

INJURY AND VIOLENCE AMONG VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

RESULTS FROM THE VIRGINIA YOUTH SURVEY – 2015

INTRODUCTION

During adolescence, youth begin to spend more time without adult supervision, gain more independence, and are more likely to engage in risk-taking behaviors making them particularly vulnerable to injury and violence.¹ Adolescents and young adults maintain the highest rates of fatal motor vehicle crash involvement.¹ Youth violence is the third leading cause of death for people between the ages of 15 and 24.² Adolescents can be victims, offenders, and/or witnesses to violence, which impacts their own physical, emotional, and mental health as well as that of their communities.²

RESPONDENTS

A total of 5195 Virginia high school students took the survey, most of whom (74%) were between the ages of 15 and 17 years old. Males (52%) and females (48%), as well as student grade levels, were evenly distributed.

SUMMARY

Physical Dating Violence

Physical dating violence is defined as being hit, slammed into something, or injured with an object or weapon on purpose by someone they were dating or going out with.

- Eleven percent of students experienced physical dating violence at least once during the previous 12 months, compared to 10% nationally.
- Females were more likely than males to experience physical dating violence (1.3 times as likely).

School & Neighborhood Safety

- Ten percent of students never or rarely felt safe at school. Seven percent of students never or rarely felt safe in their neighborhood.
- Six percent of students both in Virginia and nationally did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school on at least one day during the previous 30 days.
- Twenty percent of students both in Virginia and nationally were bullied at school during the previous 12 months.
- Fourteen percent of students were bullied electronically during the previous 12 months, compared to 16% nationally.

Vehicle Safety

- For each vehicle safety-related behavior, the percentage of Virginia students engaging in the behavior was lower than the percentage of students nationally (**fig. 1**).

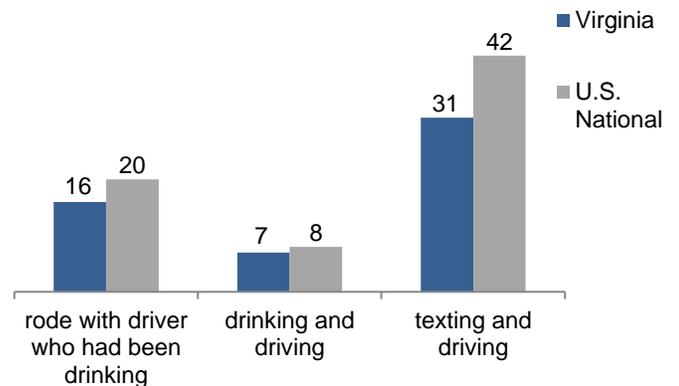


Figure 1: Percentage of students who rode with a driver who had been drinking, who consumed alcohol and drove, and who text messaged and drove.

Weapon Carrying

- Fifteen percent of students had carried a weapon on at least one of the previous 30 days, compared to 16% nationally.
- Three percent of students had carried a weapon on school property at least once during the previous 12 months, compared to 4% nationally.
- Students were more likely to carry a weapon on school property at least once during the previous 12 months if they were bullied at school (1.2 times as likely).
- Students were more likely to carry a weapon on school property at least once during the previous 12 months if they were electronically bullied (2 times as likely) (fig. 2).

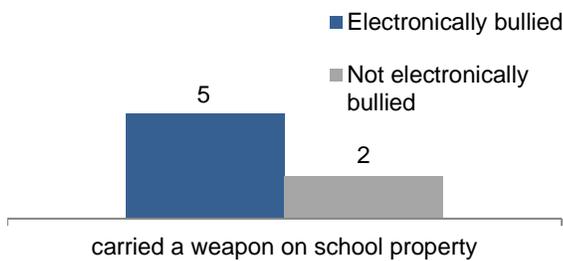


Figure 2: Percentage of students who carried a weapon on school property at least once during the previous 12 months, by whether they were electronically bullied.

- Students were more likely to carry a weapon on school property at least once during the previous 12 months if they were threatened or injured with a weapon at school (9.4 times as likely) (fig. 3).

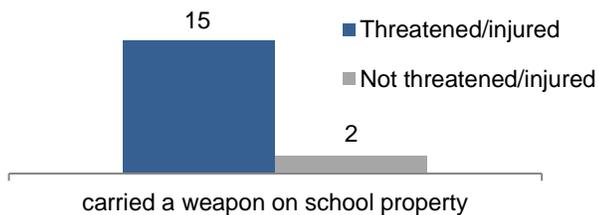


Figure 3: Percentage of students who carried a weapon on school property at least once during the previous 12 months, by whether they were threatened/injured with a weapon at school.

Physical Fighting

- Twenty-one percent of students were in a physical fight at least once during the previous 12 months, compared to 23% nationally.
- Eight percent of students both in Virginia and nationally were in a physical fight on school property at least once during the previous 12 months.
- Females were less likely than males to have been in a physical fight one or more times during the previous 12 months (0.4 times as likely).
- Students were less likely to have been in a physical fight one or more times during the previous 12 months if they received As and Bs in school (0.4 times as likely) (fig. 4).

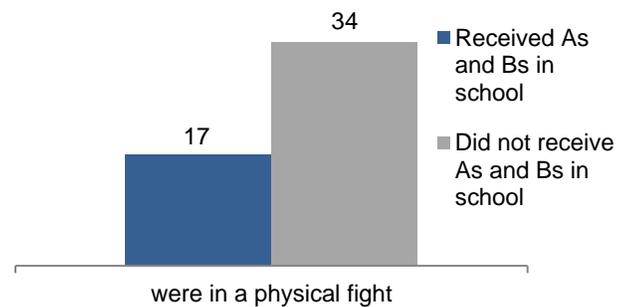


Figure 4: Percentage of students who were in a physical fight one or more times during the previous 12 months, by whether they received As and Bs in school.

Resources

- Twenty-five percent of students did not have a teacher or adult at school with whom they could talk.

MORE INFORMATION

1. Schwarz, S. (2009, October). Adolescent Violence and Unintentional Injury in the United States. Retrieved from http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_890.html
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2015). Understanding Youth Violence. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/YV-FactSheet-a.pdf>

For more information, please visit <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/virginia-youth-survey/> or contact VYSrequest@vdh.virginia.gov