

The topics covered in this presentation are heavy ones. Yet they are very real challenges faced by the young people in our community.

We have two options: We can bury our heads in the sand and ignore these issues. Alternatively, and I would argue, more effectively, we can acknowledge the challenges that exist (here and throughout the Cape, the state, and the nation), so that we can proactively take steps to help keep our students as safe and healthy as we possibly can. By understanding the issues, we can better work to support our children.

While substance abuse, sexual activity, dating violence, and emotional wellbeing are sometimes difficult to talk about, we must overcome our own discomfort for the greater good of our children's health and safety.

These results have been presented to all students in Grades 8-12 by Monomoy's Peer Leaders – each of the presenters was either a junior or senior at our high school. The Peer Leaders are sharing the same presentation with families and caregivers at an evening session. The data from the past Youth Risk Behavior Surveys has also been woven into our health curriculum, both at the high school and middle school levels.

What is the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)?

The survey was administered on June 6, 2019, to Monomoy Regional High School students in Grades 8-12.

The survey administered had 114 questions focusing upon:

- Substance use (vaping, alcohol, marijuana, etc.)
- Depression and suicide
- Sexual behavior
- Violence and bullying
- Protective factors

Questions were asked about behaviors that occurred in the past month, the past year, or the student's lifetime.

Data from the Monomoy's 2014 and 2016 YRBS surveys is compared to our 2019 survey results.

As most high schools serve Grades 9-12, where possible this presentation compares Monomoy's Grade 9-12 results to aggregate Grade 9-12 high school results for Massachusetts and the nation.

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Monomoy students in Grades 8 through 12 were invited in June 2019 to participate in the YRBS, which covered topics on substance use and abuse, sexual activity and dating violence, depression and suicide, violence and bullying, and support structures teens may have in their lives.

Most of the questions asked if you had taken part in a potentially risky behavior in the past month, the past year, or during your lifetime.

Survey data is compared in this presentation between this 2019 data and Monomoy's previous 2014 and 2016 Youth Risk Behavior Survey results.

Special thanks to Sheila House and those supporting prevention initiatives within our community

- Grant funds obtained by Sheila House, the Harwich Youth & Family Services Director, were used to enable the Monomoy Regional School District to administer this Youth Risk Behavior Survey.
- Sheila House is a member of the Barnstable County Regional Substance Abuse Commission. Part of the Barnstable Regional Substance Abuse Commission's 5-year plan includes focusing on prevention with regards to underage youth substance use throughout Barnstable County.
- If you are interested in prevention efforts in the towns of Harwich and Chatham, contact Sheila House at (508) 430-7836

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A community can't address children's risky behavior and measure progress without assessing and understanding what the risks are. Problems also won't get better unless we are bold enough to engage in difficult conversations. Monomoy is unique among Cape schools, both in our transparent approach to openly share the full results of our YRBS and in maintaining a commitment to biannually conducting this survey, publicly sharing the results, developing plans to address concerns, and implementing these plans.

Thanks to the efforts of Sheila House, Harwich's Youth & Family Services Director, she was able to obtain a grant for Monomoy to participate in this survey. The Town of Harwich should be commended for its progressive thinking of having a Youth & Family Services Director for the town. Ms. House is an integral part of the safety net protecting our youth year-round and often collaborates with the schools to develop programming to support and protect children.

YRBS Validity and Reliability

How do we know student responses are truthful?

- The YRBS is a well-designed and well-tested survey. The survey was developed in 1990, and has been taken by more than 4.4 million students, in more than 1,900 separate surveys.
- Research shows that students need to perceive the survey as important, voluntary, and anonymous, and guidelines were followed to ensure this happened. Students had the option to opt out, which decreased the overall response rate.
- Scoring, cleaning, and validating student responses and compilation of the data was performed by Jennifer Hohl Evaluation and Assessment Services. Doodling, random answers, inconsistency in responses, or selecting the highest (or lowest) possible response for all questions would lead to an individual's survey being deemed invalid and removed from the analysis. A total of 13 student surveys were removed for validity reasons.
- The resulting sample size was 522 respondents: 401 students in Grades 9-12 and 121 in Grade 8. The overall response rate was 83% in Grades 9-12 and 89% in Grade 8.

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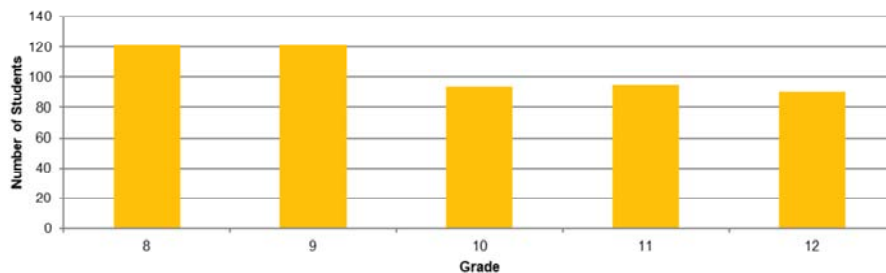
By allowing students to opt-out AND reviewing each survey for consistency, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey is considered to be a reliable tool for assessing levels of risky behavior and overall trends.

Participation Rates

522 students were included in the final surveyed sample, after some elected to opt out and a few surveys were excluded for validity reasons.

The survey was taken by nearly equal numbers of boys & girls (47% vs. 53%).

Number of Monomoy Students by Grade Who Took the 2019 YRBS



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The consistency of participation rates and the relatively large sample size, in conjunction with the data review and cleaning done, results in reliable information for us to review.

Some Select Findings and Trends

Our students report ...

- Monomoy high school students' use of tobacco is well below the state and national averages and continues to decline, but their vaping use has rapidly risen above both state and national averages.
- Monomoy teens' use of marijuana has increased since 2016 and is above their peers in Massachusetts and the U.S.
- Our high school students' use of alcohol is below the state and national averages, but we have higher frequencies of teens who binge drink.
- Monomoy student drivers are far less likely than their peers in Massachusetts to get behind the wheel of a car after drinking.
- The percentage of our students who report having had sexual intercourse in their lifetime has increased by an alarming 43% in the past 3 years.
- The number of Monomoy teens who reported on the YRBS as having experienced unwanted sexual contact has dropped by 30% since 2014, but still impacts a shocking number of our girls.
- Reports of self-harm and suicidal ideation on our YRBS have decreased significantly in the past 5 years, but the number of our teens who report being depressed is up nearly 50% since 2016.

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The above selection of findings highlights both some of the positive findings within our YRBS, as well as some more troubling trends. This provides a window into the range of topics covered over the next hundreds slides.

It's important to note that while we use the state or national averages as comparisons, our goal is to bring risky behaviors as low as possible, and well below state or national levels.

We ALL have a role to play in fostering healthy behaviors for our students

A.C.T.

Acknowledge – Care – Take Action

Acknowledge trends and challenges seen in these results.

Care enough to protect your friends, your children, or your students by seeking to change the status quo.

Take action by in participating in conversations, supporting safety initiatives, and being part of a solution.

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Our hope is that by understanding what the risks are, you will acknowledge problems, care enough to protect our youth, and join us in taking action to make our children safer.

Substance Use

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Lifetime Use Summary

Overall, Monomoy students in Grades 9-12 had substance use comparable with the overall Massachusetts state **percentages** for students reporting use of these substances at some point in their lifetimes.

Substance Use	Monomoy Grades 9-12	State Grades 9-12
Tobacco (Lifetime use)	13%	20%
Vape Products (Lifetime use)	46%	41%
Alcohol (Lifetime use)	53%	56%
Marijuana (Lifetime use)	42%	38%
Cocaine (Lifetime use)	3.5%	4%
Inhalants (Lifetime use)	4.5%	6%
Prescription Abuse (past 30 days)	2.5%	4%

Since the 2014 survey, Monomoy Grades 9-12 lifetime use of tobacco is down 13%, alcohol down 3%, and marijuana use unchanged, but vaping use has risen appreciably.

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Monomoy High School students (Grades 9-12) have lower use of alcohol and tobacco than the state average. The use of marijuana and vape products is slightly higher than the state average.

The use of most other “hard drugs” is below or at national or state averages.

Understanding the frequency of substance use among teens can be helpful in social norming risky behavior. A child may erroneously believe that “everybody is smoking pot,” for example. Yet this isn’t the Monomoy norm. In reality, most Monomoy students (58%) in Grades 9-12 have never even tried marijuana.

Lifetime Use Summary

While some percentages throughout the YRBS are low or below state averages, the **number reporting use** behind these percentages is concerning. 401 Monomoy students in Grades 9-12 took the survey.

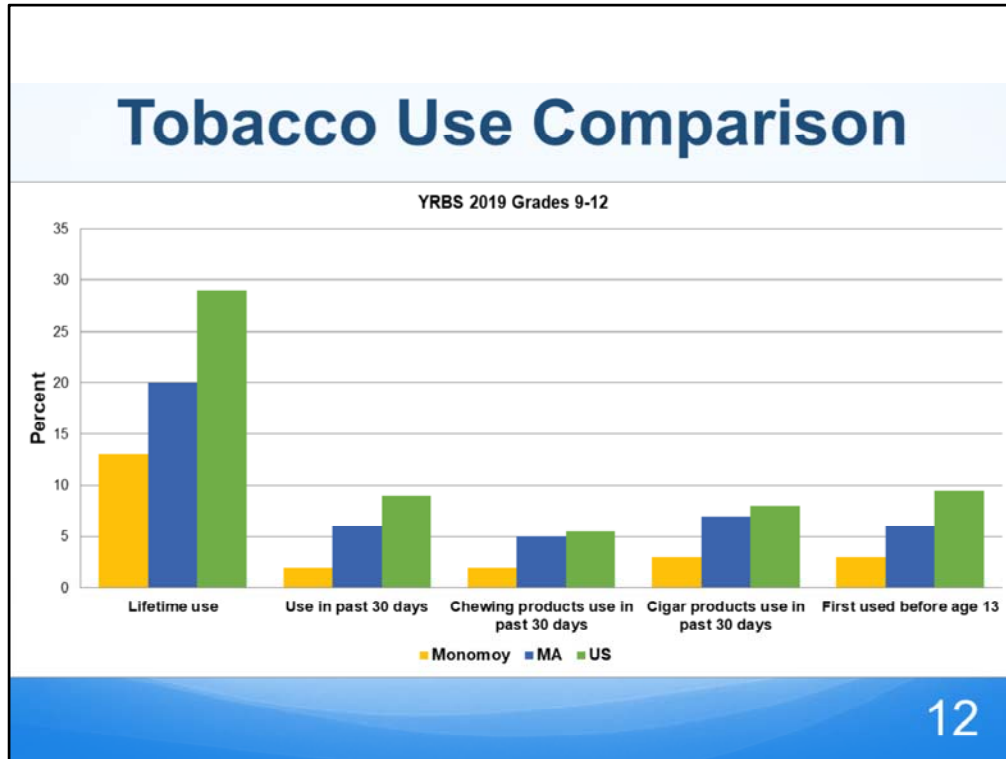
Substance Use	Monomoy Grades 9-12	Number Reporting Use
Tobacco (Lifetime use)	13%	52
Vape Products (Lifetime use)	46%	184
Alcohol (Lifetime use)	53%	213
Marijuana (Lifetime use)	42%	168
Cocaine (Lifetime use)	3.5%	14
Inhalants (Lifetime use)	4.5%	18
Prescription Abuse (past 30 days)	2.5%	10

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While it's reassuring that the percentages for Monomoy are largely lower than or close to the state averages, looking at the actual number of students that these figures represent is important to understand the real impact.

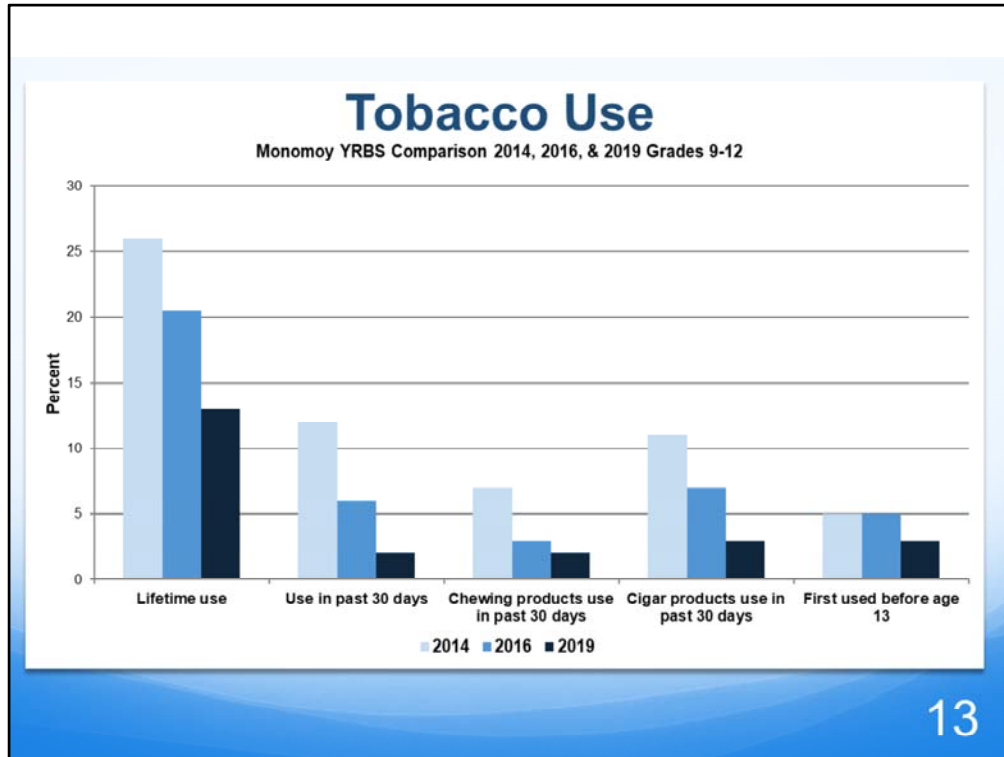
Tobacco & Vaping

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Lifetime use of tobacco, use of tobacco in the past 30 days, use of chewing tobacco, and use of cigar products is significantly below state and national levels for Monomoy Grade 9-12 students.

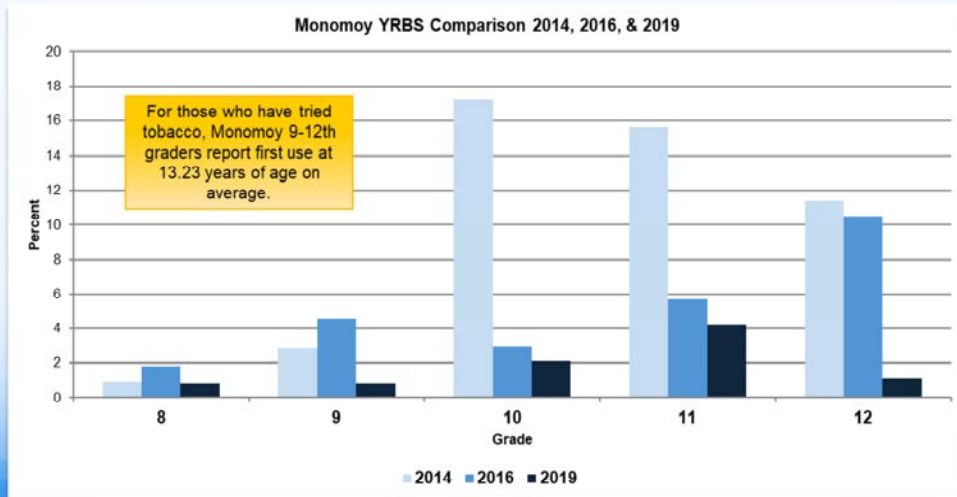
NOTE: Through out this slide deck, when comparisons are made between Monomoy, Massachusetts, and national data, the color scheme of yellow, blue, and green, respectively, is always used.



There was a significant reduction in tobacco use in Grades 9-12 from 2014 to 2016 and now to the 2019 survey.

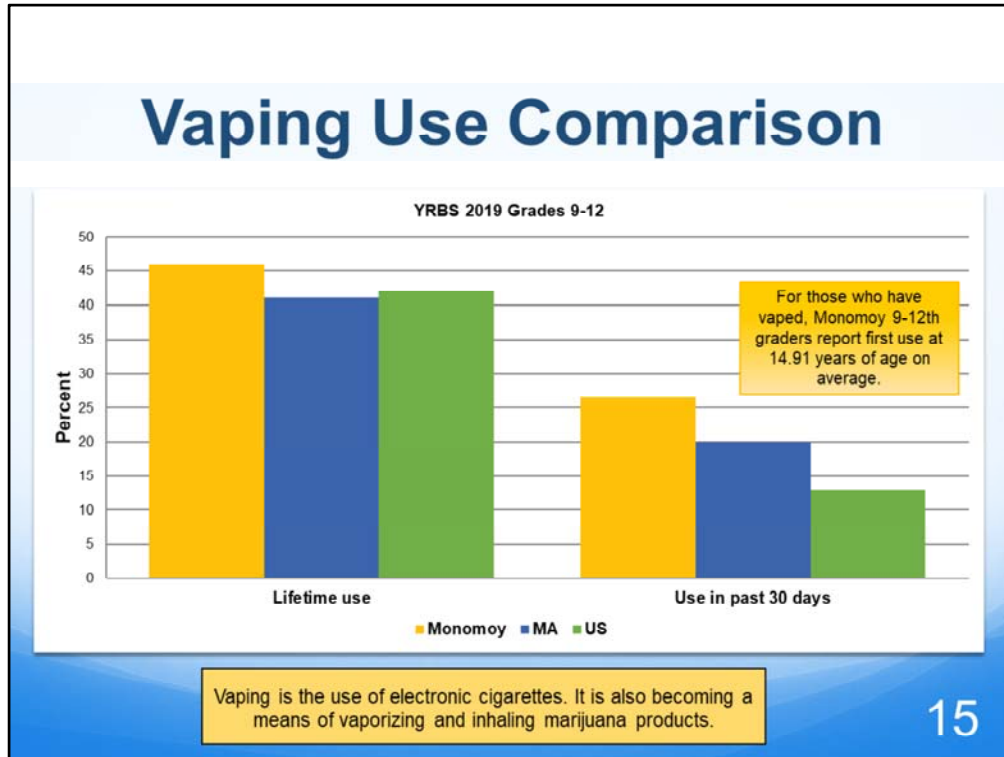
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Tobacco Use in Past 30 Days by Grade



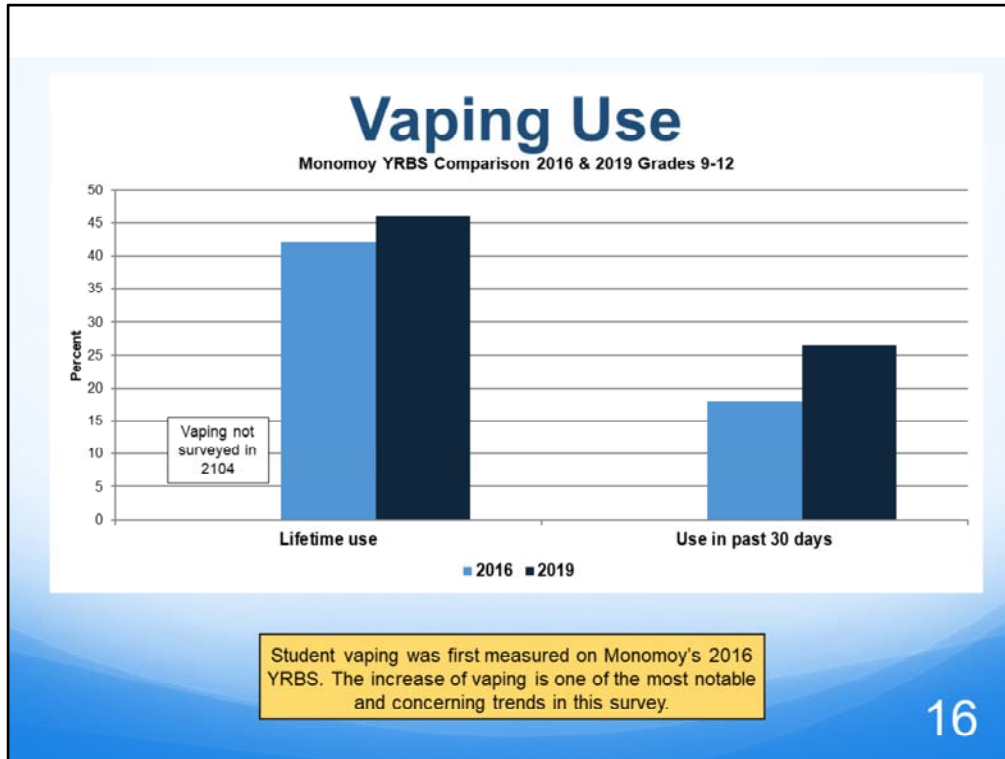
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There is a general trend that older students are more likely to smoke tobacco in the past 30 days, though you can see there is a dip in the 2019 results for grade 12 students.



