



# Find out what our young people think...

about drugs, alcohol, tobacco, bullying, sex, safety and more.

## *2015 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey*



# HEALTHY

marathon county

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## Introduction

In 2015, a partnership between all 10 public school districts in Marathon County, the Marathon County Health Department, and the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point (School of Health Care Professionals) resulted in the creation of the first ever Marathon County-wide Youth Risk Behavior Survey aggregate data set.

The Wisconsin Online Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is conducted as part of a national effort by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to monitor health-risk behaviors of the nation's high school students. These behaviors, in turn, result in the most significant causes of both mortality and morbidity during youth and adulthood. The behaviors monitored by the Wisconsin YRBS include traffic safety; weapons and violence; suicide; tobacco use; alcohol and other drug use; sexual behavior; and diet, nutrition, and exercise.



Participating school districts included: Abbottsford, Athens, Colby, DC Everest, Edgar, Marathon, Mosinee, Spencer, Stratford, and Wausau.



## Summary of Findings

Approximately 2,000 students (13 years and older) from all 10 public school districts in Marathon County completed the survey.

0.2% | (13 years old)  
 26.3% | (14 years old)  
 32.6% | (15 years old)  
 24.4% | (16 years old)  
 11.8% | (17 years old)  
 4.8% | (18 years old)

44% | (9th grade)  
 32% | (10th grade)  
 15.4% | (11th grade)  
 8.7% | (12th grade)  
 0.1% | (Other grade)

2% | (American Indian or Alaska Native)  
 7.2% | (Asian)  
 1.6% | (Black)  
 0.3% | (Native Hawaiian)  
 89.3% | (white)  
 7.6% | (Hispanic or Latino)

The 2015 YRBS provides insight into our young people's behaviors and attitudes about a wide variety of topics, grouped in this report as Personal Safety, Alcohol Use, Tobacco Use, Marijuana and Other Drugs, Mental Health, Sexual Behavior and Personal Health.

The data highlights many positives in Marathon County students. Overall, most young people in Marathon County are making the right choices, but the data also highlights areas of concern. The rate of underage drinking among Marathon County high school students was less than both Wisconsin and the U.S., yet students at one out of four high schools in Marathon County drank alcohol in the past 30 days. The schools that reported the highest levels of underage drinking also had the lowest percentage of parent disapproval, meaning more

Percentage of students who described their general health as being good, very good, or excellent.



underage drinking occurred when parents didn't think it was wrong.

Marathon County, as well as the rest of Wisconsin, has seen a tremendous increase in heroin use, trafficking, and crime related to illicit drug sales during the past three years. Although the use of heroin was not included in the 2015 Marathon County Youth Risk Behavior Survey, nearly 6% of our students were offered, sold, or given an illegal drug by someone on school property during the 12 months before the survey.

Bullying is another issue that warrants more attention: 41% of our high school students agree that harassment and bullying by other students is a problem at their school and 30% of students reported being bullied on school property. On a positive note, 73% of our students reported having at least one teacher or other adult in their school who they can talk to if they had a problem.

**What you can do**  
to help reduce young people's risky behavior.

**Read this report**  
**Stay informed**  
**Get involved**  
**Volunteer**

# Personal Safety

The first percentage listed represents the responses of Marathon County's 2,000 students in 2015. The second percentage represents Wisconsin students surveyed in 2013 and the third percentage represents students surveyed in 2013 throughout the U.S. If only one percentage is listed, results from Wisconsin and U.S. were not available for comparison.

## Traffic Safety

Percentage of students who rarely or never wore a seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else.

**6.3%** (Marathon County)  
**8.3%** (Wisconsin)  
**7.6%** (United States)

Percentage of students who texted or emailed while driving a car or other vehicle in the past 30 days.

**22.4%** (Marathon County)  
**47.9%** (Wisconsin)  
**41.4%** (United States)

## Weapons

Percentage of students who carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, club on at least one day during the 30 days before the survey.

**19.2%** (Marathon County)  
**14.4%** (Wisconsin)  
**17.9%** (United States)

Percentage of students who carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, club on school property on at least one day during the 30 days before the survey.

