

Mental Health

Risk Factors

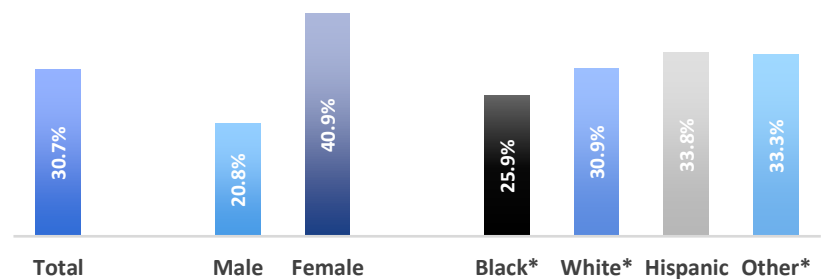
Key Highlights

- ▶ In 2019, 3 in 10 (30.7%) middle school students suffered from a mental health disorder of not feeling good about themselves.
- ▶ Compared to male students, female students were significantly more likely to not feel good about themselves (40.9% vs 20.8%).
- ▶ On an average school night, nearly 6 in 10 (57.8%) middle school students who experienced mental health issues reported less than 8 hours of sleep.
- ▶ On average, middle school students who experienced not feeling good about themselves reported 4.4 hours of screentime (TV viewing and computer use) on an average school day compared to 2.5 hours of screentime for those who reported feeling good about themselves.
- ▶ Compared to female students, male students were more likely to never or rarely get the kind of help they needed when they were in emotional distress (72.8% vs 69.7%).
- ▶ NH Black students (78.1%) were significantly more likely than Hispanic (74.5%), NH Other (70.6%), and NH White (67.9%) students to report that they never or rarely got the kind of help they needed when they were in emotional distress.
- ▶ Compared to male students, female students who reported not feeling good about themselves were significantly more likely to report any form of suicidality (59.7% vs 42.3%), seriously considered killing themselves (53.8% vs 36.4%), to make a plan about how they would kill themselves (37.5% vs 22.5%) and to have ever tried to kill themselves (24.4% vs 12.6%).

Introduction

Adolescent mental disorders have become a public health concern due to their prevalence and impact on children, families and communities.¹ According to the CDC, mental health disorders among adolescents are described as severe alterations in the child’s ability to achieve social, emotional, cognitive, and academic milestones and to function in daily settings.² Despite the evidence of increasing expenditure on care for overall child health, mental health treatment utilization among children is relatively low.^{1, 2} Untreated adolescents are more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviors, illicit substance use, and other delinquent behaviors. For example, over 3 in 10 (35.6%) Virginia students who never or rarely got the kind of help they needed when they were in emotional distress, misused a substance one or more times during their life.

Figure 1: Percentage of Students who did not feel good about themselves by sex and race/ethnicity, VYS, 2019



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

Figure 2: Percentage of how often students received the kind of help they needed when feeling emotionally distressed, VYS, 2019

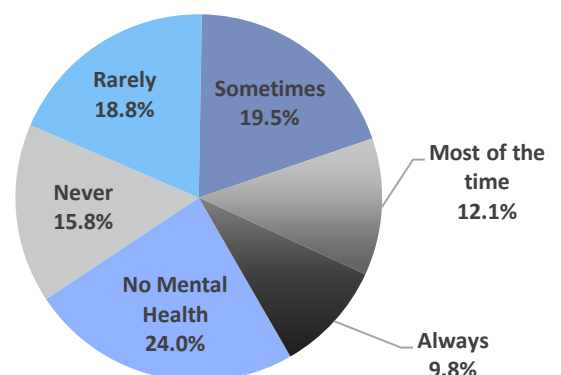


Figure 3: Percentage of Students who did not feel good about themselves and reported lifetime substance use, VYS, 2019

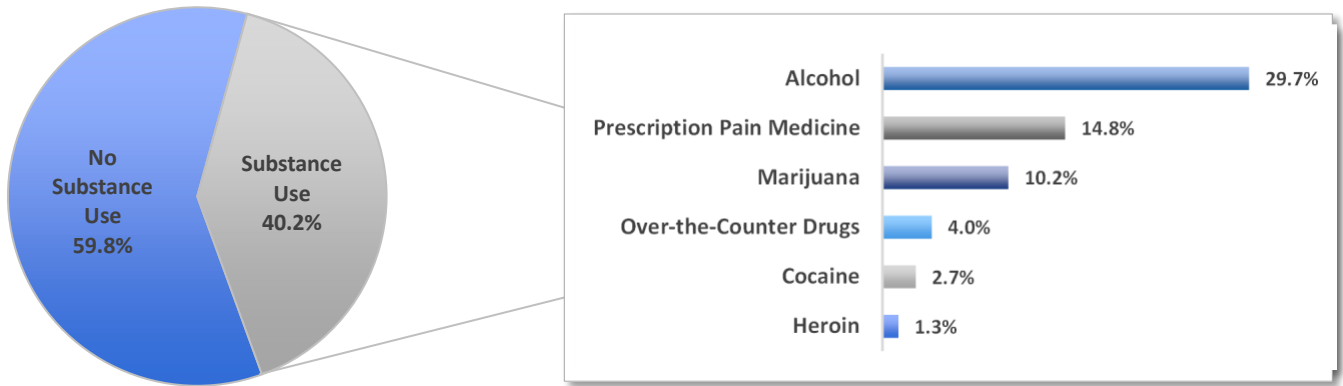


Figure 4: Percentage of Students who did not feel good about themselves and reported alcohol use, marijuana use and cigarette smoking before age 11 years, VYS, 2019

