

# SUSSEX COUNTY STUDENTS

This survey provides a snapshot of trends surrounding substance use and school climate among Sussex County's 6th through 12th grade students in 2022.

## STUDENT SAMPLE



**3,300**  
Total of Student Responses



## WHY DO WE CARE?

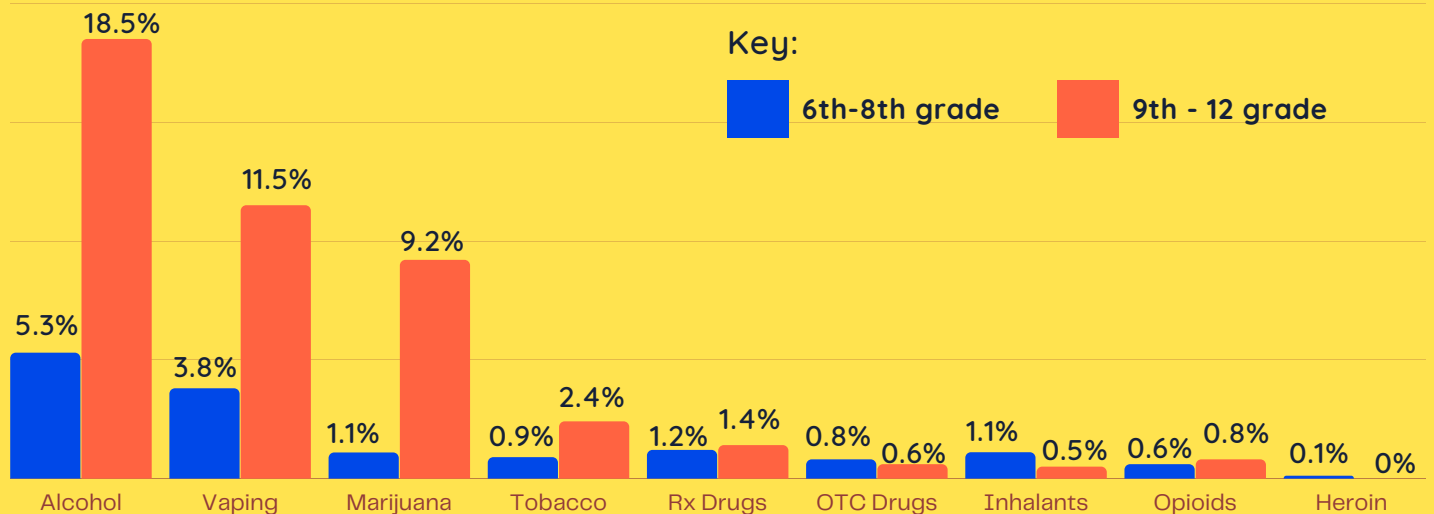
Substance use drastically affects the developing brain. This survey looks at substance use and trends that impact healthy youth development.



## SUBSTANCE USE

### Past 30-Day Use of All Substances

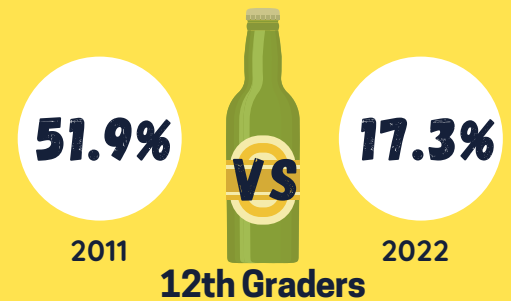
In 2022, past 30-day use of substances among Sussex County youth has decreased overall. Below provides a snapshot comparing 6th-8th graders vs 9th-12th graders. Significant findings showed increases in alcohol, marijuana, and vaping among 7th and 9th grade, and a significant increase in marijuana use in 10th grade.



## ALCOHOL

Over the past 10 years, youth use of alcohol has continued to **trend downwards**. However, alcohol still remains the most widely used substance among **9th to 12th graders**.

