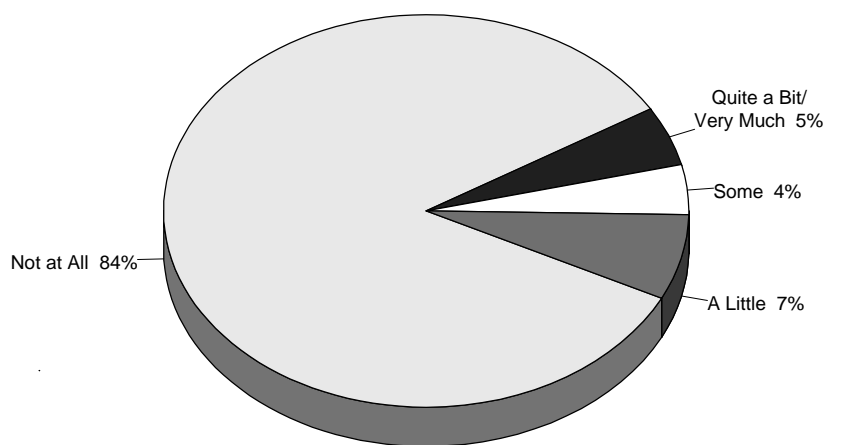

CHAPTER 4

Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use

Recent statistics indicate many of New Hampshire's youth drink. One major concern about adolescent alcohol use is the fatalities resulting from automobile accidents, which is 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 16% of all teens indicated they worry to some degree about alcohol or drug abuse in their family.

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



Number Responding 2027

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

Figure 4-2 shows 41% of teens surveyed worry to some degree about being pressured into drinking or doing drugs. Figure 4-3 shows a slight difference of 4% between middle school males and high school males on this question. For females there is also a difference of 4% between school levels. Slightly more middle school youth than high school youth are worried "quite a bit" or "very much" about being pressured into drinking or doing (8% vs. 5%).

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

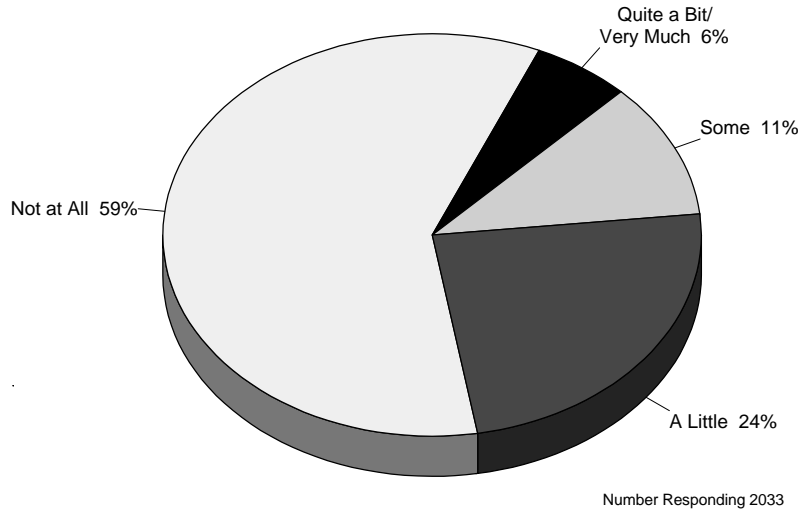


Figure 4-3: Being Pressured into Drinking or Doing Other Drugs as a Teen Worry (Quite a Bit or Very Much, by Gender and School Level)

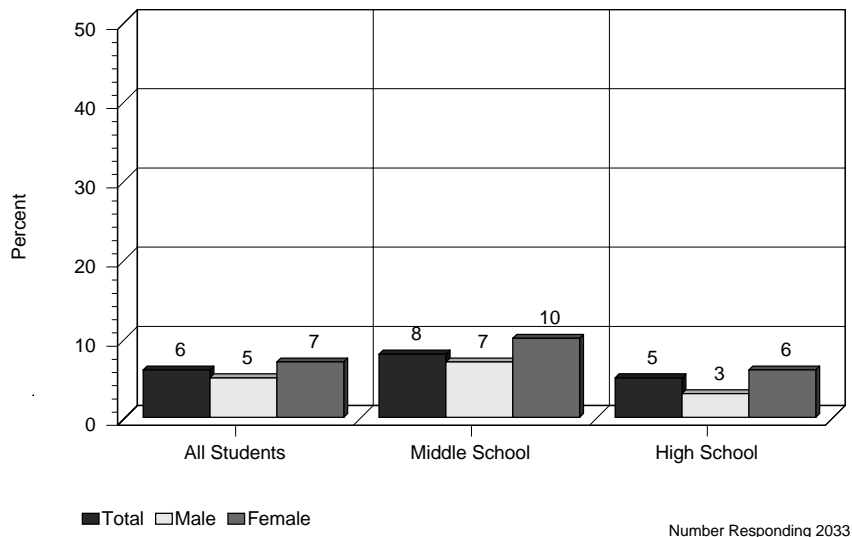


Figure 4-4 shows the percentage of all teens who have used various substances at any time in the past. At 48%, alcohol (beer, wine and hard liquor) is the most commonly used substance at the "any at all" level, followed by smoking tobacco (35%) and marijuana (29%).

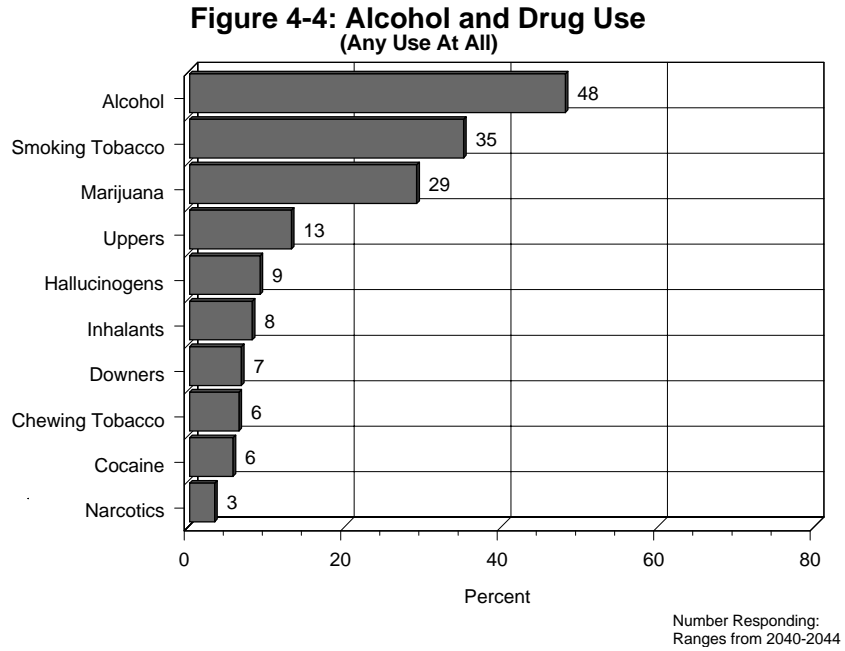


Figure 4-5 shows the percent of teens who use alcohol or other drugs on a monthly or more often basis. Alcohol is the substance most often used at this level (23%), followed by marijuana (14%) and smoking tobacco (13%).

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

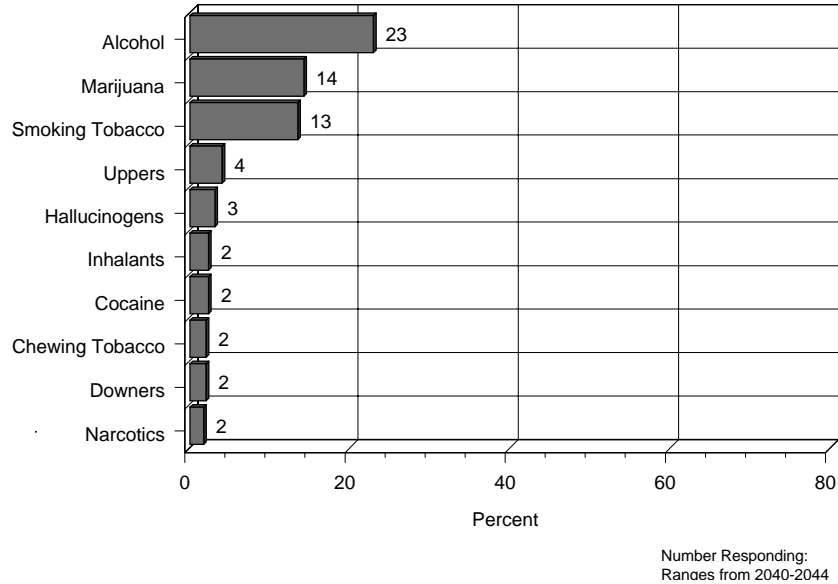


Figure 4-6 shows the percent of all teens who use various substances "once or twice a week" or more often. Smoking tobacco (11%) is the most commonly used drug at this level of frequency, followed by marijuana (8%), then alcohol (7%).

