



Healthy People Lincoln County



Lincoln County Youth Health Profile 2017

Learn about the health behaviors of Lincoln County youth



Merrill Area Public Schools

Introduction

The Lincoln County Drug Free Coalition has partnered with Merrill Area Public Schools since 2007 and the Tomahawk School District since 2010 to administer the Social Norms Survey. This survey focuses on use and perceptions of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs and is conducted every other year.

Over the last several years, school staff and community partners expressed the need to collect more comprehensive student health data. In 2016, the Lincoln County Drug Free Coalition received funding from the Northwoods Coalition to pursue efforts to administer the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) in Lincoln County. YRBS is a standardized survey tool that is used throughout the country to collect data on dietary behaviors, traffic safety, violence, bullying/harassment, mental health, nutrition, physical activity and personal health.

Through collaborative efforts between the Lincoln County Drug Free Coalition, Lincoln County Mental Health Coalition, Merrill Area Public Schools and the Tomahawk School District, the YRBS was administered in the spring of 2017. Both Merrill and Tomahawk High Schools and Middle Schools participated in the survey. This was the first time that the YRBS was completed at the county level.

Partners involved in this process see the value in having a comprehensive set of youth data and have agreed to administer the YRBS on odd years and the Social Norms Survey on even years.

A special thank you to Merrill Area Public Schools and the Tomahawk School District for their continued support throughout the YRBS and Social Norms Survey process.



Merrill Area Public Schools

- Dr. John Sample, Merrill Area Public Schools
- Gerald Beyer, Merrill Area Public Schools
- Karen Baker, Merrill Area Public Schools
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- Ryan Martinovici, Prairie River Middle School
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- Dan Reiter, Tomahawk High School
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Thank you to Merrill Area United Way and Plum Creek Foundation for their financial support to administer the 2016 Social Norms Survey, the Northwoods Coalition for their support of the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey and Ascension Good Samaritan Hospital and Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital for funding printing costs.



This profile was developed by Kristin Bath, Health Educator with the Lincoln County Health Department and Debbie Moellendorf, 4-H Youth Development Educator with the University of Wisconsin-Extension in Lincoln County.

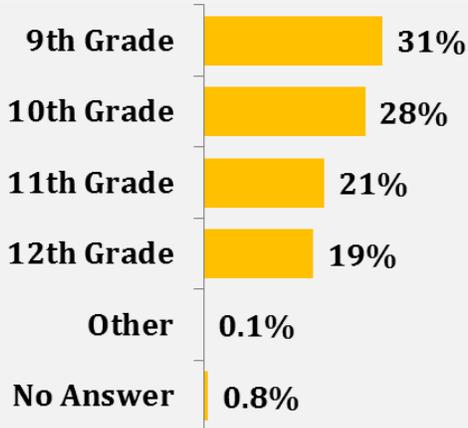
Overview

Demographics

High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)

A total of 774 high school students completed the YRBS from Merrill and Tomahawk in spring of 2017.

Grade Distribution



Middle School YRBS

A total of 708 middle school students completed the YRBS from Merrill and Tomahawk.

Grade: 6th (32%), 7th (37%), 8th (30%), Other (.4%), No Answer (.4%)

Gender: Male (51%), Female (48%), No Answer (.4%)

Ethnicity: White (83%), Hispanic (5%), Multi-Ethnic (4%), Native American or Alaskan (3%), African American (3%), Asian (.8%), No Answer (2%)

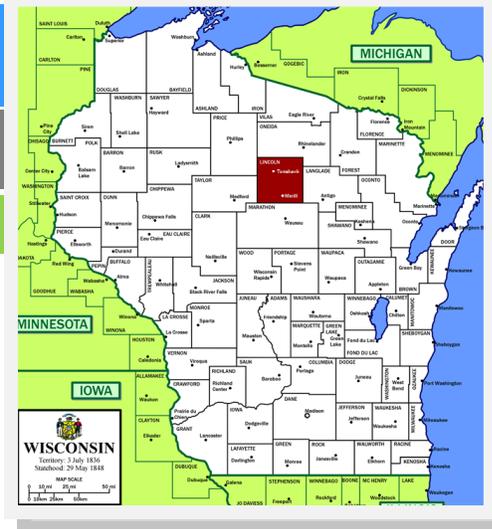
Social Norms Survey

A total of 890 high school and 746 middle school students completed the Social Norms survey from Merrill and Tomahawk in spring of 2016.

