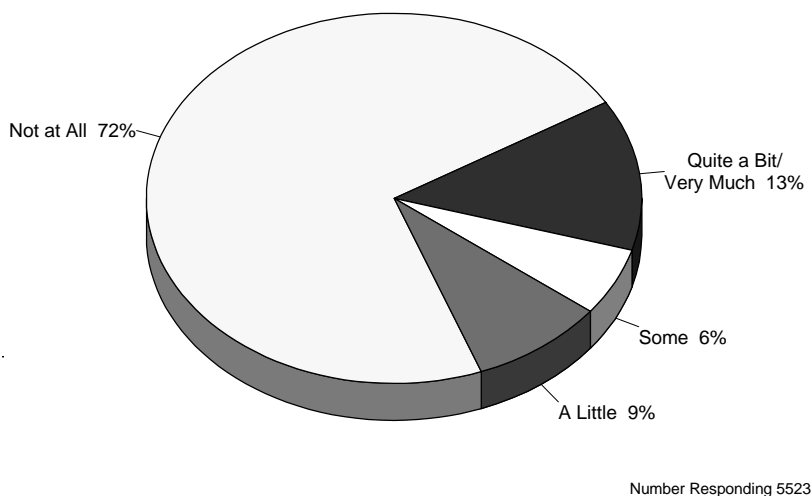

CHAPTER 4

Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use

Recent statistics indicate many of the New Hampshire's youth drink. One major concern about adolescent alcohol use is the fatalities resulting from automobile accidents, the leading cause of death among adolescents. In addition, frequent alcohol use during adolescence is one of the best predictors of problem drinking in adulthood (Hawkins & Graham, 1997). Frequent alcohol use often puts individuals at risk for various behavioral (e.g., suicide), psychological (e.g., depression), social (e.g., divorce), and vocational (e.g., unemployment) consequences (Midanik & Tam, 1996; Newcomb and Bentler, 1988). For these reasons, we need to be concerned about teen alcohol and other drug use and the impact it has on other behaviors. In addition to surveying about teens' drug and alcohol use, we also asked youth if they worried about their parent's drinking too much or using drugs. Our survey revealed some local youth worry about their parent's drinking or drug use. Figure 4-1 shows 28% of all teens indicated they worry to some degree about parental alcohol or drug abuse.

**Figure 4-1: Parental Alcohol or Drug Abuse
as a Teen Worry**



Note: Due to rounding, some graphs may not total 100%.

Figure 4-2 shows 35% of teens surveyed worry to some degree about being pressured into drinking or using other drugs. Figure 4-3 shows this broken down by gender and school level. It is interesting to note that at the “quite a bit” or “very much” level, teens worry slightly more about their parents’ substance use than being pressured to use.

Figure 4-2: Being Pressured into Drinking or Doing Other Drugs as a Teen Worry

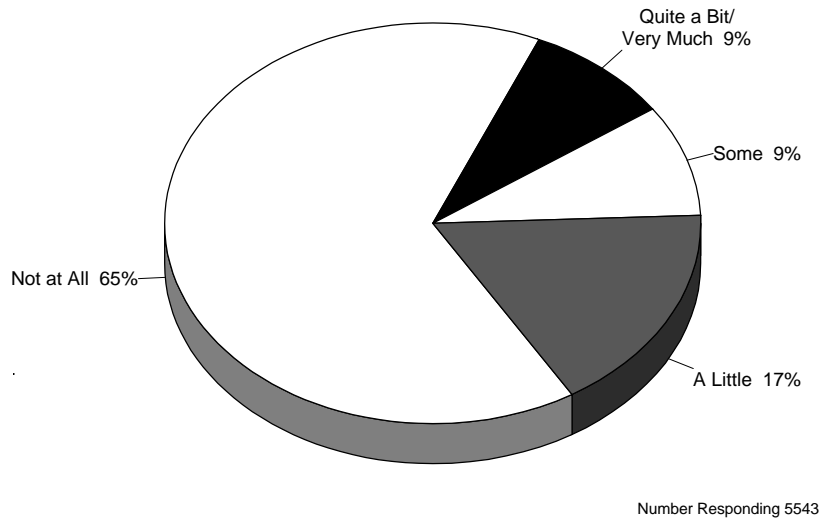
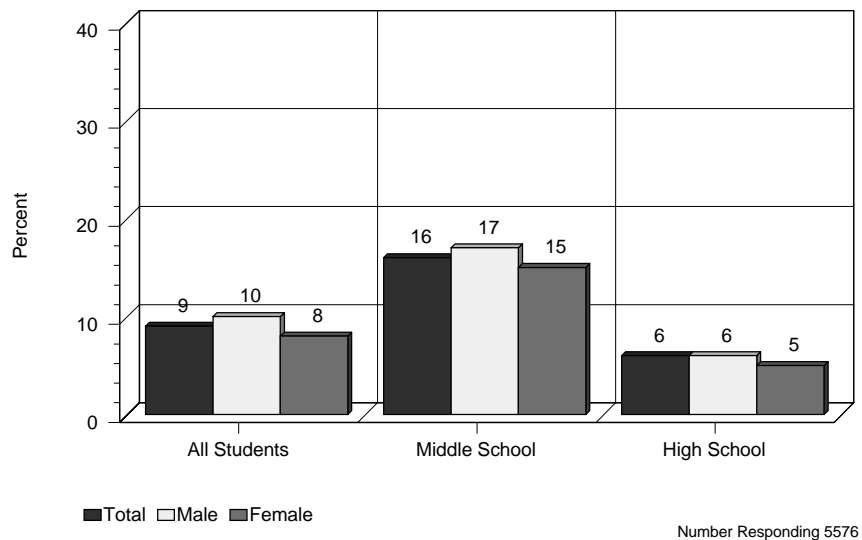


Figure 4-3: Being Pressured into Drinking or Doing Other Drugs as a Teen Worry (Quite a Bit or Very Much, by Gender and School Level)



Overall Alcohol and Drug Use

Figure 4-4 shows the percentage of all teens who have used various substances at any time in the past. Alcohol (beer, wine, and hard liquor) is the most commonly used substance at the "any use at all" level (60%), followed by smoking tobacco (45%), and marijuana (36%).

**Figure 4-4: Alcohol and Drug Use
(Any Use At All)**

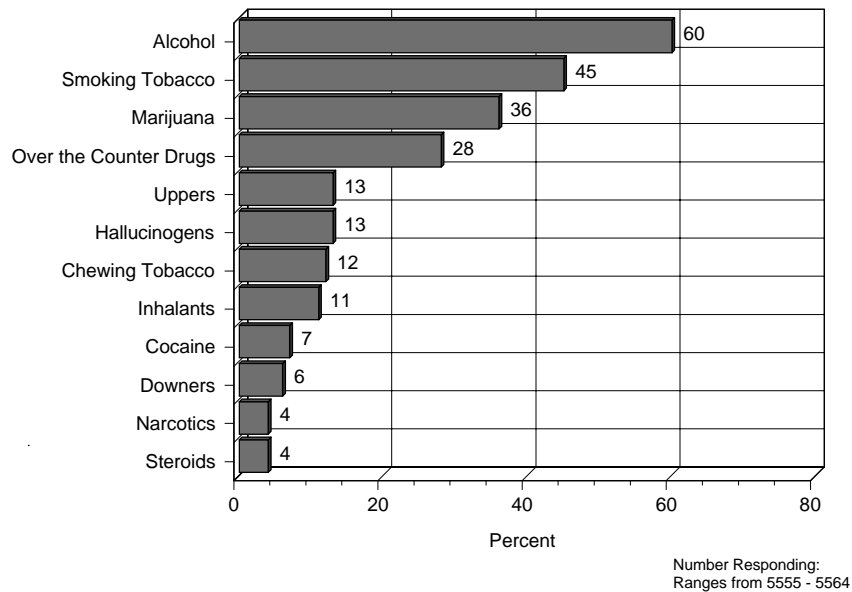


Figure 4-5 shows the percent of teens who use alcohol or other drugs on a monthly or more often basis. Alcohol is the substance most often used at this level (34%), followed by smoking tobacco (21%) and marijuana (19%).

**Figure 4-5: Alcohol and Drug Use
(Monthly or More Often)**

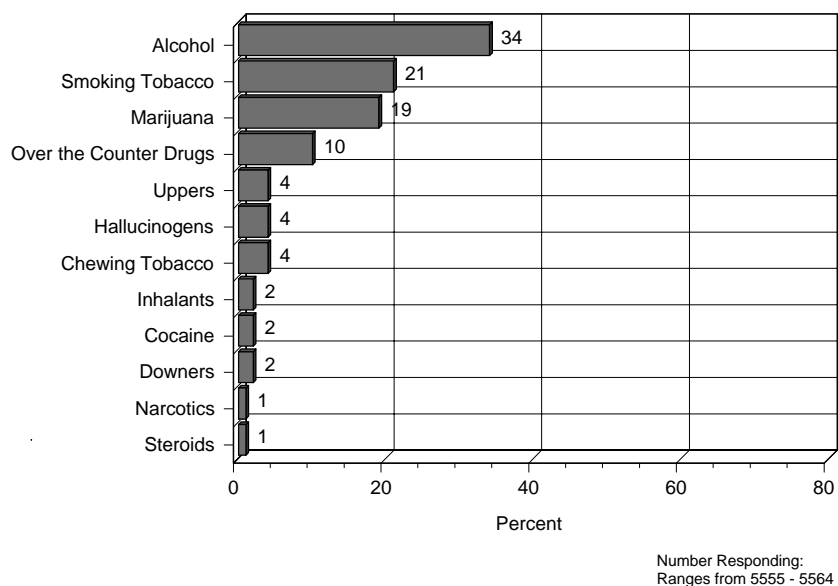


Figure 4-6 shows the percent of all teens who use various substances "once or twice a week" or more often. Smoking tobacco (16%), alcohol (12%), and marijuana (12%) are the most commonly used substances at this level of frequency.