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

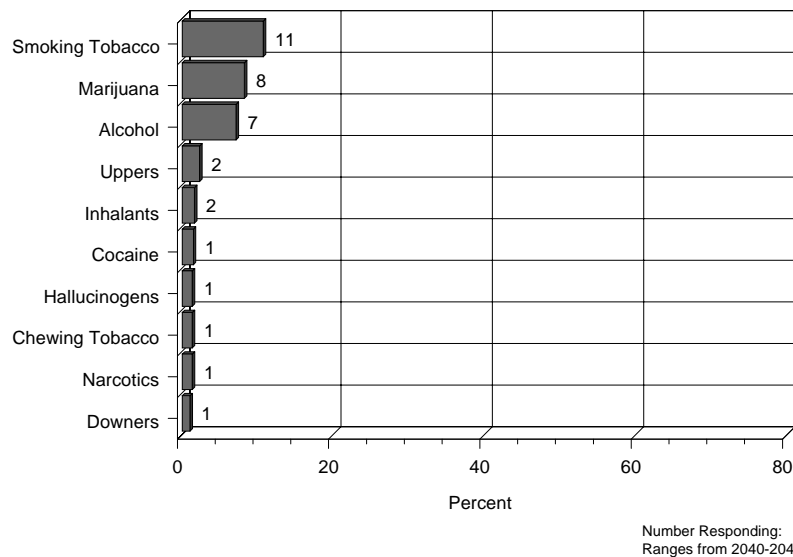
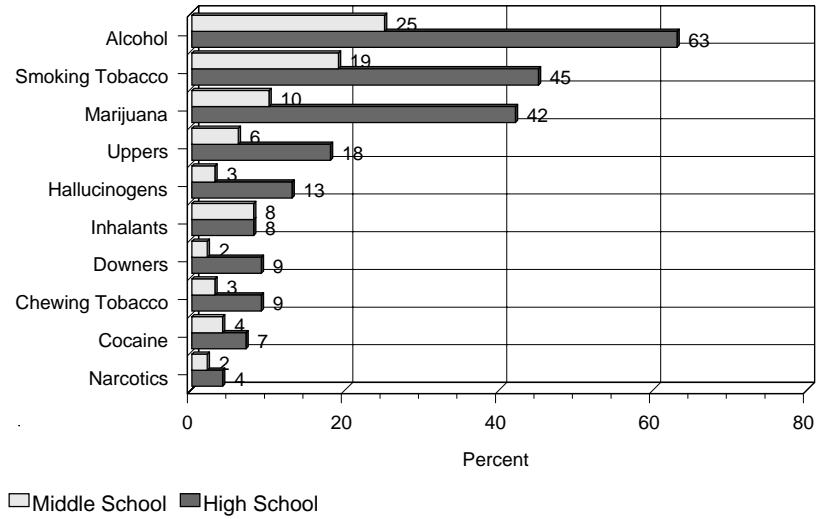


Figure 4-7 shows more high school youth than middle school youth have used alcohol (beer, wine, and hard liquor), tobacco (both smoking and chewing), marijuana, uppers, hallucinogens, and downers at the "any use at all" level.

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



Number Responding:
Ranges from 2040-2044

Figure 4-8 shows monthly use of alcohol, marijuana, and smoking tobacco is greater in high school than in middle school.

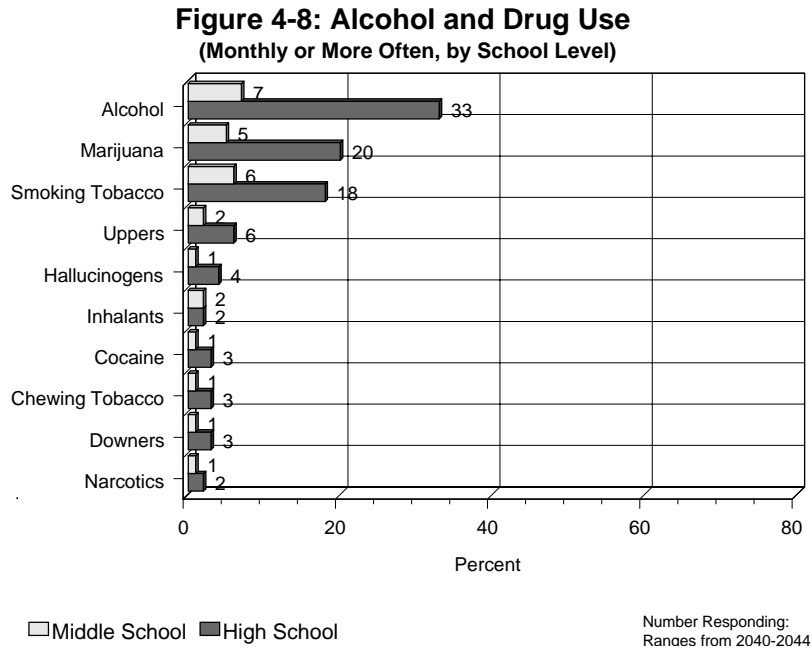
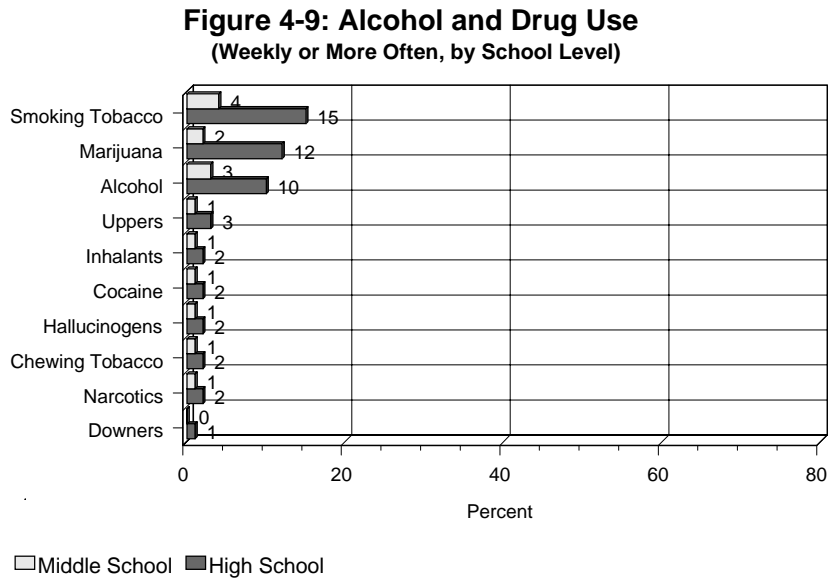
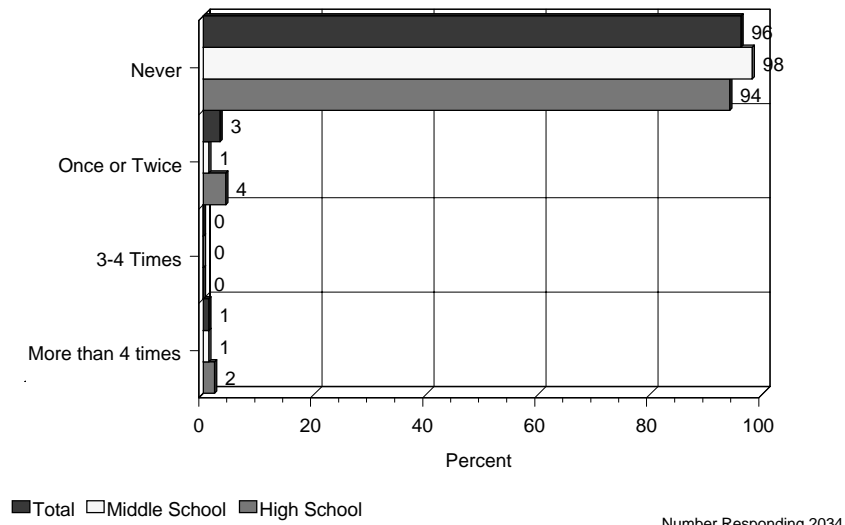


Figure 4-9 shows that like Figure 4-8, weekly use of smoking tobacco, marijuana, and alcohol (beer, wine, and hard liquor) are also more common in high school than in middle school.



Students were asked, "In the past month have you missed school or work because of your use of drugs or alcohol?" Figure 4-10 shows that 4% of students reported they had missed school or work at least one time because of their use of drugs or alcohol. Of middle school students, 2% reported they had missed school or work and 6% of high school students said they had done so.

Figure 4-10: Times Teens Missed School or Work Because of Their Use of Drugs or Alcohol (In the Past Month, by School Level)



We asked local youth where they thought teens in their town got illegal drugs (for example, marijuana, cocaine, mushrooms, LSD). About 3 out of 5 students (62%) believe teens get illegal drugs from other teens, either in their town (47%) or another town (15%). Six percent (6%) believe they obtain them from adults and 27% don't know. Figure 4-11 shows the total responses by school level.