**2.0%** (Marathon County)  
**3.2%** (Wisconsin)  
**5.2%** (United States)

Percentage of students who did not go to school at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey because they felt they would be unsafe at school or on their way to or from school.

**4.2%** (Marathon County)  
**5.8%** (Wisconsin)  
**7.1%** (United States)

Percentage of students who were threatened or injured with a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.

**5.5%** (Marathon County)  
**4.3%** (Wisconsin)  
**6.9%** (United States)



## Physical Fighting

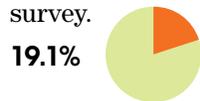
Percentage of students who were in a physical fight one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.



Percentage of students who were in a physical fight on school property one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.



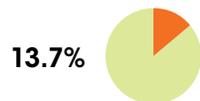
Percentage of students who were physically threatened or injured while on school property one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.



Percentage of students who never or rarely feel safe from physical harm while at school.



Percentage of students who agree that violence is a problem at their school.



## Partner Abuse

Percentage of students who were forced, either verbally or physically to take part in a sexual activity.



Percentage of students who were physically injured on purpose by someone they were dating or going out with one or more times in the 12 months before the survey.



Percentage of students who were forced to do sexual things (kissing, touching, or being physically forced to have sexual intercourse) that they did not want to do by someone they were dating or going out with one or more times in the 12 months before the survey.



## Bullying

Percentage of students who were bullied while on school property during the 12 months before the survey.



Percentage of students who were electronically bullied during the 12 months before the survey.



Percentage of students who agree that harassment/bullying is a problem at their school.



# Alcohol Use



*Alcohol remains the primary substance of choice for Marathon County youth. Schools that reported the highest levels of underage drinking also had the lowest percentage of parent disapproval on underage drinking. This direct correlation is a strong reflection of how parent perceptions and beliefs drive the local alcohol culture in Marathon County, leading to more underage drinking.*

Percentage of students who had at least one drink of alcohol on at least one day during their life.



Percentage of students who drank alcohol (other than a few sips) for the first time before age 13 years.



Percentage of students who rode one or more times during the 30 days before the survey in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol.



Percentage of students who drove a car or other vehicle one or more times during the 30 days before the survey when they had been drinking alcohol.



Percentage of students who had at least one drink of alcohol on at least one day during the 30 days before the survey.



Percentage of students who had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours, on at least one day during the 30 days before the survey.



Where students obtained the alcohol they drank during the 30 days before the survey.

*Retail = from a licensed alcohol establishment (convenience store, bar, restaurant, public event)*

*Social = from someone else (family, friend)*



Percentage of students whose parents feel drinking alcohol at least twice a month is wrong or very wrong.



# Tobacco Use

*Youth smoking rates have continued to decline in Marathon County and Wisconsin over the past decade. Alternative tobacco products are being sold, resulting in the need for ongoing education on the health risk associated with tobacco products. For example, e-cigarettes are devices that can be used to simulate smoking and that produce an aerosol of nicotine or other substances.*

Percentage of students who ever tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs.

- 23.6%**  (Marathon County)
- 33.2%**  (Wisconsin)
- 41.1%**  (United States)

Percentage of students who smoked a whole cigarette for the first time before age 13 years.

- 5.1%**  (Marathon County)
- 6.6%**  (Wisconsin)
- 9.3%**  (United States)

Percentage of students who smoked on at least one day during the 30 days before the survey.

- 8.2%**  (Marathon County)
- 11.8%**  (Wisconsin)
- 15.7%**  (United States)

Percentage of students who smoked 10 or more cigarettes per day during the 30 days before the survey.

- 5.9%**  (Marathon County)
- 9.8%**  (Wisconsin)
- 8.6%**  (United States)



Percentage of students who smoked cigarettes on school property on at least one day during the 30 days before the survey.

- 1.8%**  (Marathon County)
- 3.0%**  (Wisconsin)
- 3.8%**  (United States)

Percentage of current smokers who tried to quit smoking in the past 12 months.



Percentage of students who used chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip on at least one day during the 30 days before the survey.