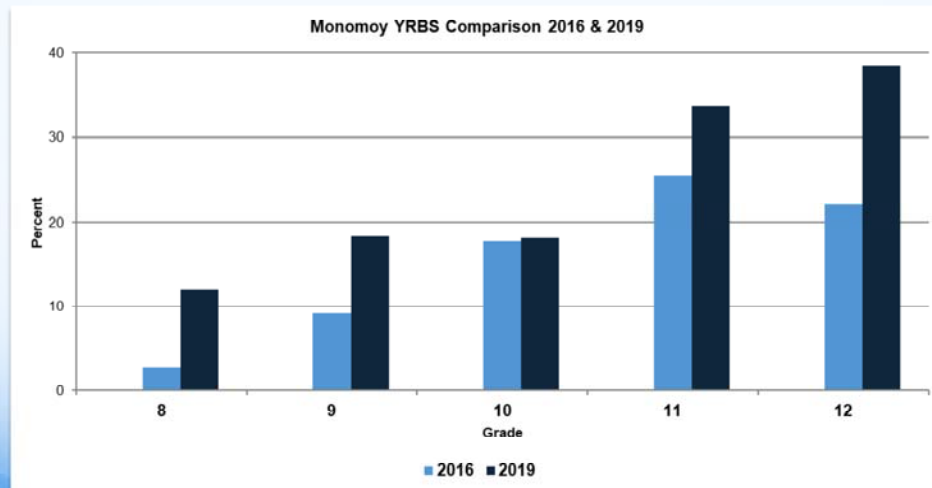
Vaping, the use of electronic cigarettes, is a new “technology” and was not a topic on the 2014 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, and minimally covered in the 2016 survey. In 2016, Monomoy students had a slightly lesser use of vaping than the state or national averages, and by the 2019 survey that has increased to slightly over the state and national averages.

In reality, the substances that can be used in vaping devices range from nicotine-free juice to liquids with much higher nicotine levels than cigarettes to solutions containing THC, the psychoactive component of marijuana. As it is challenging to determine exactly what substance is being vaped, students with vape products on campus are addressed by the administration as if the contents of the vaping device contained THC. All students caught vaping lose Jawsome privileges and are required to participate in Project Connect, an 8-week vaping cessation education and support program.



There was an increase in vaping in Grades 9-12 from the 2016 to the 2019 survey, resulting in one of the more concerning takeaways from this year's survey.

Vaping Use in Past 30 Days by Grade

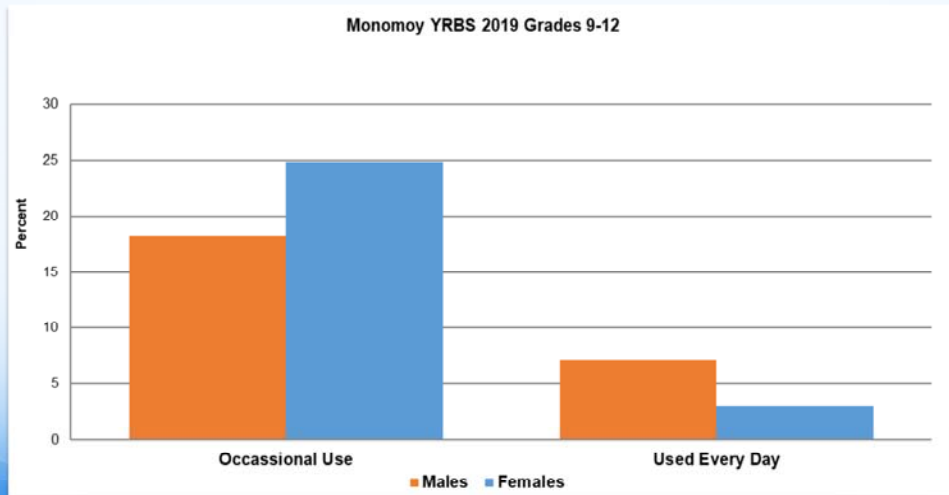


There was a large increase in vaping across both older and younger high school students. By senior year, 38.5% of all students report vaping in the past month.

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Younger students, in Grades 8 and 9, saw the largest proportional increase in vaping between 2016 and 2018, while our seniors and to a lesser extent juniors reported large increases in use of vape products since 2016.

Vaping Use in Past 30 Days by Gender

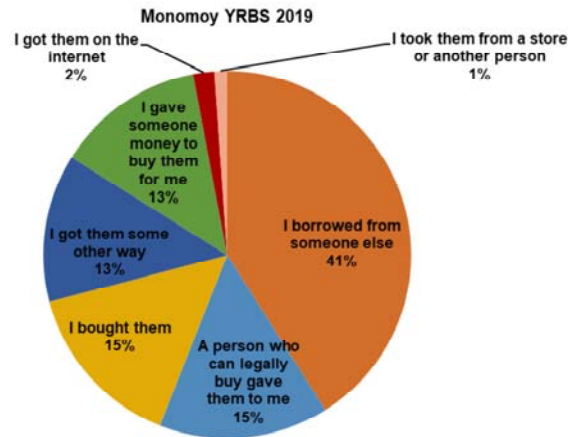


In our school, female students are more likely to have vaped in the past 30 days, while males are more likely to vape daily.

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Over past administrations of the YRBS, males tend use tobacco, alcohol, and others substance use in greater numbers than females. When it comes to occasional use of vape products by Monomoy students, that pattern is reversed. Females are more likely to have vaped in the past 30 days, while males are more likely to vape on a daily basis.

How Students Got Their Vape Products

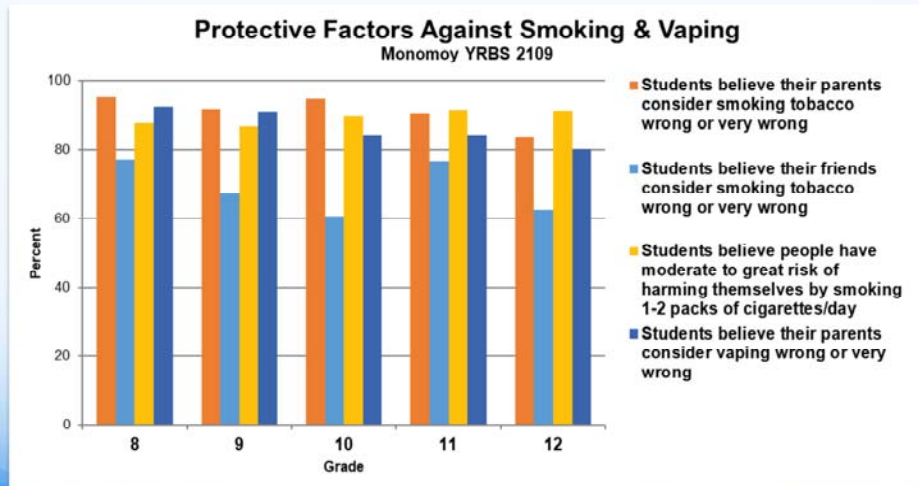


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Vaping requires equipment, including the device itself as well as cartridges (which come in a variety of flavors, and which can also be obtained with THC/marijuana, or converted to do so). Massachusetts law states that the sale/distribution of electronic smoking devices to persons under age 21 is prohibited (except those who have attained the age of 18 before December 31, 2018). Young people therefore undertake a myriad of ways to obtain the products.

Few of our students are buying the vape products themselves, generally someone else is buying the vape products or they are using a friend's vaping device.

Students' Beliefs Matter



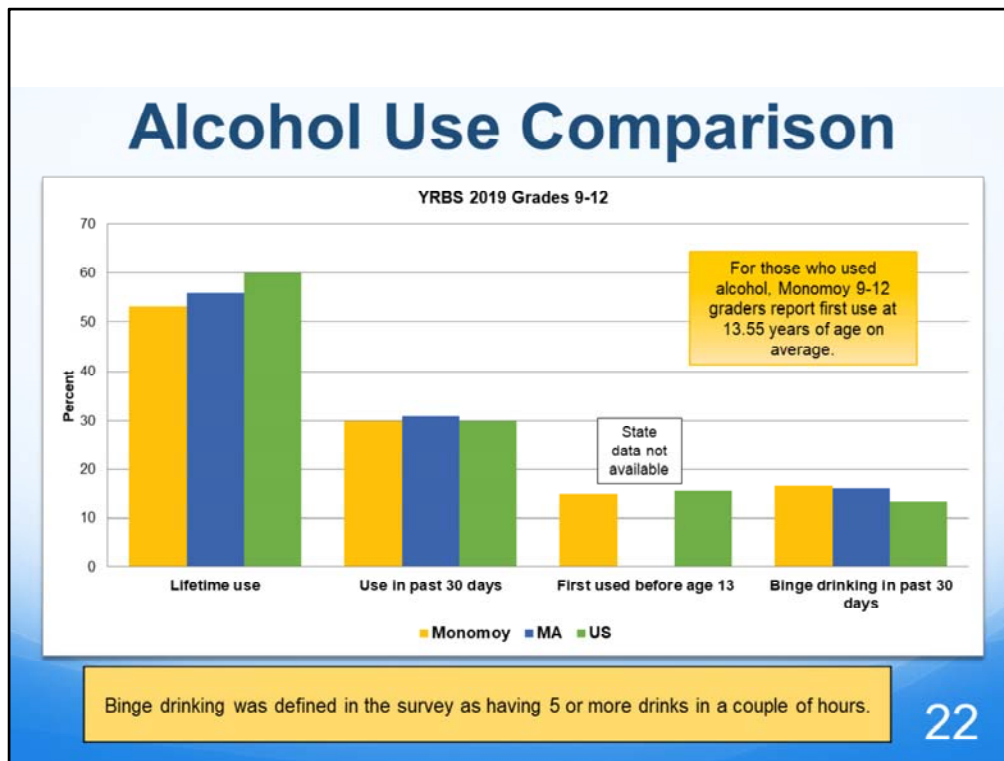
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It cannot be understated the impact of students' beliefs regarding the perceptions of others. If students believe that their peers and families think an activity is wrong, they will be less likely to participate in it. Similarly, if students have been exposed to information that use of substances is risky, they will be less likely to use those substances.

The percentage of students using tobacco has been in steep decline in recent years, in part because of extensive Public Service Announcements on television and messaging coming from home that tobacco use is harmful. Students generally think their parents believe vaping is less wrong than using tobacco. Teenagers' perceptions that using tobacco is harmful are sustained at well above the 85% level across grades.

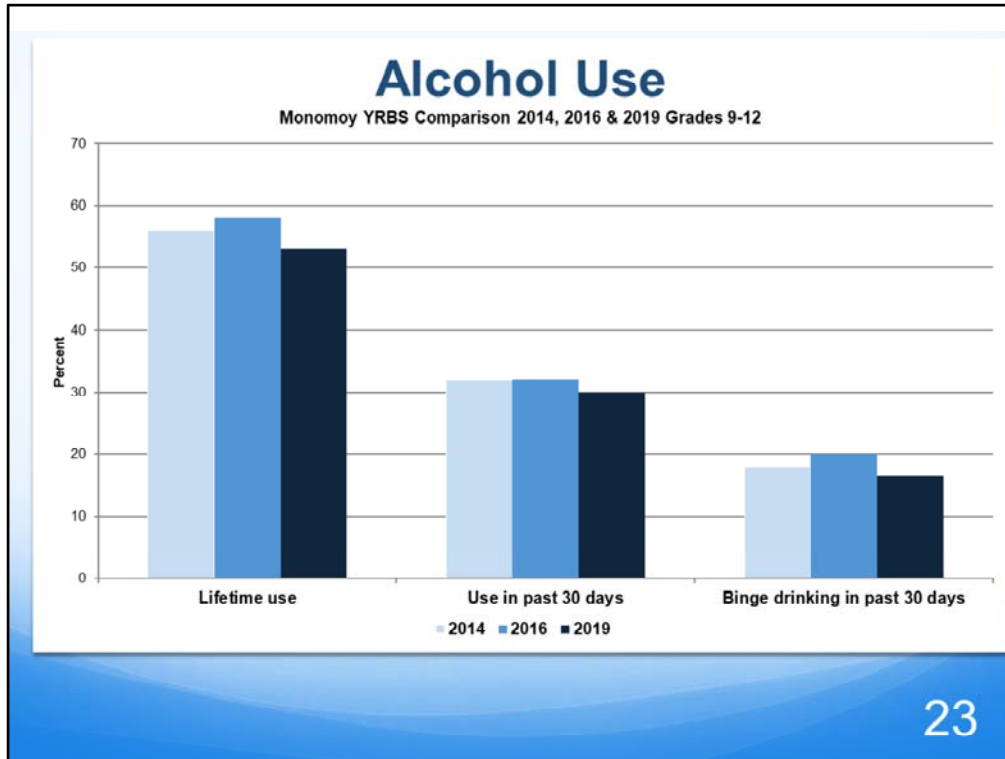
Alcohol

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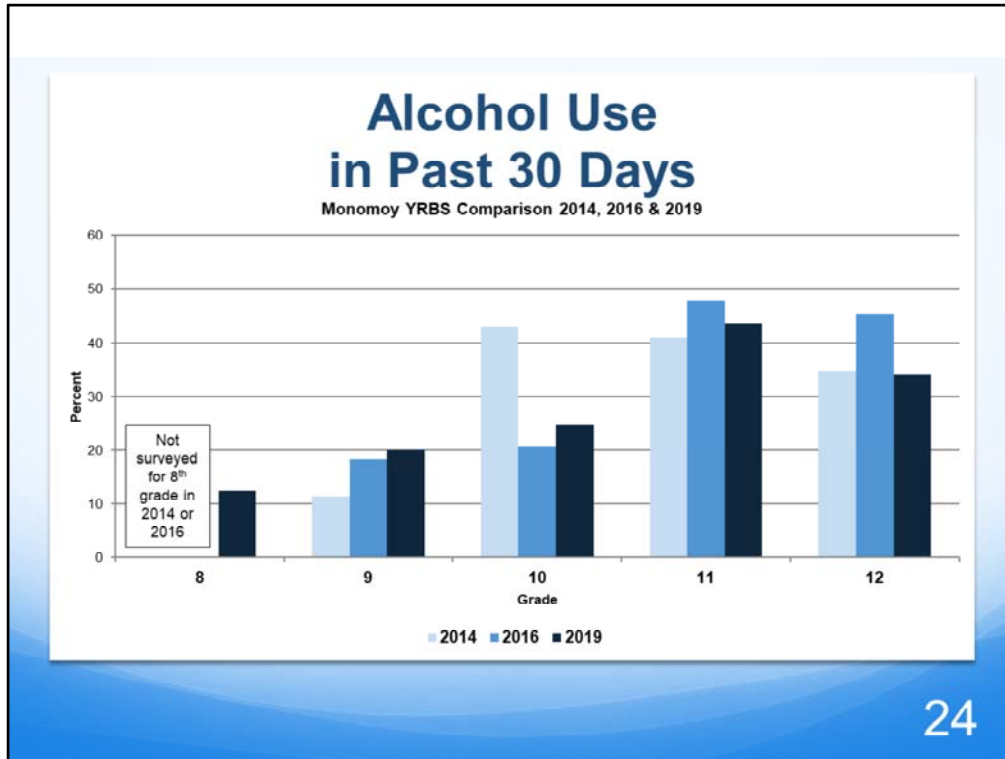


Monomoy Grades 9-12 lifetime alcohol use and use in the past 30 days are below state and national averages, albeit very slightly for student use in the past 30 days. Monomoy students in Grades 9-12 engage in binge drinking at higher rates than their peers in Massachusetts and the nation.

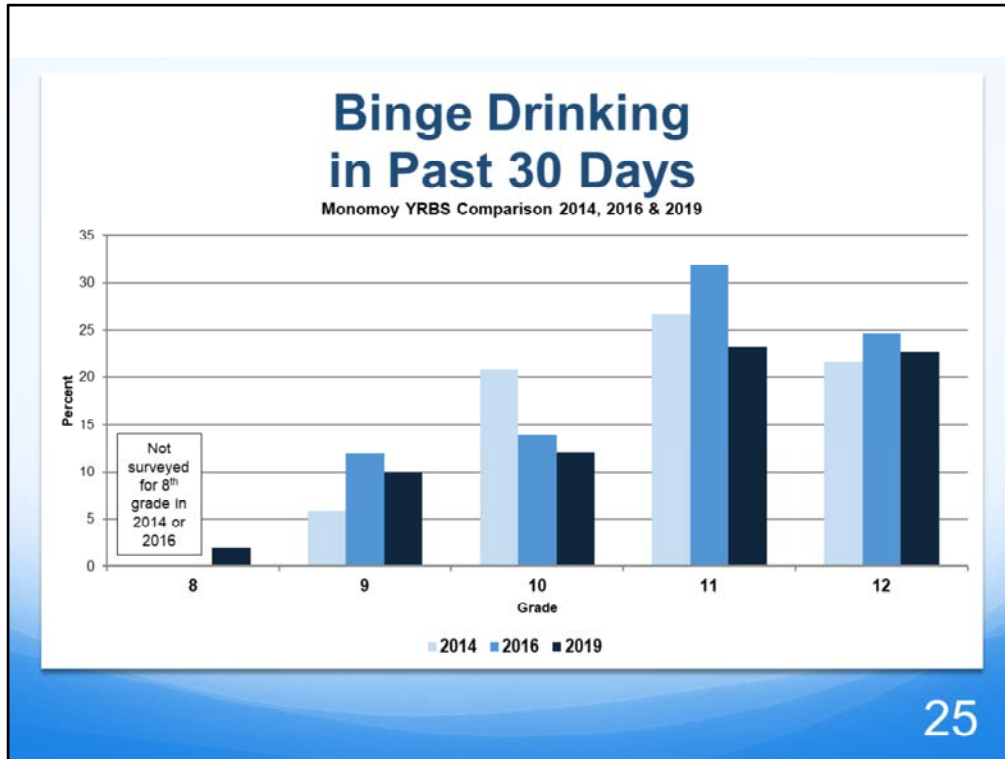
Binge drinking was described in the survey as having “5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours” (for females, it is 4 or more drinks in that time frame).



Lifetime alcohol use and binge drinking in the past 30 days have both decreased for Monomoy students since the 2014 and 2016 surveys.



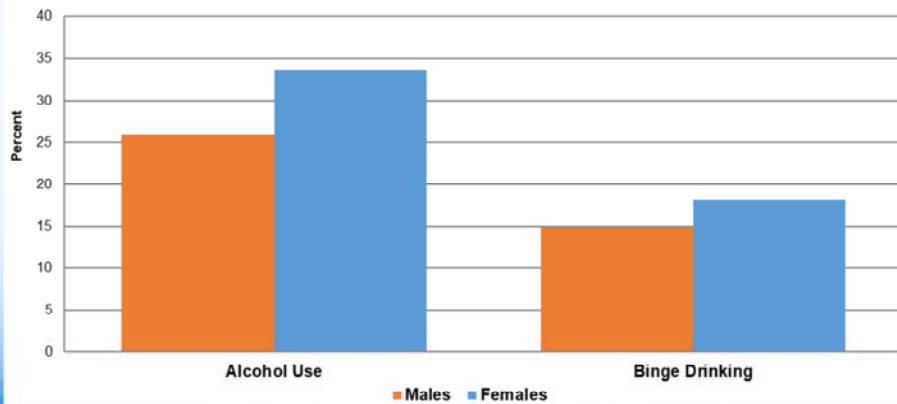
Of concern, alcohol use in the past 30 days has increased in 9th and 10th graders. Alcohol use in the past 30 days has decreased for 11th and 12th graders.



On the positive side, binge drinking has decreased for most grade levels since 2016.

Alcohol Use & Binge Drinking in Past 30 Days by Gender

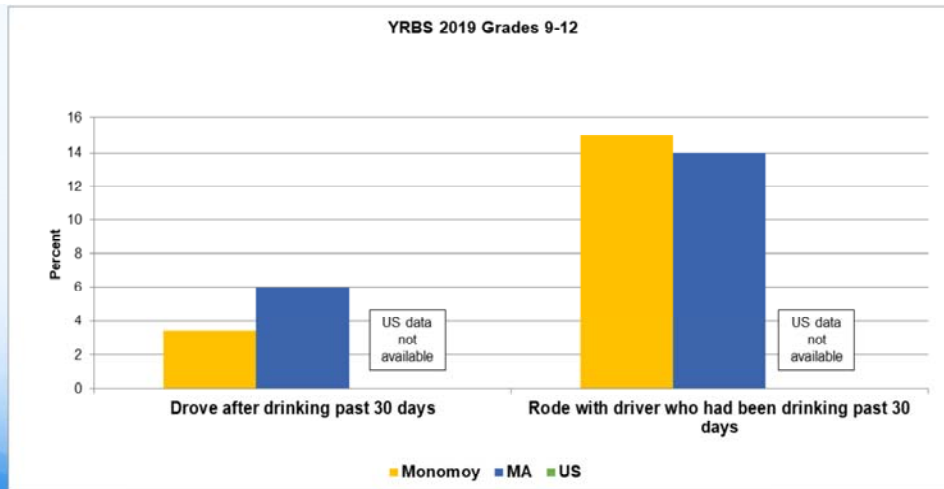
Monomoy YRBS 2019 Grades 9-12



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As with the vaping data, the conventional wisdom is that boys engage in more risky behaviors and use alcohol more than girls. Unlike with past YRBS, the 2019 data indicate that Monomoy's girls are both using alcohol in the past 30 days more than boys and are also engaging in binge drinking more often than boys.