Grade: Middle School — 6th (36%), 7th (30%), 8th (34%)
High School — 9th (29%), 10th (25%), 11th (25%), 12th (21%)

Gender: Middle School — Female (52%), Male (48%)
High School — Female (54%), Male (46%)

Ethnicity: Middle School — White (87%), Other (5%), American Indian or other Native American (4%), Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin (2%), Black, African American (2%), Asian American or Pacific Islander (1%)
High School — White (91%), Other (2%), American Indian or other Native American (2%), Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin (2%), Asian American or Pacific Islander (2%), Black, African American (1%)



Gender Distribution

- Female—52%
- Male—47%
- No Answer—1%

Ethnicity Distribution

- White —90%
- Hispanic —3%
- Multi-Ethnic —3%
- African American—1%
- Native American or Alaskan—1%
- Asian—1%
- No Answer —1%

Plan Overview

Health Topics



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Youth Violence: Bullying
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Tobacco Use
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Mental Health
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Marijuana & Other Drugs
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Data Sources

The Lincoln County Youth Health Profile contains data that is color coded by data source.

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Lincoln County | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017 Lincoln County High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey • 2016 Lincoln County High School Social Norms Survey |
| Wisconsin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 Wisconsin High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey <p>Note: Wisconsin did not achieve a weighted data set for the 2015 state YRBS. Therefore, the 2013 data set was used as a comparison for this report as it was the most current data available.</p> |
| United States | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015 United States High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey |



Lincoln County Middle School data is included at the end of each health topic. Data included in this section is from the 2017 Lincoln County Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey and the 2016 Lincoln County Middle School Social Norms Survey. Middle school data was separated from the high school data as survey questions varied and there was no Wisconsin or United States Middle School data available for comparison.

Traffic Safety

Overview

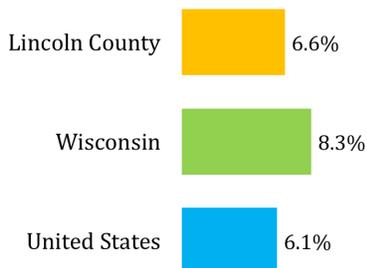
Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of unintentional injury death for U.S. teens. In 2015, more than 2,300 teens lost their lives in car crashes. That means six teens, died from motor vehicle injuries every day. ¹

A number of factors put teens at higher risk, including inexperience, seat belt use, alcohol and drug use and distracted driving.

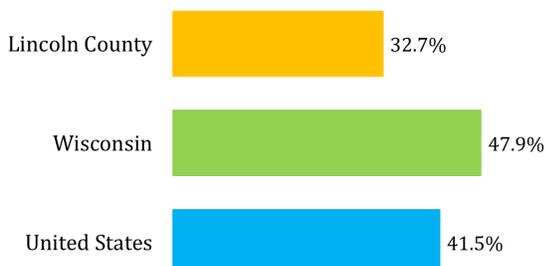
Data Summary

Lincoln County high school students that never or rarely wear seat belts was higher than the U.S. percentage, but lower than Wisconsin. Lincoln County had a lower percentage of students that texted and emailed while driving compared to Wisconsin and the U.S. However, Lincoln County had a higher percentage of high school students that either rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol or drove a vehicle after drinking alcohol in comparison to Wisconsin and the U.S.

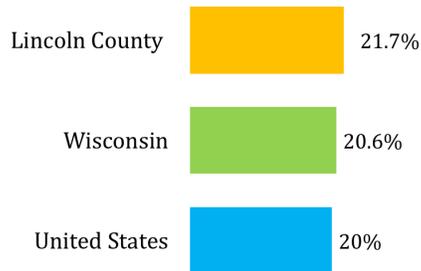
Students who never or rarely wore a seatbelt (when riding in a car driven by someone else)



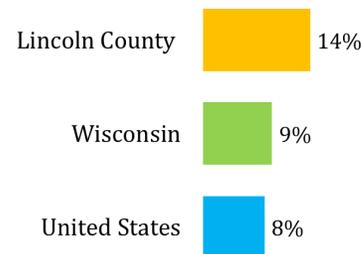
Students that texted or emailed while driving a car or other vehicle (on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey)



Students who rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol (in a car or other vehicle 1 or more times during the 30 days before the survey)



Students who drove a car or other vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol (on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey)



Lincoln County Middle School

- 2.7% never or rarely wear a seatbelt when riding in a car
- 19.8% have ever rode in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol
- 35.9% never wear a helmet when riding a bicycle

Youth Violence

Overview

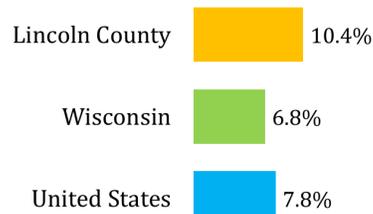
Youth violence includes a variety of behaviors including gun violence, physical fighting, bullying and dating violence.