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

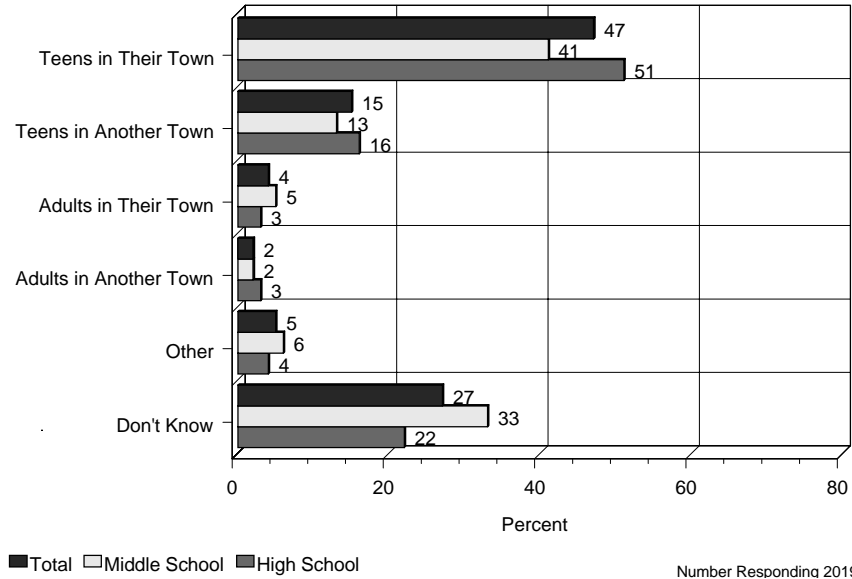
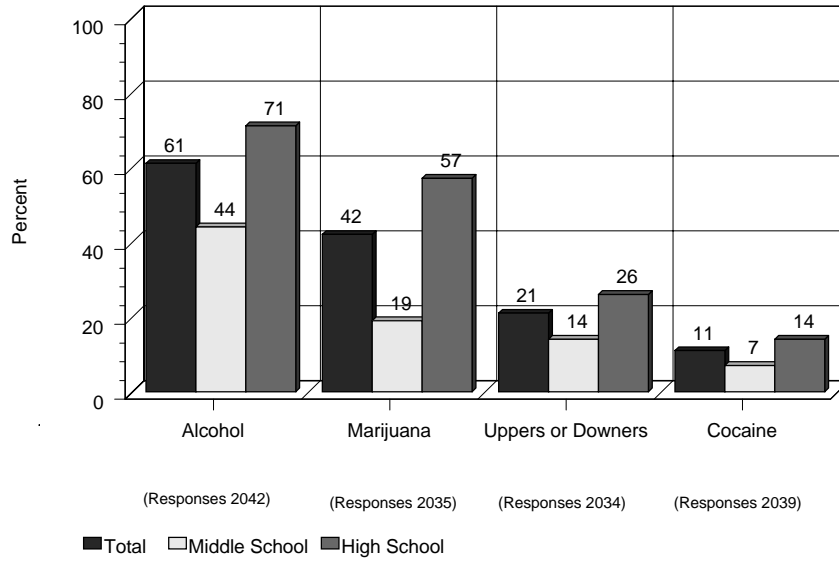


Figure 4-12 shows the perceived ease of obtaining alcohol and other drugs on the basis of school level. It is worth noting well over half of high school youth believe alcohol (beer, wine or hard liquor) and marijuana are easy or very easy to get.

Figure 4-12: Obtainability Of Alcohol and Other Drugs
 (Very Easy or Easy to Get, 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. Figure 4-13 shows those youth who consider these activities to be of "no risk" or "slight risk".

Figure 4-13: Perceived Risk of Alcohol & Other Drug Use
(No Risk or Slight Risk, by School Level)

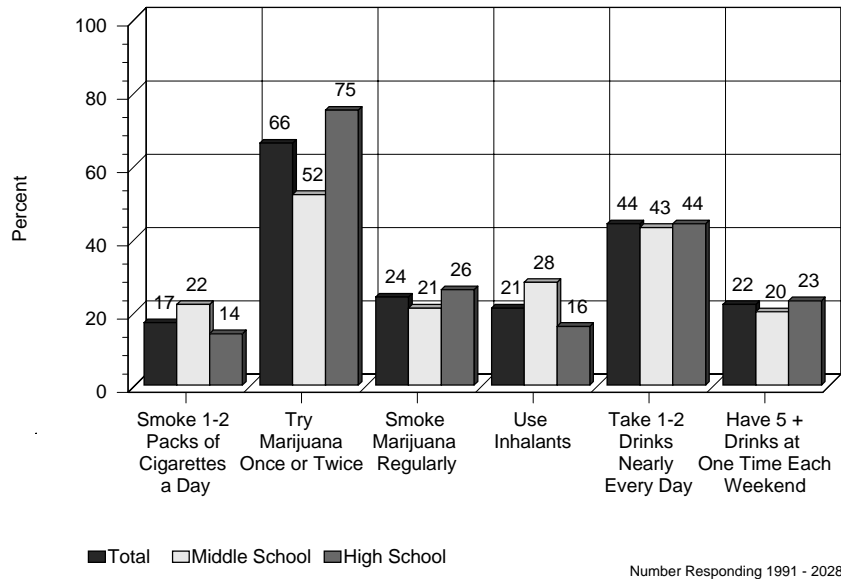
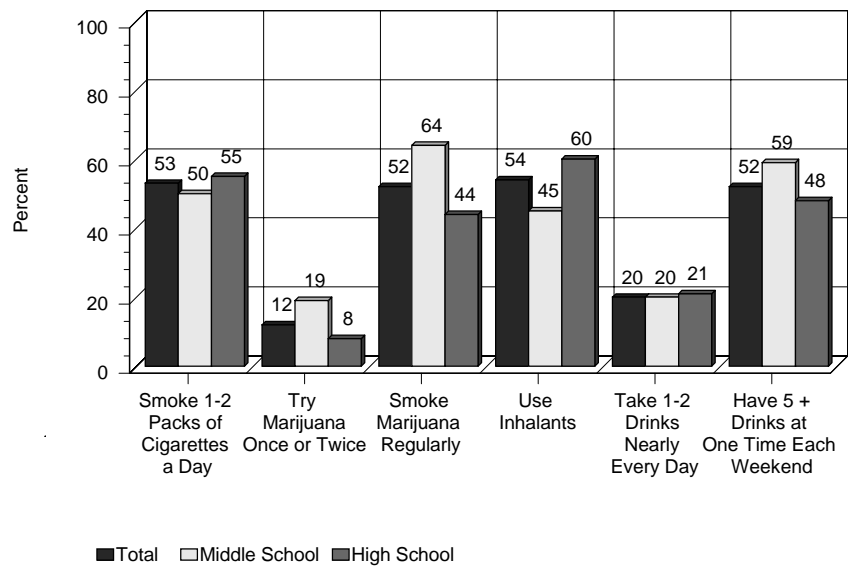


Figure 4-14 shows those who consider these activities to be of *great risk*. More middle school students than high school students felt trying marijuana once or twice (middle school, 19% and high school, 8%), smoking marijuana regularly (middle school, 64% and high school 44%) and having five or more drinks at one time each weekend (middle school, 59% and high school, 48%) were of great risk. More high school students than middle school students felt smoking one or more packs of cigarettes a day (high school, 55% middle school, 50% and using inhalants (high school, 60% and middle school, 45%) were of great risk. There is no major difference between school levels for taking 1-2 drinks every day.

**Figure 4-14: Perceived Risk of Alcohol & Other Drug Use
(Great Risk, by School Level)**



Number Responding 1991 - 2028

Alcohol Use

Overall, 48% of local teens have at some point consumed alcohol. Figure 4-15 shows how often local teens use alcohol (beer, wine and hard liquor) on the basis of school level.

Figure 4-16 shows how old students were when they first experimented with alcohol.

Figure 4-15: Frequency of Overall Alcohol Use
(Of Those Who Have Had Beer, Wine, or Hard Liquor, by School Level)

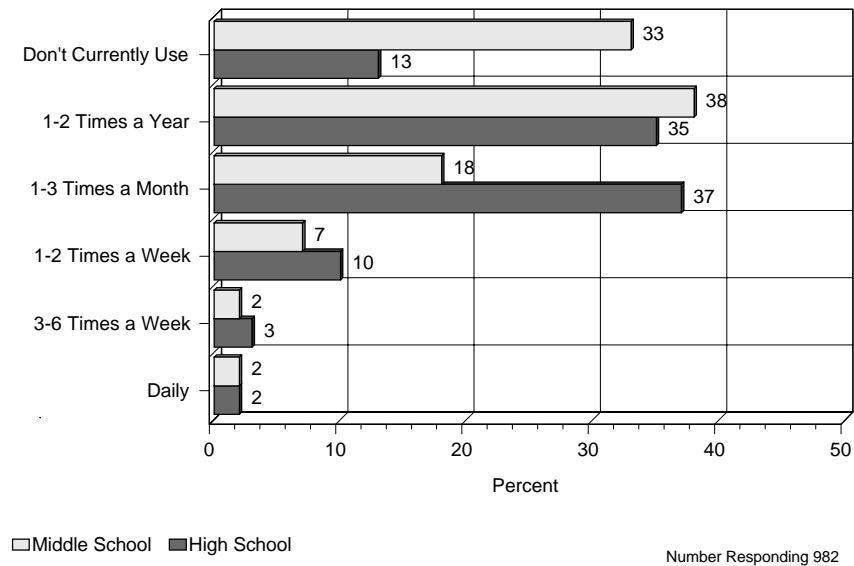
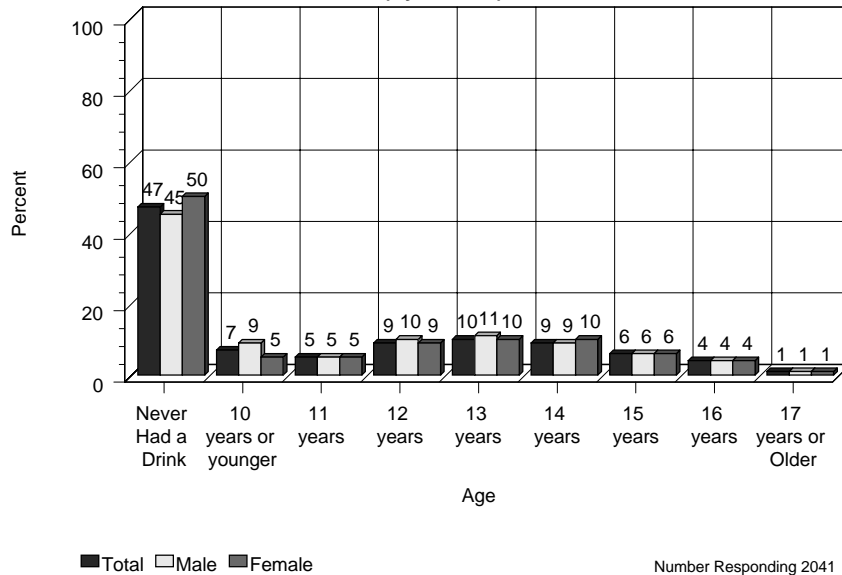
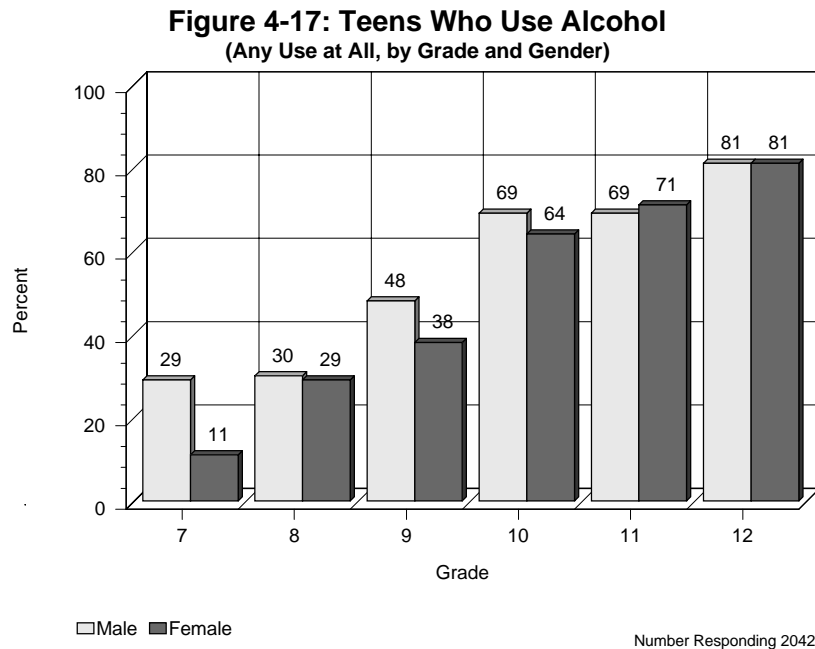