Drinking and Driving Comparison

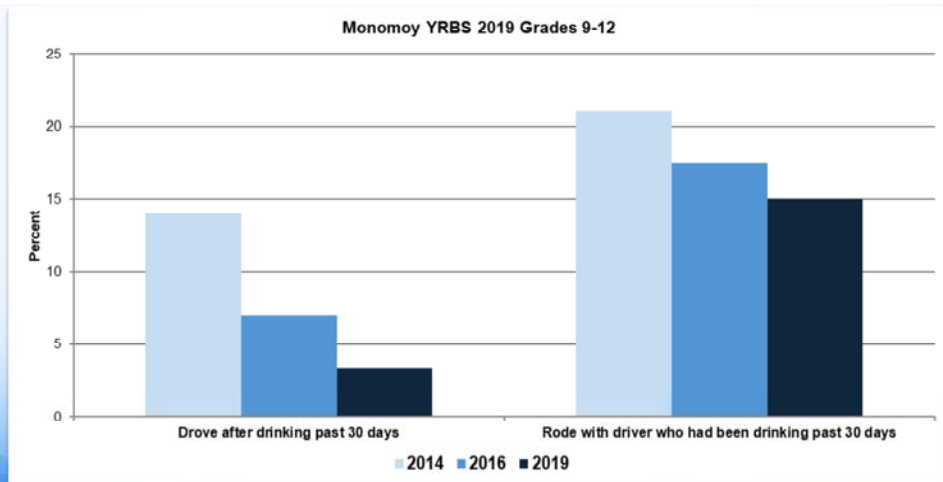


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Reassuringly, only 3% of Monomoy students in Grades 9-12 report driving after drinking in the past 30 days, which is significantly lower than the state average. This represents a continued decline from 2014 to 2016 and now to 2019, but there is still room for improvement.

Of concern, our students in Grades 9-12 reporting that they rode in a car in the past 30 days after the driver had been drinking is slightly higher than the state average, now up to 15%.

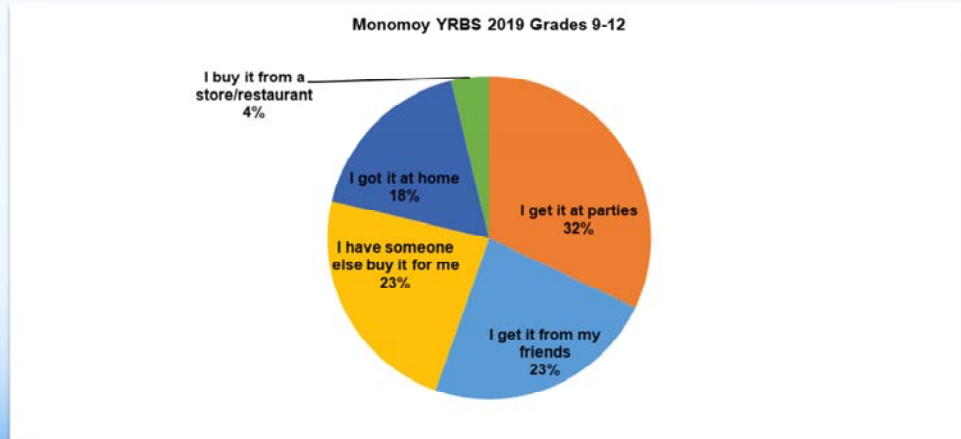
Drinking and Driving in Past 30 Days Trends



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The Past 30 Days Trends represent good news, in that both driving after drinking and riding with a driver who had been drinking continue to decrease from 2014 to 2016 to 2019.

Where did student drinkers usually get their alcohol?



The vast majority of alcohol student drinkers use comes from their home or other student's homes.

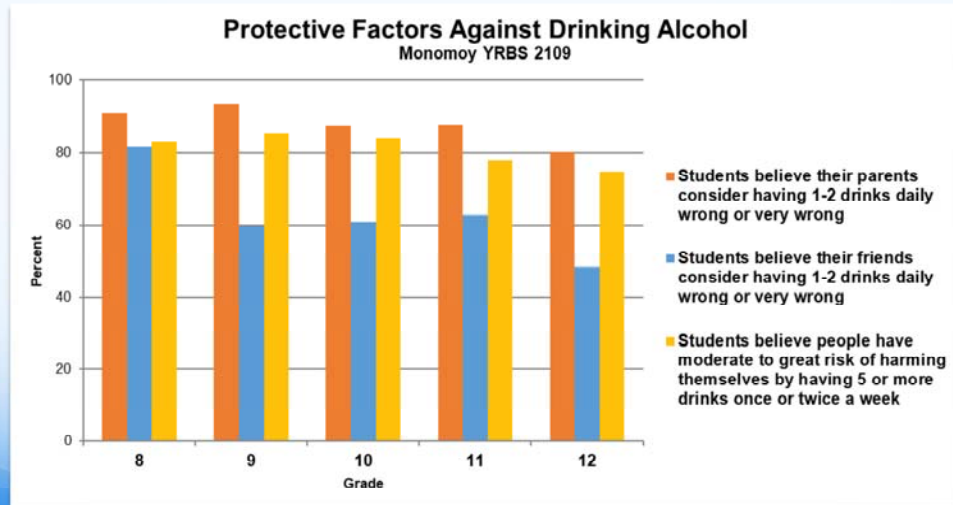
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Where are students getting their alcohol?

Answer: Largely from their parents. In some cases, older siblings or older friends are buying the alcohol, but much of the alcohol our students drink comes from their own parent's supply at home. This alcohol then shows up at parties and is shared with friends.

Parents need to be aware of this issue and lock up or monitor alcohol at home and be wary about the availability of alcohol at friends' homes.

Students' Beliefs Matter



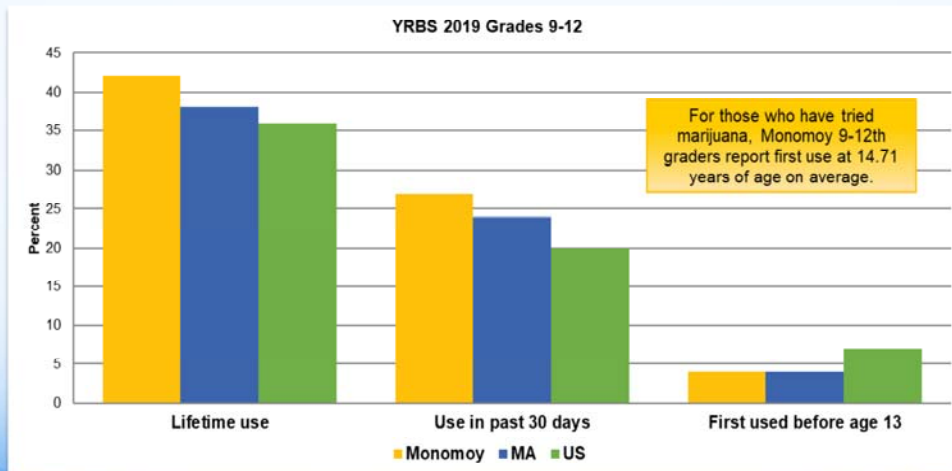
30

Again, the more that students have the perception that their peers or parents believe something is wrong, they less likely they are to participate in it. Whereas teens' perceptions that tobacco use was harmful hovered well above 85%, their perception that having 5 or more drinks once or twice a week is less than this and falls well below 80% by junior year. Concurrently, the perceptions that parents and peers believe its wrong to have one or two drinks daily also tails off by senior year.

Marijuana

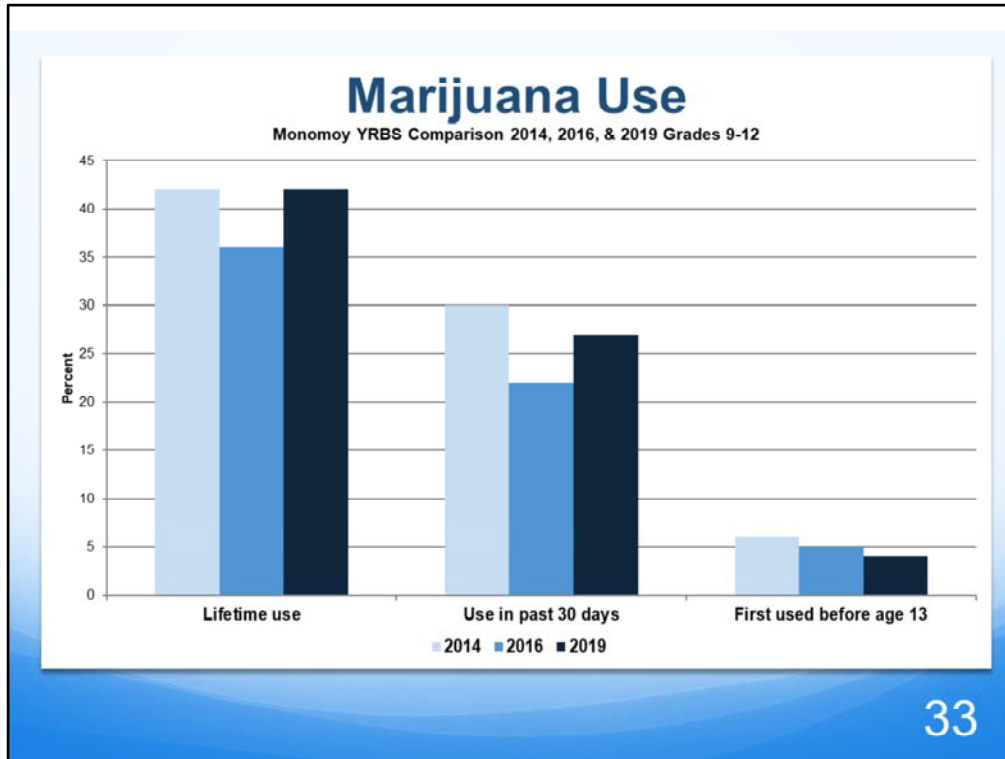
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Marijuana Use Comparison

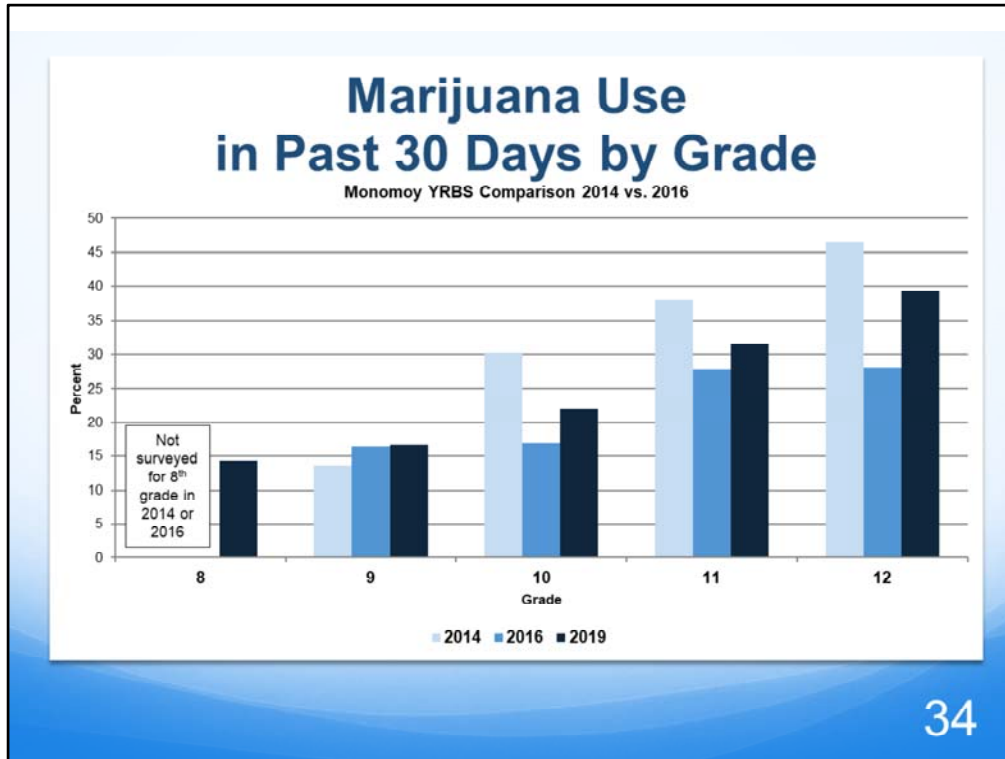


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Of notable concern is that Monomoy Grade 9-12 student use of marijuana in one's lifetime and use in past 30 days are above both the state and national. First use before age 13 is right at the state average and below the national average.

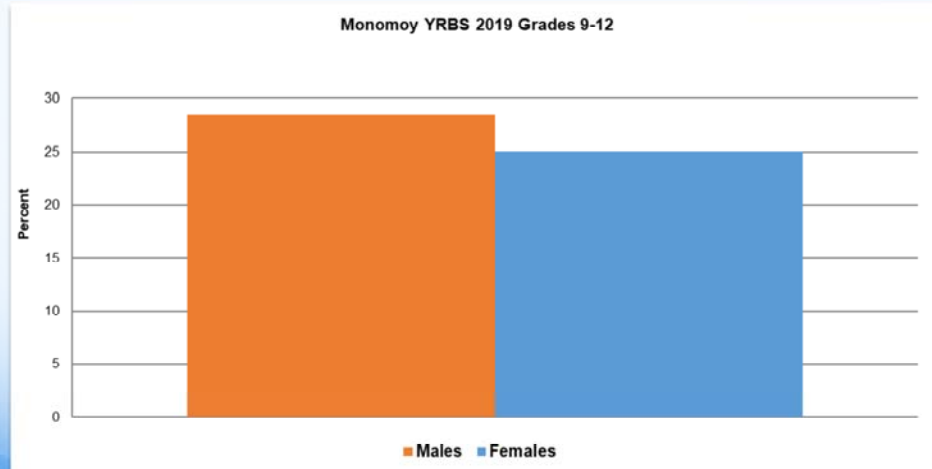


There has been an increase in marijuana use in Grade 9-12 since the 2016 survey, nearing 2014 levels. First use before age 13 has continued to decrease.



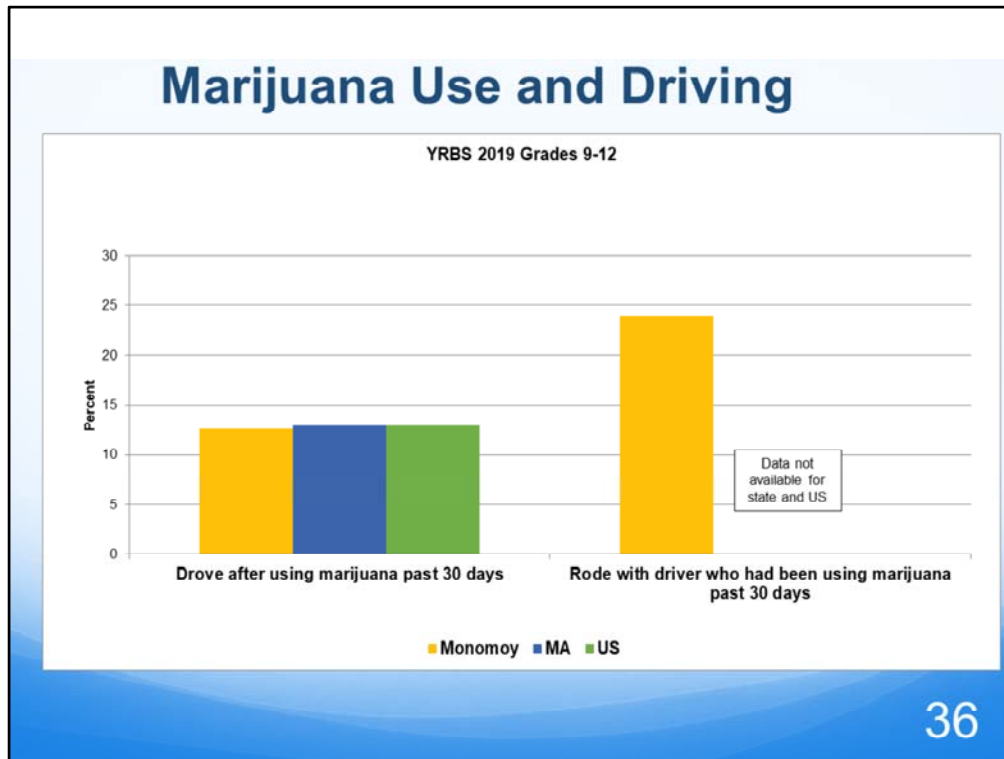
While marijuana use in the past 30 days is generally lower than 2014 levels, it has increased significantly over 2016 numbers.

Marijuana Use in Past 30 Days by Gender



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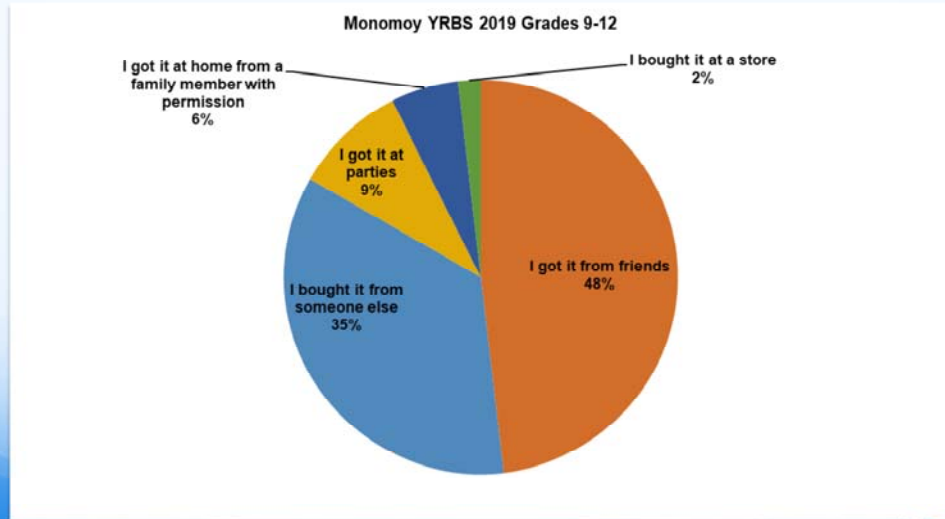
Marijuana use in the past 30 days among our male students is slightly higher than among our female students, at 27% and 24%, respectively.



The number of students reporting that they have driven after using marijuana is slightly lower than the state and national averages.

24% of students report that they have ridden with a driver who had been using marijuana. This is much higher than the 15% of students reporting being riders in a car driven by someone who had been drinking.

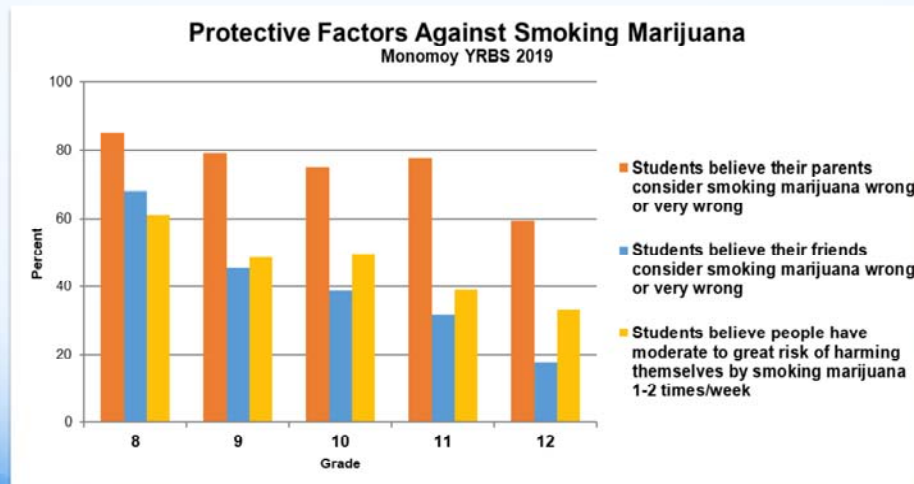
How did students get their marijuana?



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Students obtain marijuana from the expected sources: friends, at parties, buying it from someone. Two response options on the survey were getting marijuana from home WITHOUT permission and getting it somewhere else WITHOUT permission – none of our students reported taking their marijuana without permission. 6% report getting marijuana from a family member with permission.

Students' Beliefs Matter



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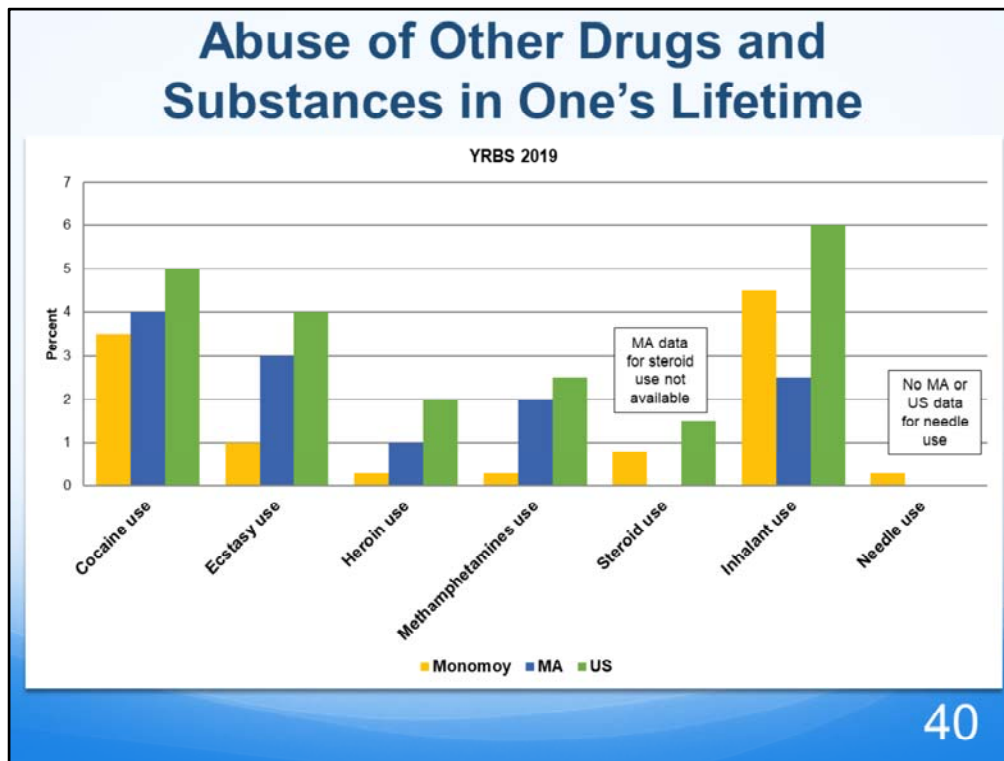
The greater degree to which students believe that their peers and parents consider and activity to be wrong, the less likely they will be to participate in it. This reiterates the importance of parent messaging and of positive peer pressure.