Acts such as bullying, slapping, or hitting, can cause more emotional harm than physical harm. Other acts like assault (with or without weapons), can lead to serious injury or even death. Deaths resulting from youth violence are only part of the problem, violence can cause long term physical and mental health challenges. ²

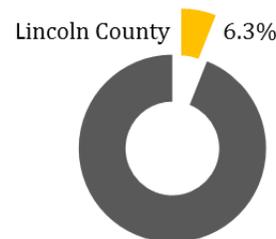
Youth violence is separated into the following sections in this report: **physical fighting, weapons, dating violence and bullying.**



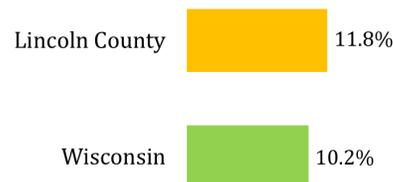
Students that were in a physical fight on school property (1 or more times, 12 months before the survey)



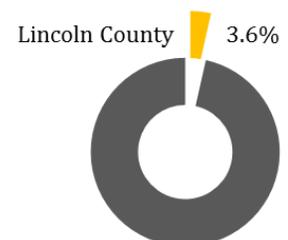
Students that have you used electronic means (cell phone, texting, Facebook) to call in reinforcements to help settle a fight at school



Students who never or rarely feel safe from physical harm at school



Students that never or rarely feel safe and secure in their neighborhood

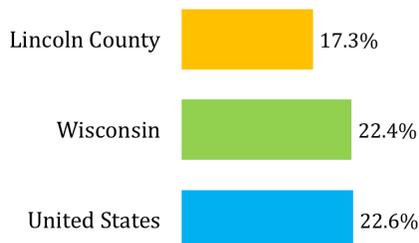


Physical Fighting

Data Summary

Lincoln County had a lower percentage of high school students that had been in a physical fight compared to Wisconsin and the U.S. However, Lincoln County had a higher percent of students that had been in a physical fight on school property compared to Wisconsin and the U.S. Lincoln County high school students that reported never or rarely feeling safe from physical harm at school was slightly higher than Wisconsin.

Students that were in a physical fight (1 or more times in the 12 months before the survey)



Lincoln County Middle School

- **34%** were in a physical fight 1 or more times, 12 months before the survey

Youth Violence

Weapons

Data Summary

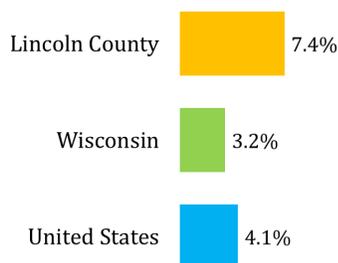
Lincoln County high school students reported higher percentages in weapon related violence and personal safety indicators in comparison to Wisconsin and the U.S.

Lincoln County had a higher percentage of students that carried a weapon on school property compared to Wisconsin and the U.S. Lincoln County also had a higher number of students that reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property.

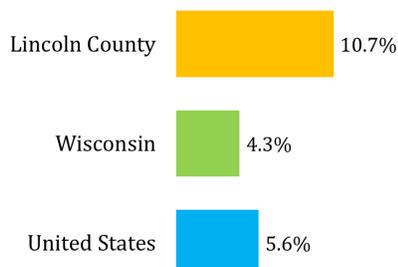
In addition, Lincoln County had a higher percentage of students that reported not going to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school. Lincoln County also had a lower number of high school students who disagreed with the statement that violence is a problem at their school.