Figure 4-16: Age Students Had Their First Drink of Alcohol
(By Gender)



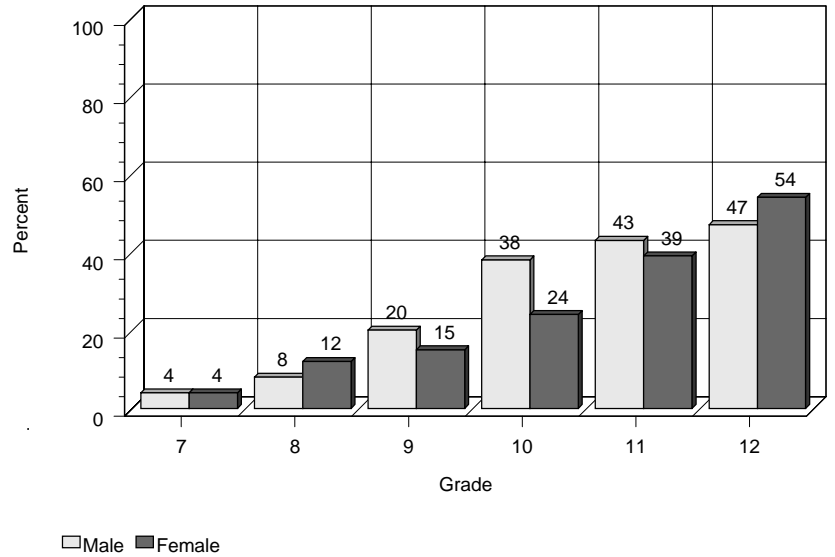
The consumption of alcohol continues to increase as teens grow older. Figure 4-17 summarizes the percentages of males and females, at each grade level, who reported having used alcohol at some time in the past. In grades 7, 8 and 9, less than 40% of teens have used alcohol. In grades 10, 11 and 12, more than 60% have used it. On the basis of school level, 1 out of 4 middle school youth (25%) and about 3 out of 5 (63%) high school youth have used alcohol.



A recent survey found 79.1% of high school youth (*grades 9-12*) in the United States (N.H., 81.4%) have had at least one drink of alcohol during their lifetime (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1998). TAP found 63% of local high school students reported having at least one drink of alcohol. New Hampshire ranks 5th out of the 33 states surveyed by the CDC.

Monthly use of alcohol is shown in Figure 4-18. Overall, 23% of local youth reported using alcohol once a month or more often (middle school, 7%; high school, 33%). Monthly use of alcohol is greater for males than females in grade 10. Females use alcohol on a monthly basis more often in grade 12. Gender differences in other grades are slight.

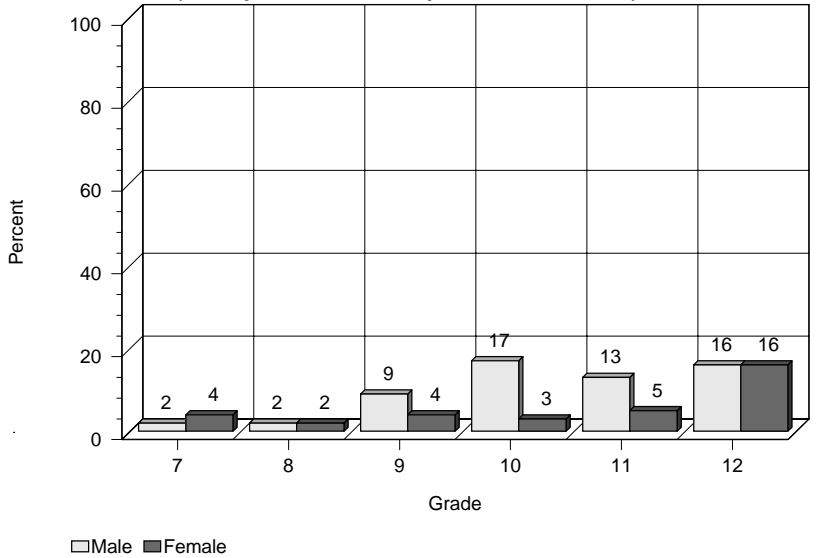
Figure 4-18: Teens Who Use Alcohol
(Monthly or More Often, by Grade and Gender)



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (1998) found 50.8% (N.H., 54.5%) of high school youth (*grades 9-12*) surveyed have had one or more drinks in the 30 days preceding the survey. TAP found 33% of Exeter high school youth drink monthly or more often. New Hampshire ranks 7th out of 33 states surveyed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for teens who drink monthly.

Weekly use of alcohol is noted in Figure 4-19. Seven percent (7%) of all youth reported the consumption of alcohol at least once a week or more (middle school, 3% and high school, 10%). Weekly alcohol use increases from middle school to high school for both males (middle school males, 2%; high school males, 14%) and females (middle school females, 3%; high school females, 6%). Weekly use by females is slightly lower than by males (females, 5% and males, 9%).

Figure 4-19: Teens Who Use Alcohol
 (Weekly or More Often, by Grade and Gender)



Number Responding 2042

Perceived Risk of Drinking 1 or 2 Drinks a Day

We asked local youth how risky they thought taking one or two drinks nearly every day is. Overall, 20% felt taking one or two drinks every day carries a great risk. Figure 4-20 shows the breakdown of all responses by school level. Figure 4-21 shows the breakdown by gender.

Figure 4-20: Perceived Risk: Take 1 or 2 Drinks of an Alcoholic Beverage Nearly Every Day (By School Level)

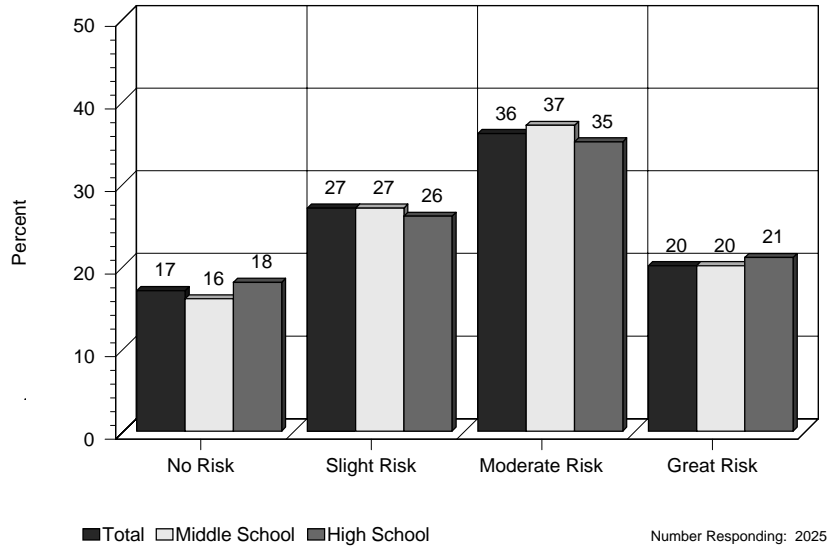
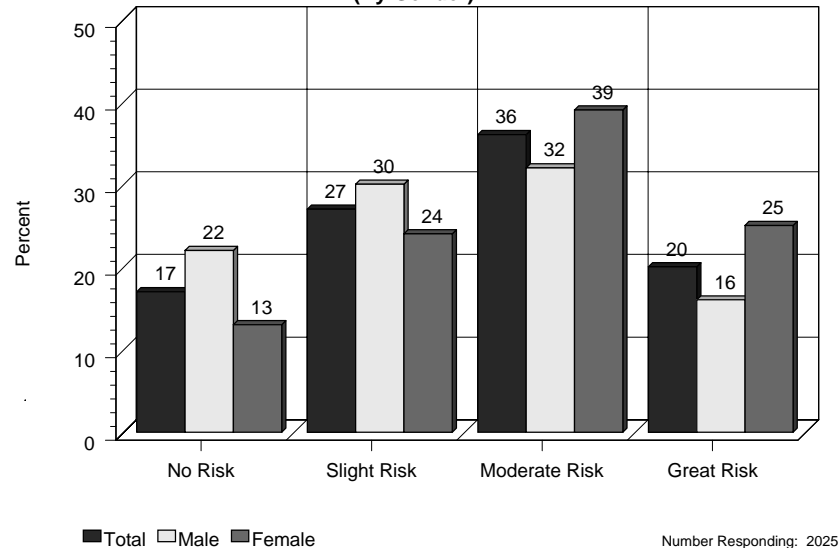