- 7.2%**  (Marathon County)
- 8.0%**  (Wisconsin)
- 8.8%**  (United States)

Percentage of students who smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars on at least one day during the 30 days before the survey.

- 4.9%**  (Marathon County)
- 11.5%**  (Wisconsin)
- 12.6%**  (United States)



# Marijuana and Other Drugs

The 2015 YRBS data indicates that marijuana usage rates by youth in Marathon County are significantly lower than the state and national averages, which is positive. Legalization of marijuana has not yet been addressed at the state level in Wisconsin. As other states continue to legalize medicinal and recreation marijuana,\* the anticipation of increased marijuana usage rates for youth in Wisconsin is a real threat.



\*Not only is marijuana use increasing in other parts of the country, perceived risk is decreasing.

## Marijuana

Percentage of students who used marijuana one or more times during their life.

**12.7%** (Marathon County)  
**31.2%** (Wisconsin)  
**40.7%** (United States)

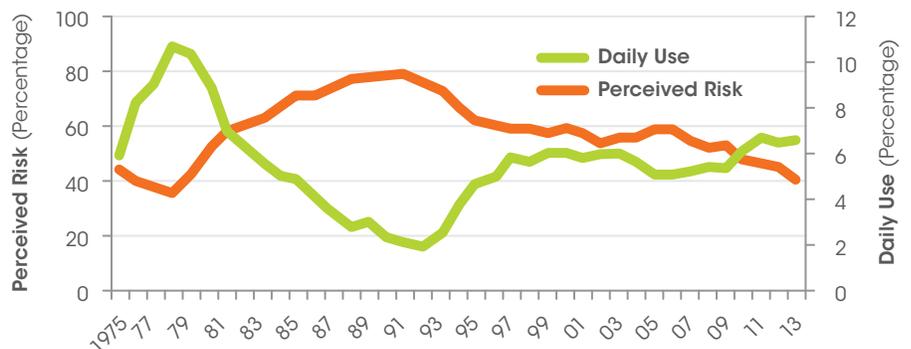
Percentage of students who tried marijuana for the first time before the age of 13 years.

**2.8%** (Marathon County)  
**6.3%** (Wisconsin)  
**8.6%** (United States)

Percentage of students who used marijuana one or more times during the 30 days before the survey.

**5.6%** (Marathon County)  
**17.3%** (Wisconsin)  
**23.4%** (United States)

Percentage of U.S. Grade 12 Students Reporting Daily Marijuana Use vs. Perceived Risk of Regular Marijuana Use



Source: The Monitoring the Future study, the University of Michigan



## Other Drugs

Percentage of students who used any form of cocaine, including powder, crack, or freebase one or more times during their life.

- 1.6% (Marathon County)
- 4.3% (Wisconsin)
- 5.5% (United States)



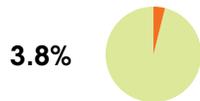
Percentage of students who sniffed glue, breathed the contents of aerosol spray cans, or inhaled any paints or sprays to get high one or more times during their life.

- 4.9% (Marathon County)
- 5.9% (Wisconsin)
- 8.9% (United States)

Percentage of students who had taken prescription drugs (e.g., OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin, codeine, Adderall, Ritalin, or Xanax) without a doctor's prescription one or more times during their life (i.e., ever took prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription).

- 7.9% (Marathon County)
- 14.9% (Wisconsin)
- 17.8% (United States)

Percentage of students who had taken prescription drugs (e.g., OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin, codeine, Adderall, Ritalin, or Xanax) without a doctor's prescription one or more times in the past 30 days.



Percentage of students who have taken an over-the-counter drug to get high one or more times.



Percentage of students who attended school under the influence of alcohol or other illegal drugs, such as marijuana or cocaine, one or more times, during the past 12 months.



Percentage of students who were offered, sold, or given an illegal drug by someone on school property during the 12 months before the survey.

