

2025 Middle School Executive Summary

Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey

August 2026

The Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is part of a national school-based survey that monitors the health-risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death and disability among youth and young adults including:

- Behaviors that lead to injuries and violence
- Sexual behaviors related to unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections,
- Mental health,
- Alcohol, tobacco and other drug use,
- Nutrition and physical activity, and
- Protective factors.

The Vermont high school YRBS has been conducted every other spring since 1993, a middle school survey was added in 2011. Copies of the 2025 Vermont high school and middle school surveys as well as previous surveys can be found online at Healthvermont.gov/YRBS.

If you need help accessing or understanding this information, contact AHS.VDHYRBS@vermont.gov.

Why Are These Data Important?

The YRBS helps our communities understand how young people are doing—what they struggle with, what supports them, and where we can work together to improve youth health and safety. In 2025, nearly 13,000 middle school students across Vermont shared anonymous information about their experiences, behaviors, and wellbeing.

Learn more about the YRBS program or view additional reports and data briefs on special topics at HealthVermont.gov/YRBS.

Vermont 2025 YRBS: At-A-Glance

111 of the 111	invited middle schools participated*
12,911	students in grades 6–8 completed the survey
86%	overall middle school response rate
75	middle school questions

* Elementary or intermediate schools ending in sixth grade are not eligible to participate.



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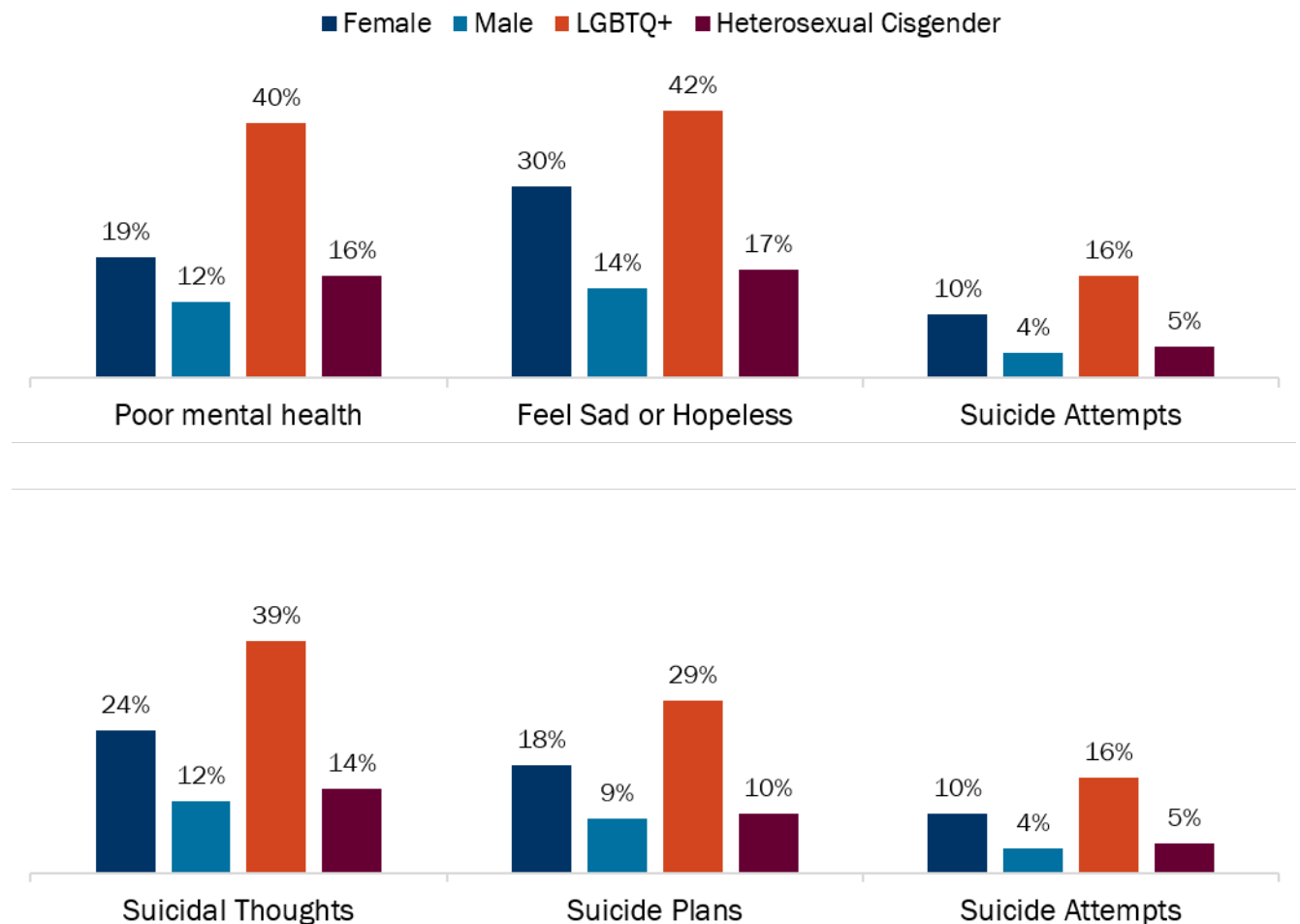


Highlights From the 2025 Report

Mental health among middle school students continues to be one of Vermont's biggest needs.