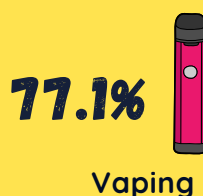
\*Past 30-Day Use



## PERCEPTION OF HARM

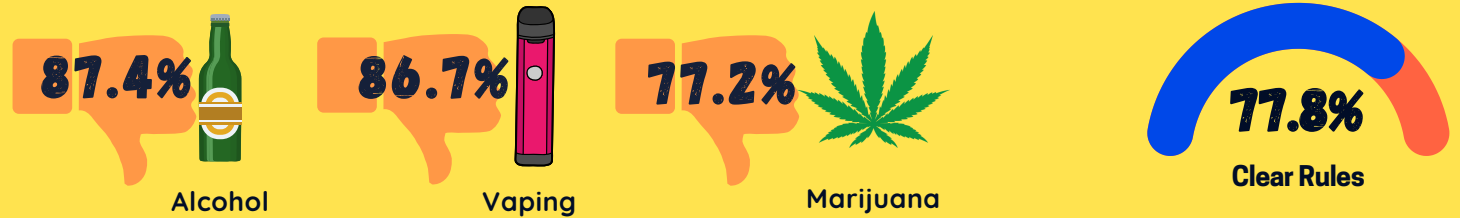
Perception of harm is the single biggest indicator in the likelihood of youth substance use. When perception of harm is low, use tends to rise. Since the legalization of marijuana along with the impact of COVID-19, perception of harm has decreased across most substances on local, national, and international levels. Below is the reported percentage of students who believe that alcohol, vaping and marijuana use is harmful. Our goals is to get close to 100%.

\*9th-12th grade combined



# PERCEPTION OF PARENT DISAPPROVAL

Parents are a major influence on their child's decision to use substances. When parents create supportive and nurturing environments, children make better decisions. It is important for parents to send a clear and strong message of disapproval regarding youth substance use.



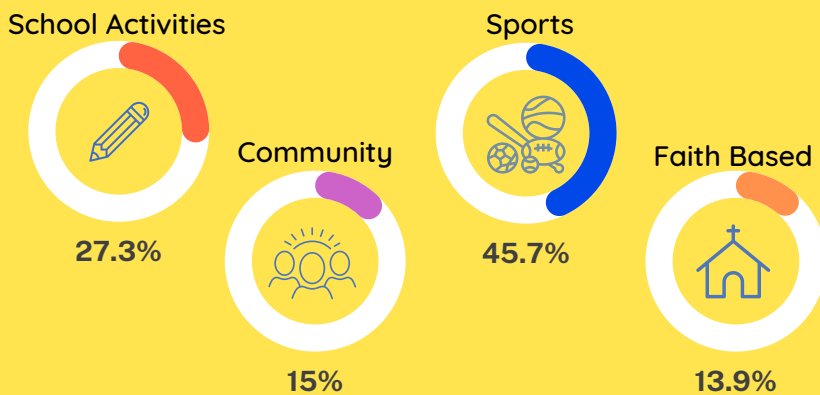
\*9th-12th graders report their parents disapprove of these substances

9-12th graders report that their parents set clear rules

# RISK & PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Protective factors promote the health and well-being of children and lower the likelihood of negative outcomes. Below is a snapshot student involvement in extra-curricular activities.

\*9th-12th grade combined



Students report good grades 'often' and 'a lot'  
\*6-12th grade combined

# MENTAL HEALTH & IMPACT OF COVID-19

Students were surveyed on how the pandemic affected them and their families. Nationally, there was a significant increase in negative mental health conditions and Sussex County was no exception. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, 43.3% of students reported feeling more sad or hopeless than usual, 19.3% reported feeling worthless, and 29.8% reported feeling nervous.

## RESOURCES



## FEELINGS OVER THE PAST 30 DAYS

\*Combination of 6th to 12th graders