**Figure 4-6: Alcohol and Drug Use
(Weekly or More Often)**

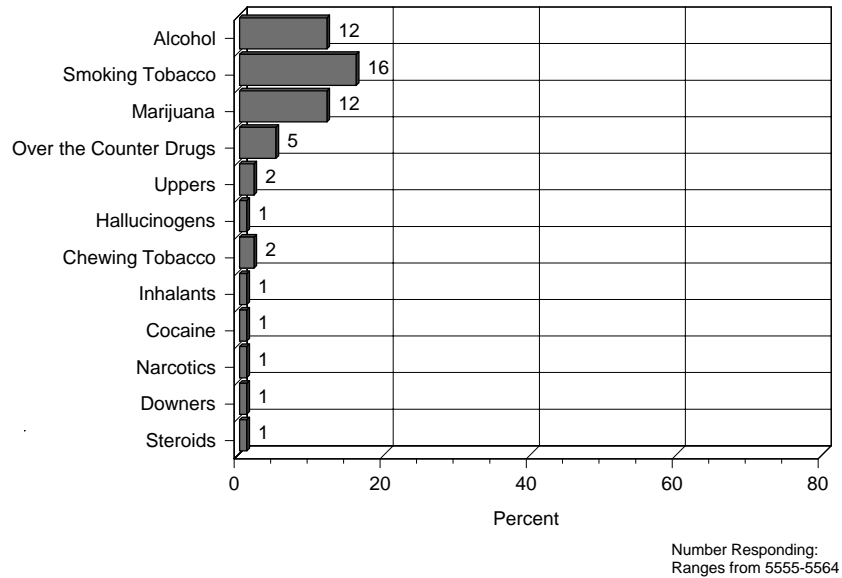


Figure 4-7 shows with the exception of inhalants, more high school students than middle school students have used alcohol or other drugs at the "any use at all" level.

**Figure 4-7: Alcohol and Drug Use
(Any Use at All, by School Level)**

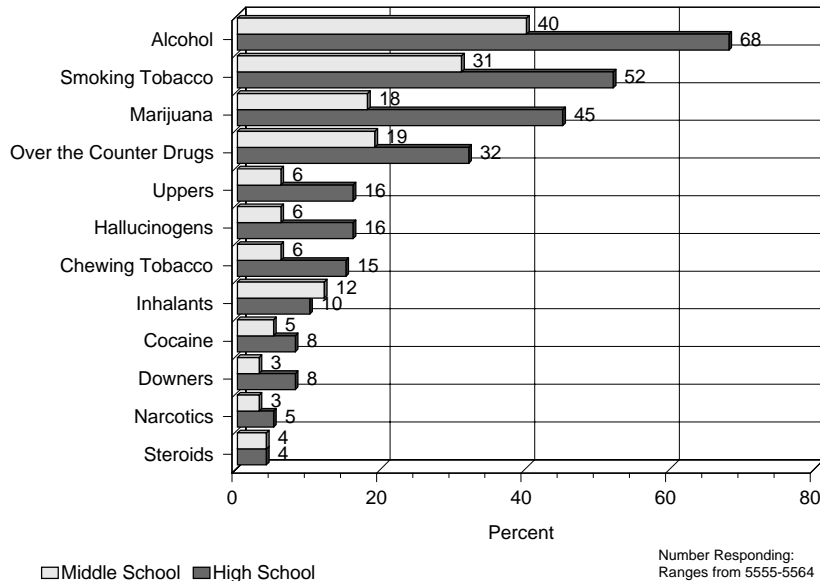


Figure 4-8 shows monthly or more often use of alcohol, smoking tobacco, and marijuana is also greater in high school than in middle school. Differences in monthly use of other substances are slight.

Figure 4-8: Alcohol and Drug Use
(Monthly or More Often, by School Level)

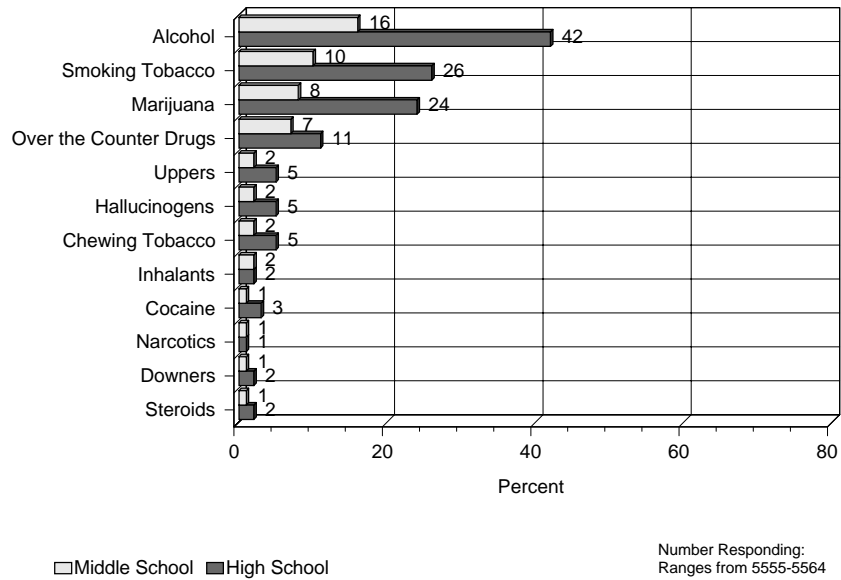
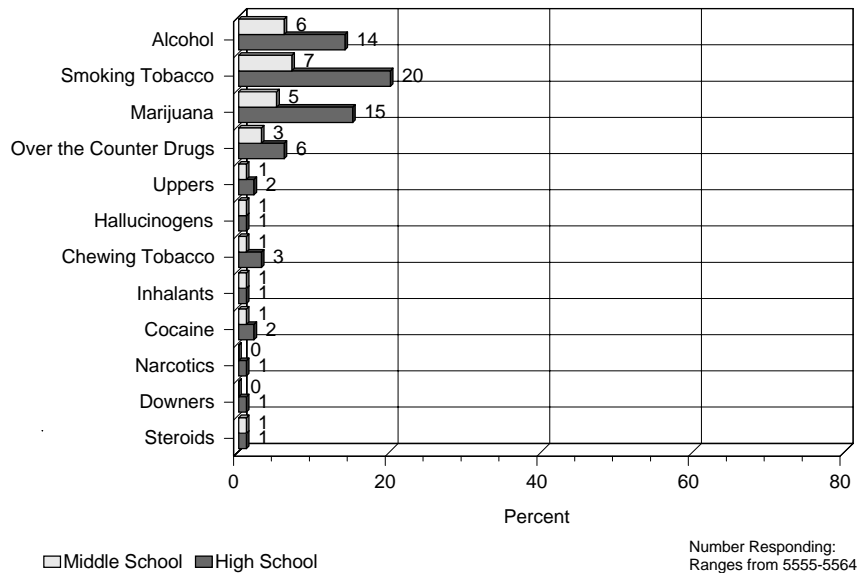


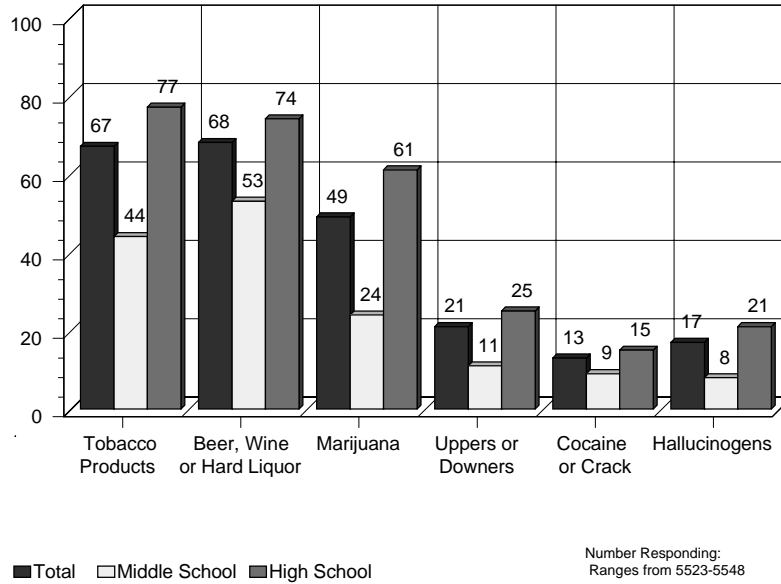
Figure 4-9 shows weekly use of alcohol, smoking tobacco, and marijuana are also more common in high school than in middle school. Differences in weekly use of other substances are negligible.

Figure 4-9: Alcohol and Drug Use
(Weekly or More Often, by School Level)



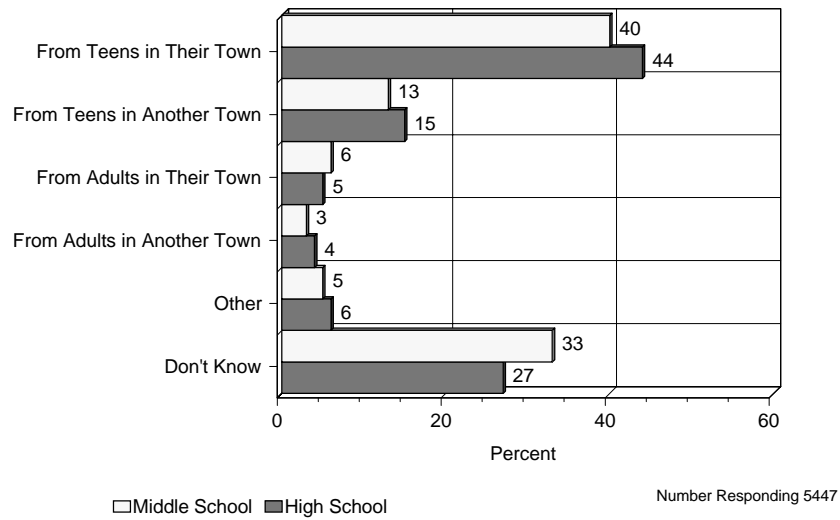
Obtainability. Figure 4-10 shows the perceived ease of obtaining alcohol and other drugs on the basis of school level. It is worth noting well over half of high school youth believe alcohol, marijuana and tobacco products are easy or very easy to get.

**Figure 4-10: Obtainability Of Alcohol and Other Drugs
(Very Easy or Easy to Get, by School Level)**



Students were asked, "Where do you think teenagers who use illegal drugs in your community most often get them from?" Figure 4-11 shows that most teens get illegal drugs from other teens in their town. There are no major differences between middle school and high school responses. Over half (57%) of teens get illegal drugs from other teens, while less than 1 out of 10 (9%) get them from other adults.

**Figure 4-11: Where Teens Get Illegal Drugs
(By School Level)**



Perceived Risk. We asked local teens a series of questions regarding how risky they thought certain behaviors are. We asked, *"How much do you think people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they: smoke one or more packs of cigarettes a day; try marijuana once or twice; smoke marijuana regularly; use inhalants; take 1 or 2 drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day; and have 5 or more drinks at one time each weekend?"* Figure 4-12 shows those youth who consider these activities to be of "no risk" or "slight risk".