While 80% or more of student in each grade believed that drinking 5 or more drinks of alcohol once or twice a week was harmful, only 60% of 8th graders perceive smoking marijuana 1-2 times a week as harmful. This percentage drops off to 33% by senior year.

There is a similar decline in student's perceptions that their parents and peers think smoking marijuana is wrong from Grade 8 to senior year.

Prescription Medication, Other Drugs, and Distribution

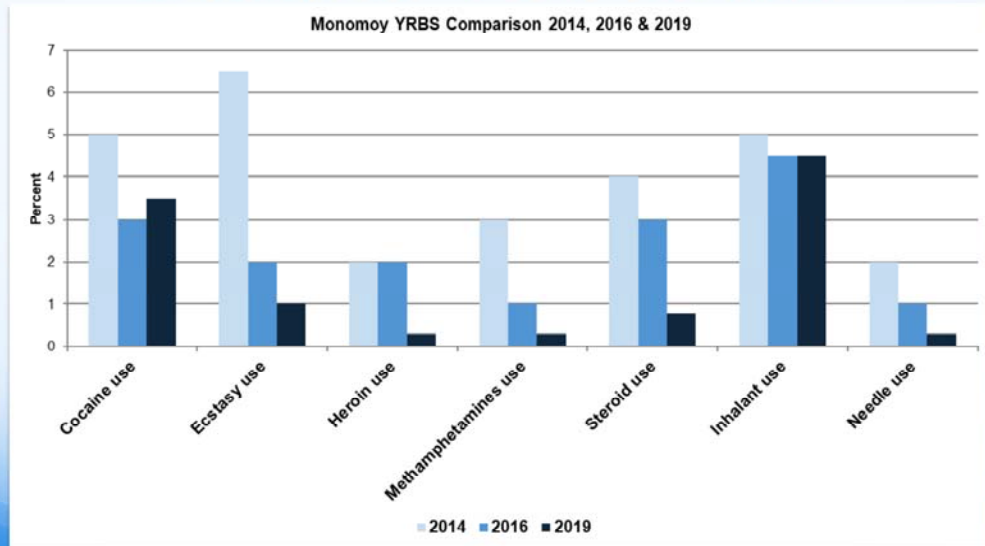
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The good news here is that Monomoy students are reporting lower use of these “heavier” categories of drugs than the state or national average. While the overall percentages are low, this still represents a less-than-ideal number of students, and we’d like those numbers to go even lower.

Inhalant use is the only category where Monomoy teens were above the state average. When student’s parents were coming-of-age, the inhalant use everyone was warned about was “glue sniffing.” Today, some teens are making the risky decision to inhale the vapors from volatile chemicals contained in small brown glass vials, often labeled as liquid incense or leather cleaner, available in some area convenience stores.

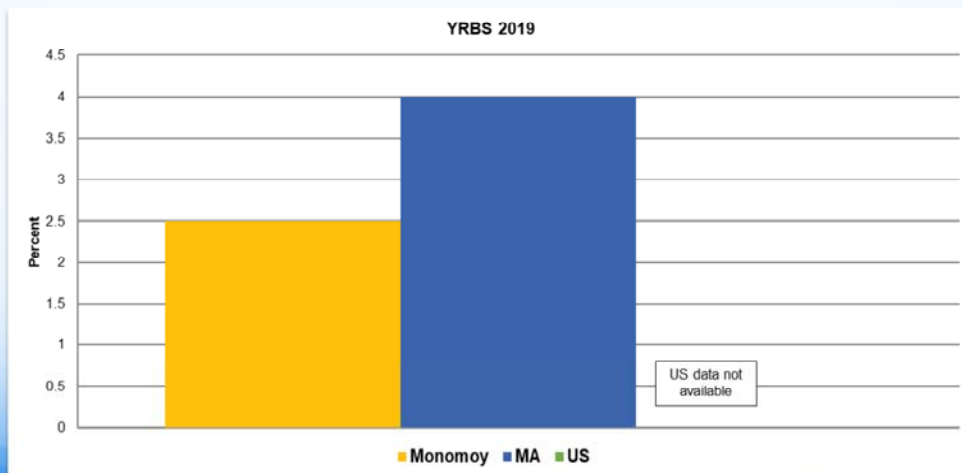
Abuse of Other Drugs and Substances in One's Lifetime



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For many of the “heavier” drugs, the use is down since 2014 and 2016 (including cocaine, ecstasy, methamphetamines, inhalants, and needle use) for Grades 9-12. However, there is a slight uptick in cocaine use (though still a very low percentage), and inhalant remained at the same level as 2016.

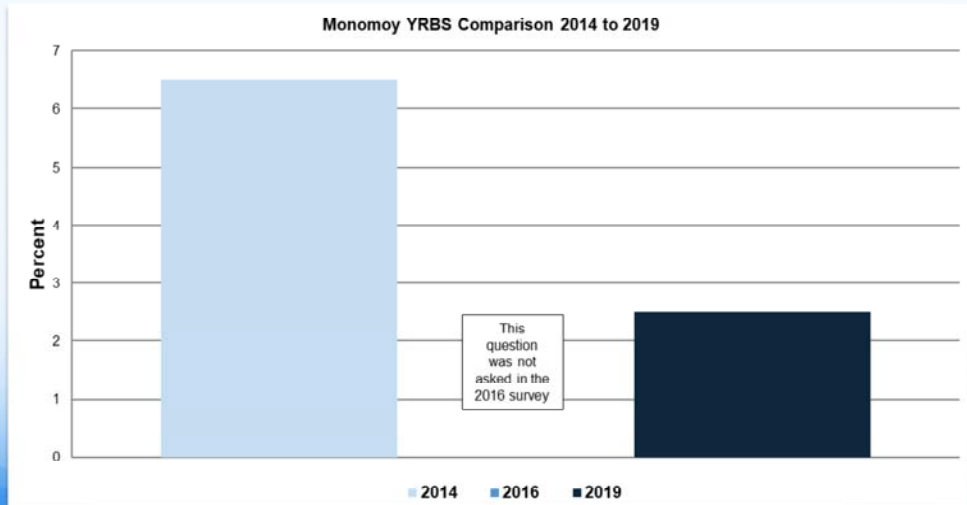
Use of Prescription Drugs Not Prescribed to Student in Past 30 Days



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The YRBS asked students how many times they have used prescription drugs not prescribed to them. In 2019, the number of students who are using prescription drugs not prescribed to them is lower than the state average. The concern has been largely centered around the misuse of prescription painkillers, which has been linked to individuals moving on to opioids and becoming part of the opioid crisis facing our country.

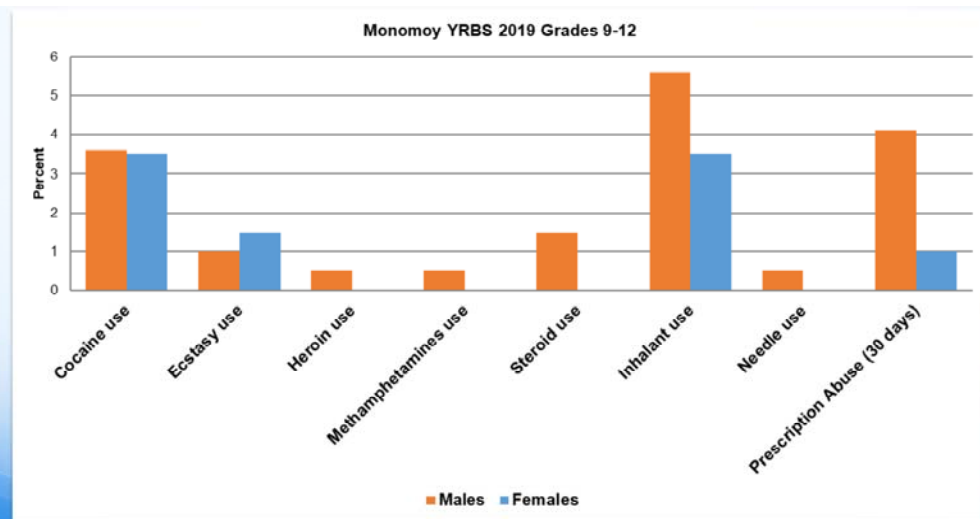
Use of Prescription Drugs Not Prescribed to Student in Past 30 Days



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When compared to 2014 data, far fewer students are taking medication not prescribed to them.

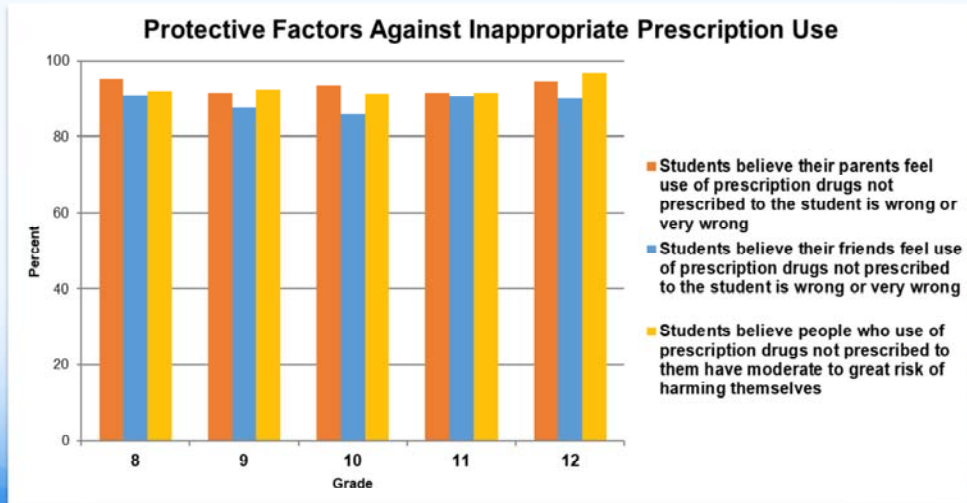
Abuse of Other Drugs and Substances in One's Lifetime by Gender



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As is generally the case, the use of “harder” drugs is higher for males than for females.

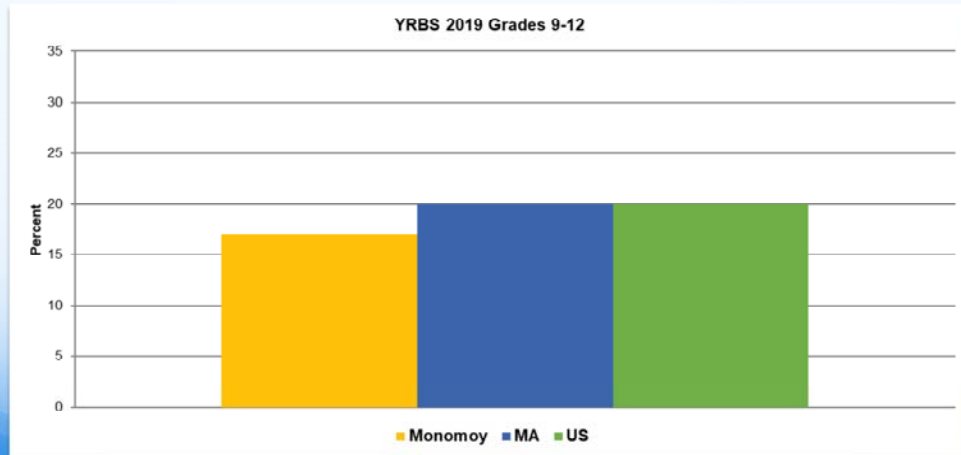
Students' Beliefs Matter



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Students receive messages from their peers, parents, and family members about the casual use of prescription drugs not prescribed to them. As with the case of use of tobacco products, in which over 85% of students across grade levels believed that tobacco was harmful, prescription misuse is believed to be wrong and harmful at rates even higher than tobacco. This is likely why we have seen such a pronounced decline in tobacco use and prescription abuse. For vaping, alcohol, and marijuana, where the products are perceived to be less wrong and harmful, use remains at much higher levels and is often increasing.

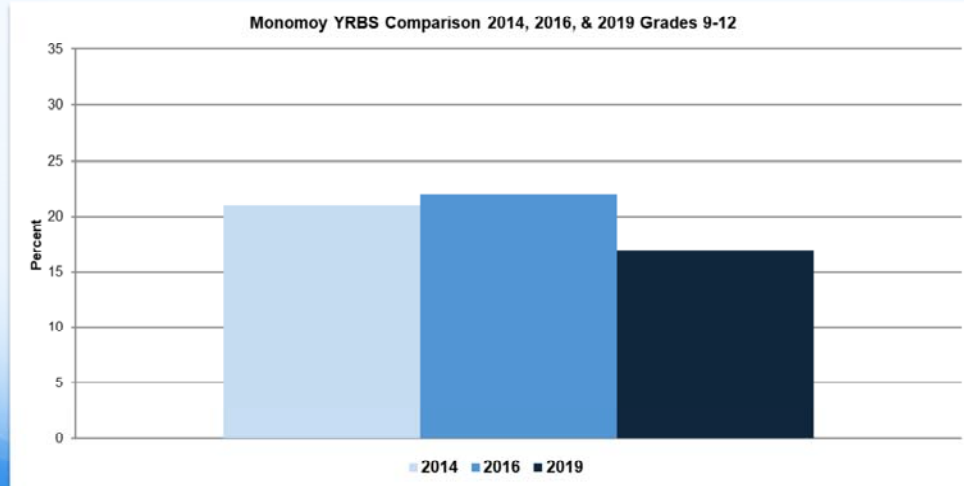
Percentage of Students Offered, Sold, or Given Illegal Drugs on School Property in Past Year



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Students in Grade 9-12 report that the distribution of illegal drugs at Monomoy schools is slightly lower than the state and national averages. Per our Memorandum of Understanding with our town's Police Departments, any student distributing drugs on campus will face criminal charges in addition to the schools disciplinary consequences.

Percentage of Students Offered, Sold, or Given Illegal Drugs on School Property in Past Year

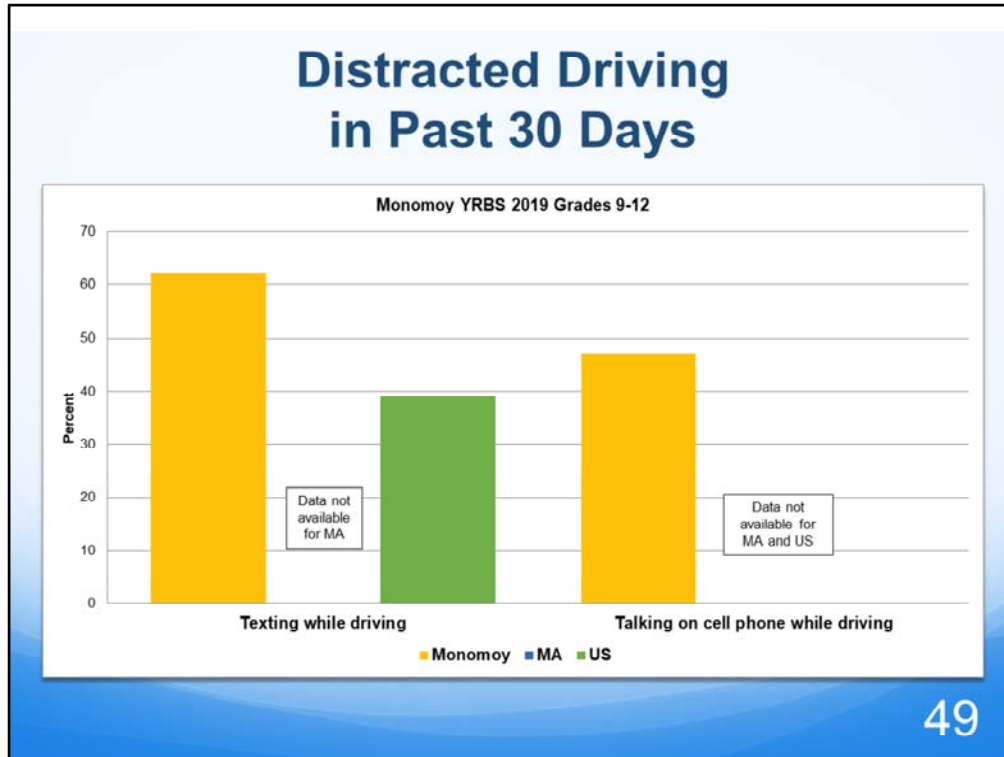


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Students in Grade 9-12 report that the distribution of illegal drugs at Monomoy schools has decreased from both the 2014 and 2016 surveys.

Distracted Driving

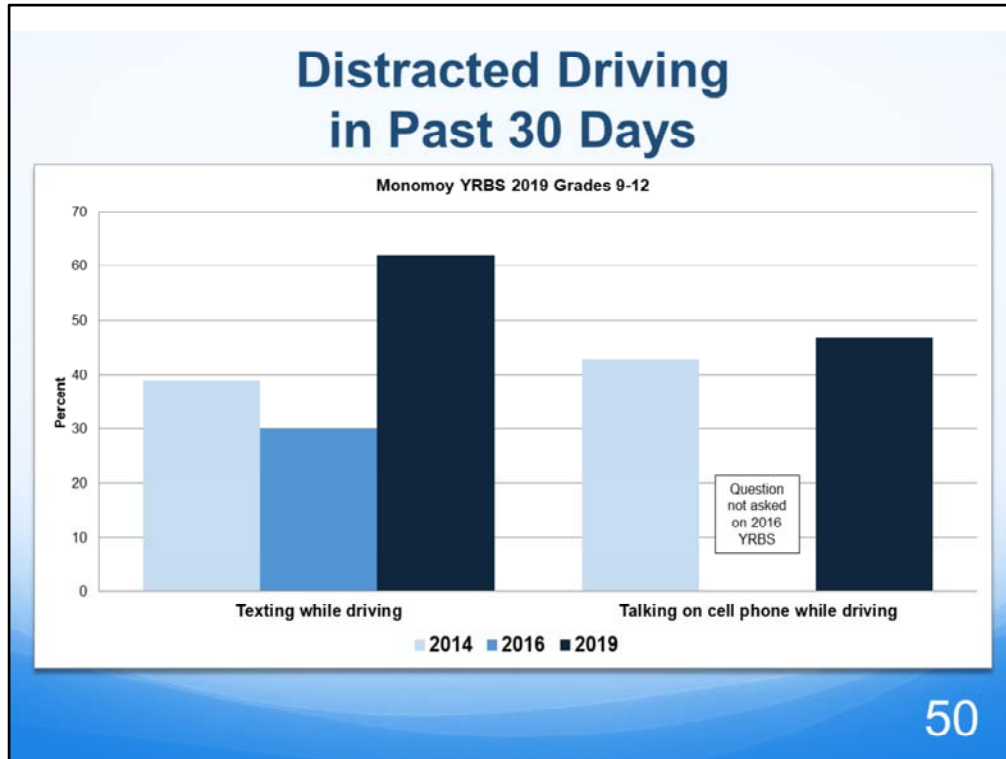
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Of tremendous concern, more than 60% of our students who drive report texting while driving in the past 30 days. This is significantly higher than the national average and the risk is alarming. From national studies:

- 21% of teen drivers involved in fatal accidents were distracted by their cell phones.
- 1 out of every 4 car accidents in the United States is caused by texting and driving.
- Texting while driving is 6x more likely to cause an accident than driving drunk.

Source: <https://www.edgarsnyder.com/car-accident/cause-of-accident/cell-phone/cell-phone-statistics.html>

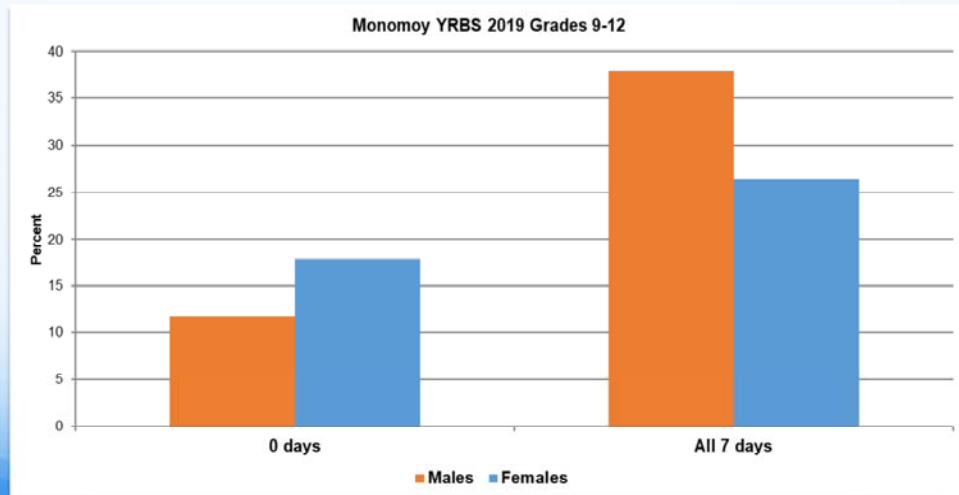


The number of students reporting texting while driving has increased dramatically from both the 2014 and 2016 surveys. Twice as many teens are texting while driving in 2019 compared to the previous YRBS in 2016. Surprisingly, teens talking on the phone while driving appears to have increased slightly since 2014, since our teens seem to rarely use their phones for talking.