Students that carried a weapon on school property (gun, knife, or club, on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey)



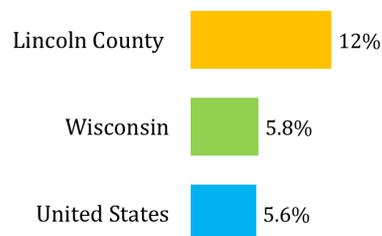
Students that were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property (gun, knife, or club, 1 or more times during the 12 months before the survey)



Students who disagree or strongly disagree that violence is a problem at their school



Students that did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school (on at least 1 day during the past 30 days)



Lincoln County Middle School

- 3.4% have ever carried a weapon on school property
- 10% have ever not gone to school because they felt unsafe at school

Youth Violence

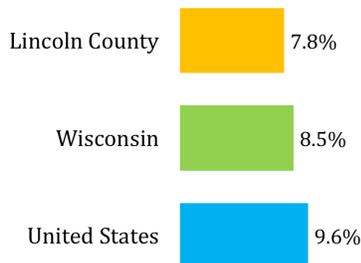
Dating Violence

Data Summary

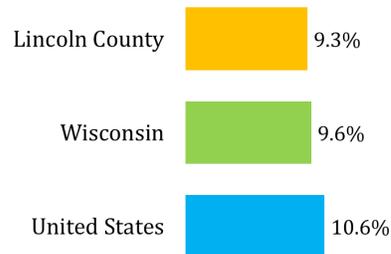
Lincoln County high school students reported less physical and sexual dating violence, in comparison to Wisconsin and the U.S.

Lincoln County had a lower percentage of students who reported experiencing physical dating violence. In addition, there were slightly less Lincoln County students who reported experiencing sexual dating violence, compared to Wisconsin and the U.S.

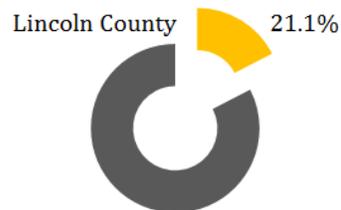
Students that experienced physical dating violence (*being hit, slammed into something, or injured with an object or weapon on purpose 1 or more times during the 12 months before the survey*)



Students that experienced sexual dating violence (*kissing, touching, or being physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to 1 or more times in the 12 months before the survey*)



Students that reported someone that they were dating or going out with purposely tried to control them or emotionally hurt them (*told who they could and could not spend time with, being humiliated in front of others, or being threatened if they didn't do what was wanted*)



Youth Violence

Bullying & Harassment

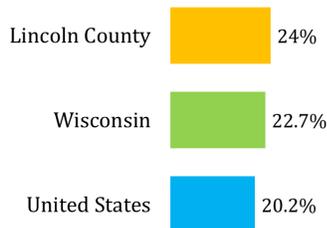
Data Summary

Lincoln County high school students reported slightly higher percentages in bullying related indicators.

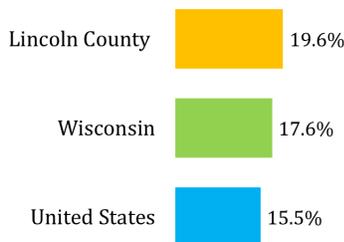
Lincoln County had a slightly higher number of students that reported being bullied on school property compared to Wisconsin and the U.S. In addition, Lincoln County had a higher percentage of high school students who reported being electronically bullied. Lincoln County had a smaller percentage of students that disagreed with the statement that bullying is a problem at their school in comparison to Wisconsin.



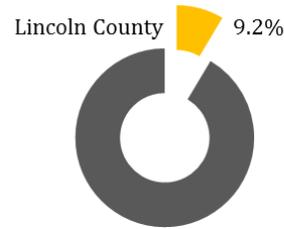
Students that were bullied on school property (during the 12 months before the survey)



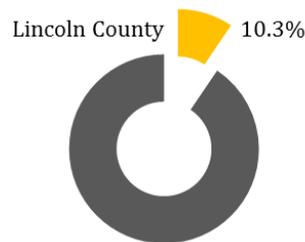
Students that were electronically bullied (through texting, Instagram, Facebook, or other social media during the 12 months before the survey)



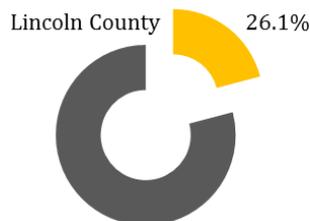
Students who have been a victim of a verbal slur because of their race or ethnic background (during 30 days prior to survey)



Students who have teased or called someone names because you thought they were gay, lesbian, or bisexual (during the 12 months prior to survey)



Students who have been a victim of a verbal slur because of their weight, size, or physical appearance (during 30 days prior to survey)



