

# Multiple and Simultaneous Tobacco Use and Other Risk Behaviors Among High School Students

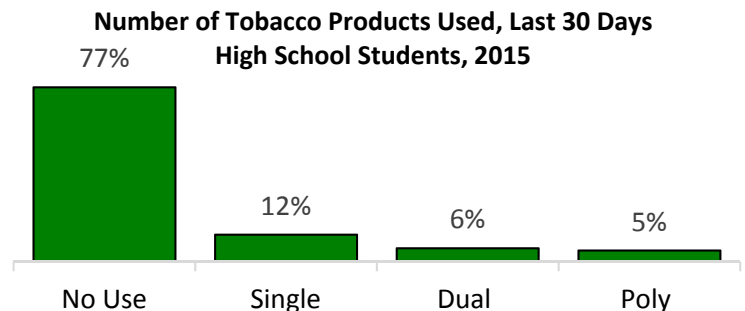
## 2015 Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey

### Background

Simultaneous use of multiple tobacco products is associated with risk factors that include and extend beyond what is typically considered with tobacco use<sup>1</sup>. While youth cigarette use has fallen consistently the last several decades<sup>2</sup>, adolescence remains the time at which tobacco use is started and established. Nearly nine in ten smokers start smoking by age 18<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, simultaneous use of multiple products is common among youth and increases the likelihood of addiction and continuation of smoking into adulthood<sup>4</sup>. In 2015, the Vermont high school youth risk behavior survey (YRBS) asked students about tobacco use, including use of cigarettes, cigar products, smokeless tobacco, and electronic vapor products.

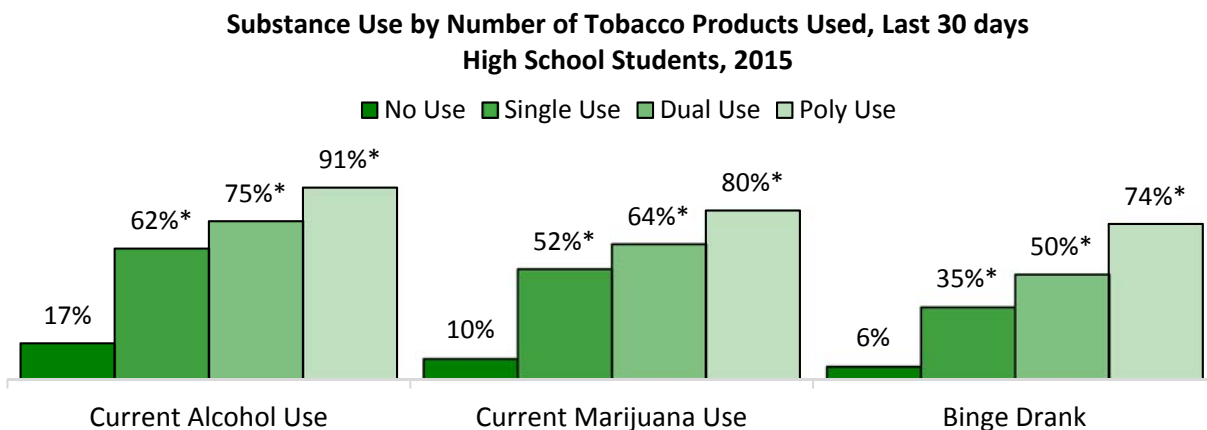
### Poly Use

Overall, about one in ten (12%) high school students used only one type of tobacco in the last month. One in twenty students reported current use of two forms of tobacco (dual use, 6%) and three or more tobacco products (poly use, 5%). Three-quarters of high school students did not use any tobacco during this time. Male high school students were significantly more likely than females to currently use any type of tobacco (27% vs. 19%), and report dual (7% vs. 5%) or poly use (7% vs. 3%) (data not shown).



### Alcohol and Marijuana Use

Alcohol and marijuana use differed by the number of tobacco products used. As the number of tobacco products used increased, so did the prevalence of alcohol and marijuana use. Those who used any tobacco product in the last month were significantly more likely than those who did not to currently use marijuana (52%-80% vs. 10%), alcohol (62%-91% vs. 17%), and engage in binge drinking (having 5+ drinks, 35%-74% vs. 6%). Additionally, youth participating who reported poly tobacco use were significantly more likely than dual and single product users to have engaged in each of these behaviors.



\*Statistically different compared with no tobacco use group.

For more information on youth tobacco use and the risks of tobacco:

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/50-years-of-progress/exec-summary.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/tables/trends/cig\\_smoking/](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/tables/trends/cig_smoking/)

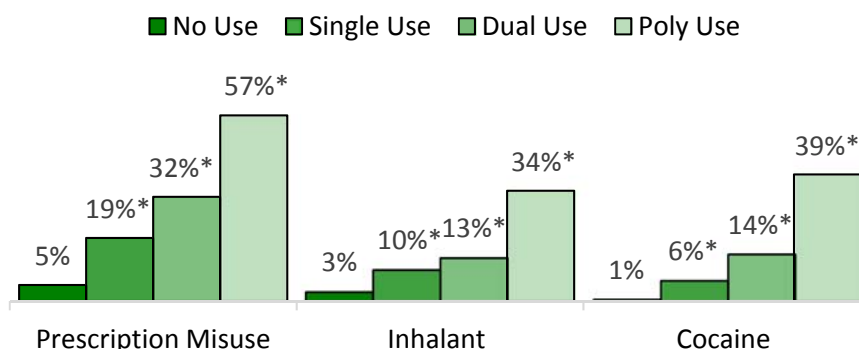
<sup>3</sup> <https://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/preventing-youth-tobacco-use/factsheet.html>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/youth\\_data/tobacco\\_use/](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/youth_data/tobacco_use/);  
[https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6345a2.htm?s\\_cid=mm6345a2\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6345a2.htm?s_cid=mm6345a2_w)

