

The Student Stressors and Assets Survey:

An Assessment of the Developmental Assets™ of
Students in the Bernards Township School
District

*Bernards Township Board of Education -
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Study Process

- Focus on assessing the presence among students of the Search Institute's eight developmental assets :
 - Support—support from family, school, and community;
 - Empowerment—valuing of young people by the community;
 - Boundaries and expectations—clear expectations and limits;
 - Constructive use of time—enriching activities in which young people can participate;
 - Commitment to learning—lifelong commitment to learning and education;
 - Positive values—guiding values for choices;
 - Social competencies—Skills equipping young people to make effective choices; and
 - Positive identity—Sense of purpose and worth.

Questionnaire Design

- 25 questions drawn from Search Institute
- Remaining questions developed specifically for project
- Parental permission gotten for each student completing questionnaire
- Distributed to all 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in classrooms



Response Rates

- 1,314 completed surveys

Table 1. Response Rates by Grade and Gender

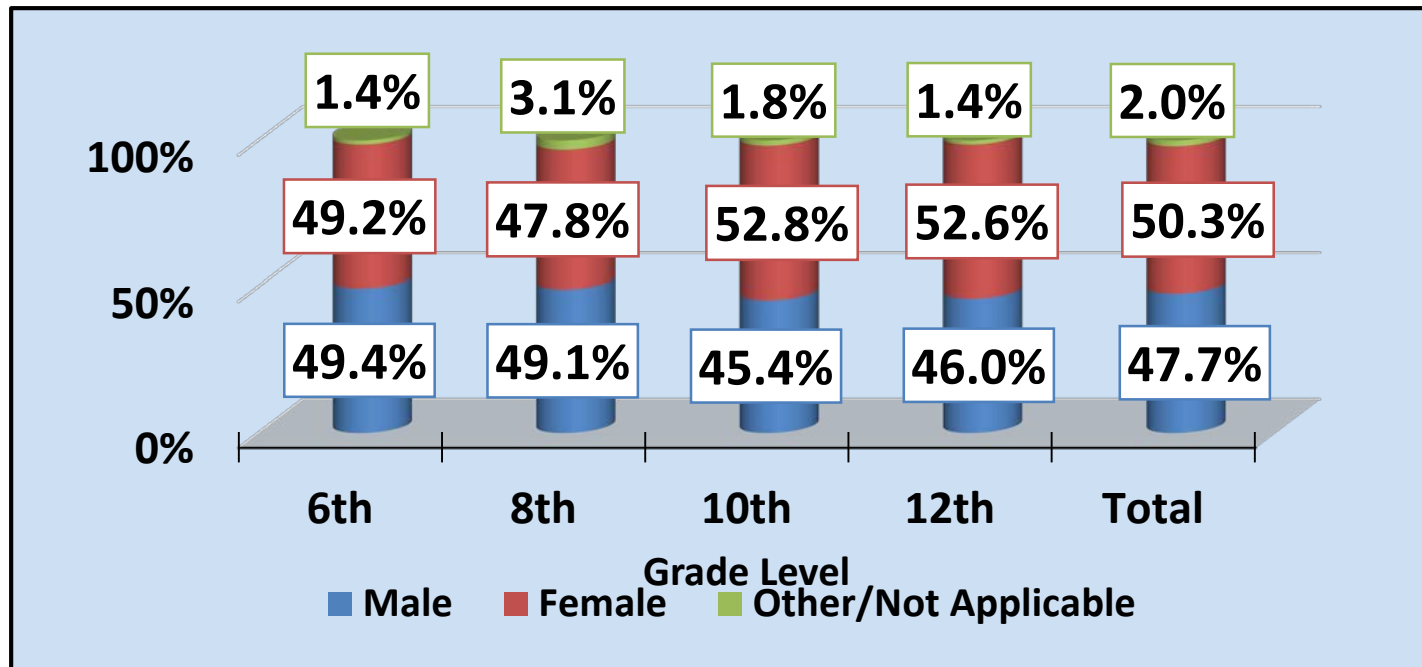
Grade	Males	Females	Total
6th	81%	82%	82%
8th	86%	85%	85%
10th	59%	69%	64%
12th	60%	70%	65%
Total	67%	74%	70%