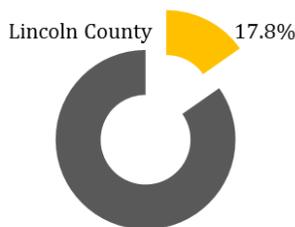
Youth Violence

Bullying & Harassment

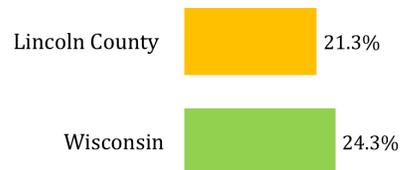
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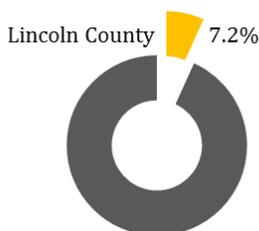
Students that have been touched, told something, or shown a picture that was sexual in nature and made them feel uncomfortable



Students that disagree or strongly disagree that harassment and bullying by other students is a problem at their school



Students that carried a weapon at school to protect themselves from bullying or harassment



Lincoln County Middle School

- **51.7%** were ever bullied on school property
- **25.8%** were ever electronically bullied (e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, websites, or texting)
- **14%** disagree or strongly disagree that harassment and bullying by other students is a problem at their school

Mental Health

Overview

Mental Health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. ³

Mental illness is common and refers to a wide range of mental health conditions or disorders that affect mood, thinking and behavior. Examples of mental illness include depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, eating disorders and addictive behaviors. It's estimated that 1 in 5 children ages 13-18 have, or will have a serious mental illness. ⁴

Not seeking help or treating a mental illness can be detrimental. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth ages 15-24. It's estimated that more than 90% of children who die by suicide have a mental health condition. ⁵

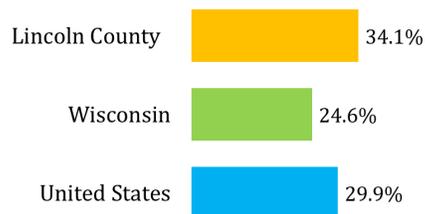
Data Summary

Lincoln County had a higher percentage of high school students that reported their mental health was not good one or more days in the last month compared to Wisconsin. The number of Lincoln County students that reported feeling sad or hopeless almost everyday for 2 weeks was also higher than Wisconsin and the U.S. Lincoln County had a greater number of students that reported seriously considering suicide compared to Wisconsin and the U.S. However, the percentage of Lincoln County high school students that planned a suicide or attempted suicide, was higher than Wisconsin, but lower than the U.S. The number of Lincoln County students that purposely hurt themselves without wanting to die was slightly lower than Wisconsin.

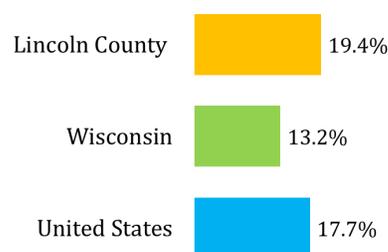
Students whose mental health was not good 1 or more days (during the 30 days before the survey)



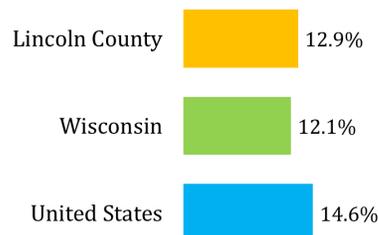
Students that felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities (during the 12 months before the survey)



Students that seriously considered attempting suicide (during the 12 months before the survey)



Students that made a plan about how they would attempt suicide (during the 12 months before the survey)



3. CDC, Mental Health, <https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/basics.htm>, accessed 7/28/17

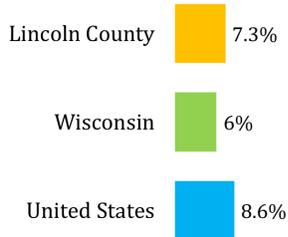
4. NIH, Mental Health Prevalence, <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/prevalence/any-disorder-among-children.shtml>, accessed 7/28/17

5. NAMI, Mental Health by the Numbers, <https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-By-the-Numbers>, accessed 7/28/17

