0.9	0.4
Current marijuana use (past 30 days)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lifetime inhalant use	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.5
VIOLENCE				
Physical fighting (lifetime)	33.8	28.7	26.9	29.6
Physical fighting on school property (lifetime)	10.4	6.2	7.6	8.0
Carried a weapon (lifetime)	7.3	9.8	7.4	8.1
Carried a weapon on school property (lifetime)	0.0	0.7	0.3	0.3
BULLYING VICTIMIZATION				
Bullying victim (past 12 months)	26.6	32.0	22.9	27.0
Bullying victim on school property (past 12 months)	18.2	24.7	15.0	19.1
Cyberbullying victim (past 12 months)	12.1	15.7	17.3	15.2
MENTAL HEALTH				
Life "very" stressful (past 30 days)	6.6	12.7	18.6	12.9
Depressive symptoms (past 12 months)	11.1	13.1	17.9	14.2
Self-injury (past 12 months)	6.3	13.9	11.3	10.6
Considered suicide (lifetime)	8.4	12.7	15.3	12.3
Attempted suicide (lifetime)	0.7	2.6	3.3	2.3
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND BODY WEIGHT				
Exercised for ≥20 minutes on 3 or more days/week	86.1	81.7	87.1	85.0
Overweight or obese [‡]	12.6	13.5	10.7	12.2

* Includes electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) like JUUL, Phix, Vuse, MarkTen, and blu, and other electronic vapor products, like vapes, vape pens, e-cigars, e-hookahs, hookah pens, and mods; in 2021, disposable products like Puff Bars, Stig, and Viigo were added to the definition.

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