- When asked about their mental health over the last 30 days, one in five middle school students (20%) report that their mental health was not good most of the time or always.
- Overall, 22% of middle school students report feeling so sad or hopeless during at least two weeks in the past year that they stopped doing some of their usual activities.
- One in five middle school students (19%) report ever doing something to hurt themselves on purpose without wanting to die (such as cutting or burning).
- During their lifetime, one in five middle school students (18%) report seriously thinking about killing themselves. About one in eight middle school students (13%) report making a suicide plan; 7% have ever tried to kill themselves.

Female students and LGBTQ+ students are 2 to 2.5 times more likely to experience mental health concerns.



Vermont saw improvement in several mental health indicators compared to 2023.

- Feeling sad or hopeless, hurting oneself on purpose, and experiencing poor mental health statistically decreased between 2023 and 2025

Between 2023 and 2025, the percent of students who have thought about killing themselves and who report making a suicide plan statistically decreased.

Overall, 32% of middle school students said they do not need help with their emotions; one in five (21%) say they do not feel sad, empty, hopeless, angry or anxious.

- Among students who needed help with their emotions during the past year:
 - More than a third (39%) are never (16%) or rarely (23%) able to get the help they need. A quarter (25%) sometimes get the help they need.
 - More than a third of middle school students who feel sad, empty, hopeless, angry or anxious (36%) get the help they need most of the time or always.
- Among middle school students who felt sad, empty, hopeless, angry, or anxious during the past year:
 - More than two in five (44%) say they are most likely to talk with a parent or other family member about their feelings. Three in 10 would talk to a friend (25%) or sibling (4%).
 - One in 10 would talk to another trusted adult (6%) or someone else (4%).
 - One in six (17%) students are not sure who they can talk to about their feelings.

Personal Safety and Prevention

- Nearly a quarter of middle school students (23%) who ride bicycles never or rarely wear a helmet; 23% of those who rollerblade or skateboard also never or rarely wear a helmet.
- One in six middle school students (18%) report having at least one concussion while playing a sport or being physically active in the last year.
- More than six in 10 middle school students (62%) report having at least one sunburn during the past year.
- One in five middle school students (20%) did not see a doctor, dentist or nurse in the past year.
- Among students who saw a doctor, dentist or nurse in the past year, nearly three in 10 middle school students (28%) report being asked about tobacco use by their provider.

Experiencing and witnessing violence often differs by sex, grade, sexual orientation and gender identity, and race and ethnicity.

- About two in five middle school students (39%) have been in a physical fight. Roughly half of all male (52%) and BIPOC students (47%) have been in a fight.
- Nearly half of all middle school students (46%) have been bullied on school property. During the past 30 days, more than a quarter of middle school students (26%) report being bullied. LGBTQ+ students (39%) are more than 1.5 times as likely to have been bullied during the past 30 days.
- More than half of all middle school students (55%) have ever been teased or called names because of their weight, size or physical appearance.
- Nearly six in 10 LGBTQ+ students (59%) feel they are treated unfairly because of who they are sexually attracted to or for how they express their gender. More than half of all BIPOC students (53%) feel they are treated unfairly at school because of their race or ethnicity.
- About one in 10 middle school students (11%) report skipping school during the past 30 days because they feel unsafe at school or on their way to or from school.

New this Year:

More than a third of middle school students (37%) report they could get a loaded gun that is ready to fire without a parent or other adult's permission or supervision. About three in 10 (30%) could access a loaded gun in less than 24 hours and 16% say they could get one in less than 10 minutes.

Substance use continues to decline among middle school students.

- During the past 30 days, about one in 25 middle school students have used alcohol (4%) or marijuana (3%).
- One in 20 (5%) have used an electronic vapor product during the past 30 days.
- Between 2023 and 2025, current use of alcohol, marijuana, and electronic vapor products statistically decreased.

Strong Family, School and Community Connections Provide Key Protective Supports

- Nearly nine in 10 middle school students (88%) eat dinner with their families at least four times weekly.
- Seven in 10 middle school students (71%) have at least one teacher or adult at school they can talk to if they have a problem. Nearly one in six (16%) are not sure if they have an adult they can talk to at school.
- Most middle school students feel close to people at their school and like they matter to people in their community. Specifically:
 - Seven in 10 middle school students (71%) agree or strongly agree that they are close to the people at their school; 20% are not sure if they feel close to people at their school.
 - Three in five middle school students (61%) agree or strongly agree that they matter to people in their community. Nearly three in 10 (27%) are not sure.

More Information and Contact

Additional information about the Vermont YRBS, including the full [2025 YRBS Report](#), other executive summaries and reports, population in focus reports, and topic specific data briefs, is available at HealthVermont.gov/YRBS.

For more information about the YRBS contact: Kristen Murray, PhD, YRBS Coordinator: AHS.VDHYRBS@vermont.gov