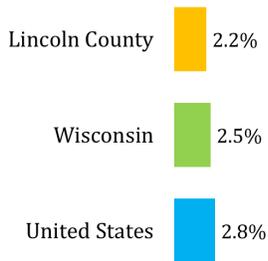
Mental Health

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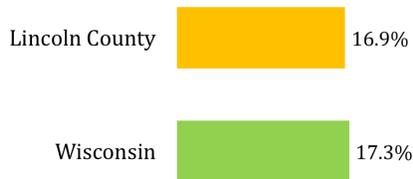
Students that attempted suicide (1 or more times during the 12 months before the survey)



Students who attempted suicide that resulted in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse (during the 12 months before the survey)



Students that purposely hurt themselves without wanting to die, such as cutting or burning on purpose (1 or more times during the 12 months before the survey)



Students who never or rarely get the help they need when feeling sad, empty, hopeless, angry or anxious



Students who had significant problems with feeling very anxious, nervous, tense, scared, or like something bad was going to happen (during the 12 months before the survey)



Lincoln County Middle School

- **23.6%** ever felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities
- **18.9%** ever seriously considered attempting suicide
- **13.6%** ever made a plan about how they would attempt suicide
- **6.6%** ever attempted suicide

Eating Behaviors

Overview

Healthy eating during childhood and adolescence is important for proper growth and development. A balanced diet promotes a healthy weight, proper nutrient consumption, and lowers risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, cancer, osteoporosis and cavities.

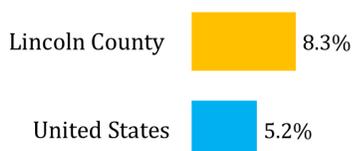
In addition, a healthy diet promotes learning and emotional well-being. Eating a healthy breakfast is associated with improved cognitive function (especially memory), reduced absenteeism, and improved mood. Eating meals as a family also promotes feelings of social connectedness and encourages healthy eating. ⁶

A poor diet increases risk for an unhealthy weight. About 1 in 5 school-aged children, ages 6–19 are obese, which can have immediate and long-term impacts on physical, social, and emotional health. ⁷

Data Summary

Lincoln County had a larger percentage of high school students that reported not eating fruits and vegetables in comparison to the U.S. The number of Lincoln County students that reported not drinking milk was significantly lower than the U.S. and slightly higher than Wisconsin. Lincoln County also had a lower number of students that reported drinking soda one or more times a day in comparison to Wisconsin and the U.S. The number of Lincoln County high school students that reported not eating breakfast on any of the 7 days before the survey was higher than Wisconsin and the U.S.

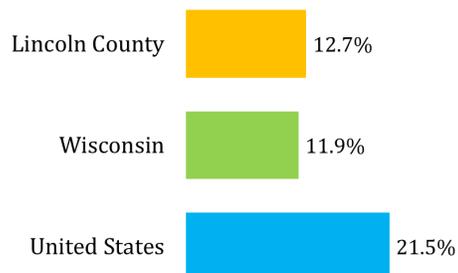
Students who did not eat fruit (during the 7 days before the survey)



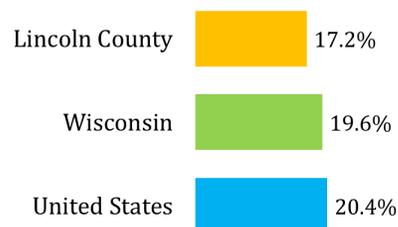
Students who did not eat vegetables (during the 7 days before the survey)



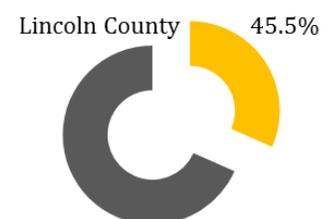
Students who did not drink milk (during the 7 days before the survey)



Students who drank a can, bottle, or glass of soda 1 or more times per day (not counting diet soda, during the 7 days before the survey)



Students that drank a drink that was high in caffeine, including coffee, espresso, or energy drinks (1 or more times a week, 7 days before the survey)



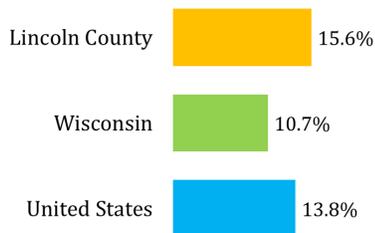
6. CDC, Childhood Nutrition Facts, <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/nutrition/facts.htm>. Accessed 7/31/17

7. CDC, Childhood Obesity Facts, <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/obesity/facts.htm> Accessed 7/31/17

