

# 2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

Durham County, NC

This survey (YRBS) is part of a national school-based survey produced by the CDC and administered every other year by the Durham Public Schools.

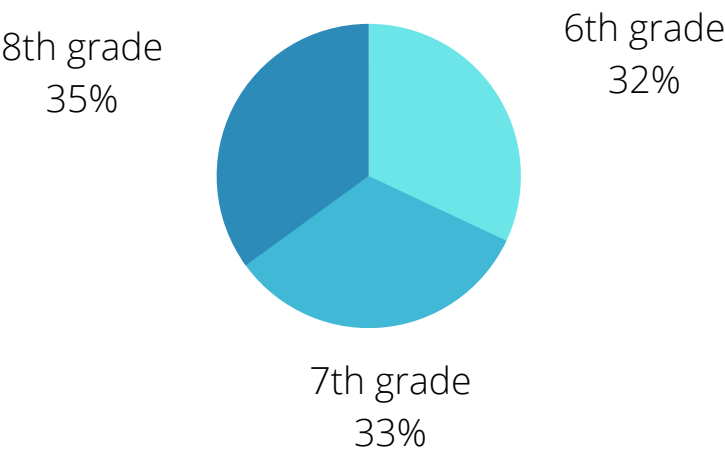
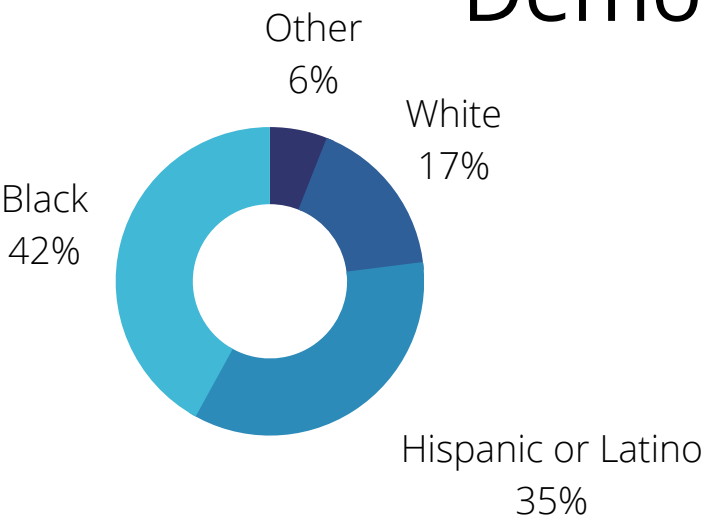
PURPOSE: To assess the health and well-being of middle school students in Durham County.

- Bullying
- Mental Health
- Nutrition
- Personal Safety
- Physical Activity
- Sexual Behavior
- Substance Use
- Tobacco

**\*NEW\***  
Disability  
Personal Health  
School Support

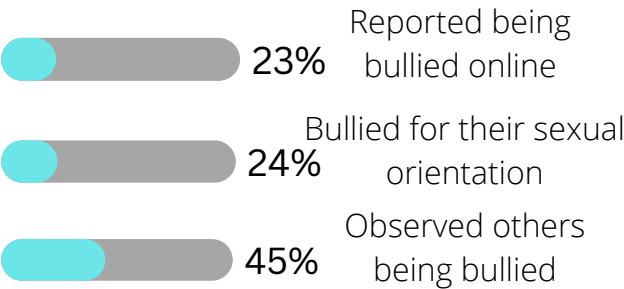
1325 students participated.

### Demographics



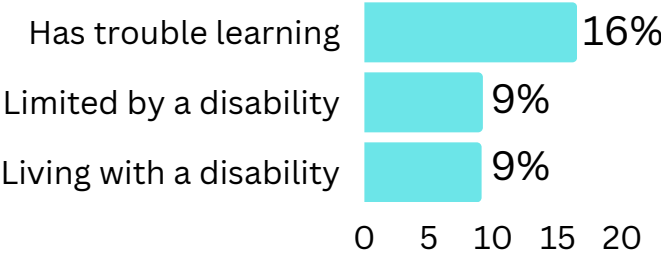
Data in this report are weighted and therefore representative of Durham County’s middle school populations.

