

December is National Impaired Driving Month

WHAT ARE EFFECTS OF DRUGS ON DRIVING?

Driving under the influence of drugs affects you and everyone around you.



MARIJUANA

Slows reaction time and impairs judgment of time and distance



METHAMPHETAMINE OR COCAINE

Aggressive and reckless behaviors



OPIOIDS

Drowsiness and impaired memory and thinking skills



SEDATIVES

(benzodiazepines, barbiturates, etc.)
Dizziness and drowsiness

Drug-Impaired Driving

Driving under the influence of over-the-counter medications, prescription drugs, or **marijuana** or other illicit drugs is referred to as drug-impaired driving. According to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), it's a significant problem among young people.

In 2020, more than 12.6 million people age 16 and older admitted to driving under the influence of illicit drugs and alcohol, according to the **2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health**. Of that total, 11.7 million people were under the influence of marijuana. In a different survey, the **National College Health Assessment**, 38% of students admitted to driving within six hours of using marijuana within the last 30 days (note: statistic only includes students who used cannabis within the last 30 days and drove a car within the last 30 days).

Medication and illicit drugs affect the brain and can alter perception, mental processes, attention, balance, coordination, reaction time, and other abilities required for safe driving. Even small amounts of some drugs can have a serious effect on driving ability.



If your student is driving, **riding with other youth**, or dreaming about the day they will drive, then this program is for them and you!!!

*HC DrugFree's Teen Advisory Council (TAC) is pleased to invite all Howard County high school teens, their parents/guardians, and grandparents to a **FREE** virtual event focusing on safe driving behaviors as we work toward our goal of reaching zero deaths in Maryland.*

In addition to alcohol and drugs, we will talk about **parental influence**, alcohol and impaired driving, Maryland's Graduated Driver's License, the 6 rules for the road, and more.

Free! Driver Safety Event for Teens and Their Parents/Guardians

Howard County Teens Talk
Monday, December 20 at 5:30 p.m.

Teens and parents must pre-register to receive the event link:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/Teens12-20-21

[Click here](#) for event flier.

This presentation will be held in partnership with the Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration's (MDOT MVA) Highway Safety Office, the Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services, and others.



...they'll always be your baby...

Be sure teens know their parents' and our community's expectations about driving while impaired or riding with impaired friends.

HC DrugFree's **Teen Advisory Council** is open to all Howard County High School Students. Public School, Private School, and Homeschool students are encouraged to join! To access the 2021-22 school year registration form please [click here](#). Community service hours available to students, but only if a current 2021-22 TAC registration form is on file with HC DrugFree. Email your

registration as well as a photo to admin@hcdrugfree.org or mail a hard copy our office.

Driving Under the Influence (DUI) / Driving While Impaired (DWI)

The State of Maryland prohibits drinking and driving. If you drink and drive, you may be arrested, fined, and/or sentenced to jail time. The following is for general informational purposes only and you should consider hiring a lawyer to represent you in court.

In Maryland, there are two types of drinking and driving offenses:

The first, and most severe offense, is called driving while under the influence (commonly called DUI). A person who has a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or greater is assumed to be under the influence of alcohol. Maryland law calls a BAC of .08 or above “under the influence per se.”

The second is called driving while impaired (commonly called DWI). A person who has a blood alcohol concentration of .07 is assumed to be impaired by alcohol.

It is also crime to drive while impaired by drugs (even legal drugs), drugs and alcohol, or controlled dangerous substances like marijuana. Driving with any combination of drugs and/or alcohol that prevent you from driving safely is illegal.

A person under the age of 21 who drives with any alcohol in their system is breaking the law. If that person is caught, they will be arrested and charged with a DUI.

[Read the Law: Md. Code, Transportation §21-902, §11-174.1](#)

MD Youth Pandemic Behavior Survey

The infographic below from the Maryland Department of Health illustrates the impact that COVID-19 has had on Maryland’s youth, such as stress, mental health challenges, and increased substance use. [Download page 1.](#) [Download page 2.](#) Marylanders of all ages who are struggling and need help are encouraged to contact **211 Maryland**, Maryland’s Crisis Hotline. Dial 2-1-1 and then press 1 or text your zip code to 898-211 to get connected to someone who can help.

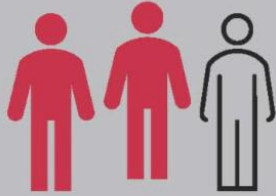
Maryland Youth Pandemic Behavior Survey 2021 MD YPBS-21



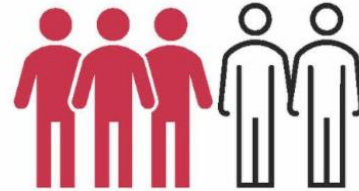
The Maryland Department of Health conducted an online survey in the spring of 2021 that focused on how students were coping with the pandemic.

The pandemic has significantly affected Maryland high school students in many ways, including struggles with mental health, tobacco use, alcohol and drug use, trouble with schoolwork, and verbal or physical abuse at home.

Two out of three high school students found schoolwork more difficult during the pandemic.



Nearly three in five high school students struggled with mental health issues the past year.



27%

used more tobacco during the pandemic.



37%

used more illegal drugs during the pandemic.



29%

drank alcohol more often during the pandemic.

Mental health support and resources should be a top priority.