**Figure 4-12: Perceived Risk of Alcohol and Other Drug Use
(No Risk or Slight Risk, by School Level)**

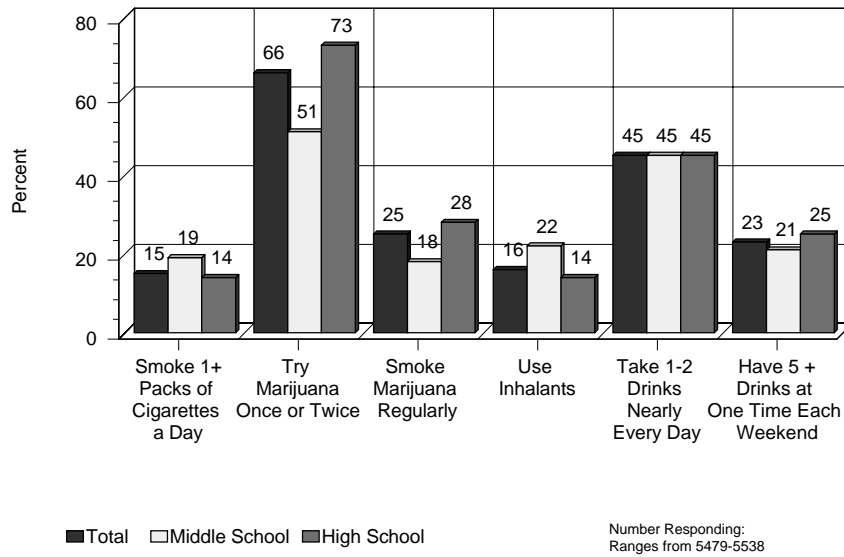
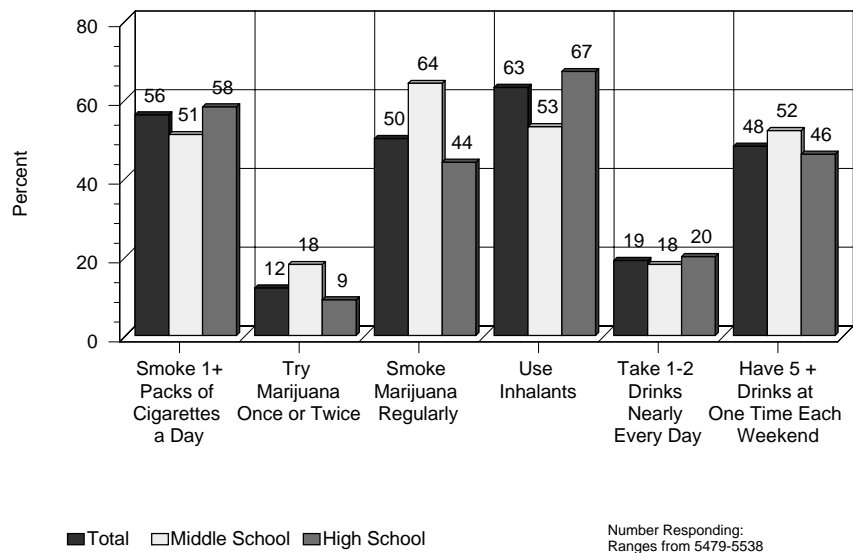


Figure 4-13 shows those who consider these activities to be of "great risk." More middle school students than high school students felt trying marijuana once or twice (middle school, 18%; high school, 9%), smoking marijuana regularly (middle school, 64%; high school, 44%), and binge drinking (middle school, 52%; high school, 46%) were of great risk. More high school students than middle school students felt smoking one or more packs of cigarettes a day (middle school, 51%; high school, 58%), using inhalants (middle school, 53%; high school, 67%), and taking 1-2 drinks nearly every day (middle school, 18%; high school, 20%) were of "great risk."

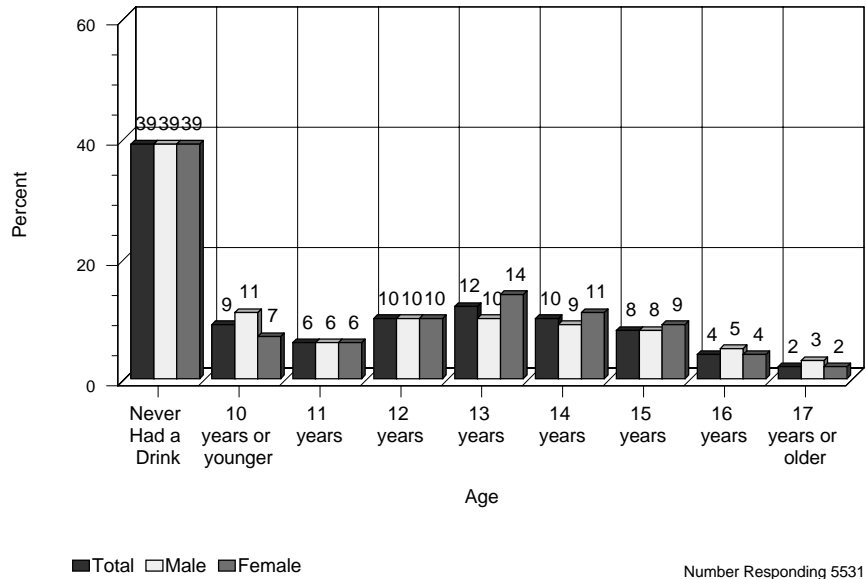
**Figure 4-13: Perceived Risk of Alcohol and Other Drug Use
(Great Risk, by School Level)**



Alcohol Use

Figure 4-14 shows how old students were when they first consumed alcohol. The average reported age teens first consumed alcohol is 13.

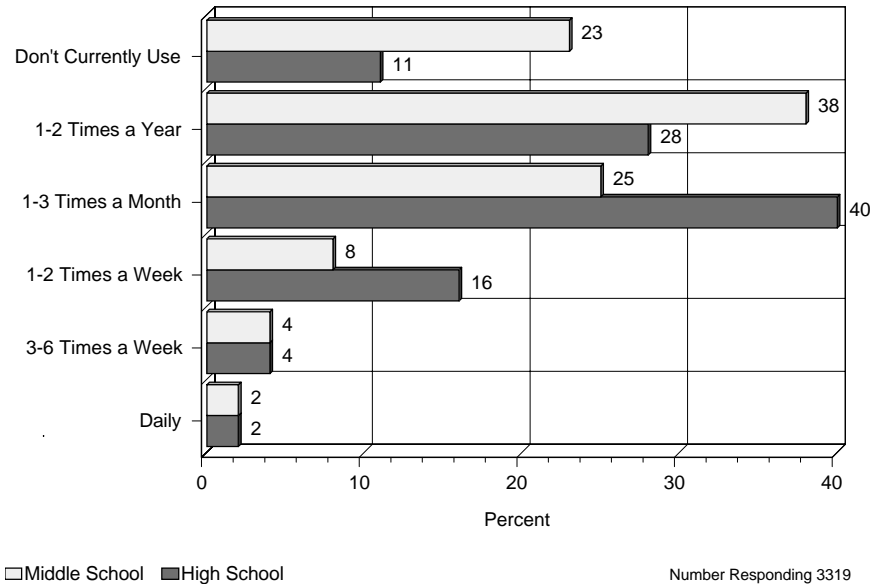
**Figure 4-14: Age Students Had Their First Drink of Alcohol
(By Gender)**



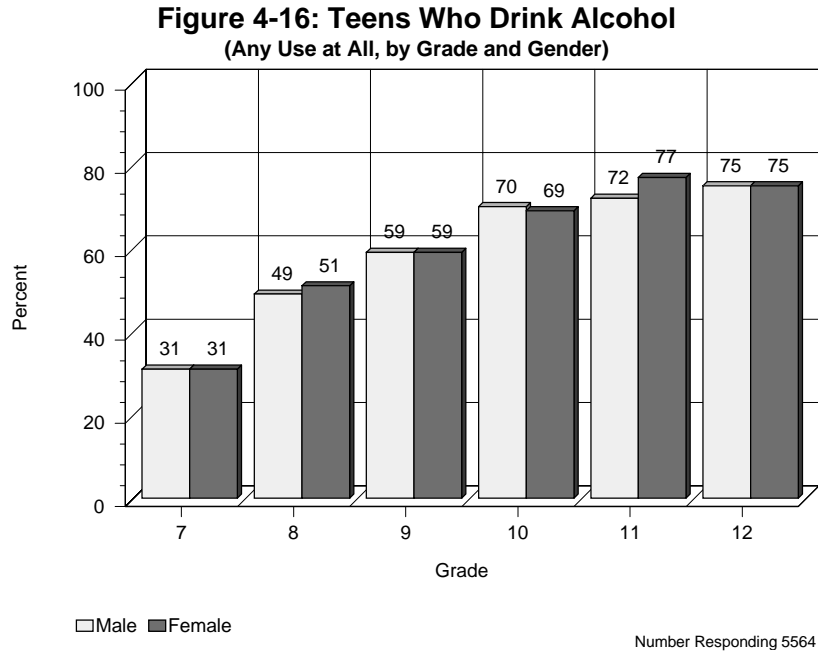
A recent study by the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey found nationally, 32.2% (N.H., 30%) of high school youth (*grades 9-12*) reported drinking more than a few sips of alcohol before age 13 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2000). New Hampshire ranked 22nd out of 33 states surveyed by the CDC.

Frequency. Overall, 60% of local teens have at some point consumed alcohol. Figure 4-15 shows how often local teens consume alcohol on the basis of school level.

Figure 4-15: Frequency of Alcohol Use
 (Of Those Who Have Had Alcohol, by School Level)

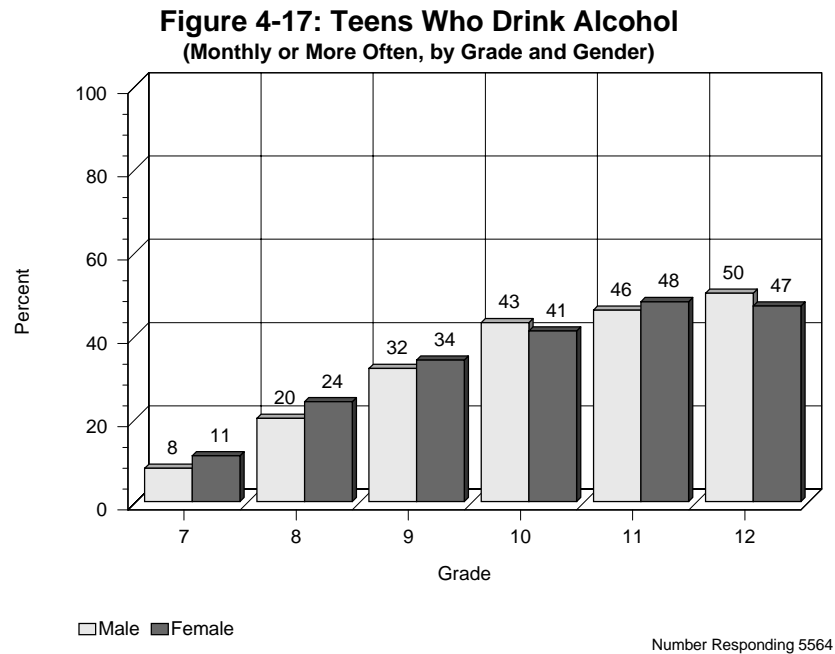


The consumption of alcohol increases as teens grow older. Figure 4-16 summarizes the percentages of males and females, at each grade level, who reported having consumed alcohol some time in the past. On the basis of school level, about 2 out of 5 middle school youth (40%) and about 2 out of 3 (68%) high school youth have consumed alcohol at some time.