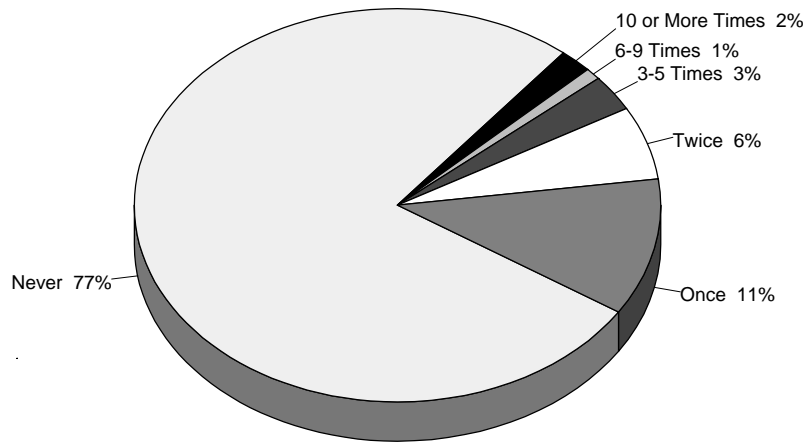
Figure 4-21: Perceived Risk: Take 1 or 2 Drinks of an Alcoholic Beverage Nearly Every Day (By Gender)



Occurrence of Binge Drinking

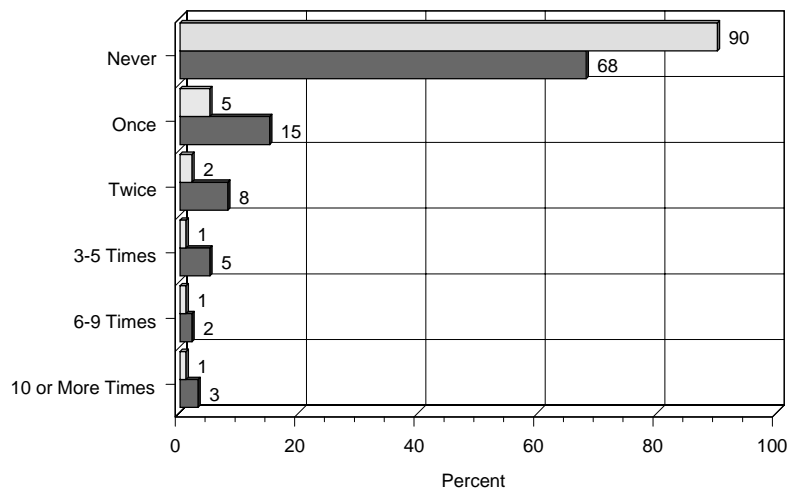
Local teens were asked the question, "During the past month have you had 5 or more alcoholic drinks at one time?" A drink was defined as "a glass of wine or beer, a bottle or can of beer, a shot of liquor or a mixed drink." Figure 4-22 shows the responses to this question. Twenty-three percent (23%) of teens reported having 5 or more drinks at one time (binge drinking) at least once in the past month. As Figure 4-23 shows, fewer middle school youth engaged in binge drinking in the past month than high school youth (middle school, 10% and high school, 32%).

Figure 4-22: Frequency of Binge Drinking
(Number of Times in Past Month, Total)



Number Responding 2034

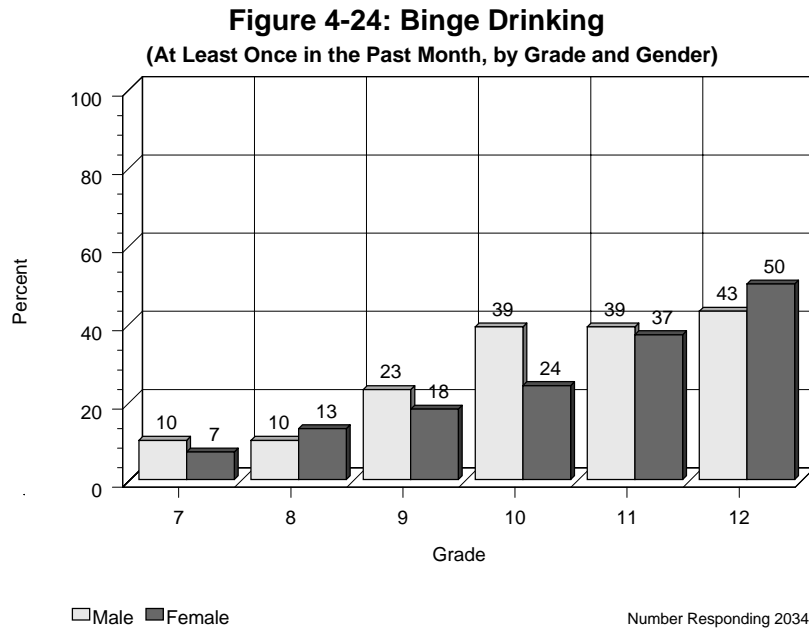
Figure 4-23: Frequency of Binge Drinking
(Number of Times in Past Month, by School Level)



□ Middle School ■ High School

Number Responding 2034

Figure 4-24 shows teens' drinking 5 or more drinks in a row (binge drinking) increases at nearly every grade level. Males reported binge drinking more than females in the 10th grade (males, 39% and females, 24%). In the 12th grade, 43% of males and 50% of females reported binge drinking in the past month. Differences between males and females in other grades are slight. The rate for males increases from 10% in middle school to 35% in high school, while the rate for females increases from 10% in middle school to 30% in high school. Frequent binge drinking can indicate a pattern of abusive drinking that may require professional attention.

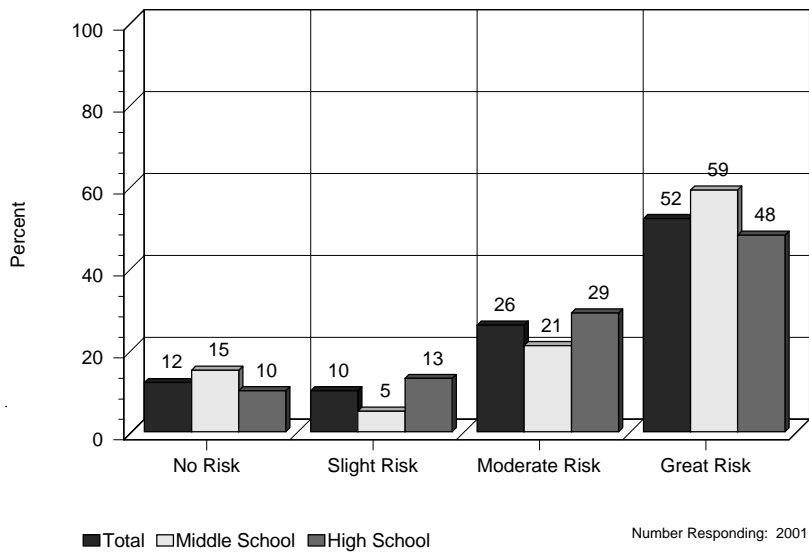


The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey found nationally, 33.4% (N.H., 35.5%) of high school youth (*grades 9-12*) reported drinking heavily at least once during the 30 days before they were surveyed (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 1998). TAP found 32% of Exeter youth (*grades 9-12*) have had 5 or more drinks in a row at one time at least once in the past month. New Hampshire ranks 9th 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, 52% reported they felt it was a great risk; 22% said they felt it was no or slight risk. Figure 4-25 shows the breakdown of all responses by school level. Figure 4-26 shows the responses broken down by gender.