Nutrition, Body Image, and Physical Activity

51

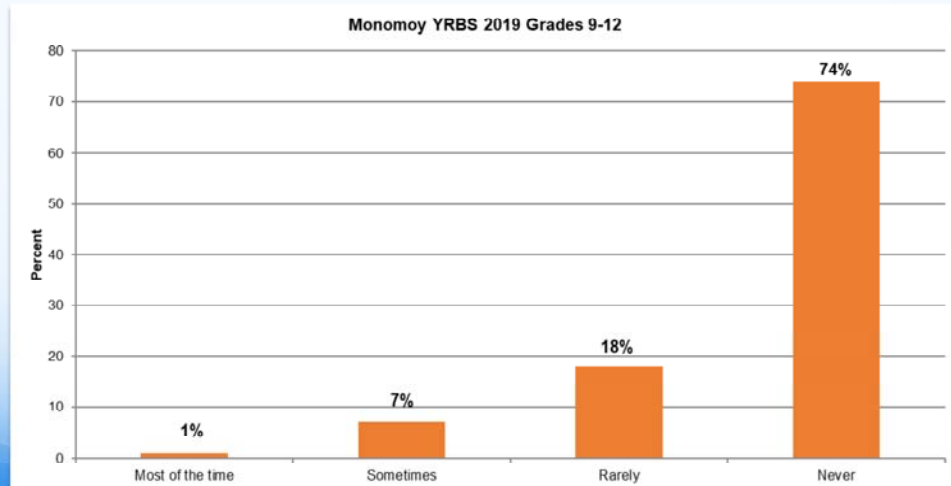
Frequency of Eating Breakfast in the Past Week by Gender



52

Girls are less likely to eat breakfast every day and more likely to not eat breakfast at all. More than a third of Monomoy boys and a quarter of girls eat breakfast every day. Nearly 20% of girls never eat breakfast.

How Often Students Went to Bed Hungry Due to Lack of Food in Past 30 Days

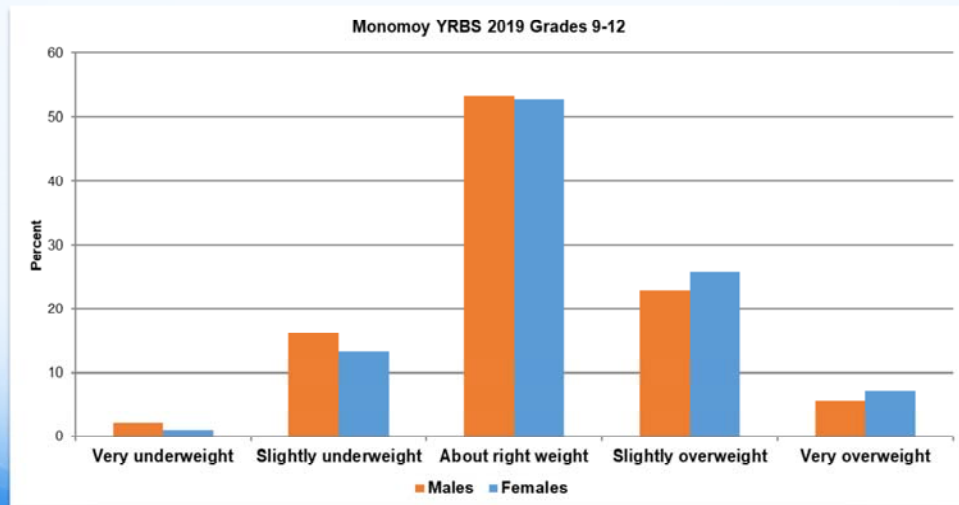


53

8% of Monomoy's students report sometimes or most of the time going to bed hungry because of lack of food in their homes.

Food insecurity is a concern in every school community and an increasing concern here at Monomoy as the number of students and families qualifying for free and reduced lunch increases. The percent of Monomoy high school students currently qualifying for free and reduced lunch is 39% and even higher at our elementary schools.

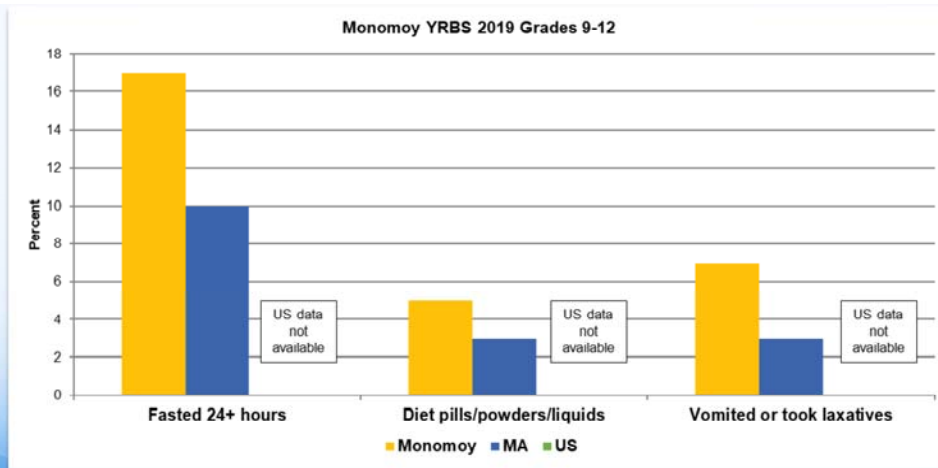
Monomoy Students' Perception of Their Weight



54

About half of Monomoy students perceive their weight to be about right. Girls were somewhat more likely to perceive themselves as slightly overweight and boys were somewhat more likely to perceive themselves as slightly underweight.

What Students Report To Be Doing About Their Weight in Past 30 Days

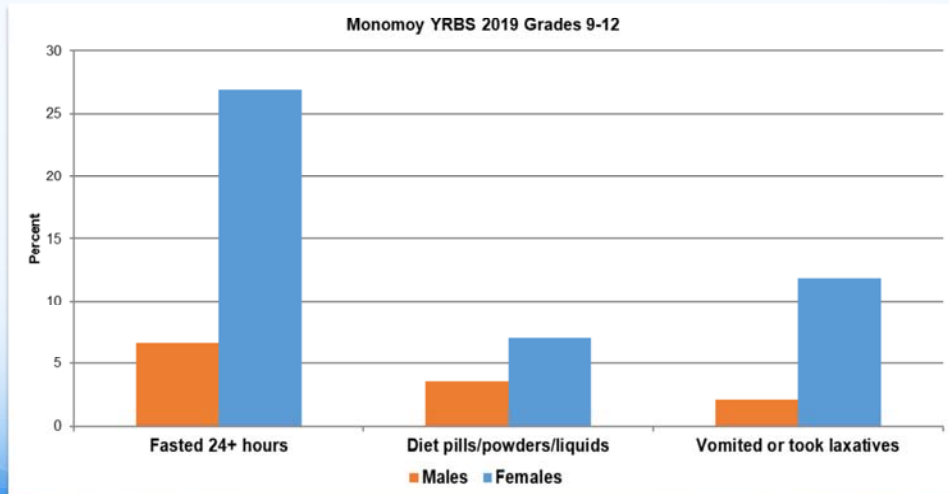


US data not available

55

Nearly 20 percent of Monomoy students fasted for 24 hours or more to lose weight, far above the state average. This is concerning as fasting extensively can negatively affect the health of teenagers.

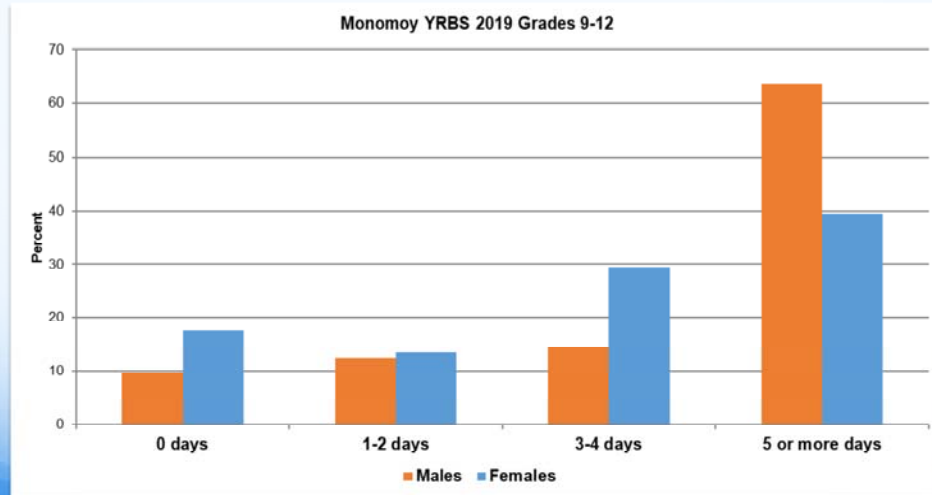
What Students Report To Be Doing About Their Weight in Past 30 Days



56

As girls are more likely to attempt to lose weight, they are far more likely than boys to engage in concerning and harmful means to shed pounds.

Frequency of Having 60 Minutes of Physical Activity in Past Week

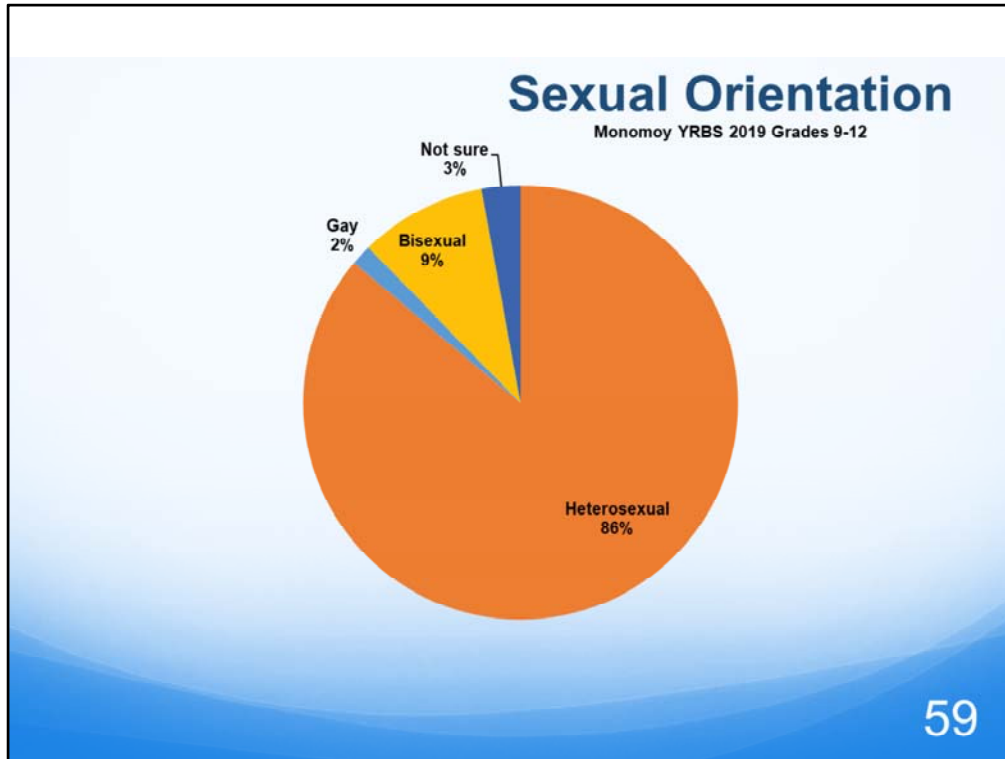


57

Our boys are more likely than girls to be physically active for at least 60 minutes 5 or more days a week. At the other extreme, girls are more likely to report not being physically active for 60 minutes in the past week.

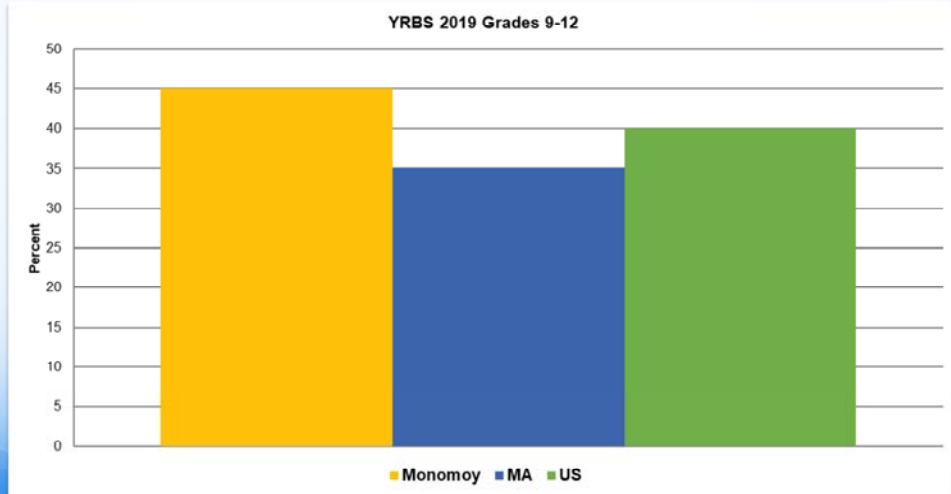
Sexual Behavior

58



The majority of Monomoy students report their sexual orientation as heterosexual. Monomoy's sexual orientation percentages mirror the state averages, where 10% of high school students in Massachusetts identify as being lesbian, gay, or bisexual. 2% of both Monomoy and Massachusetts high school students (Grades 9-12) identify as being transgender.

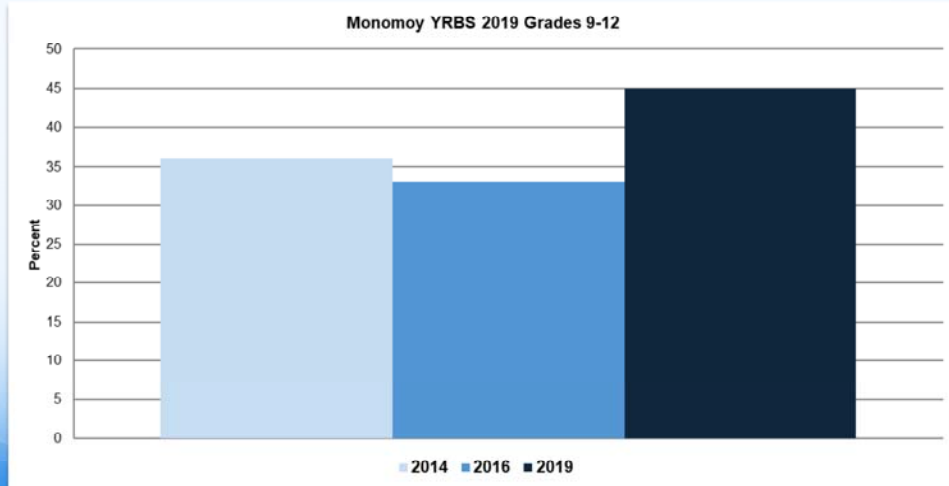
Percent of Students Reporting Having Had Sexual Intercourse in Their Lifetime



60

The percentage of Monomoy students in Grades 9-12 reporting having had sexual intercourse in their lifetimes is above state and national averages.

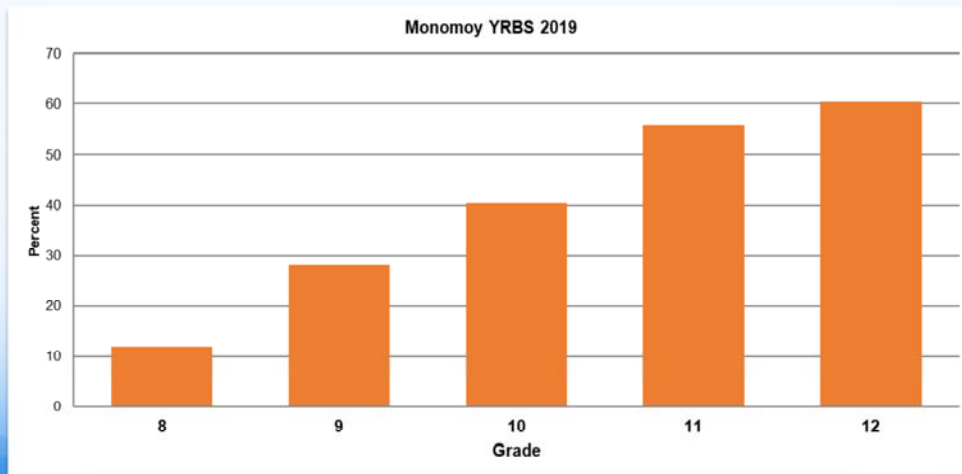
Percent of Students Reporting Having Had Sexual Intercourse in Their Lifetime



61

The percentage of Monomoy students in Grades 9-12 who report having had sexual intercourse in their lifetimes has increase significantly over both the 2014 and 2016 surveys. 55% of Monomoy students in Grades 9-12 have never had sexual intercourse.

Percent of Students Reporting Having Had Sexual Intercourse in Their Lifetime by Grade

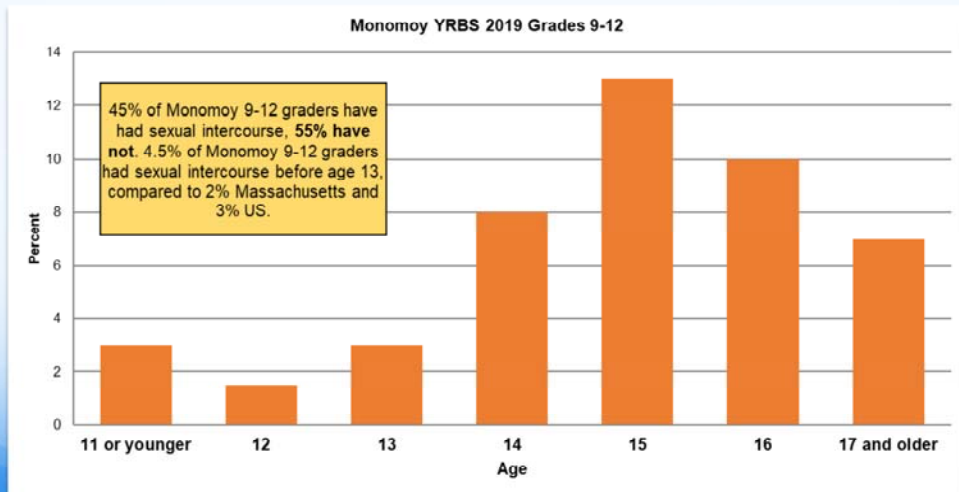


62

As would be expected, the number of students engaging in sexual intercourse increases with the students' age. By junior year, the number students who have had sexual intercourse exceeds those who have not.