### Bullying



Since 2017, cyberbullying in Durham County has increased while bullying at school remained the same.<sup>1</sup>

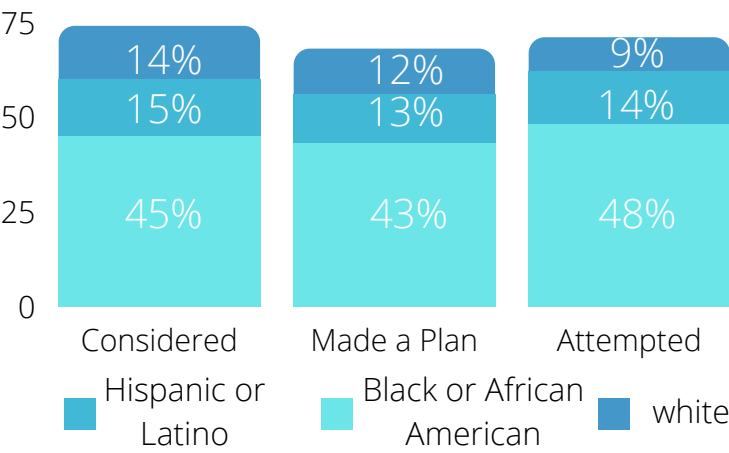
### Disability



Durham County Black or African American students were more likely to report having a disability 1.3 times more than their white peers. Teacher’s decision to refer a student for disability testing is subjective.<sup>2</sup> Durham Public Schools use Individual Education Programs to address student’s needs.<sup>3</sup>

### Mental Health

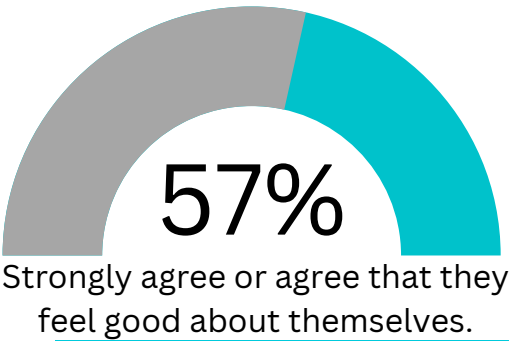
#### Suicidal Ideation



The decline in mental health in children and adolescents has been declared a national emergency as of 2021.<sup>7</sup> Durham County females were four times as likely to report having bad days most of the time than males. Females are more likely to internalize distress and become depressed.<sup>8</sup>

The COVID-19 pandemic removed key social opportunities for students resulting in lower self-esteem.<sup>9</sup> Despite these statistics, Durham County has one of the best patient to provider ratio in the state of 160 residents to 1 provider.<sup>10</sup>

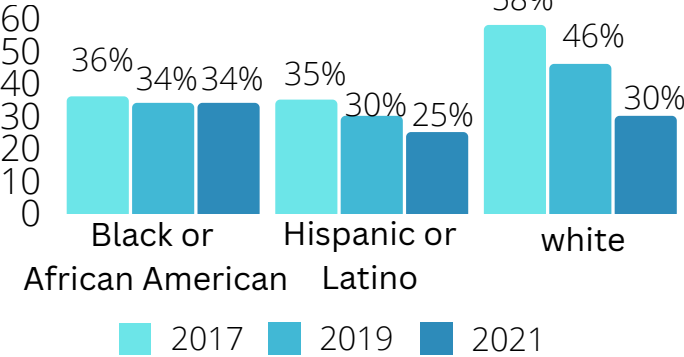
#### Self esteem



**Reasons for disparities:** Toxic stress due to racism is linked to poorer mental health and educational outcomes among persons of color that don’t have peer and teacher support.<sup>4</sup> The second leading cause of death among Black or African Americans ages 10-24 is suicide.<sup>5</sup> Adverse childhood events contribute to suicidal ideation among youth of color which are overrepresented in that population.<sup>6</sup>

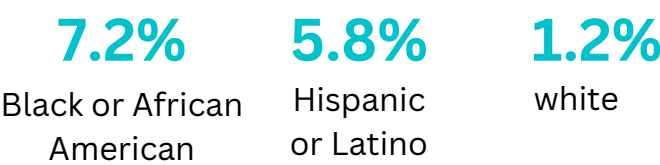
### Nutrition

#### Race of students eating breakfast everyday <sup>7</sup>



### Tobacco

#### Ever used an electronic vapor product



<2% of students use cigarettes.