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents



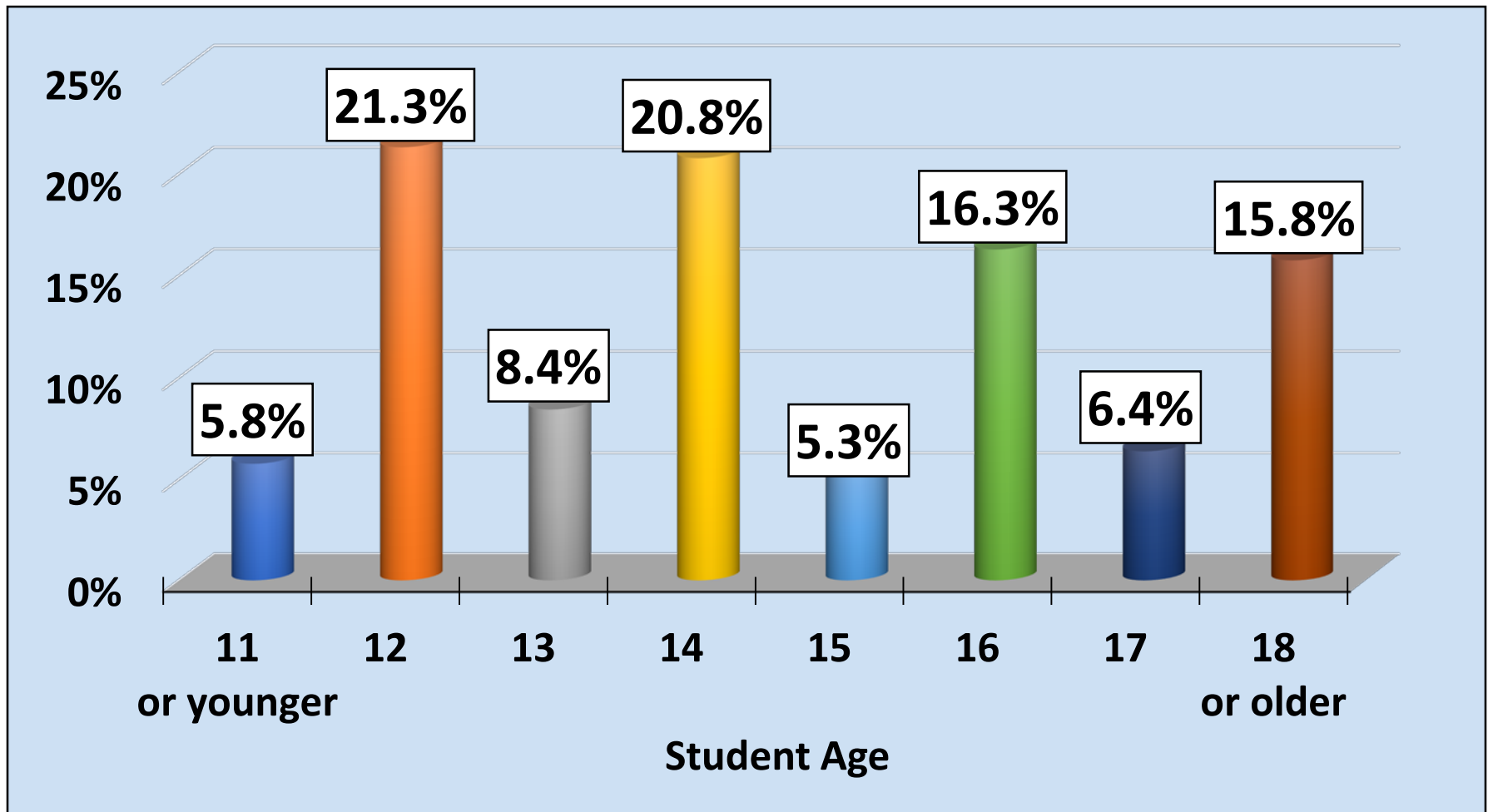
Respondent Class Grade by Gender

- Response rates by gender were similar across grades, with slightly more females than males responding in 10th and 12th grades.