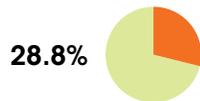
- 5.8% (Marathon County)
- 18.3% (Wisconsin)
- 22.1% (United States)

# Mental Health

*Mental health is one of many factors that can influence suicide risk. Suicide is a complex health issue influenced by a variety of factors such as serious mental illness, substance abuse, social isolation, lack of support from family or friends, or exposure to violence.*



Percentage of students who described their mental health as not good, during the past 30 days before the survey, three days or more.



Percentage of students who made a plan about how they would attempt suicide during the 12 months before the survey.



## Depression & Suicide

Percentage of students who felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two or more weeks in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities during the 12 months before the survey.



Percentage of students who attempted suicide one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.



Percentage of students who purposely hurt themselves one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.



Percentage of students who made a suicide attempt that resulted in injury, poisoning, or an overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse during the 12 months before the survey.



Percentage of students who seriously considered attempting suicide during the 12 months before the survey.



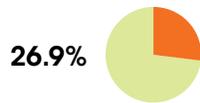
# Sexual Behavior

(Two school districts did not ask these questions.)

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention...

*“While sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) affect individuals of all ages, STDs take a particularly heavy toll on young people. CDC estimates that youth ages 15-24 make up just over one quarter of the sexually active population, but account for half of the 20 million new sexually transmitted infections that occur in the United States each year.”*

Percentage of students who felt it is important to wait until marriage to have sexual intercourse.



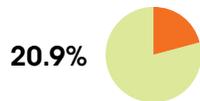
Percentage of students who ever had sexual intercourse.



Percentage of students who had sexual intercourse for the first time before age 13 years.



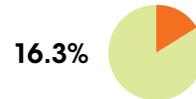
Percentage of students who had sexual intercourse with at least one person during their life.



Percentage of students who had sexual intercourse with at least one person during the three months before the survey.



Among students who were sexually active, percentage who reported drinking alcohol or using drugs before they had sexual intercourse.



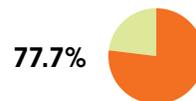
Among students who were currently sexually active, the percentage who reported that either they or their partner had used a condom during last sexual intercourse.



Among students who were currently sexually active, the percentage who reported that either they or their partner had used birth control pills to prevent pregnancy before last sexual intercourse.



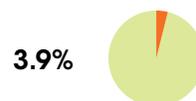
Among students who were currently sexually active, the percentage who had sexual contact with a person about their same age.



Percentage of students who described themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or unsure.



Percentage of students who have ever been told by a doctor or nurse that they had a sexually transmitted disease (STD).



# Personal Health

*This section encompasses multiple factors that contribute to an individual's overall health status, including eating habits, physical activity, and access to health care.*



## Weight Loss

Percentage of students who were trying to lose weight.



Percentage of students who drank a can, bottle, or glass of soda or pop (not including diet soda or diet pop) at least one time per day during the seven days before the survey.



## Eating Habits

Percentage of students who drank 100% fruit juices one or more times during the seven days before the survey.



Percentage of students who drank a can, bottle, or glass of an energy drink, such as Red Bull or Jolt (not including Gatorade or Powerade) at least one time per day during the seven days before the survey.



Percentage of students who ate fruit one or more times during the seven days before the survey.



Percentage of students who drank a glass of milk at least one time per day during the seven days before the survey.



Percentage of students who ate vegetables such as green salad, carrots, green beans, or other vegetables one or more times per day during the seven days before the survey.



Percentage of students who ate breakfast at least three days during the seven days before the survey.



# Personal Health

## Physical Activity

Percentage of students who were physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes per day on five or more of the seven days before the survey.

- 60.3%**  (Marathon County)
- 49.5%**  (Wisconsin)
- 47.3%**  (United States)

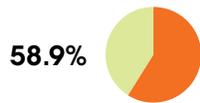
Percentage of students who watched television three or more hours per day on an average school day.

- 22.2%**  (Marathon County)
- 22.5%**  (Wisconsin)
- 32.5%**  (United States)

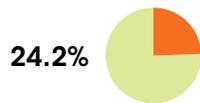
Percentage of students who played video or computer games or used a computer for something that was not school work three or more hours per day on an average school day.