Eating Behaviors

Continued

Students who did not eat breakfast on any of the past 7 days before the survey



Students who did not eat breakfast on all 7 days before the survey



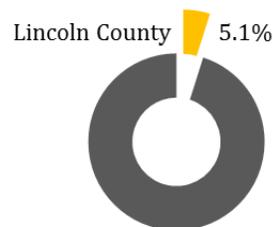
Students that ate 1 meal or snack from a fast food restaurant such as McDonald's, Taco Bell, KFC (3 or more times during the 7 days before the survey)



Students eat meals with 1 or more of the adults in their home 3 or less times a week



Students who always or most of the time go hungry because there was not enough food in the home (during the 30 days before the survey)



Lincoln County Middle School

- 3% did not eat fruit during the 7 days before the survey
- 5.8% did not eat vegetables during the 7 days before the survey
- 16.4% drank a can, bottle, or glass of soda 1 or more times per day, during 7 days before the survey
- 18.4% eat meals with 1 or more of the adults in their home 3 or less times a week
- 3.5% always or most of the time go hungry because there was not enough food in the home, during the 30 days before the survey

Physical Activity

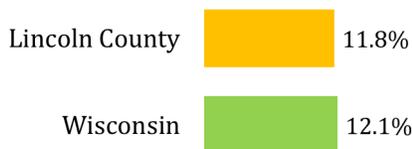
Overview

Regular physical activity helps improve overall health and fitness, and reduces risk for many chronic diseases, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease and cancers. It also promotes mental health and well-being. Children and adolescents should be active at least 60 minutes each day. ⁸

Data Summary

Lincoln County high school students that were not physically active for at least 60 minutes on all 7 days prior to the survey was slightly lower than Wisconsin. Lincoln County had less students that reported not attending physical education classes on one or more days during an average week in comparison to the U.S. The percent of Lincoln County high school students who reported watching 3 or more hours of television on an average school day was slightly lower than the U.S. and about the same as Wisconsin. Lincoln County students reported higher video game use than Wisconsin, but less than the U.S.

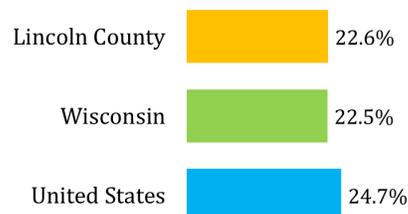
Students who were not physically active at least 60 minutes per day on all 7 days before the survey (*any kind of physical activity that increased their heart rate and made them breathe hard some of the time*)



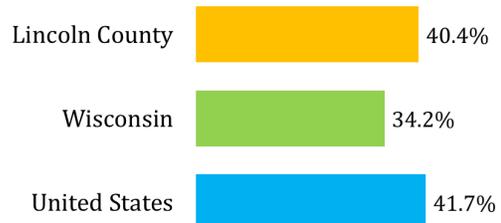
Students who did not attend physical education classes on 1 or more days (*in an average week when they were in school*)



Students who watched 3 or more hours per day of television (*on an average school day*)



Students who played video or computer games or used a computer 3 or more hours per day (*for something that was not school work on an average school day*)



Lincoln County Middle School

- 4.5% were not physically active at least 60 minutes per day on all 7 days before the survey
- 20.6% watch 3 or more hours per day of television on an average school day
- 30.4% played video or computer games or used a computer 3 or more hours per day, on an average school day, for something that was not school work

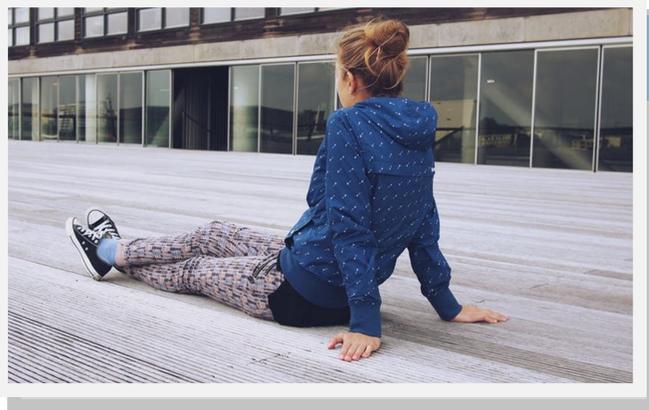
Other Health Issues

Overview

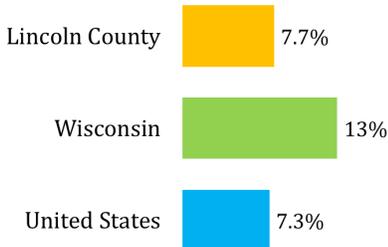
A number of other factors can influence health. This report captures data on sun safety, sleep habits and feelings of connectedness.