### Other Substance Abuse

All tobacco use groups reported significantly higher prevalence of lifetime illicit substance use than students who did not use any tobacco in the last month. As with alcohol and marijuana, as the number of tobacco products used increased, lifetime misuse of prescription drugs and use of inhalants and cocaine significantly increased. Youth in the poly use group reported prescription drug, inhalant, and cocaine use of 57%, 34%, and 39%, respectively.

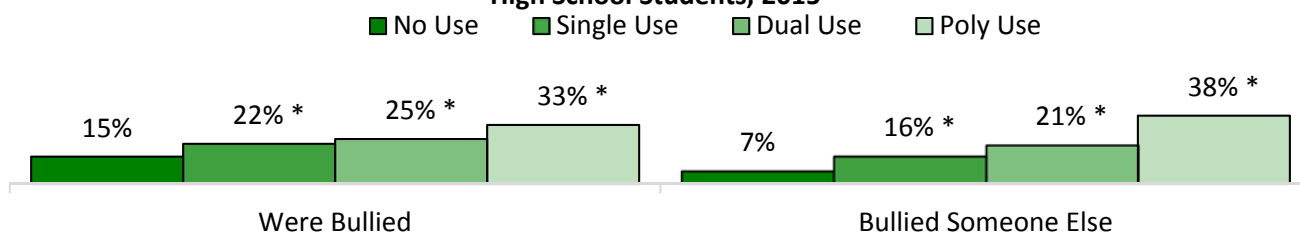
**Substance Use by Number of Tobacco Products Used  
High School Students, 2015**



### Bullying and Being Bullied

Experiencing bullying or bullying someone else is also more likely with simultaneous use of multiple tobacco products. Students who did not use tobacco were about half as likely to have been bullied in the past 30 days as those in the poly use group. Similarly, poly users were more likely to have bullied someone; they were twice as likely as single product users to have bullied others in the past 30 days, and five times more likely than those who did not use tobacco.

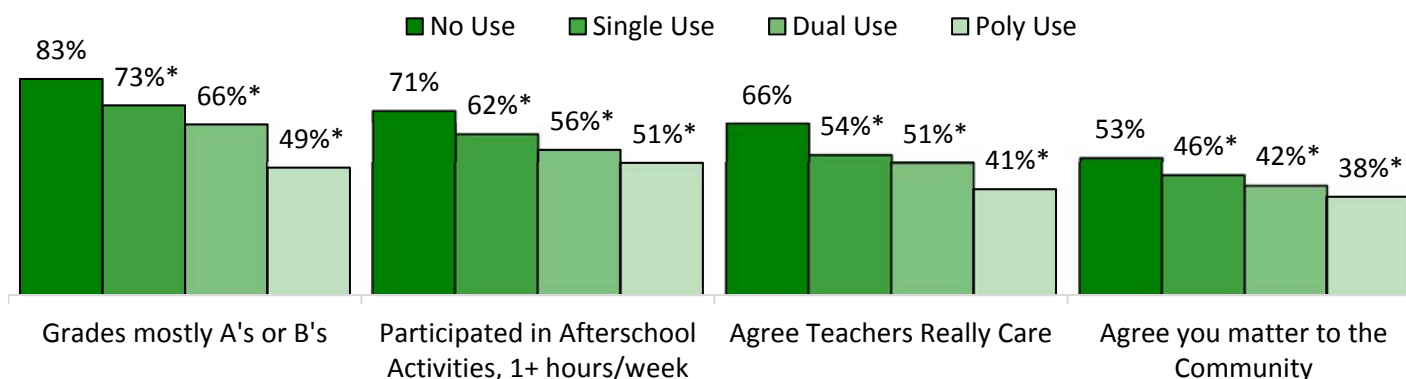
**Bullying by Number of Tobacco Products Used  
High School Students, 2015**



### Youth Assets

As the number of tobacco products used increases, student assets decrease. Youth in each of the use groups were significantly less likely than those in the no use group to get grades mostly of A's and B's, participate in afterschool activities, think teachers care, or think they matter to the community.

**Student Assets by Number of Tobacco Products Used  
High School Students, 2015**



\*Statistically different compared with no tobacco use group.

**For questions on this data brief, please contact:** Kristen Murray, PhD ([kristen.murray@vermont.gov](mailto:kristen.murray@vermont.gov)) or Erin Singer, PhD ([erin.singer@vermont.gov](mailto:erin.singer@vermont.gov)). Please visit the following websites for information about [Tobacco Control](#) and [Tobacco Surveillance](#) in Vermont.

Analysis completed by Samuel Brown, Vermont Department of Health Intern.