



## ***Safe Schools Healthy Students Student Survey Findings***

In Spring 2009, Spring 2010 and Spring 2011, 2<sup>nd</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in the Hazelwood School District participated in a survey that explored safety concerns, alcohol and drug use, and school climate. In 2009 (Year 1), 5,661 students completed the survey; 2,595 elementary school students; 2,135 middle school students and 912 high school students. In Spring 2010 (Year 2) the survey was repeated with 4,356 elementary students, 2,220 middle school students and 1,413 high school for a total of 7,989 students. In Spring 2011 (Year 3) the survey was repeated with 4,515 elementary students, 2,241 middle school students and 1,173 high school for a total of 7,929 students. Data were weighted by grade so that elementary, middle, and high school students were represented equally.

### **Safety**

*For most students, safety at school and going to and from school was not a concern. In Year 3, 14% of Elementary students reported missing school because they did not feel safe going to and from school while 18% reported missing school because they did not feel safe at school. The questions were combined for the upper levels; 12% of Middle School students and 10% of High School students reported missing a day of school because they did not feel safe.*

- There was a significant decrease in the last three years in the number of elementary school students reporting missing a day of school because they felt unsafe going to and from school.
- There was a decrease in the days missed due to feeling unsafe at school for the elementary school students as well as the days missed due to feeling unsafe for high school students. However, this has not yet reached statistical significance<sup>1</sup>. Elementary school students primarily did not feel safe traveling to and from school, outside at school, in the bathroom, in the gym and on the playground. Middle school students did not feel safe in the hallway, in the gym, in the bathroom and on their way home from school. High school students did not feel safe in the bathroom, in the cafeteria and in the hallway.
- There was an increase in the days missed due to feeling unsafe for middle school students. This number had dipped from Year 1 to Year 2 but increased past baseline numbers in Year 3.
- Fewer students in middle and high schools reported being absent due to safety concerns than students in elementary school.
- In Year 3, there was no significant difference between males and females on days missed due to feeling unsafe at any of the grade levels.
- In Year 3, many schools significantly improved their perceived student safety as reported by the students.
- From Year 2 to Year 3, seven schools made a significant improvement in the numbers of reported days missed because students felt unsafe.

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<sup>1</sup> Survey answers will show some natural variance from year to year. A statistically significant difference means that we can say, with 95% certainty that the change in the numbers is large enough that it means that there is an actual difference in the school / students rather than just being a product of the natural variance. Numbers that are not statistically significant MAY still reflect an actual difference, but we do not have enough movement in the numbers to say that with certainty.

## **Fighting**

*Fighting continued to decrease in Year 3; 54% of elementary school students, 61% of middle school students and 82% of high school students reported that they did not engage in a physical fight in the last year. In Year 1 it was 52% of elementary school students, 58% of middle school students and 77% of high school students.*

- Fighting was lower among females than males.
- Fighting was lowest in high school and highest in elementary school.
- Youth were much more likely to *witness* fighting. About 80% of elementary students, 91% of middle school students, and 87% of high school students reported witnessing a physical fight. These numbers largely remained stable from Year 1 to Year 2 and again into Year 3, although the middle school students saw a slight decrease (87%) in Year 2 that continued into Year 3 (86%).

## **Emotional Bullying (Middle and High School Students Only)**

*A majority of students did not bully another student emotionally nor were they recipients of emotional bullying. Middle school students reported significantly less ignoring another student, teasing or putting down another student in a mean way or spreading rumors behind another student's back. High school students reported significantly less ignoring another student, spreading rumors behind another student's back, spreading rumors using the internet or saying mean things about another student using text messaging.*

- The most common forms of emotional bullying were ignoring another student on purpose to hurt their feelings or putting down a student in a mean way (around half of all students) in all three years.
- Most students did not report spreading rumors behind a student's back, having been part of a group that had ganged up on a student or having been ganged up on themselves.
- Spreading rumors via the internet among students was uncommon (about 10%). Rumor spreading via text messaging was more common, though two-thirds of students did not report engaging in this behavior.
- Emotional bullying was lower among males than females, especially in middle school. However, high school males were more likely to report teasing or putting another student down in a mean way.
- Emotional bullying was lower in high school than middle school with the exception of high school students being more likely to send a mean text message.