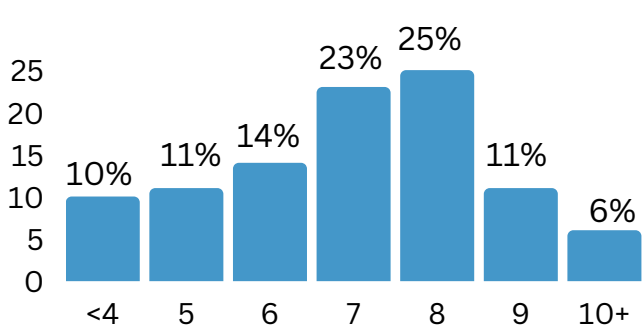
# 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

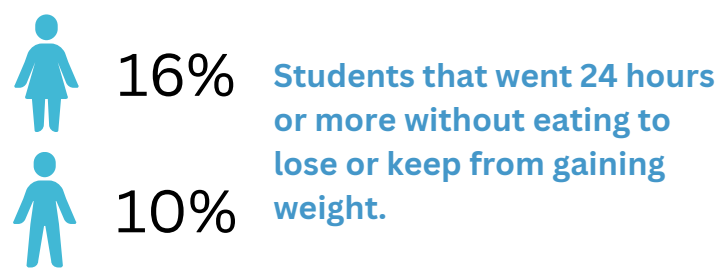
Durham County, NC

### Personal Health

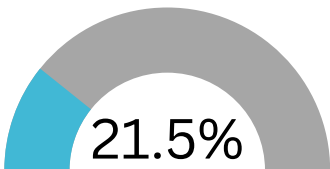
Hours of sleep students get on an average weeknight



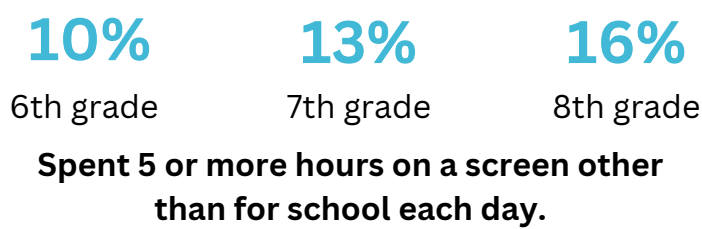
13-18-year-olds are recommended to get 8-10 hours of sleep each night.<sup>11</sup> 42.6% of Durham County students met that recommendation.



### Physical Activity

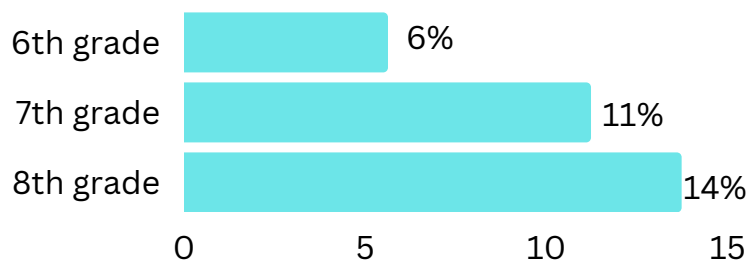


Lower socioeconomic status has been linked to lower physical activity and sports participation.<sup>14</sup> Children of low-income families reported not participating in sports because they didn't want to get hurt, they didn't feel welcome, and it was too expensive.<sup>14</sup>



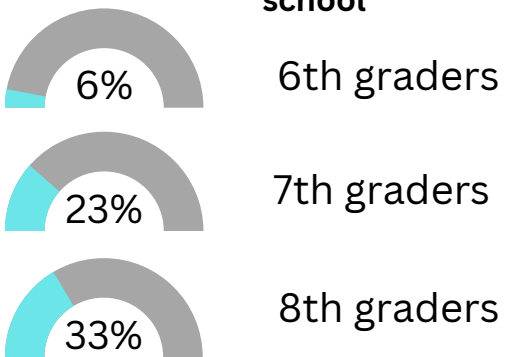
### Sexual Health

Have adults in your family told you what they expect you to do when it comes to sex?



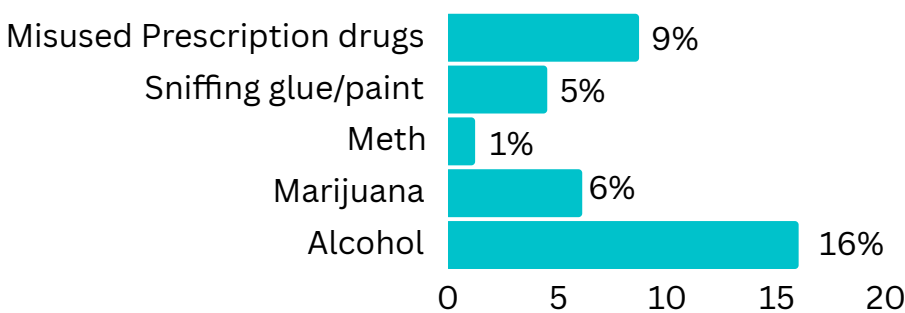
6% of Durham County middle schoolers have had sexual intercourse