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



**Figure 4-26: Perceived Risk: Binge Drinking
Once or Twice Each Weekend
(By Gender)**

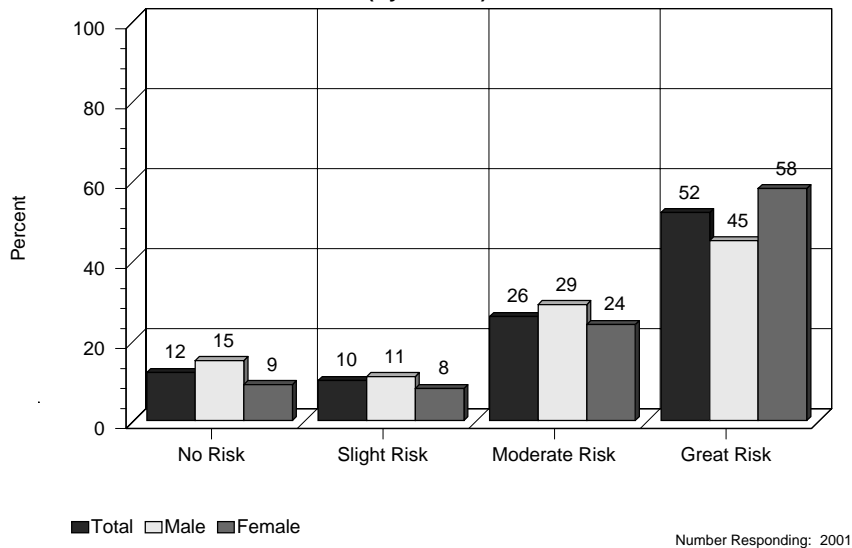
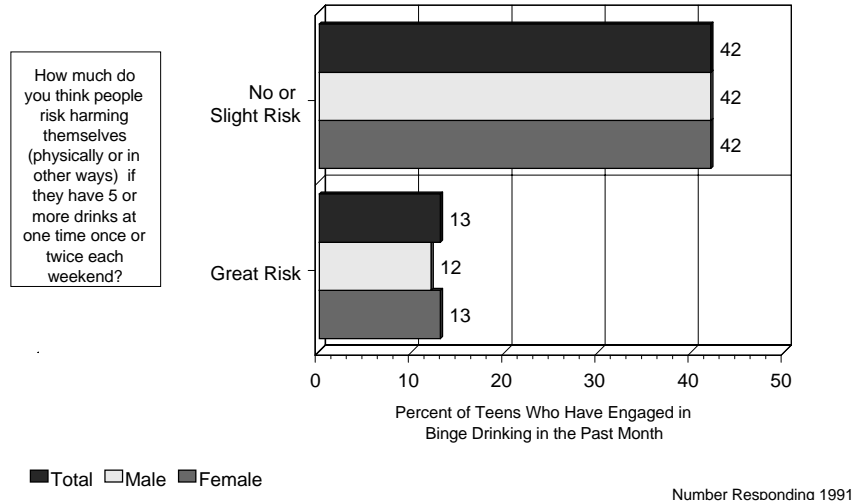


Figure 4-27 shows 42% of teens who consider having 5 or more drinks in a row at one time (binge drinking) as "no risk" or "slight risk" have engaged in binge drinking at least once in the past month. Of those who consider binge drinking a great risk, only 13% have done so.

Figure 4-27: Perceived Risk: Binge Drinking Every Weekend vs. Those Who Have Engaged in Binge Drinking at Least Once in the Past Month (By Gender)



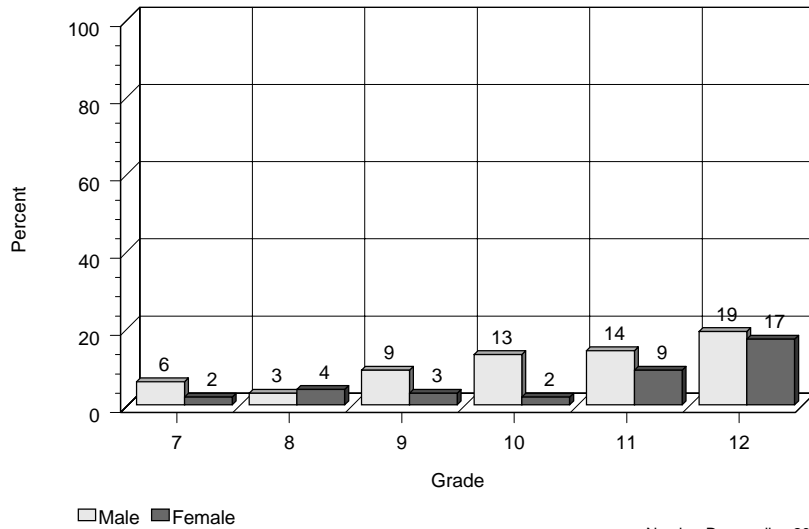
The Monitoring the Future Study conducted in 1998 found 56% of 8th grade students, 53% of 10th grade students and 43% of 12th grade students surveyed think heavy drinking carries great risk (Johnson, O'Malley and Bachman, 1999). TAP found in Exeter, 65% of 8th grade students, 47% of 10th grade students and 41% of 12th grade students reported they felt doing so has great risk.

Drinking and Driving

The issue of teens driving under the influence of alcohol is a major concern. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (1998) found nationally, 16.9% of high school youth had driven a vehicle after drinking alcohol in the month preceding the survey. For N.H., this statistic is 13% of high school youth (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 1998). New Hampshire ranked 27th out of the 33 states surveyed by the CDC.

We asked local youth, "If you drink or use drugs, during the past month how many times have you driven a motorized vehicle (car, truck, motorcycle, snowmobile etc.) after drinking alcohol or using drugs during the past month?" Seven percent (7%) of all local youth said they drove at least once in the past month after drinking alcohol (middle school, 4% and high school, 10%). Figure 4-28 displays the percentage of teens who have driven a vehicle at least once in the past month after drinking by grade and gender.

Figure 4-28: Teens Who Have Driven A Vehicle After Drinking or Using Drugs (At Least Once in the Past Month, by Grade and Gender)



Number Responding 2026

Another concern is the issue of teens riding with a driver who may be intoxicated. We asked local youth, "During the past month have you ridden in a car, truck, motorcycle or snowmobile with a driver who had been drinking or using drugs?" Figure 4-29 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 4-30 shows the responses broken down by school level.

Figure 4-29: 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)

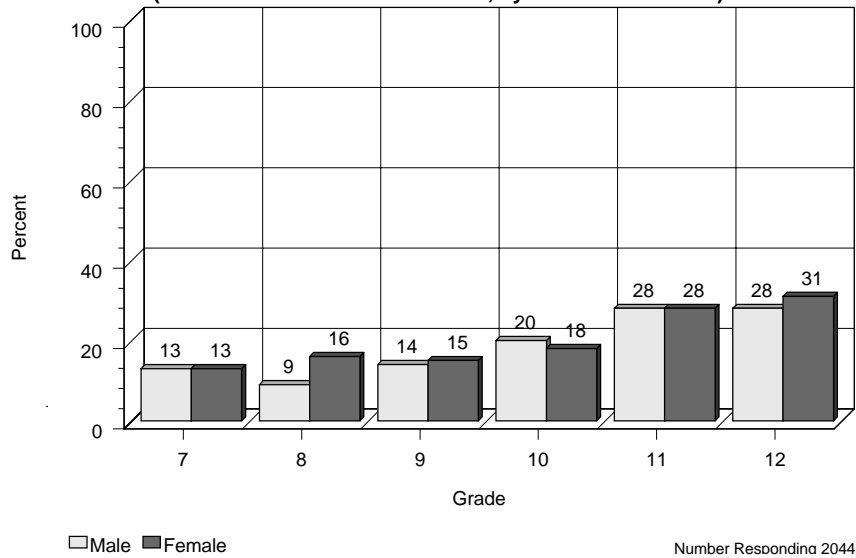
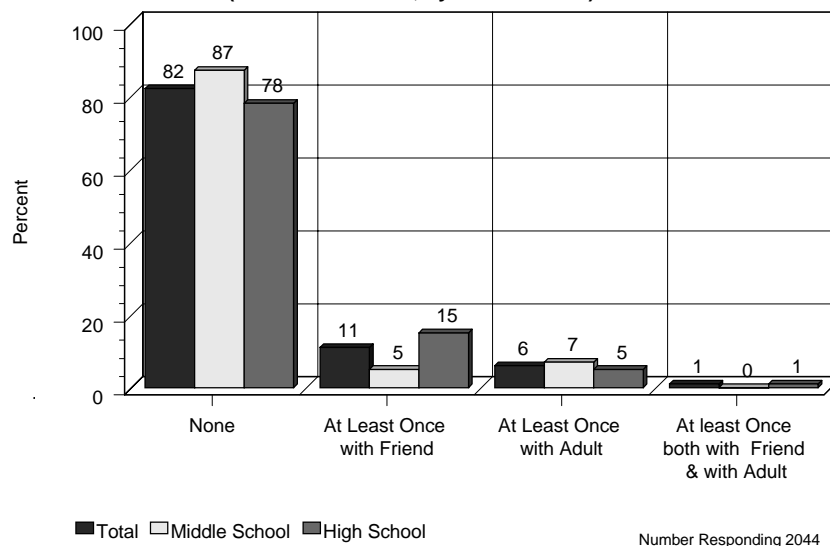


Figure 4-30: Frequency of Riding in a Vehicle With a Driver Who Had Been Drinking or Using Drugs (In the Past Month, by School Level)



Nationally, 36.6% (N.H., 32%) 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, 1998). New Hampshire ranks 28th out of the 33 states surveyed by the CDC.

Figure 4-31 shows 11% 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, 5% and high school, 15%).