## **Cigarette, Alcohol and Drug Use (Middle and High School Students Only)**

*A majority of youth reported not using alcohol or other drugs. There was a significant decline in the abuse of over the counter medication and the use of alcohol as well as a decline in binge drinking from Year 2 to Year 3.*

- In Year 3 only 6% of youth reported smoking cigarettes and only 2% used smokeless tobacco, a slight decline in both from Year 2.
- 80% of youth reported that they had not consumed alcohol in 30 days prior to taking the survey with the majority of use occurring in high school. 90% report 0 episodes of binge drinking in the last two weeks.
- In middle school, students feeling of safety decreased as substance use increased. In both middle school and high school, reported days of missing school due to feeling unsafe and reported incidents of being in a physical fight increased with reported substance use. This should be interpreted carefully as the exact cause / effect relationship is unknown but it is a relationship that may merit further exploration.
- Around 15% of students reported using marijuana. This is slightly increased from Year 2 although the increase is not significant.

- Use of other illicit drugs is very low: 6% reported abusing over the counter medicines while 5% reported abusing prescription drugs and inhalants; these numbers have decreased from Year 1. Fewer than 2% reported using ecstasy, cocaine, psychedelics, or methamphetamines. These numbers have remained stable from Year 1 to Year 3.
- Use was higher among older youth.
- Males generally used more than females, although rates of alcohol use were similar.
- All drugs were seen as harmful when used daily. Marijuana was considered the least harmful with 32% of students saying it was only at most somewhat harmful to use the drug daily. Marijuana is also the only drug where the perception of harm has decreased from Year 1.
- Almost 75% of students said alcohol was either very harmful or harmful while almost all students said the same about inhalants (91%), meth (97%) and cocaine (97%). 84% of students said that cigarettes were very harmful or harmful when used daily. All of these numbers have increased slightly from Year 2.

### **School Climate (Middle and High School Students Only except for the last bullet point)**

*Generally, student report positive feelings about their school. These numbers have all increased somewhat from Year 2.*

- Most (92%) felt that there were many chances for students to get involved in activities outside of class.
- Three-fourths (76%) felt like they were part of the school.
- Around 71% of middle school and 66% of high school students felt that their teachers praised them when they work hard.
- About half (56%) agreed that parents were informed when they do something well.
- Males felt more positive about the school climate than females.
- 82% of elementary school students said they liked school at least sometimes.

**Percentage of Students Who Missed School In Prior 30 Days Because They Did Not Feel Safe At or On Their Way Home From School  
(Decrease is an Improvement)**

	2009	2010	2011
Elementary School – to & from	17.8%	17.2%	14.4%
Elementary School – at school	20.5%	19.3%	18.4%
Middle School	11.1%	9.4%	12.4%
High School	11.2%	10.4%	9.9%

**Percentage of Students Who Felt that School was “Very Safe”  
(Increase is an Improvement)**

	2009	2010	2011
<b>Elementary School</b>			
In school	46.9%	50.1%	47.2%
To and from school	41.1%	43.8%	48.2%
<b>Middle School</b>			
In school	18.5%	20.4%	22.4%
To and from school	22.7%	23.7%	24.5%
<b>High School</b>			
In school	13.5%	14.1%	12.8%
To and from school	21.6%	20.2%	20.0%

**% Students Reporting Engaging in the Activity in Last Year, Middle & High School Only  
(Decrease is an Improvement)**

Activity	% 08-09	% 09-10	% 10-11
Ignored another student on purpose to hurt their feelings	66%	43%	39%
Been part of a group who ganged up on a student	51%	21%	19%
Teased or put down another student in a mean way	68%	46%	42%
Spread mean rumors about another student behind their back	51%	17%	16%
Spread mean rumors on the Internet about another student	43%	8%	8%
Said mean things using text messaging about another student	58%	29%	28%

**% Students Reporting Being a Victim of the Activity in Last Year, Middle & High School Only  
(Decrease is an Improvement)**

Activity	% 08-09	% 09-10	% 10-11
Ignored another student on purpose to hurt their feelings	49%	18%	16%
Been part of a group who ganged up on a student	49%	19%	17%
Teased or put down another student in a mean way	59%	34%	35%
Spread mean rumors about another student behind their back	63%	37%	37%
Spread mean rumors on the Internet about another student	49%	17%	17%
Said mean things using text messaging about another student	51%	21%	19%