Students that have been taught about Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) in school



### Substance Use

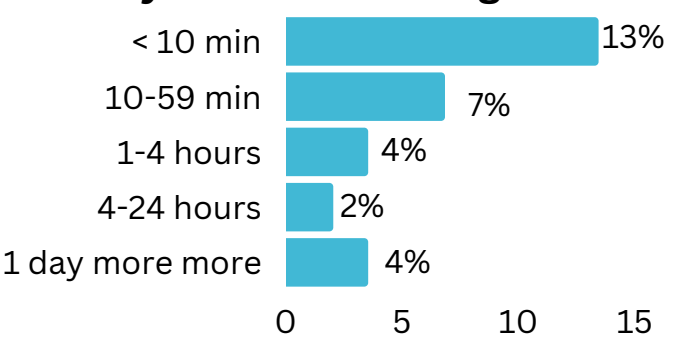
Students ever using illicit substances



Black or African American youth living in low socioeconomic circumstances are less likely to drink than their white, advantaged peers.<sup>16</sup> Marijuana use has decreased significantly since 2019 indicating substance use went down over the course of the pandemic.

### Personal Safety

Time it would take to get and be ready to fire a loaded gun



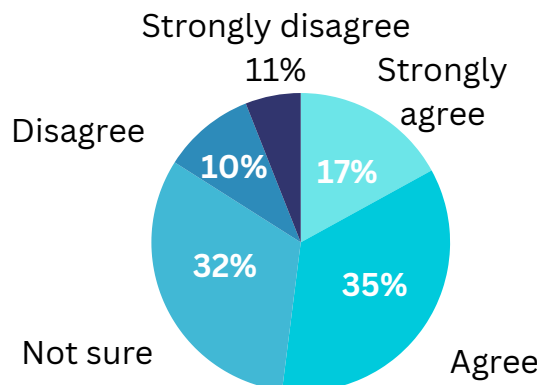
Firearms are the leading cause of death among children and teens (ages 1-19).<sup>12</sup> Gun violence has a significant impact mental wellbeing and can lead to poor performances in school.<sup>12</sup>

4.8% middle schoolers skipped school because they felt they'd be unsafe at school or to and from school.

The main reasons students avoid school are school shootings, bullying, and anxiety.<sup>13</sup>

### School Support

Do you feel your teachers care about you and give you lots of encouragement?



Having positive relationships with teachers strongly correlates to student belonging.<sup>15</sup>

60% of Durham County students report strongly agreeing or agreeing that they felt they belonged at school.

**Resources:** **1** Partnership for a Healthy Durham. 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Available here: [www.healthydurham.org](http://www.healthydurham.org) **2** NYU July 2022. New study shows racial, gender discrepancies in special education services. Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/3u539rds> **3** Durham Public Schools. Exceptional Children (EC) Services at DPS. Available here: <https://www.dpsnc.net/ec-services> **4** Shonkoff, J. P., Slopen, N., Williams, D. R. January 2021. Annual review of public health. Early childhood adversity, toxic stress, and the impacts of racism on the foundations of health. Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/4whkb2w4> **5** Everyday Health. May 2022. 5 reasons suicide is on the rise in the black community, according to a psychiatrist. Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/y5z7wcm6> **6** Association of American Medical Colleges. April 2023. The tragedy of black youth suicide. Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/yhc8tjd9> **7** Goldberg, E. The New York Times. November 2020. Teens in COVID isolation: 'I felt like I was suffocating'. Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/3cd87uvf> **8** Thompson, D. The Atlantic. April 2022. Why American teens are so sad. Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/bd6fkay3> **9** Dorn, E., Hancock, B., Sarakatsannis, J., Viruleg, E. McKinsey and company. COVID-19 and education: the lingering effects of unfinished learning. Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2zd7us3x> **10** County health rankings. 2022. Mental Health Providers. Available here: [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org) **11** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2020. Sleep in middle and high school students. Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/78sduwp3> **12** Everytown Research & Policy. Child and Teen Gun Safety. Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/3yccjva3> **13** Cision PR Newswire. April 2021. New poll reveals majority of US teens don't feel safe in schools. Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8b5sat> **14** Tandon, P. S., et al. International Journal for Environmental Research and Public Health. July 2021. Socioeconomic inequities in youth participation in physical activity and sports. Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/33mx9jxr> **15** Institute of Education Sciences. The importance of student sense of belonging. Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/ypsmw7d9> **16** Talk it out NC. November 2019. 5 causes of teen drinking: why do kids drink alcohol? Available here: <https://tinyurl.com/muy4c3ey>