Figure 4-31: 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)

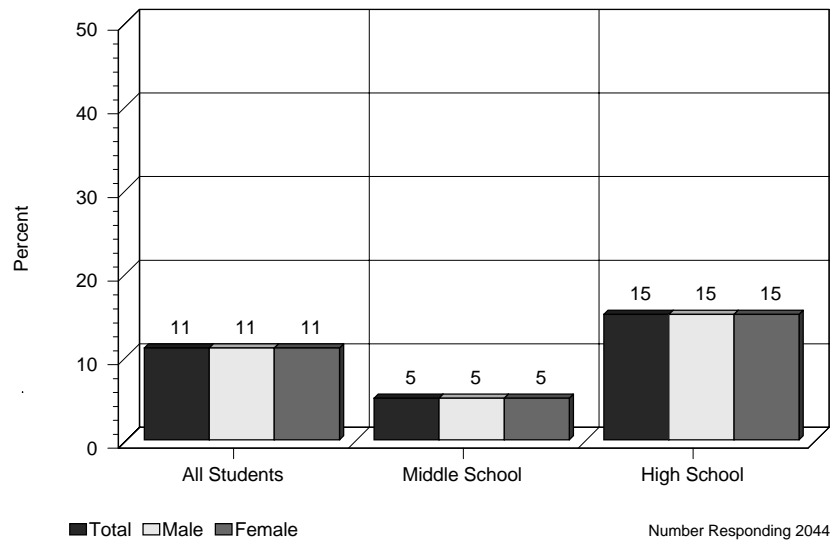
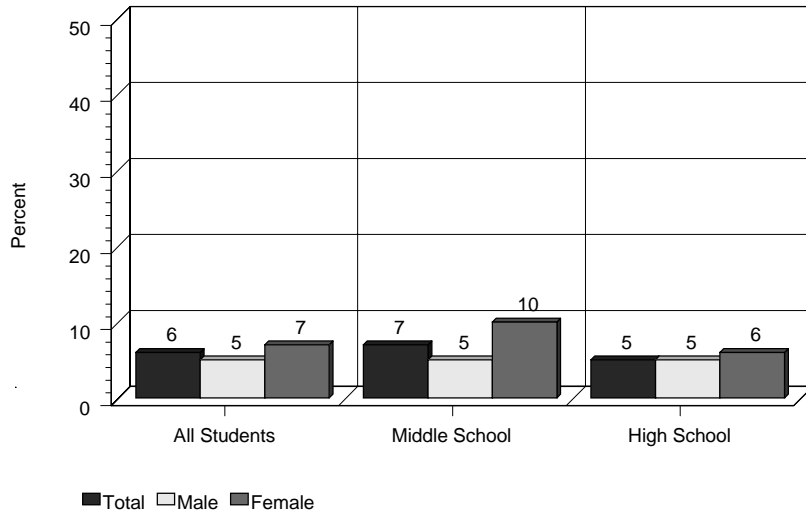


Figure 4-32 shows 6% of students have ridden with an adult who had been drinking or using drugs. In this instance, there are no major differences between middle school and high school (middle school, 7% and high school, 5%).

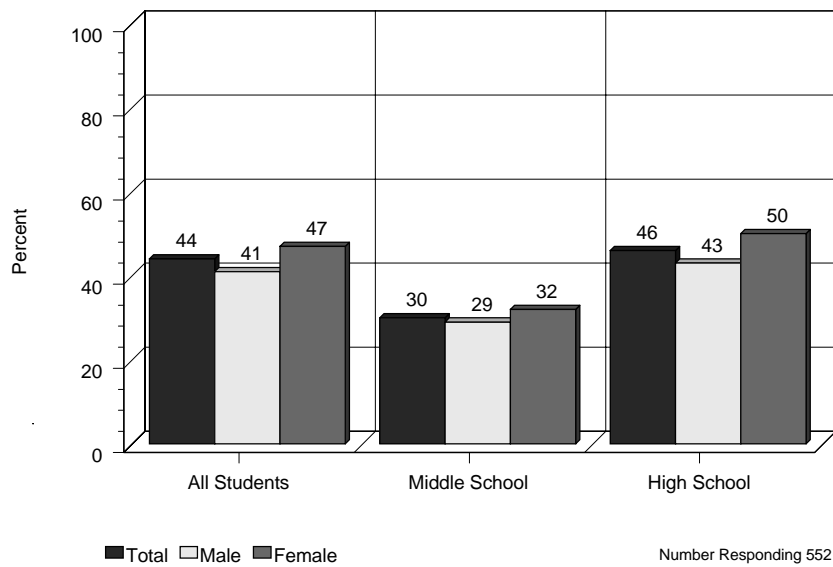
Figure 4-32: Teens Who Have Ridden with an Adult Who Had Been Drinking or Using Drugs (At Least Once in the Past Month, by Gender and School Level)



Number Responding 2044

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?" Seventy-three percent (73%) said they and their friends don't go out and drink alcohol or use drugs. Of those who do, 44% said they "always" use a designated driver (middle school, 30% and high school, 46%). Twenty-eight percent (28%) said they "never" or "rarely" use a designated driver (middle school, 48% and high school, 25%). Those who *always* use a designated driver are shown by school level and gender in Figure 4-33.

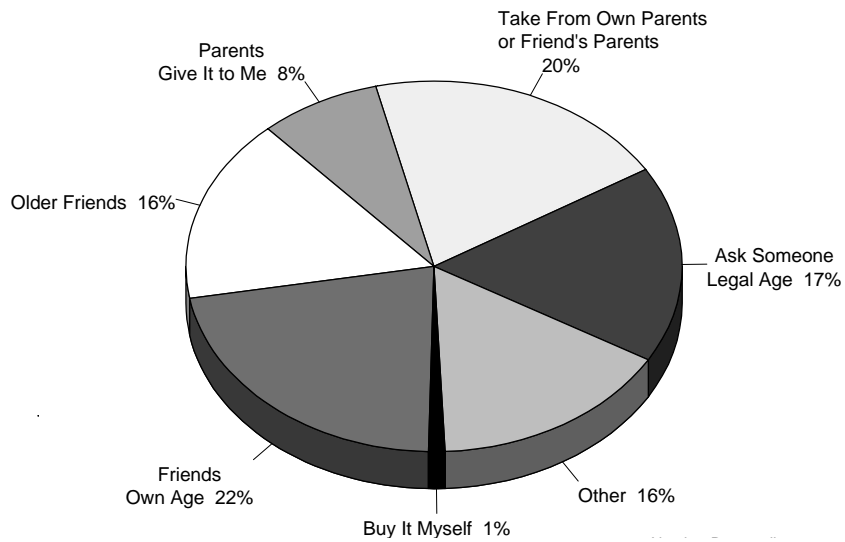
Figure 4-33: Teens Who Always Use a Designated Driver
 (Of Those Who Go Out and Drink or Use Drugs, by Gender and School Level)



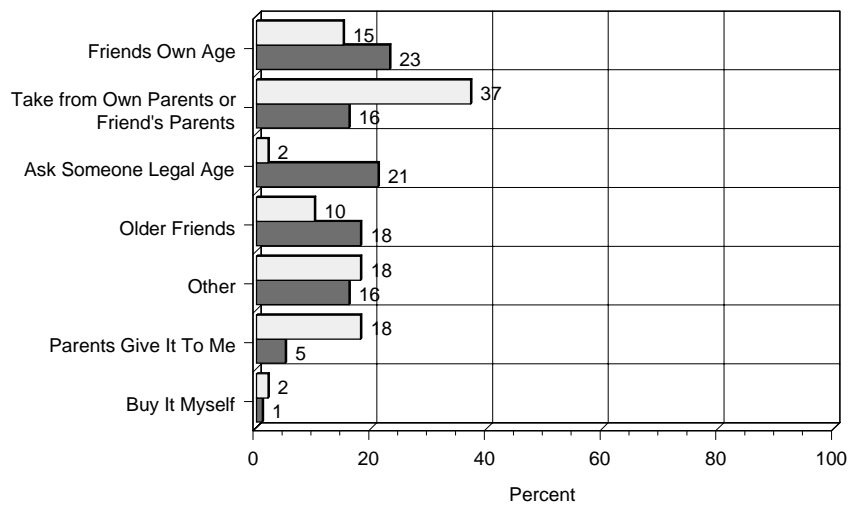
How Do Youth Obtain Alcohol? Where Do Youth Drink?

The survey asked local youth where they get alcohol. Figure 4-34 shows how students who use alcohol responded. The most commonly reported source of alcohol was from friends their own age or older (38%). As Figure 4-35 shows, middle school students who drink are more likely to obtain alcohol by taking it from their parents or a friend's parents (37%) or from friends their own age or older (25%). High school students who drink are more likely to get it from friends their own age or older (41%) or by asking someone of legal age to buy it for them (21%).

**Figure 4-34: Where Teens Get Alcohol
(Of Those Who Drink)**



**Figure 4-35: Where Teens Get Alcohol
(Of Those Who Drink, by School Level)**

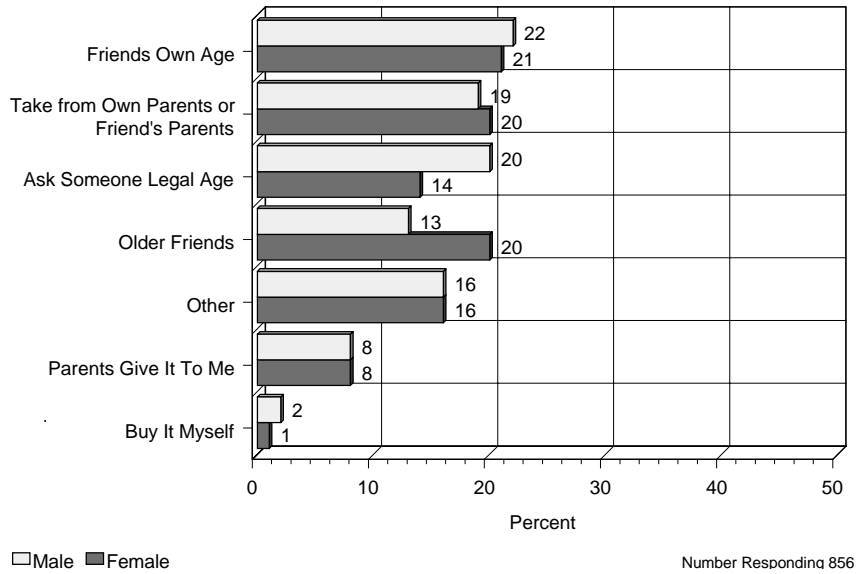


□ Middle School ■ High School

Number Responding 856

Figure 4-36 shows females who drink are more likely to get alcohol from friends their own age or older (41%) or by taking it from their own or their friends' parents without them knowing (20%). Males who drink are likely to get it from friends their own age or older (35%) or asking someone of legal age (20%).