**% Students Reporting Witnessing the Activity in Last Year, Middle & High School Only  
(Decrease is an Improvement)**

Activity	% 08-09	% 09-10	% 10-11
Ignored another student on purpose to hurt their feelings	62%	38%	40%
Been part of a group who ganged up on a student	62%	34%	32%
Teased or put down another student in a mean way	74%	45%	58%
Spread mean rumors about another student behind their back	74%	55%	57%
Spread mean rumors on the Internet about another student	61%	43%	46%
Said mean things using text messaging about another student	58%	37%	36%

### Use of Marijuana in 30 Days Prior to Survey Administration

Number of Days of Marijuana Use	Percent Who Used 2008-2009	Percent Who Used 2009-2010	Percent Who Used 2010-2011
0 days:	84.3%	86.5%	85.0%
1-2 days:	6.2%	4.7%	6.0%
3-9 days:	3.5%	3.9%	3.2%
10-19 days:	1.9%	1.6%	1.9%
20-30 days:	4.1%	3.4%	3.9%

### Use of Cigarettes and Smokeless Tobacco in 30 Days Prior to Survey Administration

Number of Days Used in Past Month	% Who Smoked Cigarettes 2008-2009	% Who Smoked Cigarettes 2009-2010	% Who Smoked Cigarettes 2010-2011	% Who Used Smokeless Tobacco 2008-2009	% Who Used Smokeless Tobacco 2009-2010	% Who Used Smokeless Tobacco 2010-2011
0 days	91.4%	93.2%	94.3%	97.1%	97.4%	97.5%
1-2 days	3.6%	2.5%	2.4%	1.4%	1.2%	1.6%
3-9 days	2.0%	1.3%	1.0%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%
10-19 days	0.8%	0.8%	0.6%	0.3%	0.4%	0.1%
20-30 days	2.2%	2.2%	1.7%	0.8%	0.4%	0.4%

### Use of Other Drugs in 30 Days Prior to Survey Administration

Drug	% Who Used in Past 30 Days 2008-2009	% Who Used in Past 30 Days 2009-2010	% Who Used in Past 30 Days 2010-2011
Over-the-counter medications without being sick	9.3%	8.6%	6.3%
Prescription drugs without a doctor's orders	5.8%	5.6%	4.6%
Inhalants	6.3%	6.6%	5.6%
Ecstasy	1.7%	1.3%	1.3%
Cocaine	1.3%	0.8%	1.1%
LSD and other psychedelics	0.9%	0.5%	0.8%
Methamphetamines	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%

### Use of Alcohol in 30 Days Prior to Survey Administration

# of Days Used in Past 30 Days	Percent Who Used 2008-2009	Percent Who Used 2009-2010	Percent Who Used 2009-2010
0 days	71.5%	76.1%	79.9%
1-2 days	15.3%	14.2%	12.2%
3-9 days	8.4%	6.6%	5.2%
10-19 days	2.6%	2.0%	1.7%
20-30 days	2.2%	1.1%	1.0%

### Binge Drinking in Two Weeks Prior to Survey Administration

Frequency of Binge Drinking	Percent Who Used 2008-2009	Percent Who Used 2009-2010	Percent Who Used 2010-2011
Never	83.5%	89.2%	89.8%
Once	7.3%	3.8%	4.5%
Twice	3.9%	3.4%	3.0%
3-5 times	3.0%	2.0%	1.9%
6-9 times	.9%	.9%	0.3%
10 or more times	1.4%	.7%	0.5%

**% Who Reported Drug As “Extremely Harmful”  
(Increase is Improvement)**

Drug	% 08-09	% 09-10	% 10-11
Alcohol	40.7%	41.2%	44.5%
Marijuana	54.0%	51.5%	50.1%
Cigarettes	54.3%	53.9%	56.4%
Inhalants	72.8%	71.3%	72.4%
Cocaine	86.7%	85.9%	86.7%
Methamphetamines	87.5%	87.8%	87.7%

**School Climate Questions**

**% Students Strongly Agreeing or Agreeing, Middle & High School Only  
(Increase is an Improvement)**

Activity	% 08-09	% 09-10	% 10-11
There are lots of chances for students in my school to get involved in sports, clubs, and other school activities outside of class.	90%	90%	92%
The school lets my parents know when I have done something well.	54%	52%	56%
My teachers praise me when I work hard in school.	68%	63%	69%
There are lots of chances for students in my school to talk with a teacher one-on-one.	74%	70%	73%
I feel like I am a part of this school.	74%	72%	76%