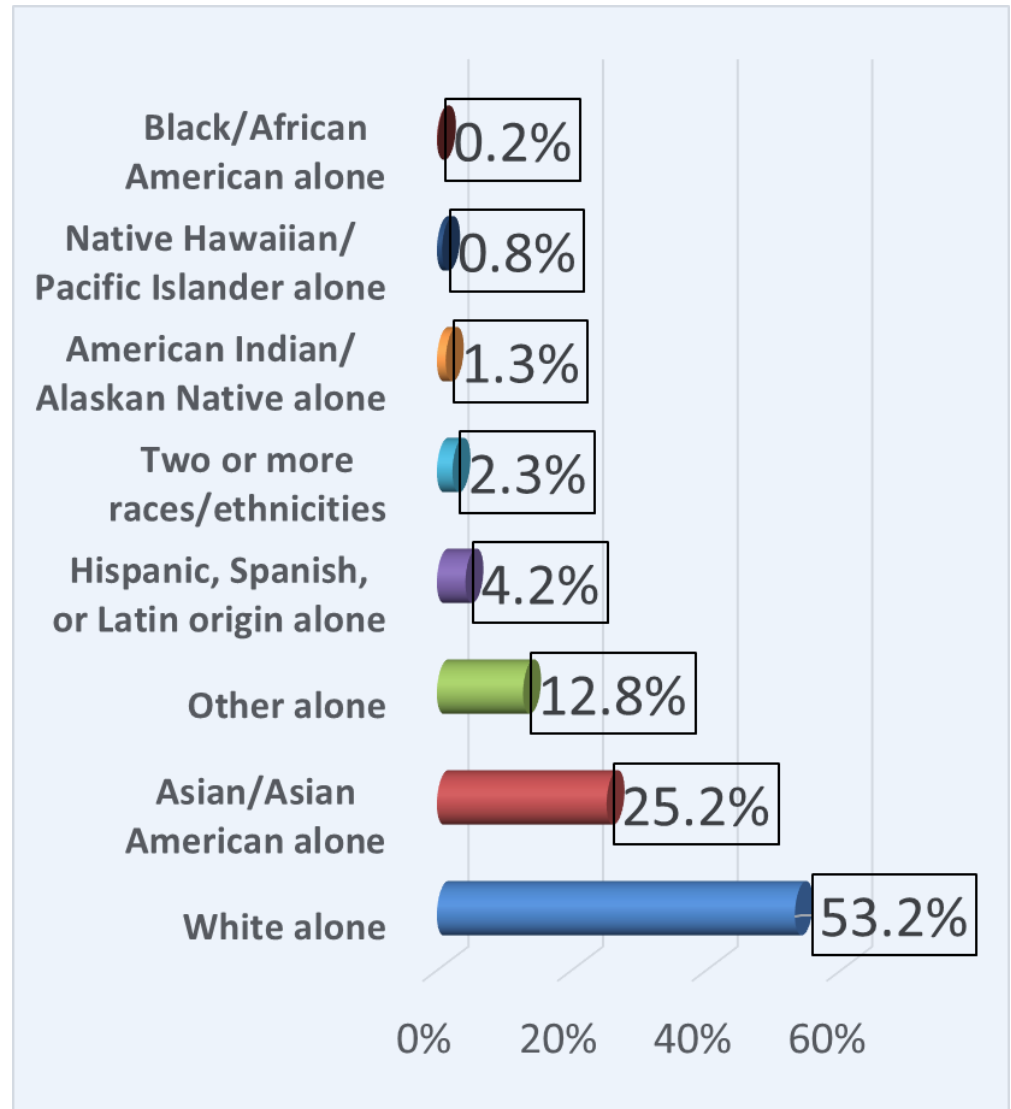
Student Age

- Student ages corresponded to the class grades



Student Ethnicity

- The majority of respondents were White
- The second largest group students identified as Asian/Asian Americans