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2000) found that, nationally, 81% (N.H., 82.9%) of high school youth (*grades 9-12*) reported having consumed alcohol at some point in the past. New Hampshire ranks 6th highest in any alcohol use out of 29 states surveyed by the CDC.

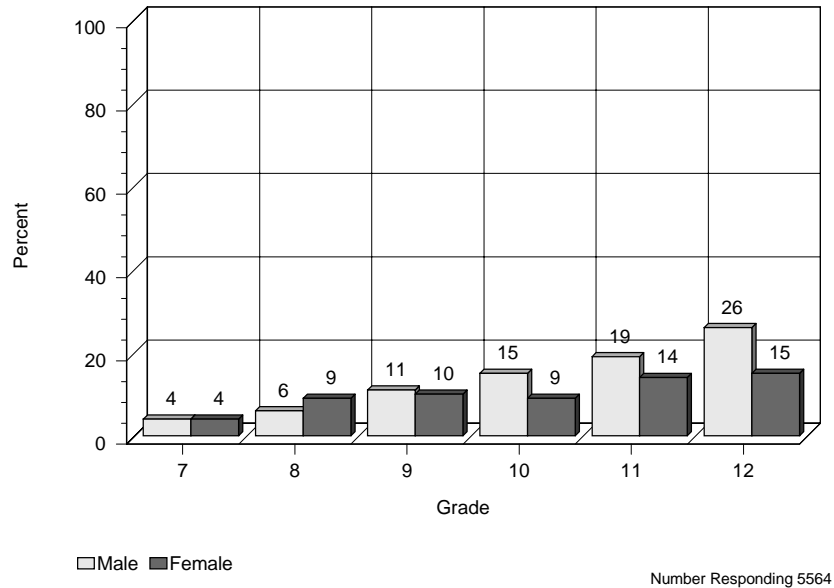
Monthly use of alcohol is shown in Figure 4-17. Overall, 34% of local youth reported using alcohol once a month or more often (middle school, 16%; high school, 42%). There is no difference in monthly use of alcohol for males and females (males, 33%; females, 34%).



The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey found nationally, 50% (N.H., 52.5%) of high school youth (*grades 9-12*) reported drinking alcohol at least once during the month preceding the survey (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2000). New Hampshire ranks 11th highest in monthly alcohol use out of 33 states surveyed by the CDC.

Weekly use of alcohol is noted in Figure 4-18. Twelve percent (12%) of all youth reported the consumption of alcohol at least once a week or more (middle school, 6%; high school, 14%). Weekly alcohol use from middle school to high school more than triples for males (middle school males, 5%; high school males, 17%) and doubles for females (middle school females, 6%; high school females, 12%).

Figure 4-18: Teens Who Drink Alcohol
(Weekly or More Often, by Grade and Gender)



Perceived Risk of Drinking. We asked local youth how risky they thought taking one or two drinks nearly every day is. Overall, 19% felt taking one or two drinks every day carries a great risk. Figure 4-19 shows the breakdown of all responses by school level. Figure 4-20 shows the breakdown by gender. It is interesting to note that while there is little difference in middle school and high school students perceived risk of drinking every day, there is a large difference in males' and females' perceptions.

Figure 4-19: Perceived Risk: Take 1 or 2 Drinks of an Alcoholic Beverage Nearly Every Day

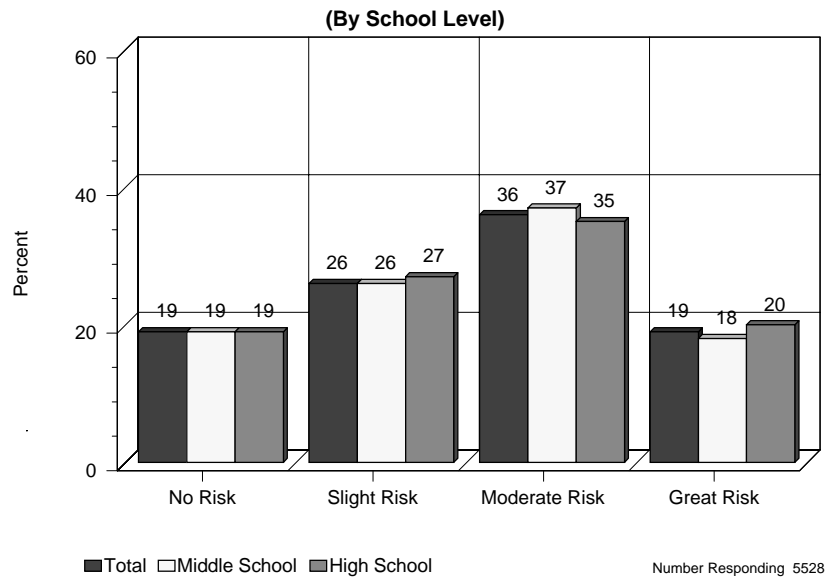
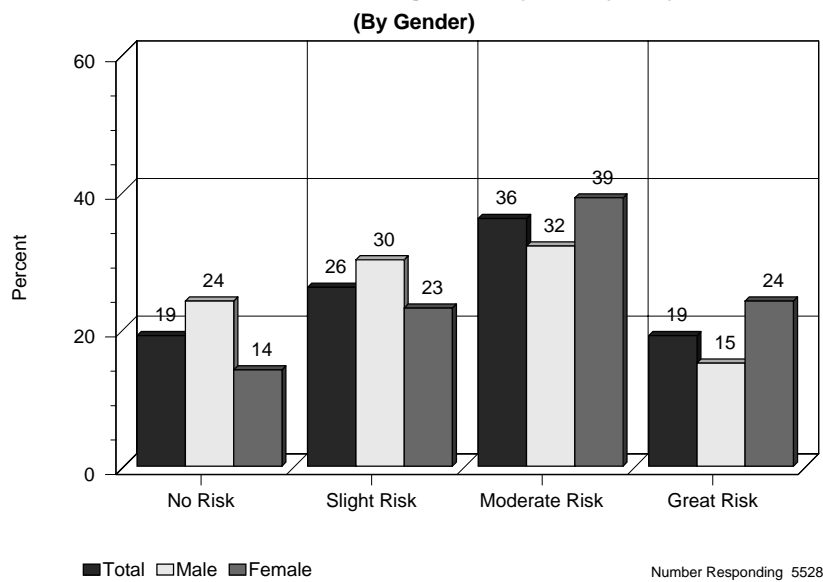
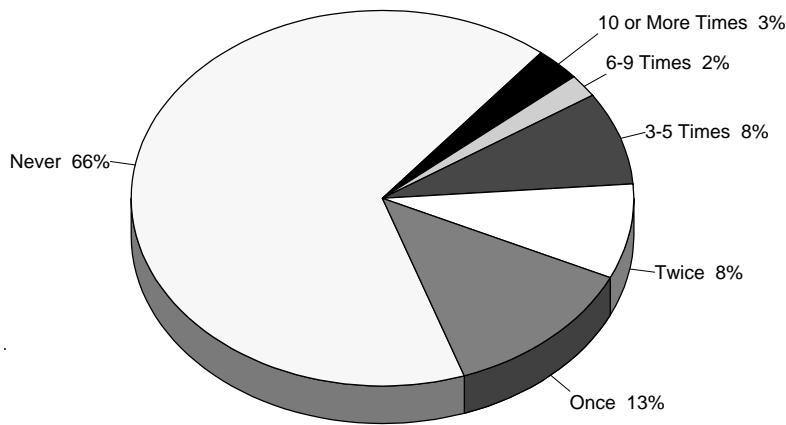


Figure 4-20: Perceived Risk: Take 1 or 2 Drinks of an Alcoholic Beverage Nearly Every Day



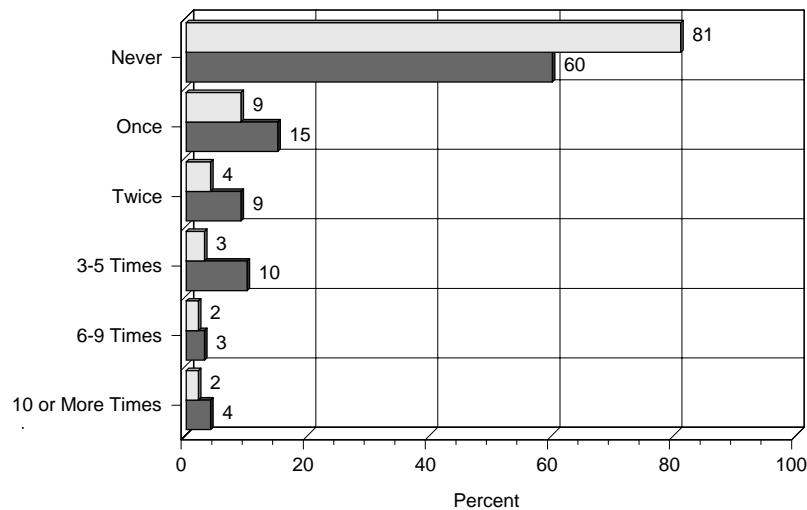
Binge Drinking. Local teens were asked the question *"During the past month, have you had 5 or more alcoholic drinks at one time?"* A drink was defined *"a glass of wine or beer, a bottle or can of beer, a shot of liquor, or a mixed drink."* Figure 4-21 shows the responses to this question. Thirty-four percent (34%) of teens reported having 5 or more drinks at one time (binge drinking) at least once in the past month. As Figure 4-22 shows, fewer middle school youth engaged in binge drinking in the past month than high school youth (middle school, 20%; high school, 41%).