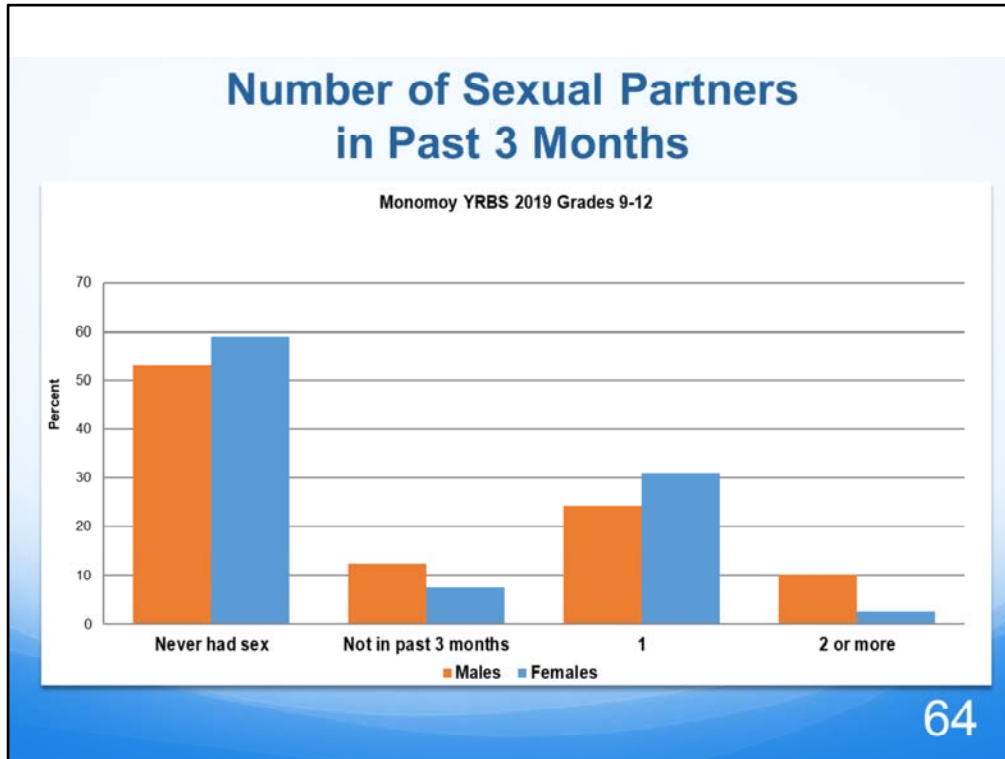
Age at First Sexual Intercourse

(of Monomoy Students Grades 9-12 Who Have Had Sex)



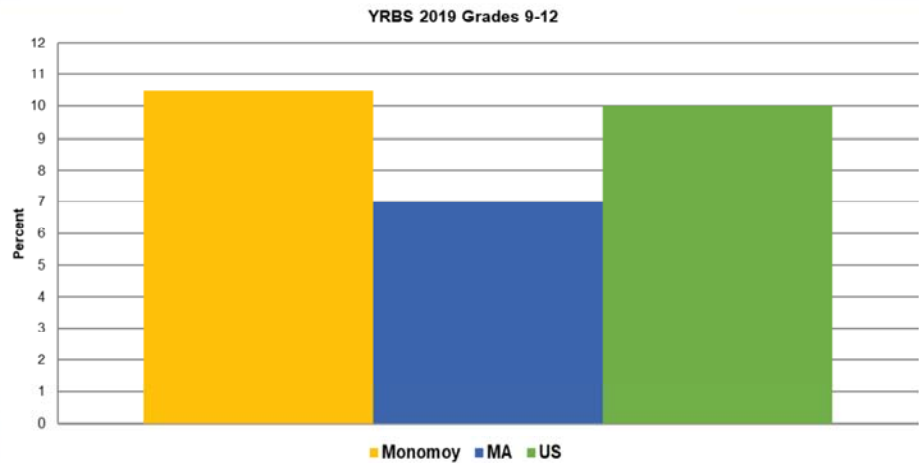
63

Of those Monomoy high school students who have had sexual intercourse, age 15 is the most common age for first sexual activity.



Vast majority of Monomoy students have either not had sex or had only one sexual partner in the past three months.

Of Sexually Active Teens, Those Having Sexual Intercourse With 4 or More Partners in Lifetime

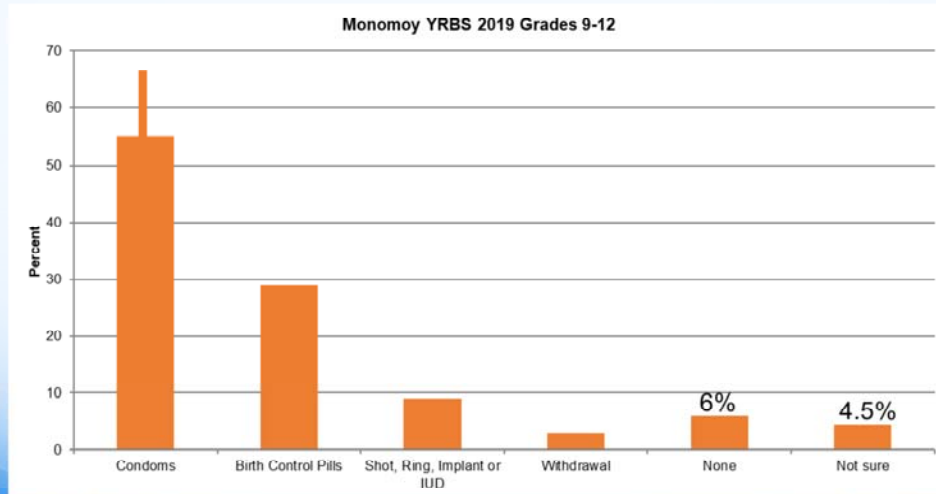


The percentage of students in Grades 9-12 who have had sex with 4 or more partners increased by 4.5% since the 2016 YRBS.

65

The number of Monomoy students who report having sexual intercourse with 4 or more partners is higher than the state average and is just above the national average.

Pregnancy Prevention Method Used the Last Time Students Had Sexual Intercourse

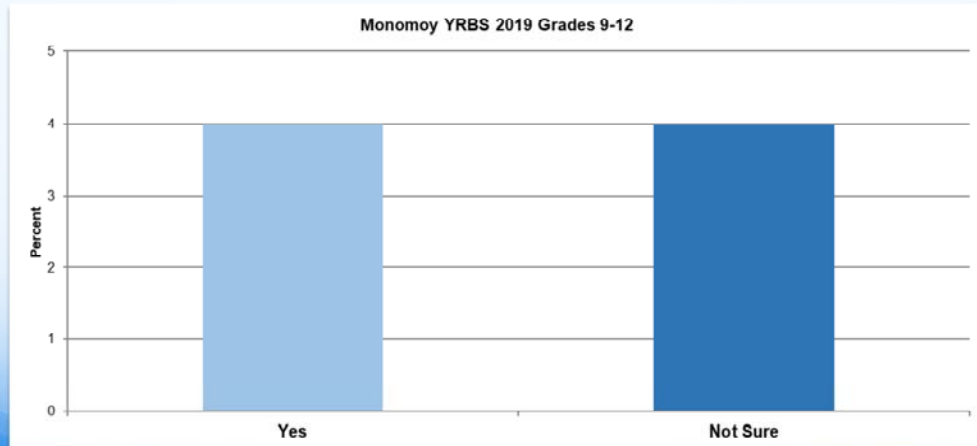


In this question, students could only select one choice, so some may have used a condom along with another method of birth control. When asked in a separate question whether they had used a condom, 68% had (which is higher than the national rate of 54% for teens).

66

For those having sex, condoms are the most common form of birth control. 10.5% either used no method of birth control or were not sure if their partner was using birth control – it's troubling that 1 in 10 students may not be using birth control.

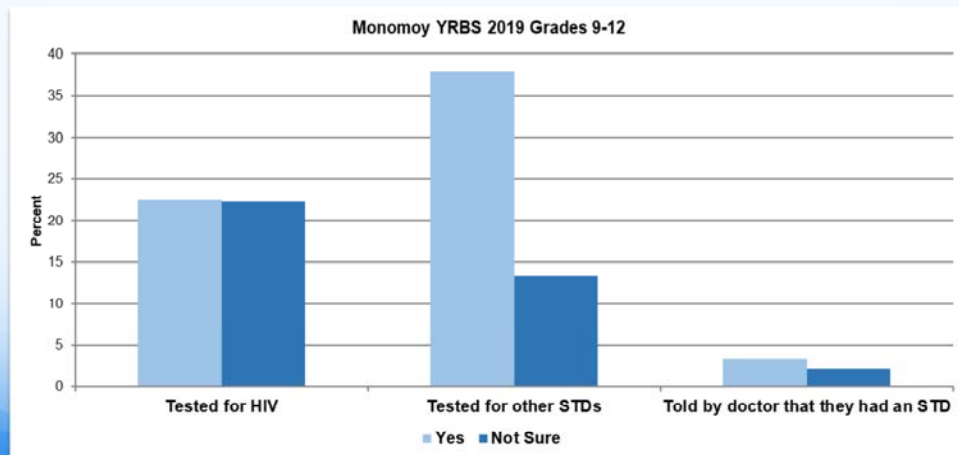
Percentage of Sexually Active Students Who Have Been Pregnant or Gotten Someone Pregnant



67

Of those sexually active students, 4% of the students report having been pregnant or having gotten someone pregnant, with another 4% not sure.

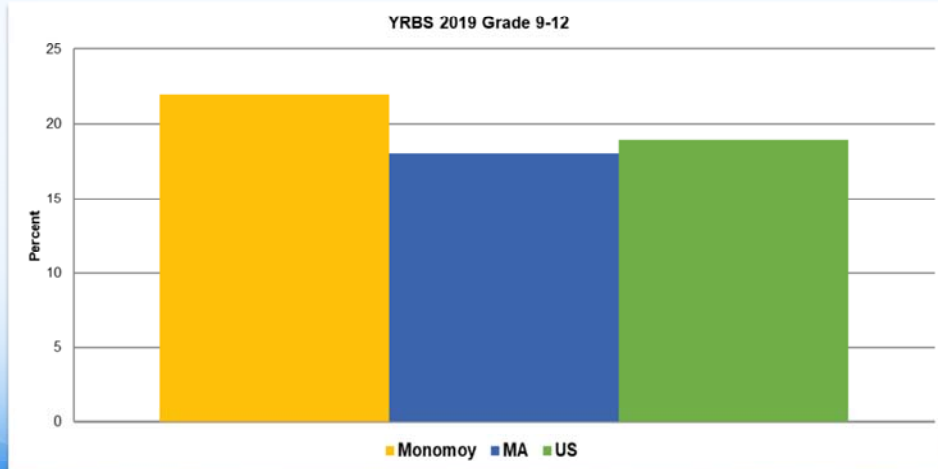
Percentage of Sexually Active Students Who Have Been Tested for or Contracted Sexually Transmitted Diseases



68

Of those sexually active students, approximately 3% of them also report having contracted a sexually transmitted disease. More than a third of sexually active students report being tested for STDs and more than a fifth have been tested for HIV.

Percentage of Sexually Active Students Using Drugs or Alcohol Before Last Sexual Intercourse

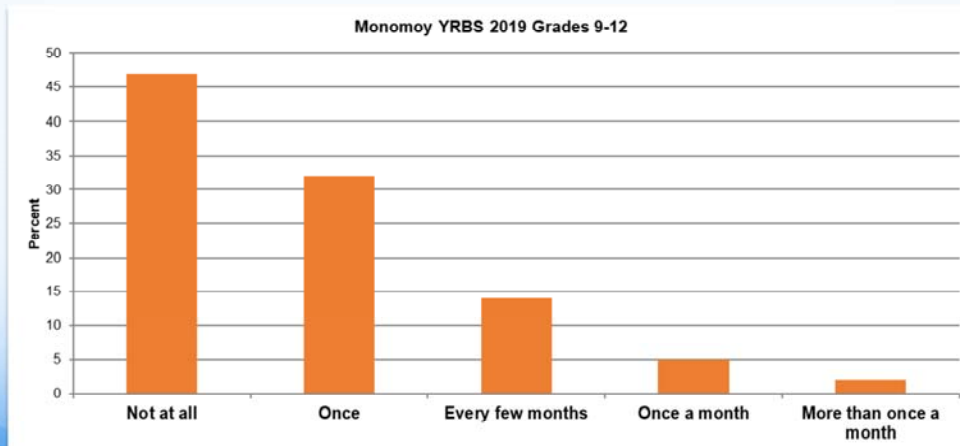


The percentage of sexually active students in Grades 9-12 who used drugs or alcohol before their last sexual intercourse has risen appreciably in the past five years from 10% in 2014 to 19% in 2016 to now 22% in 2019.

69

Of real concern, the percentage of Monomoy students who reported using drugs or alcohol before their last sexual intercourse is higher than both the state and national averages, and this percentage has increased from 10% in 2014 to 22% in 2019.

Have Discussed Sexuality and/or STD & Pregnancy Prevention With Parents or Other Adult Family Members in Past Year



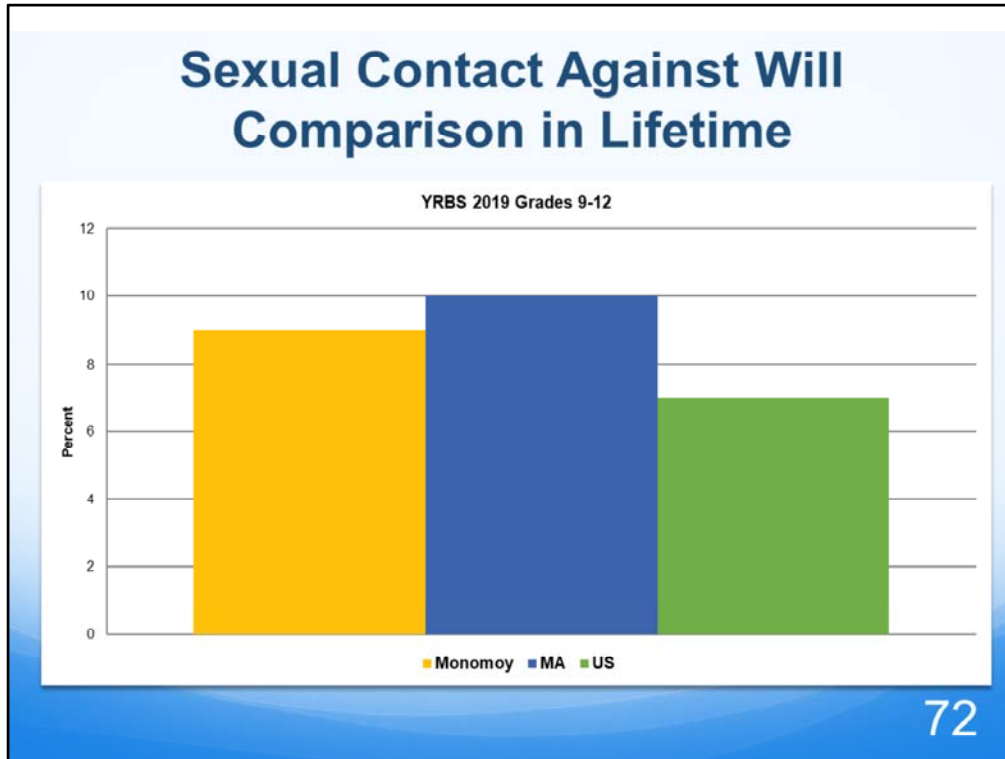
While only 47% of our students in Grades 9 through 12 have had a parent talk to them about sex in the past year, this is better than the 39% of students getting this advice from parents statewide.

70

Nearly half of students responded that their parents have never discussed sexuality with them.

Unwanted Sexual Contact and Dating Violence

71

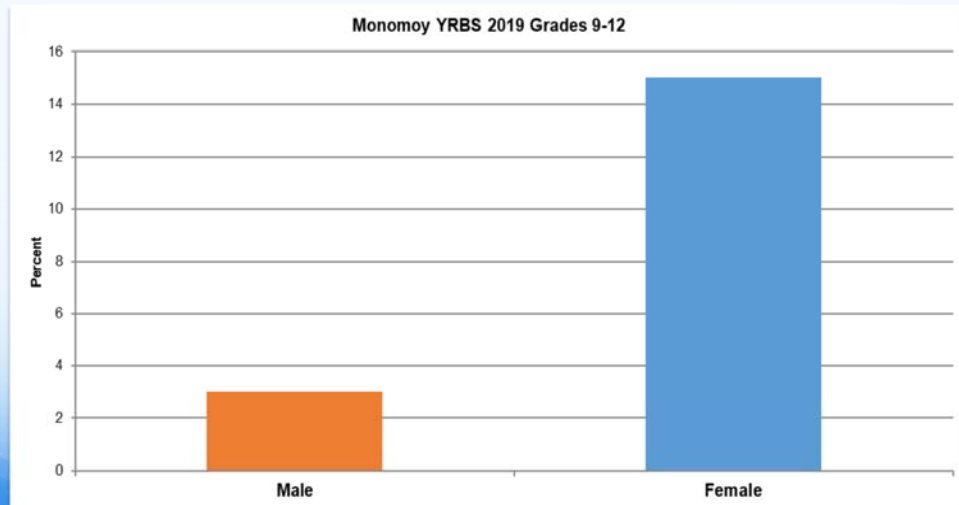


Of significant concern in the Monomoy Youth Risk Behavior Survey results was the frequency of students reporting to be physically forced to have intercourse or do other sexual acts. There is a need to reinforce what consent means with our teens and to clearly convey that forcing another into sexual contact is criminal, and can result in a student being charged with rape and/or assault.

Our students in Grades 9-12 were below the state average for this data point, but above the national average.

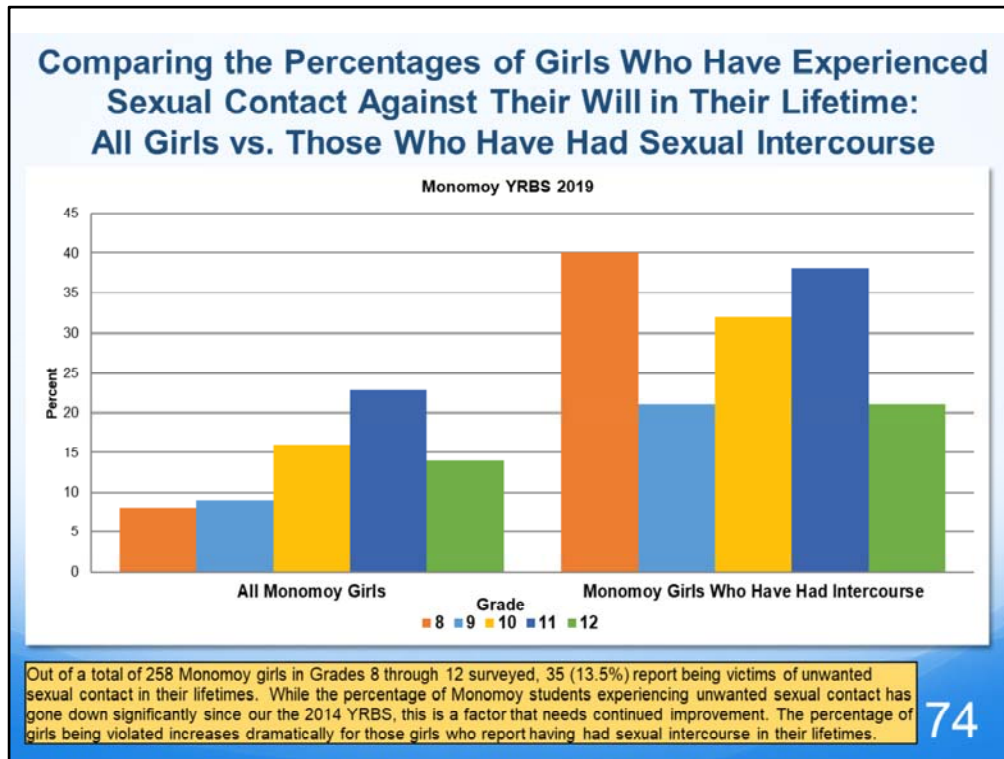
Correlated to this graph is the fact that Monomoy students who reported using drugs or alcohol before their last sexual intercourse is higher than both the state and national averages and has increased from the prior surveys.

Sexual Contact Against Will Comparison in Lifetime by Gender



73

When broken down by gender, girls report a far higher rate of unwanted sexual contact than boys. 15% of girls in Grades 9-12 have experienced sexual contact against their will in their lifetime versus only 3% for boys.



The rate of unwanted sexual contact seen in Monomoy’s 2019 YRBS mirrors larger state and national trends. What isn’t clear from the question asked is what types of unwanted sexual contact were the girls receiving and how often.

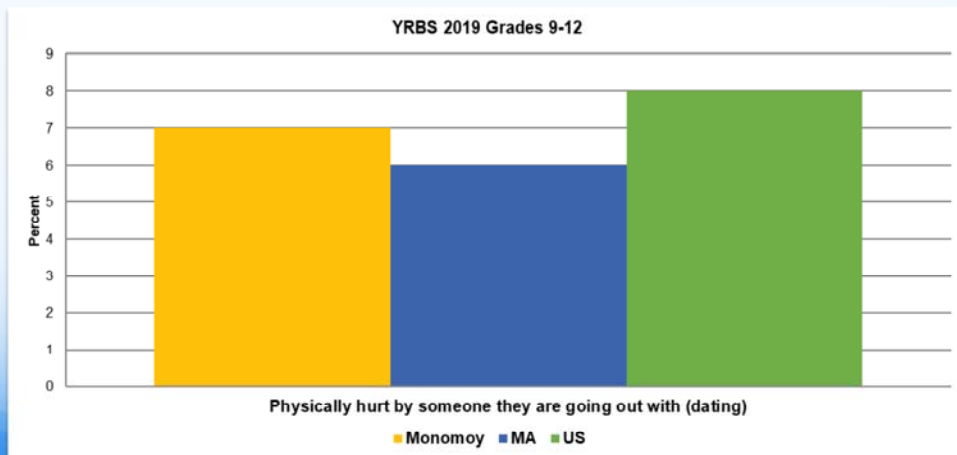
When unpacking the data from our 2019 YRBS, we found that for girls in Grades 8 through 12 who have not had sexual intercourse in their lifetime, only 6% (10 of 162 girls) had reported being victims of sexual contact against their will. By comparison, for girls who have had sexual intercourse in their lifetime, the frequency of sexual contact against their will increases five-fold to 29% (25 of 61 girls).

In 2016, the YRBS did not ask about unwanted sexual contact, rather it specifically asked if students had been “forced in their lifetimes to have sexual intercourse.” The rate at which this had been reported on Monomoy’s 2016 YRBS mirrored the national high school (Grades 9-12) rate of 7%. When specifically looking at the rate this was happening for girls, 8.3% of Monomoy girls in Grades 9-12 responded that they had been forced to have intercourse. We can’t lose sight of the fact that a significant portion of the girls in the 2019 YRBS who have both had sexual intercourse and who had sexual contact against their will may have been victims of “forced sexual intercourse.”