Other Demographic Information

- 77% had grades of As and Bs or better
- 85% lived with both parents
- 63% lived in current household ten or more years



Survey Results



** Reporting 2018 results and comparing to 2005 and 2012 survey results **

Summary Mean Scores for Developmental Asset Categories by Grade

Asset Categories	Grade			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Support				
Parent Support Summary	4.23	4.02	3.86	3.91
School Support Summary	3.72	3.34	3.10	3.47
Other Support Summary	3.90	3.68	3.53	3.65
Boundaries and Expectations				
Family/School Rules Summary	3.85	3.86	3.71	3.60
Commitment to Learning				
Commitment to School Summary	4.20	4.10	4.09	4.18

Scores are based on a 1 to 5 point scale in which 5 is highest.

Summary Mean Scores for Developmental Asset Categories by Grade Continued

Asset Categories	Grade			
	6th	8th	10th	12th
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Positive Identity				
Emotional Wellbeing Summary	4.18	3.97	3.97	3.94
Social Competencies				
Resistance Summary	4.04	3.73	3.47	3.47
People Relationships Summary	3.98	3.87	3.92	3.96
Positive Values				
Work Ethic/Responsibility Summary	3.55	3.33	3.40	3.37
Empowerment				
Empowerment and Safety Summary	3.41	3.06	3.12	3.28

Scores are based on a 1 to 5 point scale in which 5 is highest.

Percent of Students Participating in Athletics/Intramural Sports

Grade	% Yes
6th	89.5%
8th	82.4%
10th	82.8%
12th	80.1%

Additional Results - Support

- About one-fourth of all students indicated feeling too much pressure to do well from parents.
- These students were more likely to indicate feeling they did not get the support they need from parents.
- About half of the students indicated getting support from teachers.
 - About 40% of all students indicated feeling that teachers really cared about them.

Additional Results - Support

Asset Categories	Grade			
	2005	2012	2018	
There is always someone I can turn to for help	Strongly Disagree	1.6%	3.1%	2.4%
	Disagree	4.0%	7.4%	7.5%
	Neutral	14.1%	16.2%	16.3%
	Agree	37.7%	38.6%	43.6%
	Strongly Agree	42.6%	34.8%	30.2%

Additional Results - Support

- Most students identified a “Close relative or family friend as their most likely confidant or support system.
- About half said they would be at least “Somewhat likely” to consider a teacher or coach as a confidant.



Additional Results - Support

		2005	2012	2018
Guidance/school counselor	Not Likely at all	47.3%	42.9%	43.8%
	Somewhat Likely	37.5%	38.7%	39.1%
	Very Likely	15.2%	18.5%	17.1%
School nurse	Not Likely at all	71.6%	79.9%	77.9%
	Somewhat Likely	21.9%	18.1%	19.2%
	Very Likely	6.6%	7.5%	8.5%
Doctor, nurse (other than school nurse) or other health professional	Not Likely at all	53.1%	56.1%	51.6%
	Somewhat Likely	35.2%	31.5%	34.3%
	Very Likely	11.7%	12.3%	14.1%
An adult in your neighborhood	Not Likely at all	62.1%	66.4%	63.9%
	Somewhat Likely	32.1%	28.2%	30.4%
	Very Likely	5.8%	5.4%	5.7%

Additional Results - Support

		2005	2012	2018
A Teacher	Not Likely at all	44.9%	44.9%	41.5%
	Somewhat Likely	46.2%	45.2%	48.3%
	Very Likely	8.9%	10.0%	10.2%
A Coach	Not Likely at all	54.5%	51.3%	48.3%
	Somewhat Likely	34.0%	36.2%	35.3%
	Very Likely	11.5%	12.5%	16.4%
A close relative or family member	Not Likely at all	16.5%	15.6%	12.4%
	Somewhat Likely	34.3%	34.6%	30.3%
	Very Likely	49.2%	49.8%	57.3%
Student assistance counselor	Not Likely at all	64.2%	63.4%	59.0%
	Somewhat Likely	29.2%	29.1%	32.5%
	Very Likely	6.6%	7.5%	8.5%

Additional Results - School work

- Most students indicated high levels of achievement motivation.
- There was a small segment of students who did not expect to succeed with hard work.
- By 10th grade, over half of the students reported copying homework two or more times in the past year.
- About one quarter of 10th and 12th graders reported copying an Internet document for a classroom assignment two or more times.
 - Students who cheat in one way are more likely to cheat in other ways.