Figure 4-21: Frequency of Binge Drinking
(Number of Times in the Past Month)



Number Responding 5545

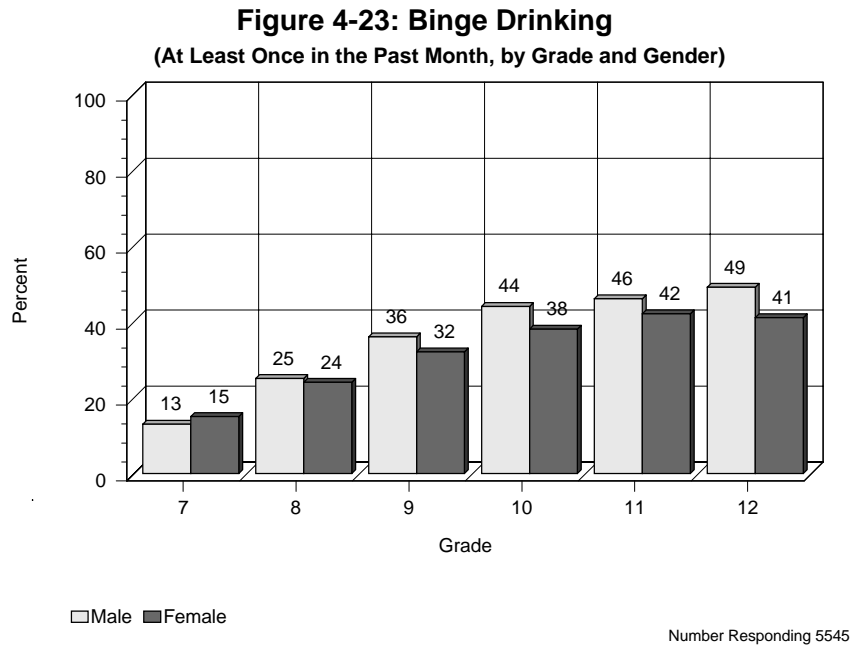
Figure 4-22: Frequency of Binge Drinking
(Number of Times in the Past Month, by School Level)



□ Middle School ■ High School

Number Responding 5545

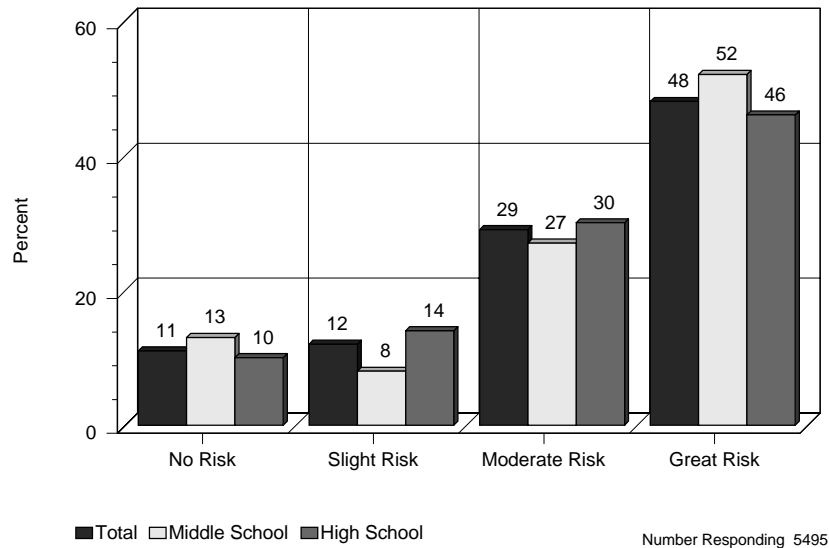
Figure 4-23 shows teens' drinking 5 or more drinks in a row (binge drinking) increases at nearly every grade level. Overall, slightly more males (35%) reported binge drinking than females (32%). In the 12th grade, 49% of males and 41% of females reported binge drinking in the past month. The rate for males increases from 19% in middle school to 43% in high school, while the rate for females increases from 20% in middle school to 38% in high school. Frequent binge drinking can indicate a pattern of abusive drinking that may require professional attention.



The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey found nationally, 31.5% (N.H., 33.2%) of high school youth (*grades 9-12*) reported binge drinking at least once during the month before they were surveyed (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2000). TAP found 41% of Monadnock Region youth, *grades 9-12*, have had 5 or more drinks in a row at least once in the past month. New Hampshire ranks 16th highest in binge drinking out of 33 states surveyed by the CDC.

Perceived Risk of Binge Drinking. We asked local youth how much they felt people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they have 5 or more drinks at one time (binge drinking) once or twice each weekend. In all, 48% reported they felt it was a "great risk"; 23% said they felt it was "no" or "slight risk." Figure 4-24 shows the breakdown of all responses by school level. Figure 4-25 shows the responses broken down by gender.

**Figure 4-24: Perceived Risk: Binge Drinking
Once or Twice Each Weekend
(By School Level)**



**Figure 4-25: Perceived Risk: Binge Drinking
Once or Twice Each Weekend
(By Gender)**

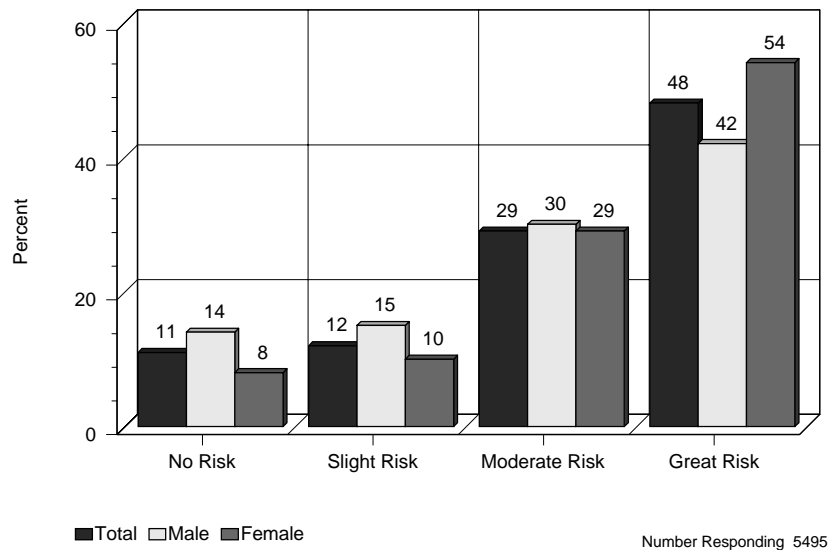
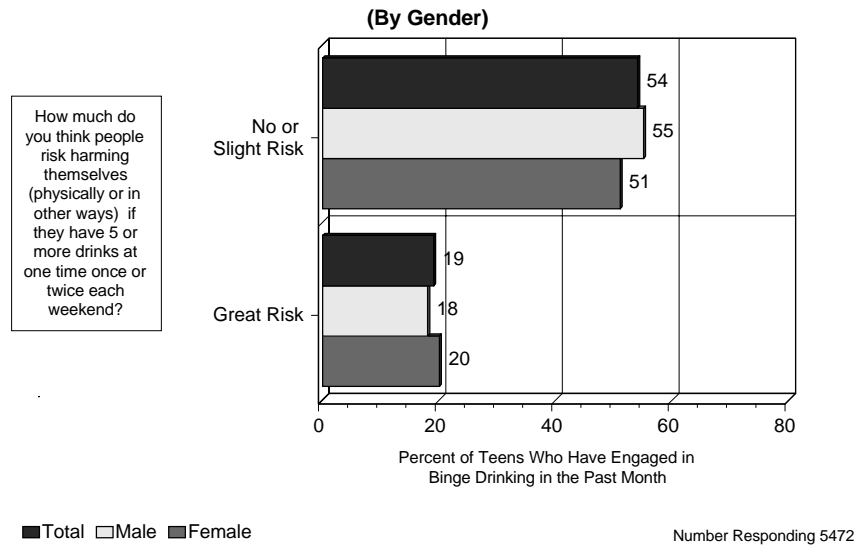


Figure 4-26 shows 54% of teens who consider having 5 or more drinks at one time (binge drinking) as "no risk" or "slight risk" have engaged in binge drinking at least once in the past month. Of those who consider binge drinking a "great risk," only 19% have done so.

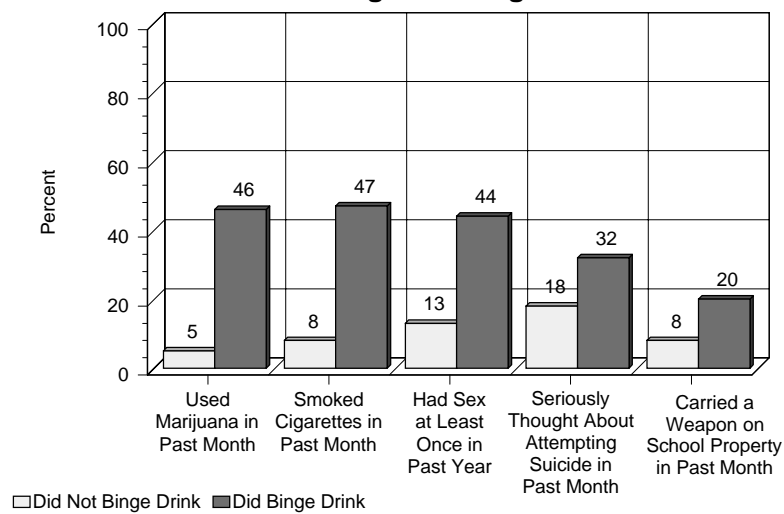
Figure 4-26: Perceived Risk: Binge Drinking Every Weekend vs. Those Who Have Engaged in Binge Drinking at Least Once in the Past Month



The Monitoring the Future Study conducted in 1999 found 55% of 8th grade students, 52% of 10th grade students and 43% of 12th grade students surveyed think binge drinking carries great risk (Johnson, O'Malley and Bachman, 2000). TAP found in the local area, 52% of 8th grade students, 48% of 10th grade students and 40% of 12th grade students reported they felt doing so has great risk.

Risky Behaviors and Binge Drinking. Recently, Harvard University conducted a study of college students and binge drinking. The study found that frequent binge drinkers were more likely to have unplanned sexual activity, unprotected sex, been in trouble with campus police, damaged property, and been hurt or injured (Harvard School of Public Health, 1995). TAP found that teens who engage in binge drinking are more likely to engage in risky behaviors. Figure 4-27 shows various risky behaviors by whether or not students engage in binge drinking.

Figure 4-27: Risk Behaviors Among Those Teens Who Engage in Binge Drinking vs. Those Who Don't Engage in Binge Drinking



Number Responding 5271-5539

When Teens Drink. Local teens were asked when they usually drink alcohol. The majority of students (87%) drink on the weekends (middle school, 78%; high school, 89%; males, 84%; females, 90%). Figure 4-28 shows the responses by school level and Figure 4-29 shows the responses by gender.

