Introduction

Bullying is a damaging behavior that impacts 1 in 5 adolescents in the U.S. The effects of bullying, in all forms, have severe immediate and long-term consequences. In 2019, 46.7% of Virginia middle school students experienced at least one form of bullying, bullying on school property or cyberbullying. Research has also shown that adolescents who bully others, are just as likely to suffer from the serious and long-lasting negative effects. For example, 80.4% of middle school students who electronically bullied someone were likely to experience any form of bullying themselves.

**Figure 1:** Percentage of Students who were victims of bullying on school property, electronically bullied and bullied someone by Race and Ethnicity, VYS, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Bullied at School</th>
<th>Electronically Bullied</th>
<th>Electronically Bullied Someone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black*</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White*</td>
<td>40.8%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Non-Hispanic (NH)
Other = Asian*, Multiple Races*, All other Races*

**Figure 2:** Percentage of Students who were victims of bullying on school property, electronically bullied and bullied someone by Sex, VYS, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Bullied at School</th>
<th>Electronically Bullied</th>
<th>Electronically Bullied Someone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Highlights

Bullied
- In 2019, middle school students who experienced cyberbullying, were more likely to report suicidality (47.9%), not feeling good about themselves (46.8%), ever drank alcohol (31.0%) and ever used electronic vapor products (24.3%).
- Female students were significantly more likely than male students to experience any form of bullying and to report not feeling good about themselves (52.2% vs 28.5%).
- Among those who experienced being bullied, 33.8% reported that they considered attempting suicide, 22.9% made a suicide plan, and 15.7% attempted suicide.
- NH Black students (72.8%) were significantly more likely than NH Other (57.6%), Hispanic (54.3%) and NH White students (43.4%) to experience any form of bullying and to report physical fighting.

Teased
- In 2019, 30.8% of middle school students were teased because of their race or ethnic background or were teased because someone thought that they were gay, lesbian, or bisexual.
- Female students were more three times more likely as male students to experience any form of teasing and reported suicidality (56.0% vs 33.2%).
- Compared to female students, males who experienced teasing because of their race or ethnic background had a higher likelihood of reporting ever being involved in a physical fight (68.1% vs 51.7%).
- Students who experienced teasing because someone thought they were gay, lesbian, or bisexual had a higher likelihood of reporting being in a physical fight than students who experienced teasing because of their race or ethnic background (69.4% vs 63.2%).
**Example interpretation of Table 1:** Nearly forty-two percent of those who have been a victim of any form of bullying, reported not feeling good about themselves.
DEFINITIONS

• **Bullied**: middle school students who were ever bullied on school property or electronically (cyber) bullied (counting being bullied through texting, Instagram, Facebook, or other social media).

• **Electronically Bullied Someone**: middle school students who electronically bullied someone (counting bullying through texting, Instagram, Facebook, or other social media).

• **Mental health**: middle school students who reported that they did not feel good about themselves

• **Odds Ratio (OR)**: represents the odds that an outcome will occur given a particular exposure, compared to the odds of the outcome occurring in the absence of that exposure.
  - Example: Students who experienced any form of teasing were 2.7 times as likely to report not feeling good about themselves.

• **Suicidality**: middle school students who reported any form of suicide ideation such as considering suicide, plans, or attempting suicide.

• **Teased**: middle school students who reported being teased students who have been the victim of teasing/name calling because of their race or ethnic background or who have been the victim of teasing/name calling because someone thought they were gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

• **Unwelcome Sexual Comments**: middle school students who reported another student most of the time or always made unwelcome sexual comments, jokes or gestures that made them feel uncomfortable on school property.

REFERENCES


FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit [https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/virginia-youth-survey/](https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/virginia-youth-survey/) or contact VYSrequest@vdh.virginia.gov