A related report was recently released by the Centers for Disease Control noting that 1 in 16 women (16%) report that their first experience of sexual intercourse was rape. Clearly this is a societal issue that needs attention, locally and nationally. Source: <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/health/1-in-16-u-s-women-say-their-first-sexual->

[intercourse-was-rape](#)

Victim of Dating Violence in Lifetime

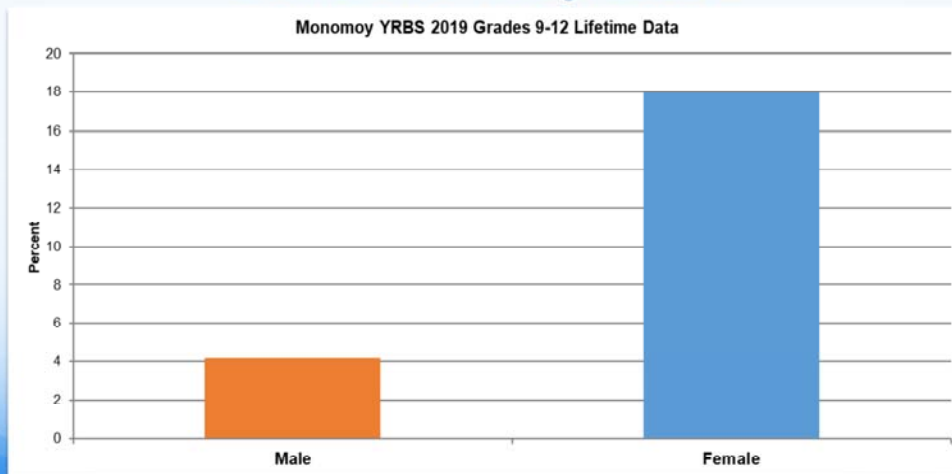


Only 24.6% of Monomoy students have ever been on a date.

75

Of the Monomoy students who date, 7% report being physically hurt by the person they were dating. This is lower than the national average but higher than the state average.

Of Students Who Have Dated, Percentage Who Have Been Hurt By Someone They Dated



Nearly 1 in 5 Monomoy girls who have dated have been a victim of dating violence.

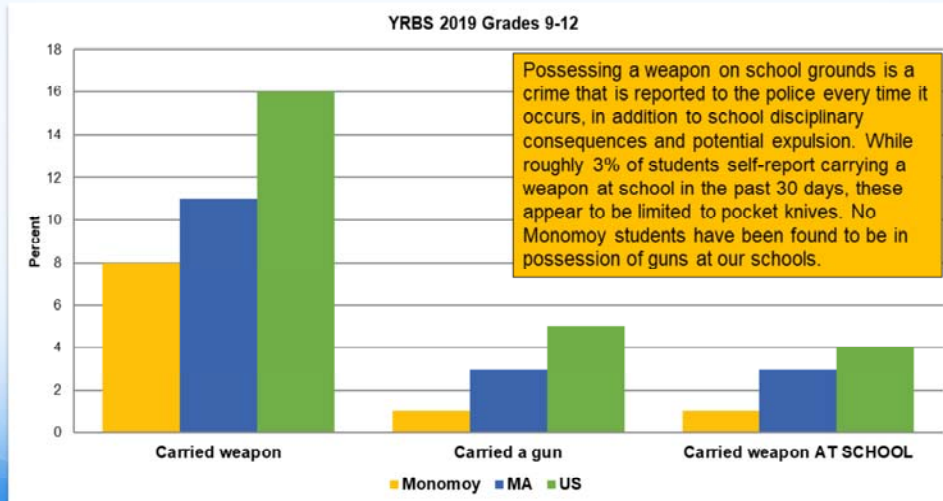
76

In keeping with similar data points, far greater numbers of girls report being victims of dating violence. Of the girls who have dated, 1 in 5 report being victims of dating violence.

Bullying, Fighting, & Violence

77

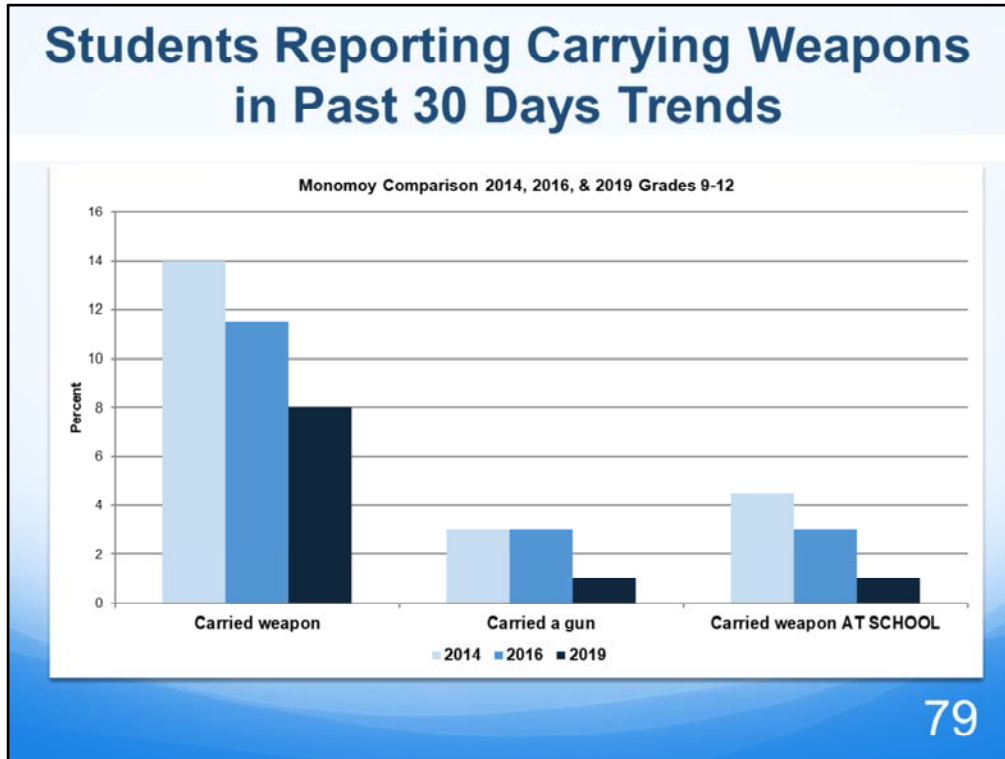
Students Reporting Carrying Weapons in Past 30 Days Comparison



78

In good news, the numbers of Monomoy students reporting carrying weapons is lower than the state and national averages for all categories.

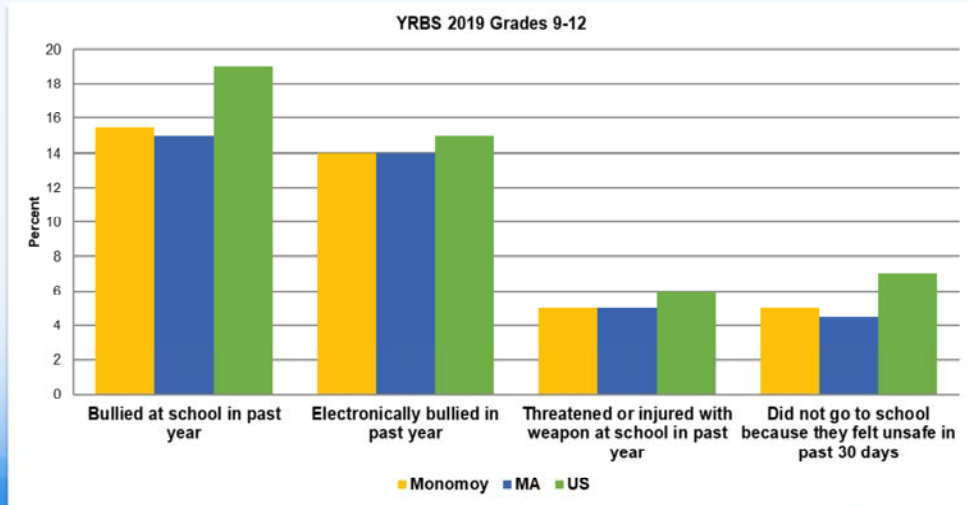
No Monomoy students have been found to be in possession of guns at our schools.



While nearly 8% of students reported carrying weapons in the past year, only about 1% reported doing so at school. These numbers are decreasing from both 2014 and 2016.

No Monomoy students have ever been found to be in possession of a gun at our schools.

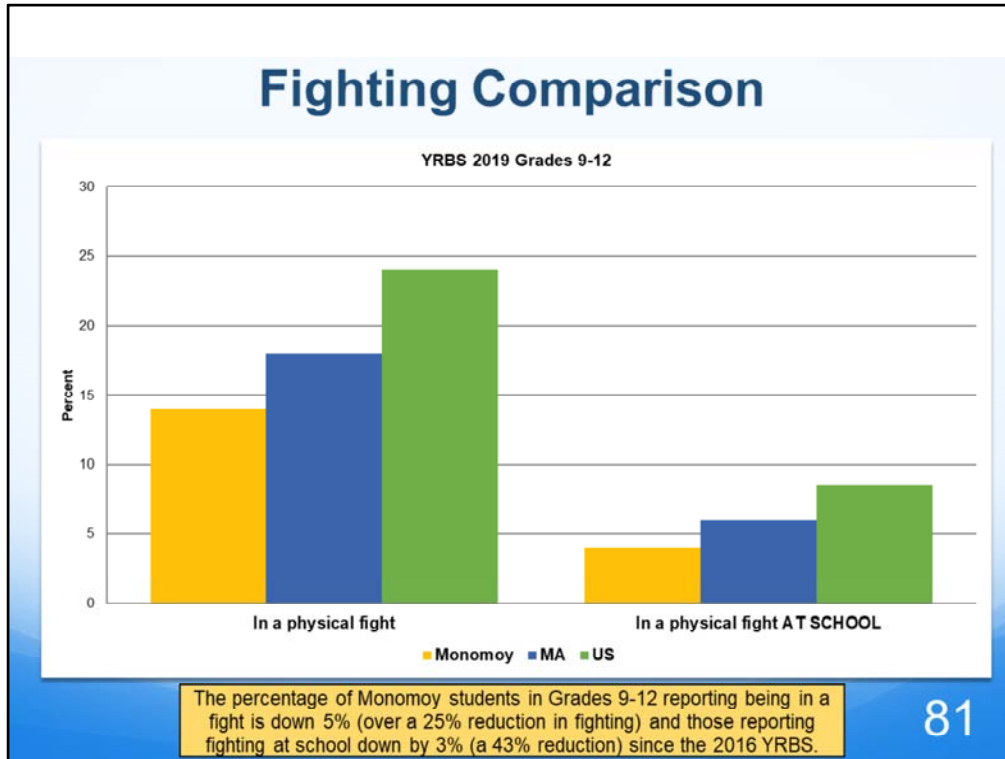
Bullying and Threats to Safety Comparison



The percentage of Monomoy students in Grades 9-12 reporting being bullied at school is down 2.5% and electronic bullying down 1% since the 2016 YRBS.

80

The reported frequency and impact of bullying at Monomoy is in keeping with state averages, and lower than the national averages.

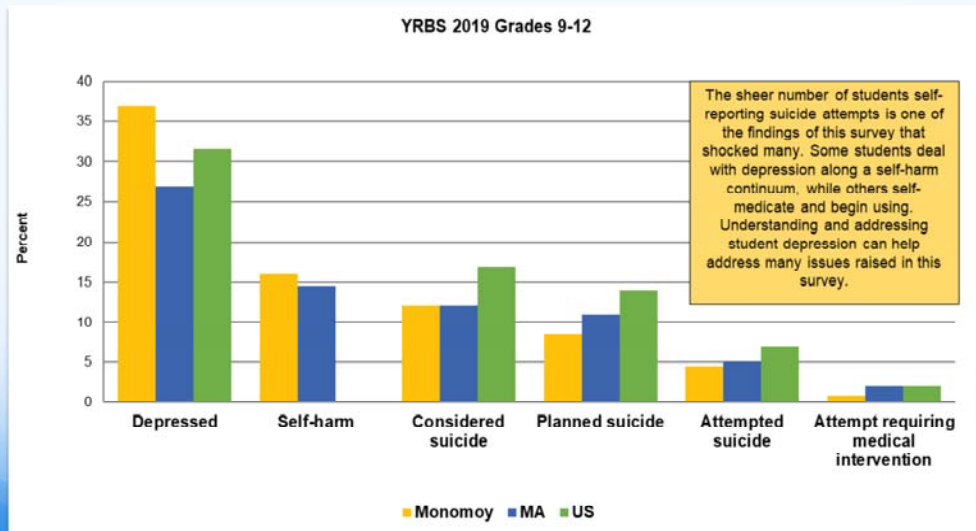


Physical fighting of students is significantly lower than the state and national averages.

Depression & Suicide

82

Depression, Self-Harm, and Suicidal Behavior in Past Year Comparison



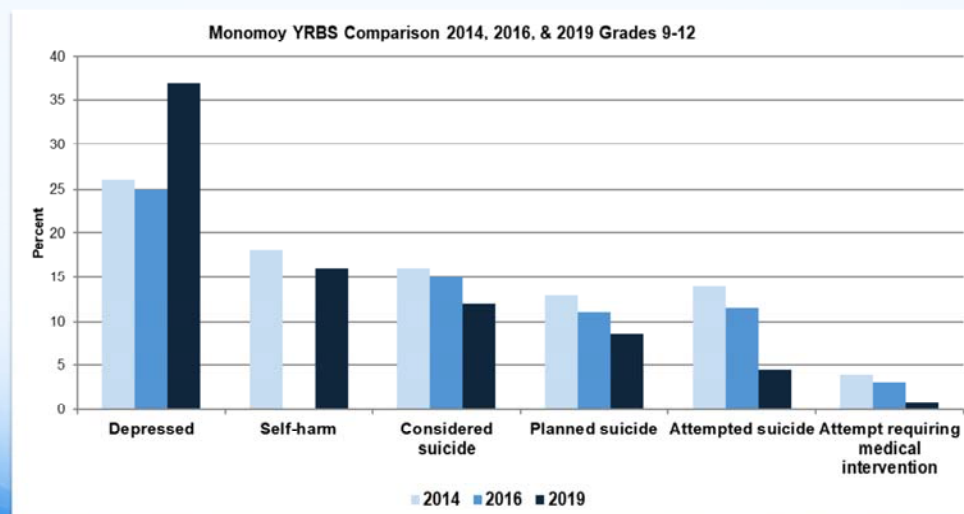
83

Depression in the YRBS is described in the question feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks for more in a row to the point that student stopped doing some of their usual activities. More than a third of Monomoy students in Grades 9-12 report feeling depressed in the past year. Alarming, this is higher than both the state and national average.

In response to such feelings of sadness and hopelessness, 12% of Monomoy students report considering suicide in the past year (which equals the state average).

Equally of concern, about 4.5% of Monomoy students report attempting suicide in the past year, which while lower than the state and national averages is still far too high.

Depression, Self-Harm and Suicidal Behavior Trends

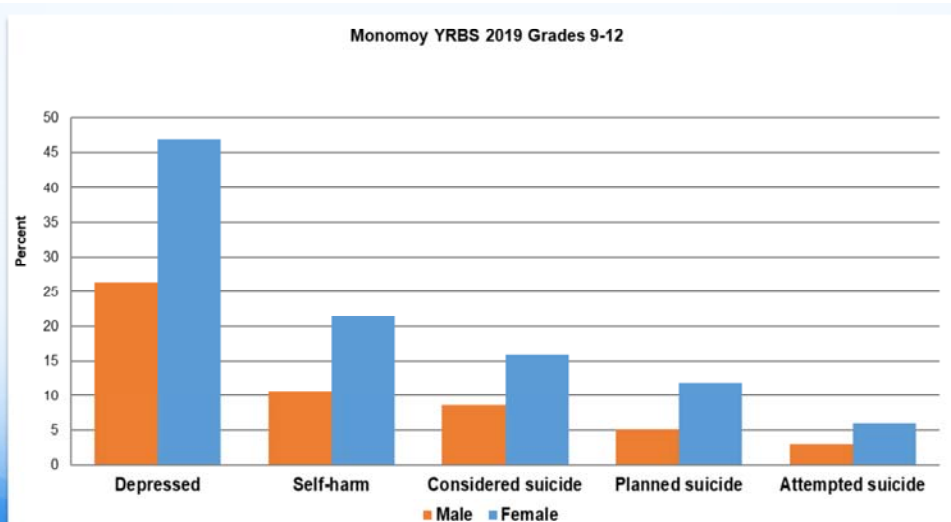


84

In most categories, Monomoy students showed improvements over the 2014 and 2016 Youth Risk Behavior Survey results. However, the 2019 results show a dramatic increase in the reported incidence of depression, which is extremely concerning.

Clearly, there is the need for additional supports for our youth and to understand what is causing these increased feelings of sadness and hopelessness.

Depression, Self-Harm and Suicidal Behavior Comparison by Gender



85

In every category surveyed, our female students report higher levels of depression, self-harm, and suicidal ideation. This is a pattern that cannot be ignored.

Past Year Depression and Suicide Attempt

The percentages throughout the YRBS translate into **actual numbers**. Of the 401 Monomoy 9th through 12th graders who took the survey, the percentages and numbers of students who report being depressed or looking towards suicide are as follows:

	Monomoy Grades 9-12	Actual Number
Depressed (past year)	37%	148
Harmed themselves without wanting to die (past year)	16%	64
Suicide considered (past year)	12%	48
Suicide planned (past year)	8.5%	34
Suicide attempted (past year)	4.5%	18

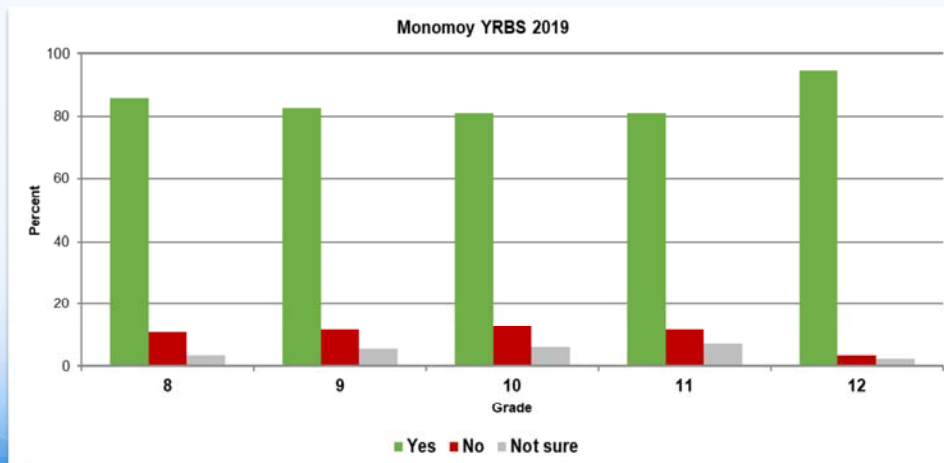
86

When the survey percentages are shared as actual numbers, the true impact of this challenge is clear. Hundreds of Monomoy students are reporting feelings of depression, saying that they felt sad or hopeless everyday for two weeks or more in the past year. Nearly 50 of our students contemplated suicide, and 18 reported that they had attempted suicide. Thankfully none of these attempts were successful. While we have greatly reduced the suicide ideation over the past four years, we have room for improvement. To make effective headway here, we need to address the root causes of depression, which has be escalating since the 2016 YRBS.

Protective Factors

87

Percent of Students with Adult Family Member(s) They Can Talk to About Things That Are Important to Them

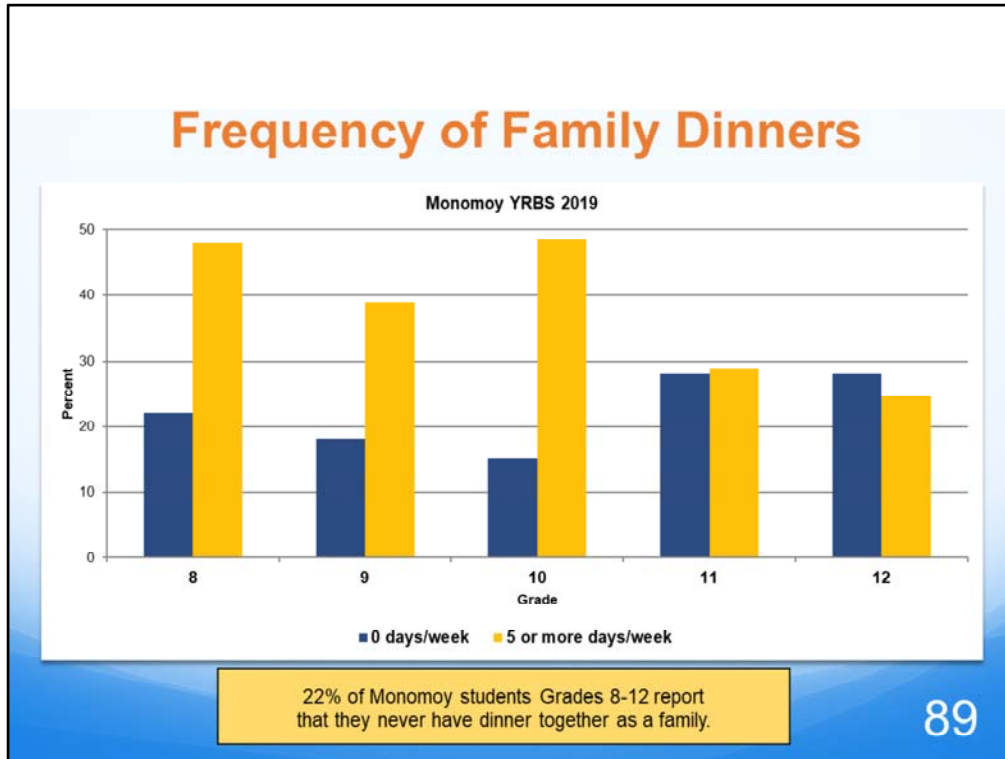


On average, 85% of Monomoy students Grades 8-12 report that they have one or more adult family members they can talk to about important things.