Figure 4-28: When Teens Use Alcohol
(Of Those Who Drink, by School Level)

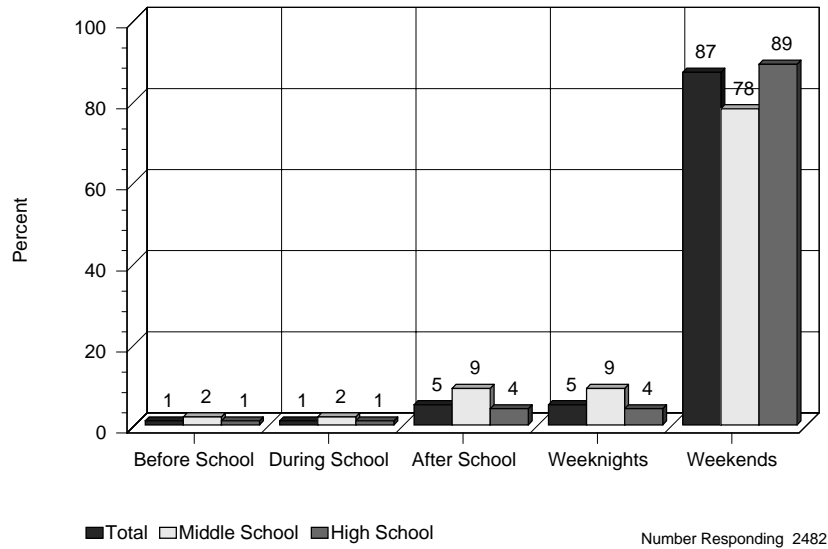
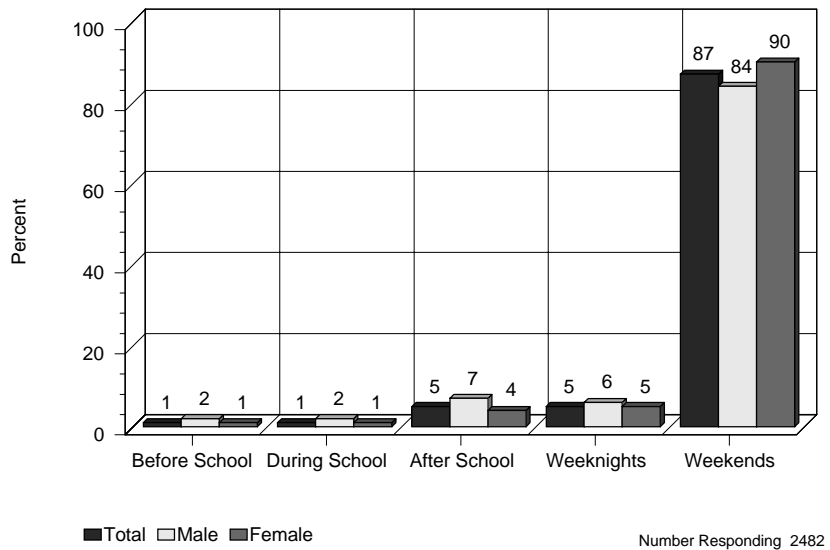
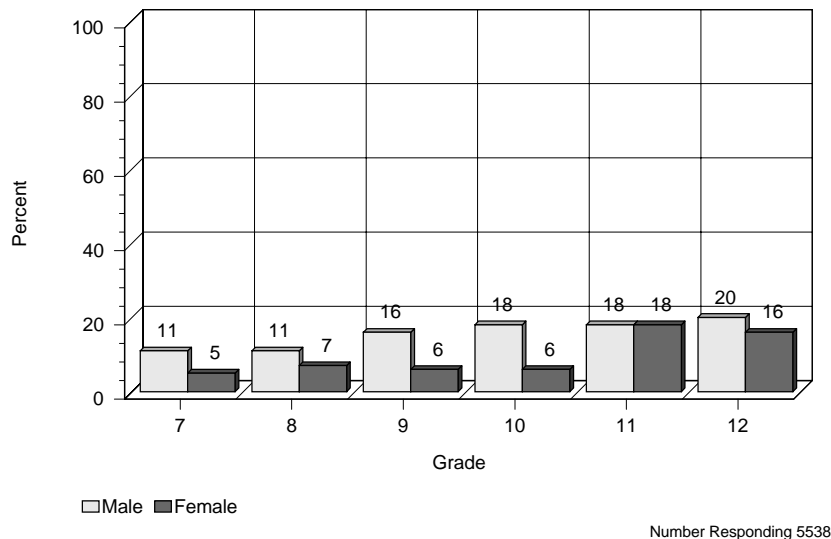


Figure 4-29: When Teens Use Alcohol
(Of Those Who Drink, by Gender)



Drinking and Driving. We asked local youth, "*During the **past month**, have you driven a motorized vehicle (car, truck, motorcycle, snowmobile, etc.) after drinking alcohol or using drugs?*" Twelve percent (12%) of all local youth said they drove at least once in the past month after drinking alcohol or using drugs (middle school, 8% and high school, 14%). One out of six 12th graders (males, 20%; females, 16%) indicated they drove at least once in the past month after drinking or using drugs. Figure 4-30 displays the responses by grade and gender.

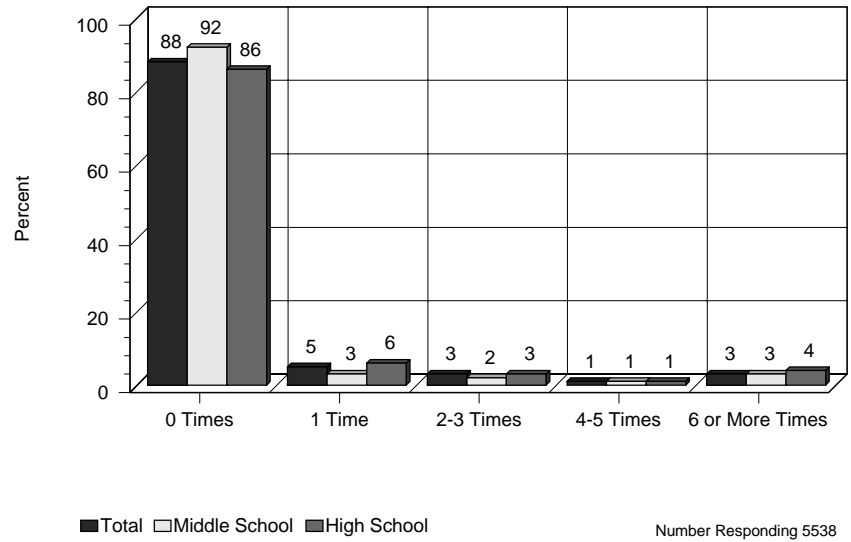
Figure 4-30: Teens Who Have Driven A Vehicle After Drinking or Using Drugs (In the Past Month, by Grade and Gender)



The issue of teens driving under the influence of alcohol is a major concern. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2000) found nationally, 13.1% of high school youth had driven a vehicle after drinking alcohol in the month preceding the survey. For N.H., this statistic is 11.7% of high school youth (CDC, 2000). New Hampshire ranked 29th out of the 33 states surveyed by the CDC.

Figure 4-31 shows the frequency of driving after drinking or doing drugs by school level.

Figure 4-31: Frequency of Driving in a Vehicle After Drinking or Using Drugs
(In the Past Month, by School Level)



Another concern is the issue of teens riding with a driver who may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. We asked local youth, "During the *past month*, have you ridden in a motorized vehicle when you were concerned about a driver who had been drinking or using drugs?" Figure 4-32 displays how many teens rode with a driver (either a friend or an adult) who had been drinking or using drugs in the past month, by grade and gender. Figure 4-33 shows the frequency of teens' riding with a driver (either a friend or an adult) who had been drinking or doing drugs by school level.

Figure 4-32: Teens Who Have Ridden in a Vehicle with a Driver Who Had Been Drinking or Using Drugs (At Least Once in the Past Month, by Grade and Gender)

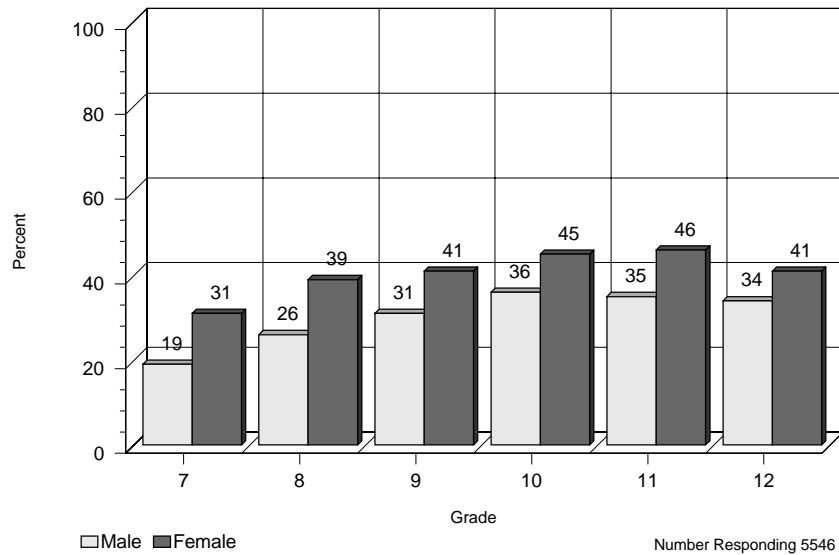


Figure 4-33: Frequency of Riding in a Vehicle With a Driver Who Had Been Drinking or Using Drugs (At Least Once in the Past Month, by School Level)

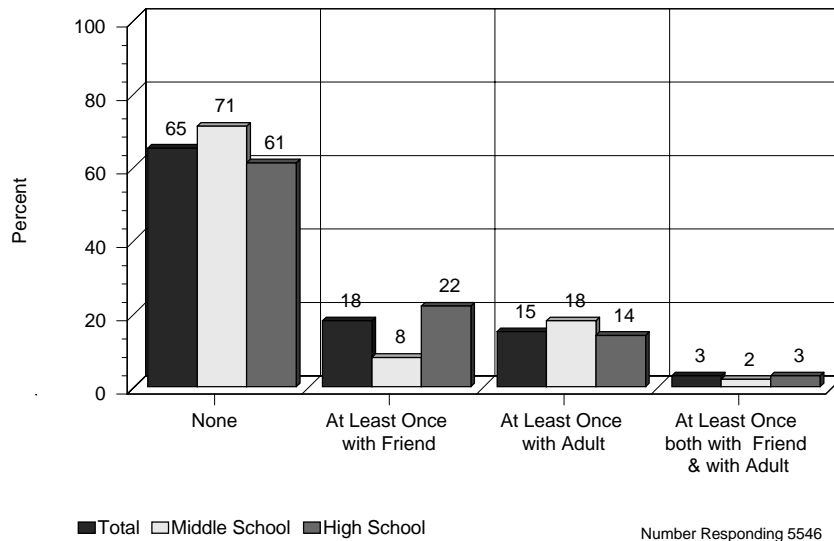


Figure 4-34 shows 18% of all local youth said they rode at least once in the past month with a friend who had been drinking alcohol or using drugs. Middle school youth were less likely to have ridden with a friend who had been drinking or using drugs than were high school youth (middle school, 8% and high school, 22%).