Figure 4-36: Where Teens Get Alcohol
(Of Those Who Drink, by Gender)



Teens were asked, "If you drink alcohol, where do you most often do it?" As shown in Figure 4-37, more teens drink at parties than any other place (40%).

**Figure 4-37: Where Teens Drink Alcohol
(Of Those Who Drink)**

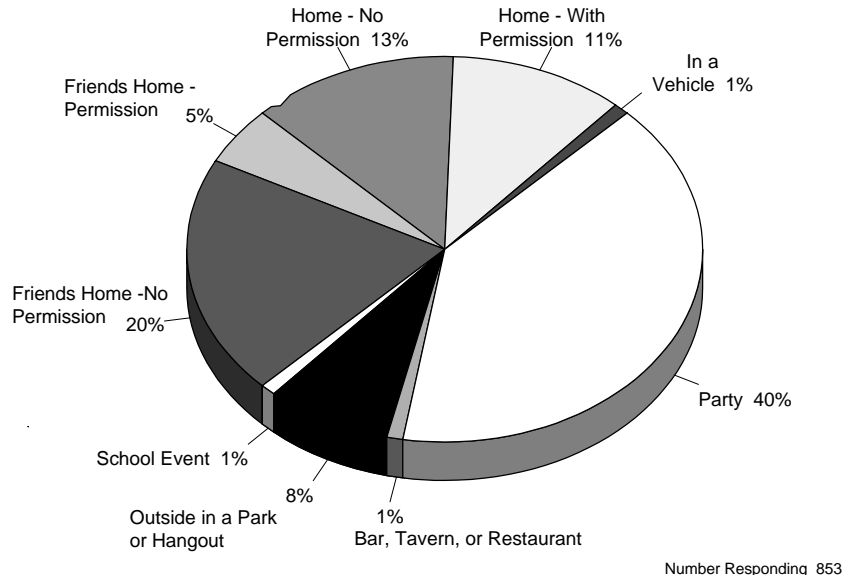


Figure 4-38 shows parties are the most common place for high school students to drink (44%). The most common place for middle school students to drink is at home without their parents' permission (23%) followed closely by drinking at a party (21%) and at home with parents' permission (21%). The home appears to be a common place to consume alcohol. It is of significant concern that 11% of teens who drink reported drinking at home with their parents' permission (21% for middle school students and 8% for high school students). An additional 5% drink at a friend's home with their parents' permission (middle school, 1% and high school 6%).

Figure 4-38: Where Teens Drink Alcohol
(Of Those Who Drink, by School Level)

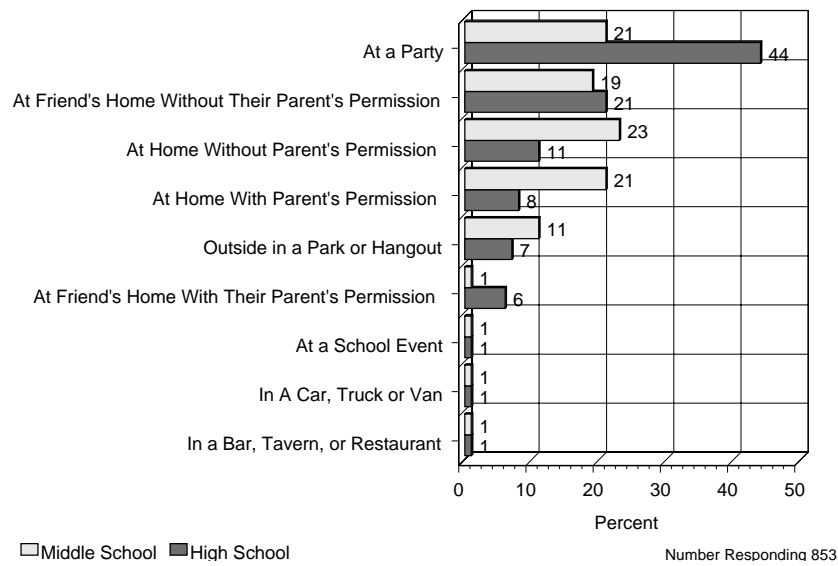
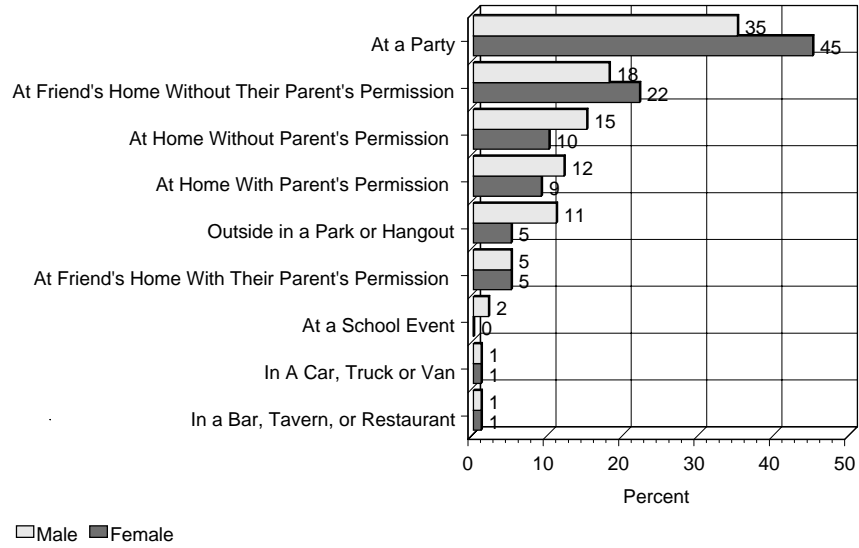


Figure 4-39 shows the most common places for teens to drink, reported for males and females.

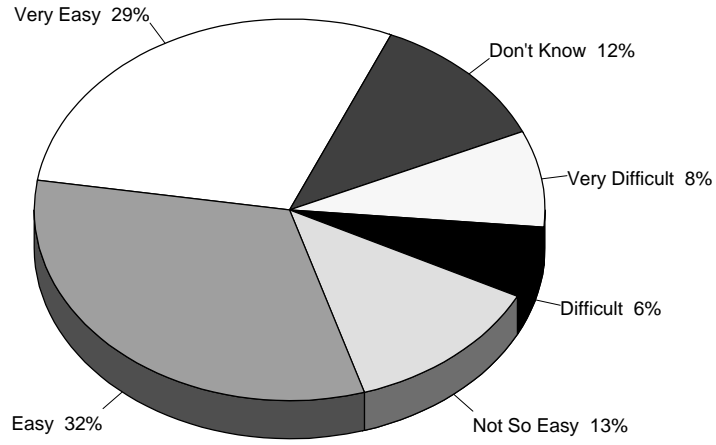
Figure 4-39: Where Teens Drink Alcohol
(Of Those Who Drink, by Gender)



Obtainability of Alcohol

As Figure 4-40 shows, 61% of students surveyed think it is "easy" or "very easy" to obtain beer, wine or hard liquor.

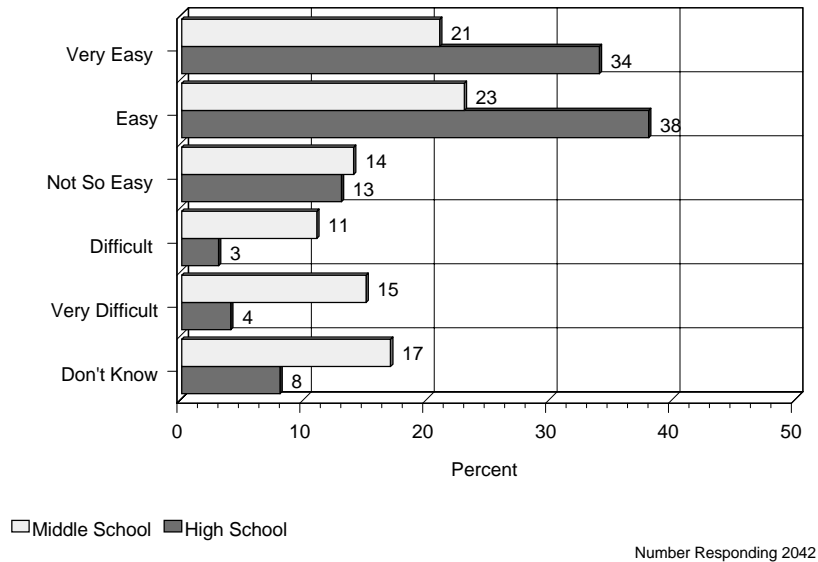
Figure 4-40: Obtainability of Beer, Wine, and Liquor



Number Responding 2042

Figure 4-41 shows while 44% of middle school students think it is "easy" or "very easy" to obtain alcohol, 72% of high school students think the same. Over one-half of both males and females (males, 62% and females, 60%) believe alcohol is "easy" or "very easy" to obtain. Fourteen percent (14%) said it was "difficult" or "very difficult" to get alcohol (middle school, 26% and high school, 7%) and 12% of local teens did not know how easy or difficult it was to get alcohol (middle school, 17% and high school, 8%).

**Figure 4-41: Obtainability of Beer, Wine, and Liquor
(By School Level)**



On the positive side, it is important to note 52% of local students reported never having used alcohol (middle school, 75% and high school, 37%). About three-quarters of all teens (76%) report never having had 5 or more drinks in a row (middle school, 90% and high school, 68%).