- 32.4%**  (Marathon County)
- 34.2%**  (Wisconsin)
- 41.3%**  (United States)

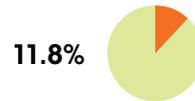
In an average week, percentage of students who attend physical education classes at least three days.



In an average week, percentage of students who walk or ride their bike to school at least one day.



Percentage of students who wear sunscreen, most of the time or always, with SPF of 15 or higher when outside for more than one hour on a sunny day.



Percentage of students who used an indoor tanning device, such as a sunlamp, sunbed, or tanning booth, at least one time during the past 12 months.



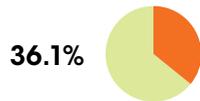
# Personal Health

## Other Health Issues

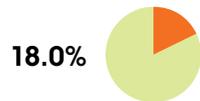
Percentage of students who had ever been taught in school about AIDS or HIV infection.



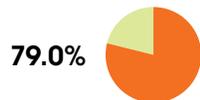
Percentage of students who had ever talked about AIDS or HIV infection with their parents or other adults in their family.



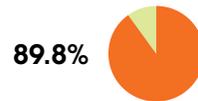
Percentage of students who have been told by a doctor or nurse that they had asthma.



Percentage of students who saw a dentist for a check-up, exam, teeth cleaning, or other dental work during the past 12 months.



Percentage of students who described their general health as being good, very good, or excellent.



Percentage of students who have any physical disabilities or long-term health problems (six months or more).



Percentage of students who described their physical health as not good, during the past 30 days before the survey, three days or more.



# What can we do to support young people in our community?

According to research\*, providing high levels of love and support is the most important thing that parents can do for their children. This includes positive family communication, parental involvement throughout child care and education, and setting family rules and behavior guidelines.

Healthy childhood development begins with a caring, supportive family, but also requires commitment and action from the entire community. Children need positive nonparent role models including teachers, coaches and neighbors. Children need to feel safe in their neighborhoods, supported in their schools, and valued in their communities to be better equipped to achieve future success.

Communities must support youth by strengthening partnerships, fostering collaboration, and expanding resources together. Marathon County is fortunate to have a strong history of collaboration across diverse community sectors committed to creating healthy and successful youth, but new challenges and issues will continue to emerge. Continued and expanded efforts to align schools, youth-serving organizations, government agencies, health care providers and businesses on mutually reinforcing strategies will result in long-lasting support for our youth.

The success of Marathon County's youth depends on all of us.



**We all play a role.  
We all have a responsibility.  
We all can make a difference.**

- Lead by example. Be a role model for youth in your community.
- Attend public forums that provide information about the issues that impact youth. Share the information with family, friends, and colleagues.
- Spend quality time with your family and friends.
- Collaborate with other community organizations and agencies to address issues that impact youth.
- Eat dinner together as a family.
- Attend your child's extracurricular activities and events.
- Get involved! Join a local coalition working to improve life for youth.
- Say "Hello!" to your neighbors.
- Become a mentor through organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, The Boys & Girls Club, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, among others.
- Talk. Listen. Connect.

*\*After more than five decades of research, The Search Institute, a leader and partner for organizations around the world in discovering what kids need to succeed has identified the key 40 Developmental Assets that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.*

## About Healthy Marathon County

Healthy Marathon County is committed to making Marathon County the healthiest county in Wisconsin. Our members, who live and work in Marathon County, collaborate with community partners to build systems, environments, and a culture that supports health and wellness. Our mission is to be a community catalyst to improve the health of Marathon County residents through individual, organizational and community involvement. Find out more about how you can support our initiatives and action teams at [www.healthymarathoncounty.org](http://www.healthymarathoncounty.org) Our board of directors partners with the following coalitions that focus on health concerns:

**Marathon County Alcohol & Other Drug (AOD) Partnership**  
**Central Wisconsin Tobacco Free Coalition**  
**Concerns About the Cost of Healthcare (CATCH) Dental**  
**Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL)**  
**Partnership for Healthy Aging**  
**Prevent Suicide Marathon County**

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*[www.healthymarathoncounty.org](http://www.healthymarathoncounty.org)*

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