Figure 4-34: Teens Who Have Ridden with a Friend Who Had Been Drinking or Using Drugs
(At Least Once in the Past Month, by Gender and School Level)

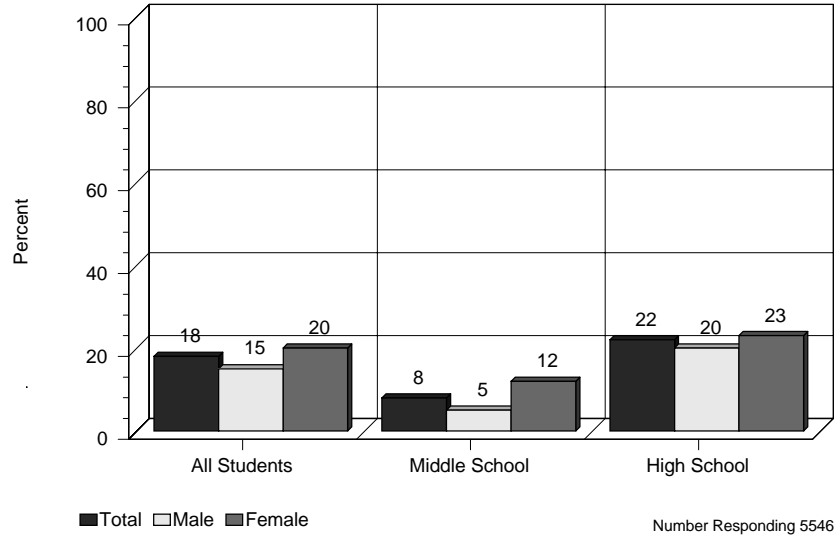
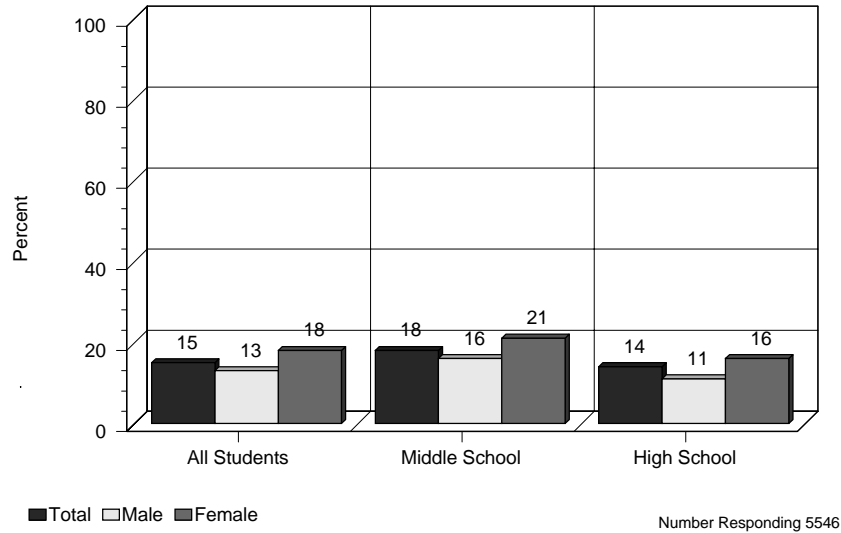


Figure 4-35 shows 15% of students have ridden with an adult who had been drinking or using drugs.

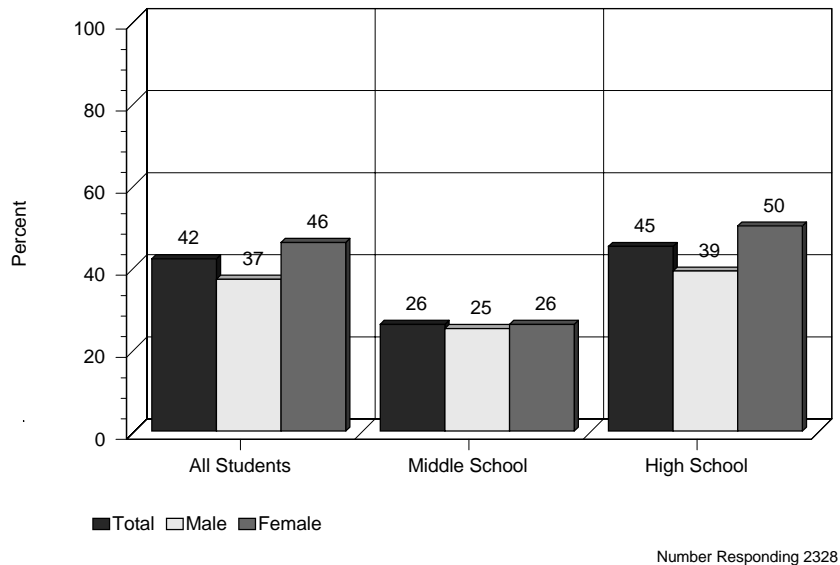
Figure 4-35: Teens Who Have Ridden with an Adult Who Had Been Drinking or Using Drugs
 (At Least Once in the Past Month, by Gender and School Level)



Nationally, 33.1% (N.H., 29.3%) of high school students had ridden with a driver who had been drinking alcohol in the month preceding the survey (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2000). New Hampshire ranks 28th highest in riding with a driver who had been drinking out of the 33 states surveyed by the CDC.

We also asked students "If you and your friends go out and drink alcohol or use drugs, how often do you use a designated driver?" Fifty-eight percent (58%) said they and their friends don't go out and drink alcohol or use drugs. Of those who do, 42% said they "always" use a designated driver (middle school, 26% and high school, 45%). Twenty-eight percent (28%) said they "never" or "rarely" use a designated driver (middle school, 54% and high school, 23%). Those who *always* use a designated driver are shown by school level and gender in Figure 4-36.

Figure 4-36: Teens Who Always Use a Designated Driver
 (Of Those Who Go Out and Drink or Use Drugs, by Gender and School Level)



Obtainability of Alcohol. The survey asked local youth where they get alcohol. Figure 4-37 shows how students who use alcohol responded. The most commonly reported source of alcohol was from asking someone of legal age (23%). As Figure 4-38 shows, middle school students who drink are more likely to obtain alcohol by taking it from their parents or a friend's parents (31%) or from friends their own age or older (31%). High school students who drink are more likely to get it from friends their own age or older (40%) or by asking someone of legal age to buy it for them (27%).

Figure 4-37: Where Teens Get Alcohol

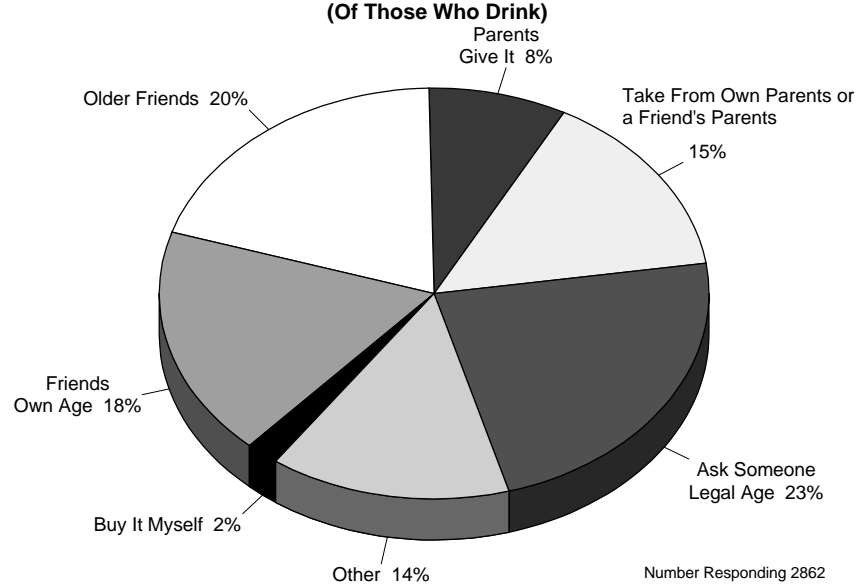
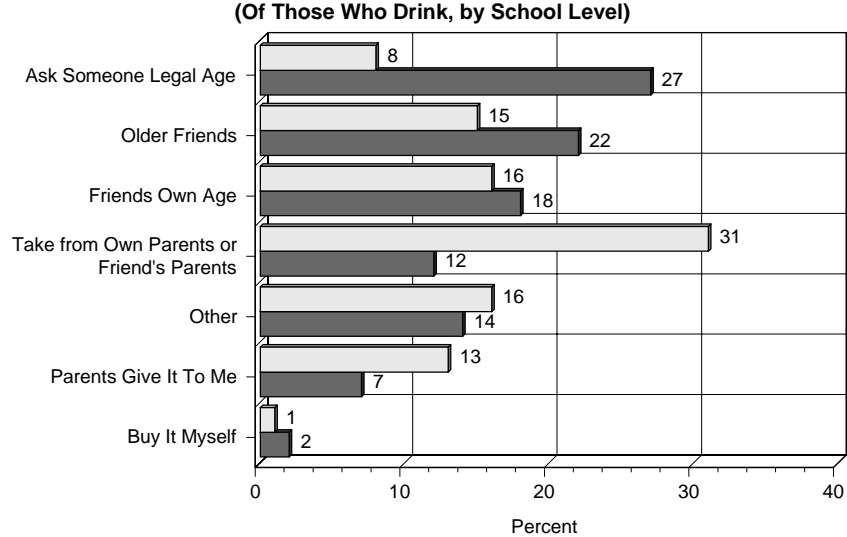


Figure 4-38: Where Teens Get Alcohol

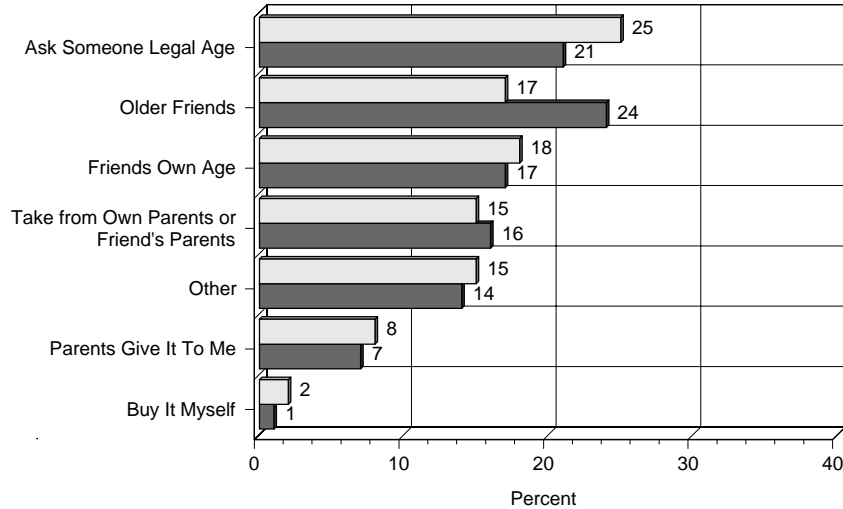


□ Middle School ■ High School

Number Responding 2862

Figure 4-39 shows females who drink are likely to get alcohol from their older friends (24%). Males who drink are likely to ask someone of legal age to buy for them (25%).