Additional Results - Mental Health

- Most students indicated they felt good about themselves and did not experience frequent sadness or loneliness.
- About 25% of 10th and 12th graders, however, reported feeling sad a lot of the time.
- Feelings of sadness were associated with a variety of factors including:
 - Feeling there is not someone to turn to.
 - Parents do not provide needed help and support.
 - The school does not provide encouragement.
 - Not expecting to succeed.

Additional Results - Mental Health

		2005	2012	2018
I feel sad a lot of the time	Strongly Disagree	28.2%	30.5%	25.3%
	Disagree	39.5%	34.8%	35.3%
	Neutral	20.6%	21.1%	22.0%
	Agree	8.8%	9.2%	10.4%
	Strongly Agree	2.9%	4.3%	7.1%
I often feel lonely	Strongly Disagree	30.7%	25.7%	23.3%
	Disagree	31.7%	30.2%	30.4%
	Neutral	21.3%	21.9%	20.4%
	Agree	12.2%	15.5%	16.2%
	Strongly Agree	4.1%	6.7%	9.7%

Additional Results - Decision Making

- Most students indicated they thought things through before acting, although about 25% of students indicated a tendency toward acting impulsively.
- Students who reported doing things they regret afterwards were more likely to respond that they did not think things through before acting.
- About 12% of 12th graders reported riding with someone their own age who had been drinking. They indicated they believed 30% of these same drivers were drunk.
- Over one-quarter of students responded they had ridden in a car with someone not their age who had been drinking. They reported that they thought 19% of those drivers were drunk.

Additional Results - Bullying

- Over 80% of the students had never been bullied in any way.
- Around 5% of students, however, reported experiencing some form of bullying once a week or more.
- In addition, those students were more likely to report feeling sad and lonely.



Additional Results - Rules

		2005	2012	2018
My school has clear rules about what students can and cannot do	Strongly Disagree	3.1%	2.7%	2.5%
	Disagree	6.4%	7.6%	8.3%
	Neutral	13.2%	17.1%	16.7%
	Agree	41.9%	46.8%	49.5%
	Strongly Agree	35.4%	25.8%	22.9%
My family has clear rules about what I can and cannot do	Strongly Disagree	2.9%	2.9%	1.2%
	Disagree	9.0%	12.4%	8.9%
	Neutral	29.0%	27.3%	21.6%
	Agree	38.8%	36.2%	43.6%
	Strongly Agree	20.3%	21.1%	24.6%

Additional Results - Social Competencies

		2005	2012	2018
I care about other people's feelings	Not at all like me	2.3%	2.5%	1.8%
	A little like me	2.8%	4.45	5.2%
	Somewhat like me	14.6%	13.8%	14.4%
	Quite like me	39.0%	45.8%	40.1%
	Very much like me	41.4%	33.5%	38.5%
Helping other people	Not Important	2.0%	2.3%	1.2%
	Somewhat Important	6.8%	7.0%	7.8%
	Not Sure	9.3%	7.0%	4.9%
	Quite Important	51.85	55.2%	49.6%
	Extremely Important	30.1%	28.4%	36.6%
Getting to know people of different races or ethnic groups	Not Important	5.6%	8.2%	5.6%
	Somewhat Important	12.1%	14.2%	13.0%
	Not Sure	25.8%	28.4%	20.2%
	Quite Important	36.8%	35.15	41.2%
	Extremely Important	19.8%	14.1%	20.0%