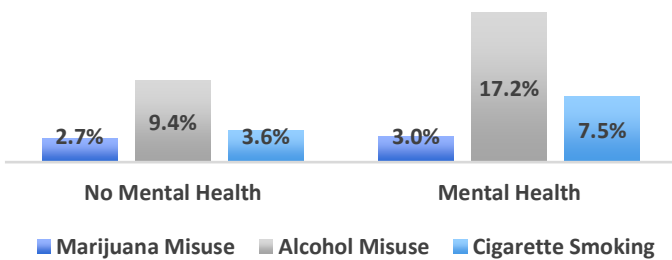


Figure 5: Percentage of Students who did not feel good about themselves and reported screentime of 2 or more hours on an average school day, VYS, 2019

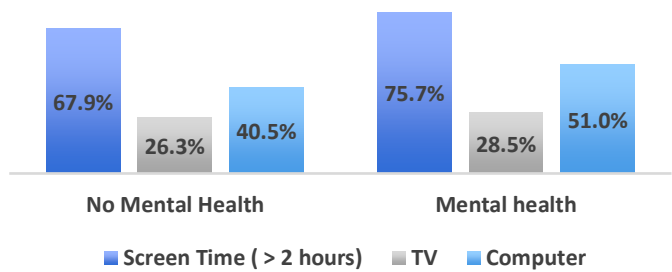


Figure 6: Percentage of Students who did not feel good about themselves and reported hours of sleep on an average school night, VYS, 2019

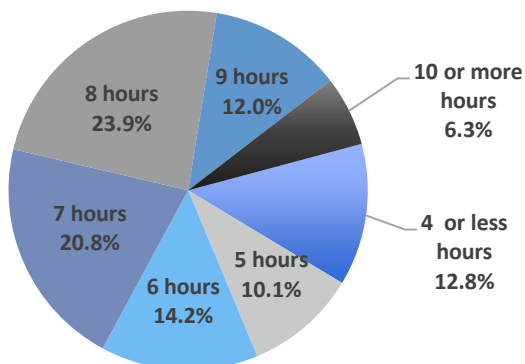


Table 1 : Prevalence and Adjusted Odds Ratio (95% Confidence Interval) of students who did not feel good about themselves by selected risk indicators, VYS, 2019

Risk Indicator	Percentage (%) [*]	Adjusted OR ^a (95% CIs) ^b
Mental Health**		
Suicidality		
Seriously Considered Suicide ^c	47.8%*	7.7 (5.5 – 10.7)
Made a Suicide Plan ^d	32.2%*	6.2 (3.9 – 10.5)
Ever Tried to Kill Themselves ^e	20.1%*	5.2 (3.8 – 7.2)
Connectedness		
After school activities ^f	46.7%*	1.7 (1.3 – 2.2)
Teacher/Adult to Talk To ^g	36.4%*	5.0 (3.9 – 6.4)

*Statistically significant
a = adjusted for race/ethnicity, sex and grade
b = Please interpret confidence interval with caution: estimates that have a 95% confidence interval width exceeding 2 points or 1.2 times, indicate that this estimate has low precision.
c = significantly different (p<0.05) than students who did not seriously considered suicide
d = significantly different (p<0.05) than students who did not make a suicide plan
e = significantly different (p<0.05) than students who did not ever try to kill themselves (attempted suicide)
f = significantly different (p<0.05) than students who did participate in after school or community activities one or more hours during an average week
g = significantly different (p<0.05) than students who report there is at least one teacher or other adult that they can talk to if they have a problem

**Example interpretation of Table 1: Twenty percent (20.1%) of middle school students who experienced mental health issues reported a suicide attempt or tried to kill themselves.

DEFINITIONS

- **Lifetime Substance Misuse:** percentage of middle student who ever used marijuana, took prescription pain medicine without a doctor's prescription, differently than how a doctor told them to use it or used any form of cocaine or heroin, methamphetamines or ecstasy.
- **Mental health:** percentage of students who did not strongly agree or agree that they feel good about themselves
- **Odds Ratio: 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 did not strongly agree or agree that they feel good about themselves were 8.1 times as likely to report seriously considering suicide.
- **Suicidality:** middle school students who reported any form of suicide ideation such as considering suicide, plans, or attempting suicide.

REFERENCES

1. Ghandour, R. M., Sherman, L. J., Vladutiu, C. J., Ali, M. M., Lynch, S. E., Bitsko, R. H., & Blumberg, S. J. (2019). Prevalence and Treatment of Depression, Anxiety, and Conduct Problems in US Children. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 206, 256-267.e3. Accessed July 20, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpeds.2018.09.021>
2. Children's Mental Disorders | CDC. (2019, September 5). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Accessed July 20, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/symptoms.html>

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/virginia-youth-survey/> or contact VYSrequest@vdh.virginia.gov