Figure 4-39: Where Teens Get Alcohol
(Of Those Who Drink, by Gender)

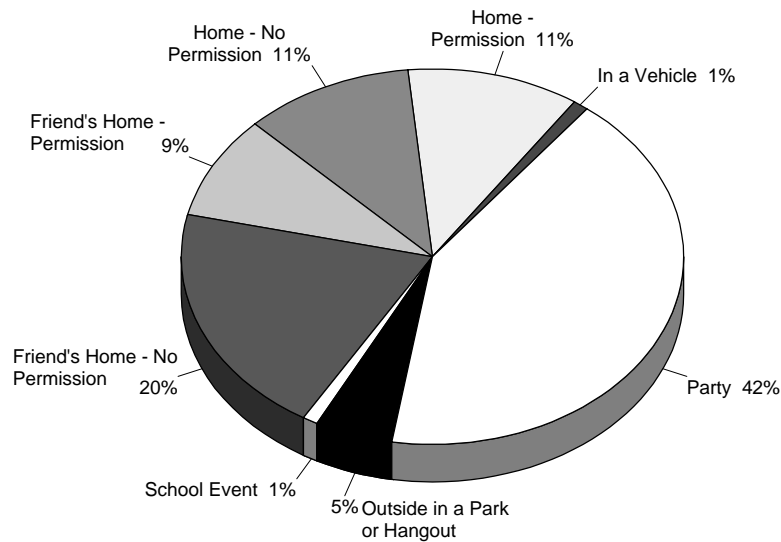


□ Male ■ Female

Number Responding 2862

Teens were asked, "If you drink alcohol, where do you *most often* drink it?" As shown in Figure 4-40, more teens drink at parties than any other place (42%).

Figure 4-40: Where Teens Drink Alcohol
(Of Those Who Drink)



Number Responding 2879

Figure 4-41 shows that parties are the most common place for high school students to drink (47%). The most common place for middle school students to drink is at a friend's home without their parents' permission (25%), followed closely by drinking at a party (24%). The home appears to be a common place to consume alcohol. Eleven percent (11%) of teens who drink reported drinking at home with their parents' permission (17% for middle school students and 9% for high school students). Nine percent (9%) drink at a friend's home with their parents' permission (middle school, 5% and high school, 10%).

Figure 4-41: Where Teens Drink Alcohol
(Of Those Who Drink, by School Level)

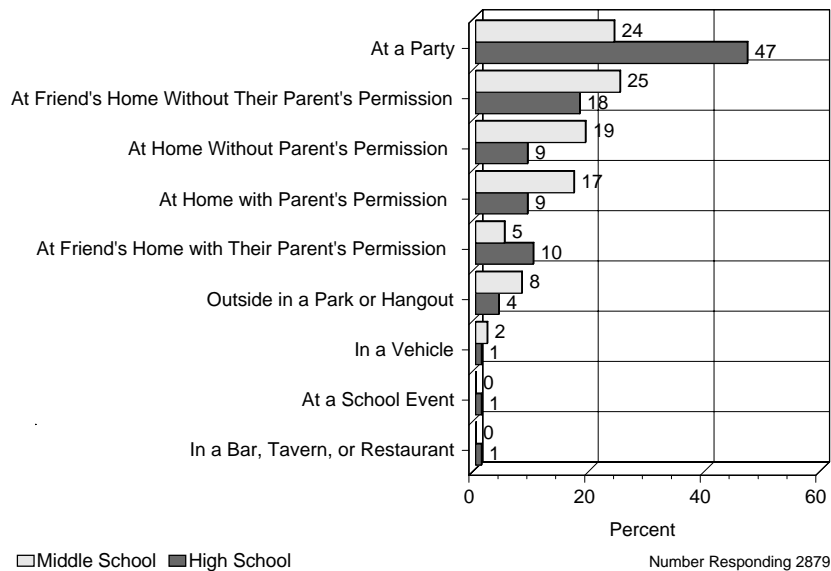
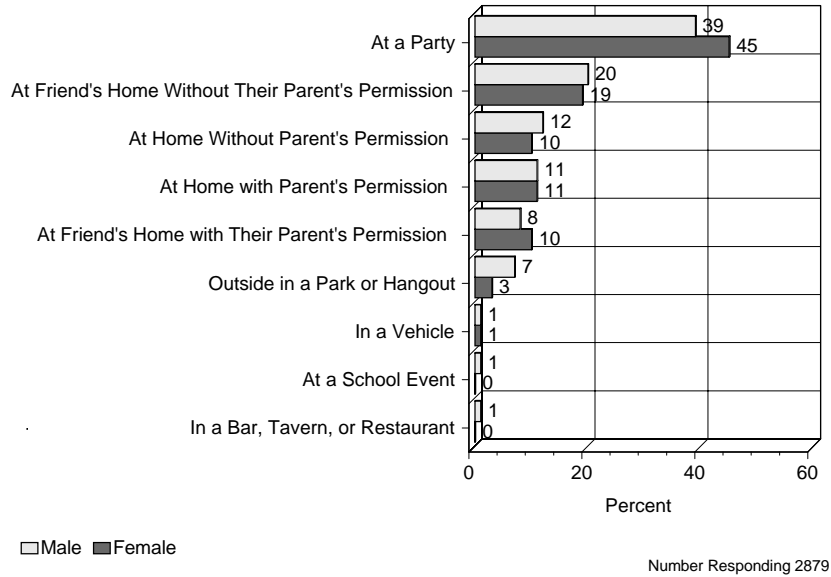


Figure 4-42 shows the most common places for teens to drink, reported for males and females. Females are more likely than males to drink at a party (males, 39%; females, 45%). Males are slightly more likely than females to drink outside in a park or hangout (males, 7%; females, 3%).

Figure 4-42: Where Teens Drink Alcohol
(Of Those Who Drink, by Gender)



As Figure 4-43 shows, 67% of students surveyed think it is "easy" or "very easy" to obtain alcohol.

Figure 4-43: Obtainability of Alcohol

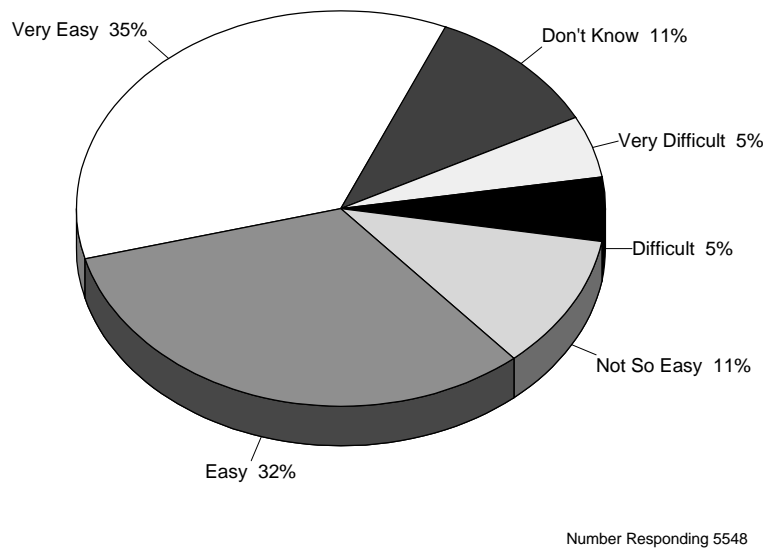
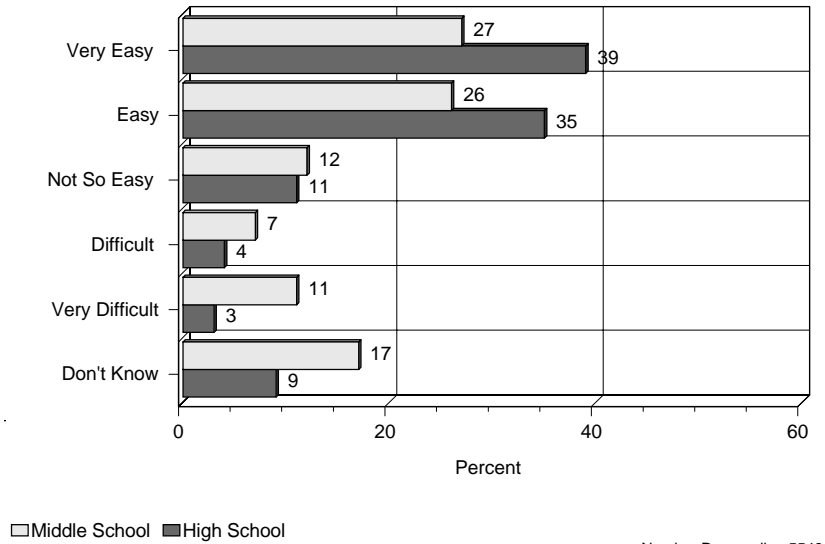


Figure 4-44 shows over two-thirds of students think it is "easy" or "very easy" to obtain alcohol (middle school, 53%; high school students, 74%; males, 68%; females, 68%). Ten percent (10%) said it is "difficult" or "very difficult" to get alcohol (middle school, 18%; high school, 7%) and 11% of local teens did not know how easy or difficult it is to get alcohol (middle school, 17%; high school, 9%).

**Figure 4-44: Obtainability of Alcohol
(By School Level)**



On the positive side, it is important to note that 40% of local students reported never having used alcohol (middle school, 60%; high school, 32%). About two-thirds of all teens surveyed (66%) report never having had 5 or more drinks in a row in the past month (middle school, 81%; high school, 60%).