Additional Results - Social Competencies

		2005	2012	2018
Adults in my town or city make me feel useful	Strongly Disagree	6.1%	7.9%	5.45
	Disagree	16.1%	14.6%	18.2%
	Neutral	37.3%	43.7%	40.3%
	Agree	33.1%	27.2%	29.5%
	Strongly Agree	7.4%	6.6%	6.6%
Students help decide what goes on in school	Strongly Disagree	12.65	13.1%	13.0%
	Disagree	17.3%	23.8%	23.5%
	Neutral	33.2%	29.3%	28.2%
	Agree	29.8%	28.5	29.7%
	Strongly Agree	7.1%	5.3%	5.6%
I feel safe in my school	Strongly Disagree	2.2%	2.6%	5.8%
	Disagree	4.7%	3.1%	12.1%
	Neutral	15.1%	15.4%	20.5%
	Agree	42.8%	42.5%	39.3%
	Strongly Agree	35.2%	36.35	22.3%

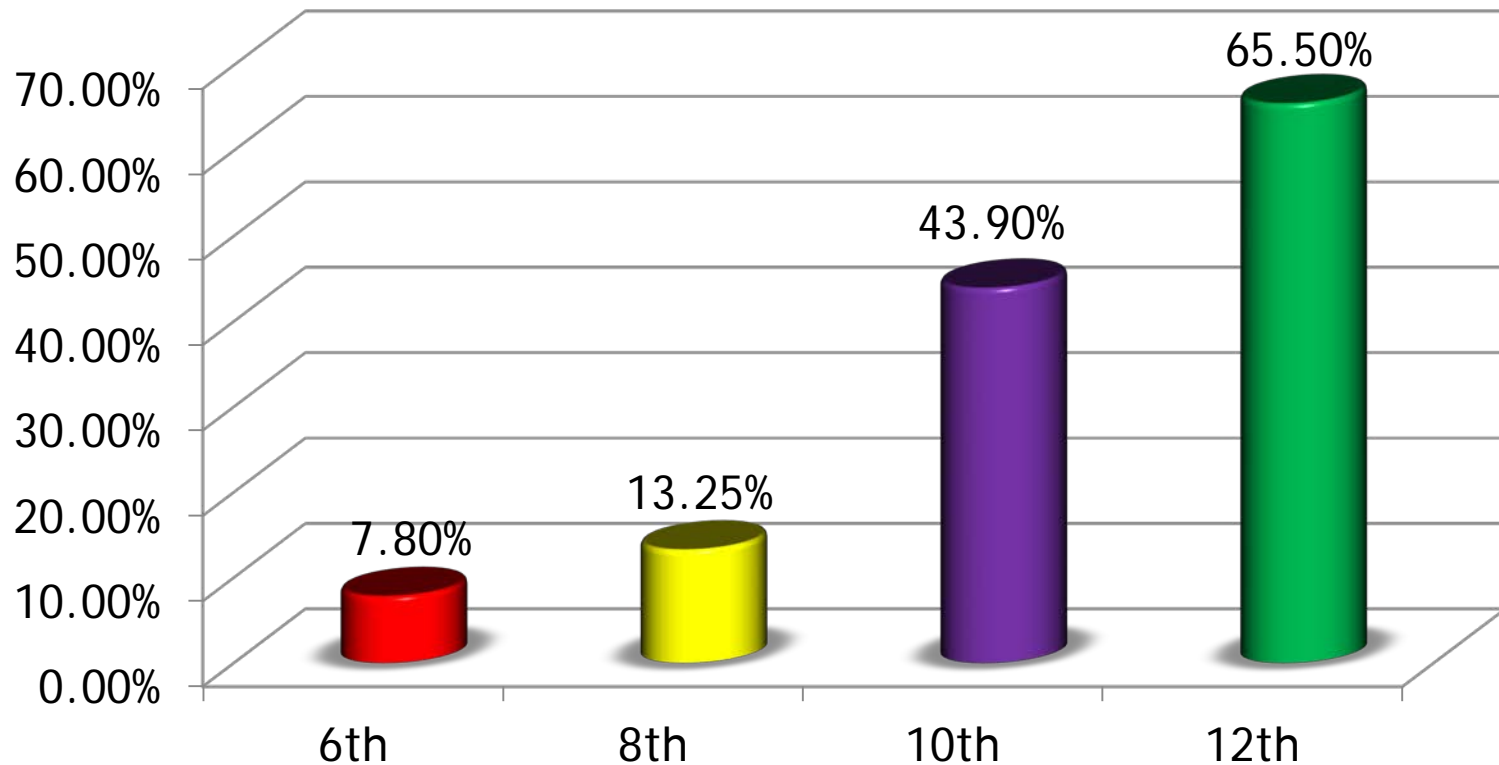
Additional Results - Electronic Cigarettes