Approximately **1 out of 5** Maryland teens seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year.

36% of Maryland high school students recently felt sad or hopeless every day for two weeks in a row.

28% of teens lived with someone who was depressed, mentally ill, or suicidal.

Social connections and community support were critical this past year.

82% of teens had a friend they could talk to.

73% of students felt like they can share their feelings with an adult in their family.

77% virtually socialized during the pandemic.

For more information about the MD YPBS-21 please contact mdh.tobaccocontrol@maryland.gov

Maryland high school students need more physical activity, less screen time, and additional emotional support.

73% were not physically active for at least one hour a day for five days in the past week.

67% spent three or more hours per day in front of a screen (excluding school attendance and assignments).

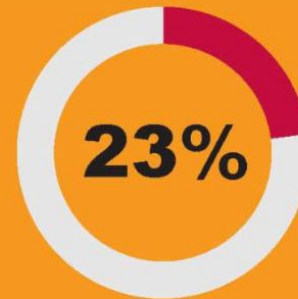
48% experienced an adult at home swear at, insult, or put them down during the pandemic.



tested positive for COVID-19 or had someone in their household test positive.



went hungry because there was not enough food in their home during the pandemic.



experienced a parent or adult at home hit, beat, kick, or physically hurt them during the pandemic.

Methodology

Survey participants were recruited through targeted social media ads.

Eligible participants consisted of youth between the ages of 14-19 living in Maryland who attend a public or private high school.

Data collection ran from May 10th, 2021 to June 13th, 2021.

The YPBS-21 contained 70 total survey questions.

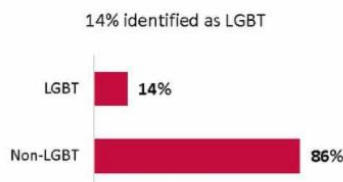
608 teens completed the survey.

Students were asked about the following topics:

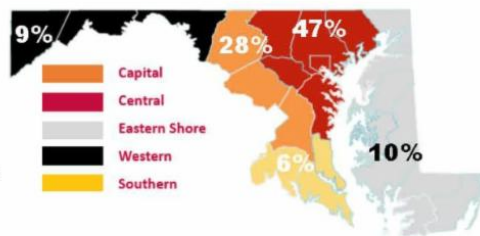
Physical Health
Safety
Substance Use
Mental Health
Food Insecurity
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs)
COVID-19 Impacts

Demographics

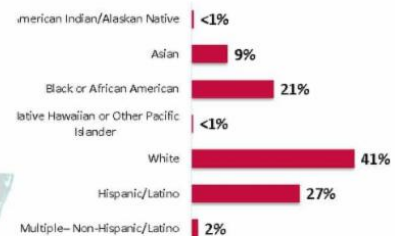
Sexual and Transgender Identity



Region



Race and Ethnicity



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In The News

Interview with Surgeon General: Youth Mental Health Crisis

Surgeon General Vivek Murthy released an advisory on the youth mental health crisis. In a December 7 interview on National Public Radio (NPR), he stated that before the pandemic, 1 in 3 high school students reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness. That's a 40% increase from 2009 to 2019. In a similar timeframe, suicide rates went up 57% among youth 10 to 24. During the pandemic, rates of anxiety and depression increased.

[Read or listen to interview.](#)

New York Opens Nation's First Supervised Drug-Injection Sites

Amid debates about legal and moral implications of sanctioning illegal drug use and overdoses exceeding 2,000 in New York in 2020, trained staff in East Harlem and Washington Heights will provide clean needles, administer Naloxone to reverse overdoses, and supervise safe injection sites in an attempt to reduce overdose deaths. [Read more.](#)

Please Make Year-End Donation



[We need YOUR financial support](#) to continue offering FREE services.



Tell Your Kids about Medication Misuse



Parents, have you talked to your middle schooler about taking prescription medications that aren't prescribed for them? Kids may hear from other kids

about taking prescription medications to feel or do better, and they think it is safe for them to take because it's a prescription written by a doctor. They may not know how dangerous it can be for their health or that it is illegal and could get them Benched for Life!

Talk to your kids and let them know that medications can affect individuals differently, so taking someone's prescriptions can be dangerous. If you or someone you know is in need of immediate assistance with a personal, mental health, family, drug/alcohol, or shelter crisis, call 2-1-1 press 1 statewide. For more info on how to talk with your kids, please [visit our website](#).

Additional Resources

Mental Health Crisis? Thoughts of Suicide? Problems with Drugs or Alcohol?

CALL 211, then press 1.

TEXT your zip code to TXT-211 (898-211).

VISIT 211md.org to chat or find additional resources for housing/shelter, utility assistance, food, domestic violence, legal services, and more.

Get Friends Connected to HC DrugFree

Friends keep friends informed! This newsletter and social media remain the best ways for us to share vital information with you! Please Like & Share our content on social media or forward this newsletter to a friend to help us with our mission of keeping Howard County safe and informed. Invite a friend to [subscribe to our newsletter](#). You can also view previous newsletters in the [Newsletter Archive](#) on our website.

Emotional Support Human

Provided by [The Horizon Foundation](#): When someone you care about is hurting, it's natural to want to help them, but that person might not always tell you something is wrong—and you might be unsure about how to reach out. [Learn how to be an Emotional Support Human here](#).

For more information, contact

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