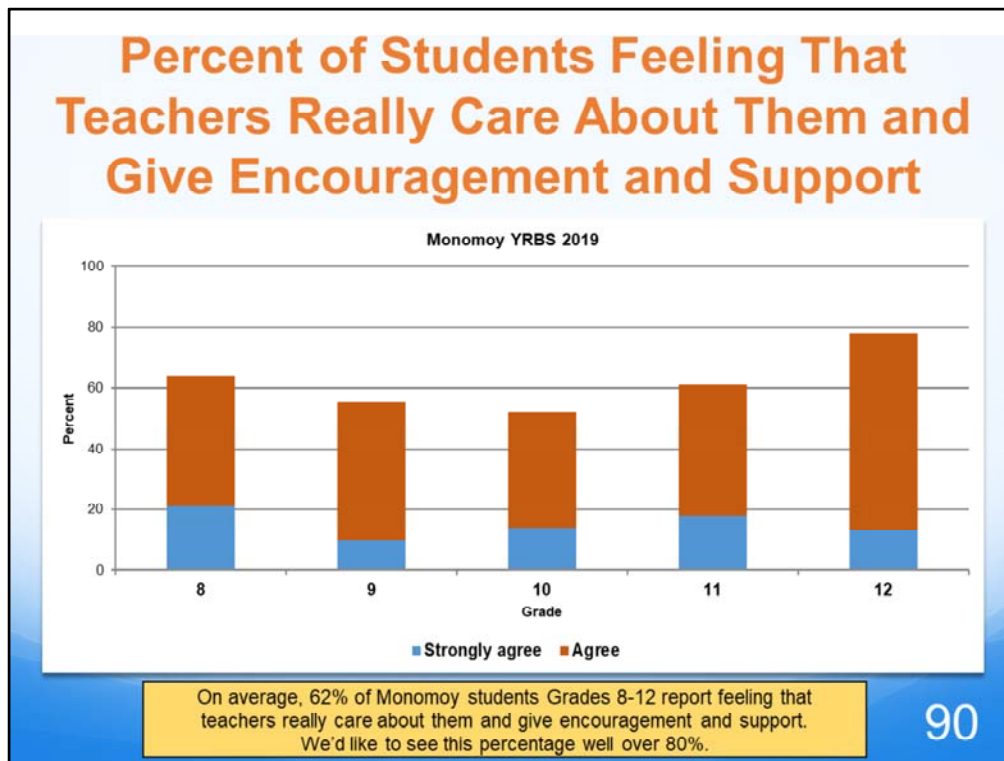
88

More than 85% of Monomoy students report having an adult family member they can talk to about important things.

The converse of this adult connection is truly troublesome, in that 10% of our students feel that they do not have this support structure in their lives and the remaining 5% were unsure if there is an adult family member that they can talk to about things that are important.



As a measure of connectedness, data was gathered on the number of students who reported having dinner as a family – of concern is that nearly a quarter of students report never having dinner together with their family in the past week.



The adult connection is an important factor in student's wellbeing and their success at school. While a majority of students (62%) report feeling that their teachers really care for them, we would like that percentage to be much higher.

Our goal at Monomoy is to achieve 100% of students feeling cared for and having adults in their lives who they can talk to about important things.

The emphasis on themes like "You Are Important" and "Home Away From Home," as well as the utilization of seminar block at the middle school and Jawsome Hour at the high school, are some of Monomoy's efforts to better connect students with teachers, in hopes that all children will have an adult in their lives with whom they can talk to about important things. While these initiatives help improve student-adult connectedness, the YRBS clearly shows that we have room for improvement.

Parent Messaging Matters

91

Parent Messaging Matters on Vaping

IF:	Percent of students <u>vaping</u> in past 30 days
Students believe their parents consider vaping not wrong or only a little bit wrong	59%
Students believe their parents consider vaping wrong or very wrong	21%

92

Sending clear messages to children that vaping is wrong will decrease the risk of children vaping. If parents send strong messages to their children that vaping is wrong or very wrong, only 21% of students report vaping in the past 30 days. Students receiving weak parental messages about vaping are nearly three times more likely to vape. The difference is statistically significant.

Parents set an example. If parents vape, their children are more likely to see vaping as permissible.

Sending a simple, clear “No Vaping” message will make your children far less likely to take up this concerning new habit.

Parent Messaging Matters on Alcohol Use

IF:	Percent of students <u>using alcohol</u> in past 30 days
Students believe their parents consider drinking alcohol not wrong or only a little bit wrong	44%
Students believe their parents consider drinking alcohol wrong or very wrong	28%

93

Sending clear messages to children that alcohol use is wrong will decrease the risk of children using alcohol. If parents send strong messages to their children that drinking is wrong or very wrong, only 28% of students report using alcohol in the past 30 days. Students receiving weak parental messages about alcohol are nearly twice as likely to drink. The difference is statistically significant.

Parents who condone underage drinking in their home, are not sending a strong message that minors drinking alcohol is wrong; subsequently their children are statistically more likely to engage in underage drinking.

Consider just sending a simple, yet consistent and clear, “No Drinking” message.

Parent Messaging Matters on Binge Drinking

IF:	Percent of students <u>binge drinking</u> in past 30 days
Students believe their parents consider drinking alcohol not wrong or only a little bit wrong	40%
Students believe their parents consider drinking alcohol wrong or very wrong	13%

94

For this study, binge drinking is defined as 5 or more drinks in a couple of hours (for boys) and 4 or more drinks in a couple of hours (for girls). Sending clear messages to children that alcohol use is wrong will decrease the risk of children binge drinking. If parents send strong messages to their children that drinking is wrong or very wrong, only 13% of students report binge drinking in the past 30 days. Students receiving weak parental messages about alcohol are three times as likely to binge drink. The difference is statistically significant.

Consider just sending a simple, yet consistent and clear, “No Drinking” message.



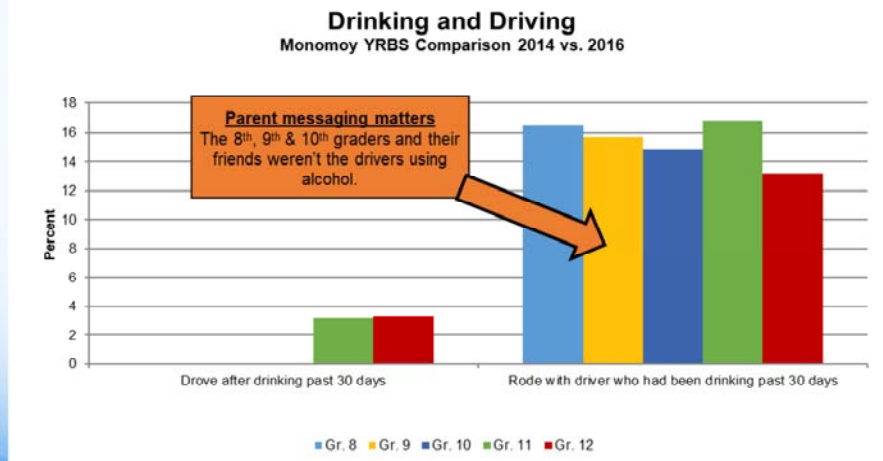
Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death among teenagers in our country. In the United States in 2016, the death toll of drivers alone from teenage drunk-driving accidents was 1,393—nearly four fatalities every day of the year of teenage drivers who had been drinking. On top of this are also hundreds of collateral deaths of passengers and occupants of other impacted vehicles. 24% of the teen drivers killed in motor vehicle accidents had been drinking.

<https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812498>

The messaging parents convey about alcohol use can be one of the single most important things in decreasing tragic motor vehicle deaths. Sending clear messages to children that minor's use of alcohol is wrong, particularly if getting behind the wheel of a car, will significantly decrease the risk of children drinking and driving by nine-fold.

If parents send strong messages to their children that minor's drinking is wrong or very wrong, only 1% of student drivers report driving after using alcohol in the past 30 days. Students receiving weak parental messages about alcohol are nine times more likely to drink and drive. The difference is statistically significant.

Drinking and Driving Comparison by Grade



96

Our 8th, 9th, and 10th graders aren't driving and aren't riding in cars driven by peers who had been drinking; however, 15% of our younger students report riding in cars after the driver had been drinking. When we want our teens to not get behind the wheel of a car after drinking, it's concerning that parents or potentially older relatives are sending subtle signals to children that drinking and driving may be acceptable.

Again, parents set an example. If students see parents driving after drinking, their children are more likely to see this practice as permissible.

Parent Messaging Matters on Marijuana

IF:	Percent of students <u>using</u> marijuana in past 30 days
Students believe their parents consider marijuana is not wrong or only a little bit wrong	54%
Students believe their parents consider smoking marijuana wrong or very wrong	17%

97

Parents both set an example and set explicit and implicit expectations for their children. Sending a consistent and clear message that smoking marijuana is wrong finds children far less likely to smoke marijuana. If parents send strong messages to their children that smoking marijuana is wrong or very wrong, only 17% of students report using marijuana in the past 30 days. Students receiving weak parental messages about marijuana are over three times more likely to use this gateway drug. This is a statistically significant difference.

Parents here are role models – if they smoke marijuana, their children are more likely to smoke marijuana. Parents who condone smoking marijuana in at their homes are likely to find their children engaging in similar behavior.

Consider just sending a simple “No Smoking Marijuana” message.

Parent Messaging Matters to Reduce “Stoned” Driving

IF:	Percent of student drivers who <u>drove after</u> <u>smoking</u> <u>marijuana</u> in past 30 days
Students believe their parents consider marijuana is not wrong or only a little bit wrong	26%
Students believe their parents consider smoking marijuana wrong or very wrong	8%

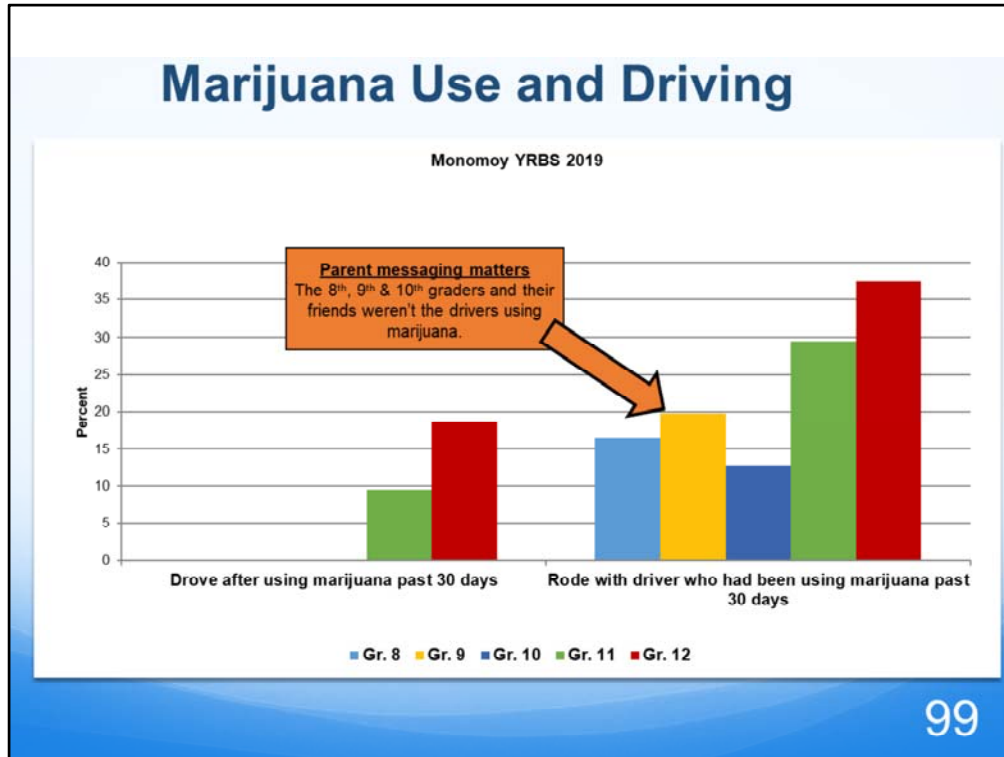
98

As with alcohol use, marijuana use can significantly alter reaction times, and research has found marijuana-impaired drivers up to twice as likely to be involved in a motor vehicle crash.

<https://newsroom.aaa.com/2019/06/americans-dont-think-theyll-get-arrested-for-driving-high/>

The marijuana accessed by teens today has a much higher THC content than the marijuana available in their parent’s youth, making the impact of this stronger strain of marijuana that much more likely to impair driver’s reaction times.

As with alcohol, the messages parents convey can protect their children and other vehicle occupants by greatly reducing the percentage of teens driving after smoking marijuana. Sending a consistent and clear message that smoking marijuana is wrong finds children far less likely to drive after smoking marijuana. If parents send strong messages to their children that smoking marijuana is wrong or very wrong, only 8% of student drivers report getting behind the wheel of a care after using marijuana in the past 30 days. Students receiving weak parental messages about marijuana are over three times more likely to drive while “stoned.” This is a statistically significant difference.



As with drinking and driving, here we see another example of unintended parent messaging. For our 8th, 9th, and 10th grade students who are not yet driving, 14% of them report riding in a car with a driver who had been driving. For our younger students, their like-aged peers aren't the drivers – in most of these instances, the student is riding with a parent or older family member who is driving after using marijuana.

If students see their parents or other adults drive after using marijuana, they will implicitly receive the message that the behavior is condoned.

Parent Messaging Matters on Prescription Abuse

IF:	Percent of students <u>abusing prescriptions</u> in past 30 days
Students believe their parents consider prescription abuse not wrong or only a little bit wrong	7%
Students believe their parents consider prescription abuse wrong or very wrong	2%

100

While student use of prescriptions not prescribed to them is fairly infrequent amongst Monomoy's teens, prescription abuse is the starting point for many in today's opioid crisis. Approximately 90% of individuals addicted to opioids started by using and abusing prescription pain medicines.

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/relationship-between-prescription-drug-heroin-abuse/prescription-opioid-use-risk-factor-heroin-use>

Our YRBS results indicate that, if parents send strong messages to their children that prescription abuse is wrong or very wrong, only 2% of students report misusing prescriptions in the past 30 days. Students receiving weak parental messages about prescription abuse were over three times more likely to abuse prescriptions.

Parent Messaging Matters “I love you. I’ll listen. Let’s talk.”

IF:	Percent of students <u>depressed</u> in past year
Students have a parent or adult family member to talk to about important things	32%
Students DO NOT or are unsure if they have a parent or adult family member to talk to about important things	59%

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Depression in the YRBS is described in the question feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks for more in a row to the point that student stopped doing some of their usual activities. Here we see that the importance of parent messaging extends into the category of emotional health – if students feel they have a trusted adult to talk to about things that are important, their rates of feeling depressed decrease.

If a student has a parent to confide in about important issues, 32% report being depressed in the past year, compared to a 59% depression rate for students without a parent there to talk and listen. This is a statistically significant difference.

Parent Messaging Matters

“I love you. I’ll listen. Let’s talk.”

IF:	Percent of students <u>attempting suicide</u> in past year
Students have a parent or adult family member to talk to about important things	2.7%
Students DO NOT or are unsure if they have a parent or adult family member to talk to about important things	14.8%

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Even more importantly, when it comes to attempting suicide, if students feel they have a parent to confide in the frequency of attempting suicide in the past year decreases dramatically. If a student has a parent to confide in about important issues, only 2.7% report attempting suicide in the past year. Students unable to talk with their parents about important things are over five times more likely to attempt suicide. This is a statistically significant difference.

Parent Messaging Matters It's Time for a Different Kind of Sex Talk

While the percentage of Monomoy students reporting to be victims of unwanted sexual contact in their lifetimes is less than the state average, the sheer number is unacceptable. Concurrently, 47% of our students reported that their parents hadn't talked to them about sex in the past year. Teens need these conversations, and the YRBS clearly indicates that we need to include some different topics in these conversations.

Our Girls: Need to understand how they can better protect their safety and personal boundaries	Our Boys: Need to understand consent and boundaries and how to proactively prevent sexual assaults
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Monomoy's 2019 YRBS found 35 girls reporting that they had been the victims of sexual contact against their will during their lifetimes – this is 13% of all girls in Grades 8 through 12. While this frequency is less than the state average, it is unacceptable. If we want to reduce unwanted sexual contact for our children, we need to engage in supportive conversations with them about sex, yet nearly half of our teens report that they haven't had parents talk to them about sex in the past year. Within these conversations about sex, which need to happen both in our Health classrooms and at home, the survey indicates that we need to be providing differentiated messages by gender.

Our girls, who are more often the victim of unwanted sexual contact, need to understand how to better protect their safety and personal boundaries. Our boys, who are more often the perpetrators, need to understand the true meaning of consent and how they can play a role in actively protecting their peers from sexual assaults.

Helpful resource for supporting our girls in dealing with unwanted sexual attention:

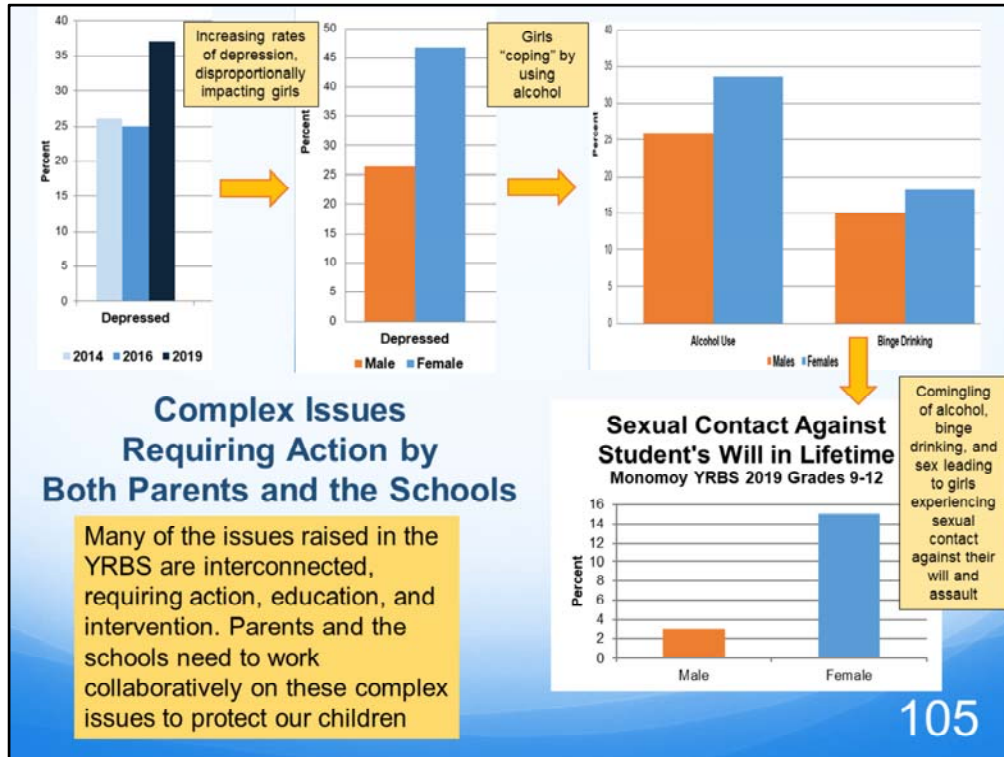
<https://childmind.org/article/helping-girls-deal-unwanted-sexual-attention/>

Helpful resource in supporting boys (and girls) in understanding consent and preventing sexual assaults:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2018/10/16/ways-parents-can-help-kids-understand-consent-prevent-sexual-assault/?noredirect=on>

Next Steps

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The behaviors covered by the Youth Risk Behavior Survey are challenging ones. Most of the behaviors students report happen outside of school hours, off campus, and during the 185 days each year that school isn't in session. If we want to create safer environments for our teens, parents and the schools will need to work collaboratively to address such complex issues.

As an example, the slide also connects pieces from four previous slides in this presentation, stressing that if we want to decrease the number of girls being sexually assaulted, we need to, among other things:

- Have frank conversations with boys both at school and home about respect and consent.
- Talk with girls about better protecting their safety and maintaining personal boundaries.
- Decrease student access to alcohol.
- Increase parent messaging that minors' use of alcohol is wrong.
- Better educate students on the dangers of binge drinking.
- Help girls find healthier coping mechanisms.
- Address the multifaceted issues underlying teenage depression, particularly in our girls.

Time to A. C. T.

**We ALL have a role to play in fostering healthy behaviors
for our students**

It's time to A. C. T.

Acknowledge – Care – Take Action

Ask yourself: What role can the community as a
whole play in positively impacting these statistics?

**What can I do as an individual to address these
concerning trends among our young people?**

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If you have questions or concerns about the results of the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, you are welcome to speak to your student's principal or to call Superintendent Scott Carpenter directly at 508-945-5130.

It takes care, attention, and honest conversations with and about our students to help guide them to make good choices and support them through the challenges they face.

Only by understanding the issues, good and bad, can we effectively address them. We hope you will join us in ACTing to make a difference for all of our students.