		6 th	8 th	10 th	12 th	Total
Used electronic cigarettes for tobacco in the past 30 days	Not at all	98.5%	93.8%	84.4%	72.6%	88.4%
	1-9 Days	.3%	3.8%	8.7%	15.7%	6.5%
	10 or more days	1.2%	2.4%	6.9%	11.7%	5.1%
Used electronic cigarettes for marijuana/THC oil in the past 30 days	Not at all	99.7%	97.0%	90.3%	77.3%	92%
	1-9 Days	0%	1.6%	7.2%	12.8%	4.9%
	10 or more days	.3%	1.3%	2.5%	9.9%	3.2%

Additional Results - Alcohol Use

Percent of Students Indicating "Mostly True" to Parents' Approval to Drink Beer Once in a While



Additional Results - Alcohol Use

- 68.6% of 10th graders and 77.1% of 12th graders believe half or more of the students their age get drunk at least once a month.
- Over half of 10th graders and three-fourths of 12th graders believe their peers would approve of them drinking alcohol sometimes.
- Although these are not actual measures of frequency of alcohol consumption, the perceptions are indicative of students' beliefs that suggest a culture in which there is substantial underage drinking.

Implications of Findings

- Like the results from the 2005 and 2012 surveys, most students possess high levels of developmental assets.
- One important step is for the School District and community to sustain the positive results into the future.



Implications of Findings

- Given about 25% of 10th and 12th graders indicated some emotional difficulty, additional attention to students' emotional wellbeing may be worthwhile.
- Students experiencing emotional difficulties also reported feeling less support from parents and teachers and less willingness to reach out to a confidant.
- A challenge is to find ways to engage these students since they may not seek out available assistance.

Implications of Findings

- The evidence that some students are riding in cars in which the driver is drunk suggests the need for increased efforts to prevent driving while drunk.
- Communication about designated drivers, approaches for taking away the keys of a potential drunk driver, and arrangements with local taxi companies are among potential responses to the issue.
- Students also are riding with nonpeers who may be drunk. It may be useful to help students find ways to respond to a parent or other adult who should not be driving.

Implications of Findings

- Cheating is quite common among the students. Some students believe it may be necessary to cheat to achieve success.
- It may be useful to explore approaches to reduce cheating such as software that identifies plagiarism in written work.
- A greater challenge will be to counter attitudes in which some cheating is viewed as an acceptable means to an end.

Implications of Findings

- About 25% of students responded they did not think things through before acting, and those students were more likely to do things they regret.
- These students are aware of their behavior and may be receptive to learning ways to strengthen their ability to “look before they leap.”



Next Steps

- Collaboration between the school, Health Department, and other organizations to work on initiatives and programs moving forward
- Standing meetings to review current data and strategic planning
- Priority - for kids to know how to access their supports at school and to understand roles of supports.
- Continue educational presentations, attempt to reach parents through other media
- Continue educating young people with up to date information and trends as they become available
- Health Department and Municipal Alliance will continue efforts to destigmatize mental health - including Youth Mental Health First Aid
- Future Survey - PRIDE

THANK YOU!!!

- Bernards Township Board of Education - Nick Markarian
- Ridge High School - Drew Krause, Ann Sobine
- William Annin Middle School - Karen Hudock, Amy Stem
- Bernards Township Health Department
- Dr. Kirk Harlow - DecisionStat



Promoting Public Health

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