Data Summary

Lincoln County high school students who reported indoor tanning was lower than Wisconsin and slightly higher than the U.S. Lincoln County had a higher number of students that reported wearing sunscreen in comparison to Wisconsin. Lincoln County had a lower percentage of students that reported not getting 8 hours of sleep on an average night compared to the U.S. More Lincoln County students reported their physical health not being good, one or more days in the last month compared to Wisconsin. Lincoln County students also reported a lower sense of belonging at their school compared to Wisconsin.



Students who used an indoor tanning device (1 or more times during the 12 months before the survey)



Students who wear sunscreen with a SPF 15 or higher always or most of the time (when outside for more than 1 hour on a sunny day)



Students who do not get 8 or more hours of sleep (on an average school night)



Students whose physical health was not good on 1 or more days (during the 30 days before the survey)



Students who strongly agree or agree they feel like they belong at their school



Students who report there is at least 1 teacher or other adult in their school that they can talk to if they have problems



Lincoln County Middle School

- 73.2% strongly agree or agree that they belong at their school
- 72.3% report there is at least 1 teacher or other adult in their school that they can talk to if they have problems

Alcohol Use

Overview

Alcohol is the most commonly used drug among youth in the U.S. Excessive drinking causes more than 4,300 deaths among underage youth each year in the U.S.

Alcohol use during adolescence affects healthy brain development. Youth that consume alcohol before their brains are fully developed are at an increased risk for future alcohol and drug addiction. Alcohol use increases risk for problems at school, as well as, physical, social and legal challenges. Alcohol use can also increase risk for alcohol-related car crashes and unintentional injuries (burns, falls, drowning), as well as, unsafe sexual behaviors.⁹

Data Summary

Most Lincoln County high school students are making the healthy choice not to use substances. Lincoln County students who reported never trying alcohol is higher than the U.S.

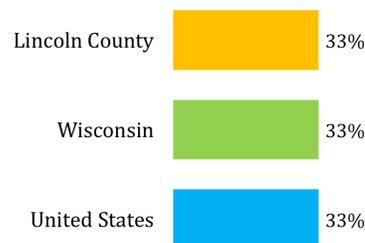
For those youth who do use substances, alcohol remains the primary substance of choice. Lincoln County is similar to the percentage of students that reported having at least one drink of alcohol on one or more days during the month before the survey in comparison to Wisconsin and the U.S.

Use of alcohol and the perception of alcohol use among Lincoln County students has been decreasing. However, there is still more work to do as students continue to over perceive the amount of alcohol their peers use, rate alcohol as the least risky substance to use and feel their parents are most accepting of their use of alcohol versus other substances.

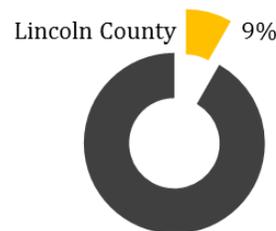
Students who have never tried alcohol



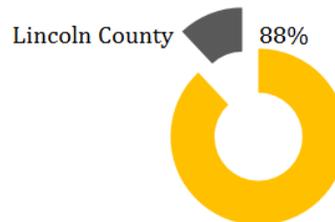
Students who had at least 1 drink of alcohol on at least 1 or more day (during the 30 days before the survey)



Students who typically drink alcoholic beverages when hanging out with friends



Students who perceive that a typical student uses alcohol



Students who believe there is moderate to great risk in using alcohol



Alcohol Use

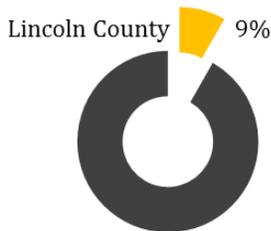
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Where students that drank obtained their alcohol (during the 30 days before the survey)

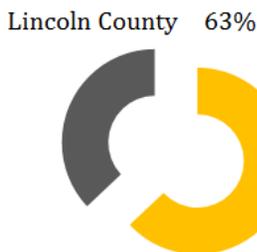
- Retail = from a licensed alcohol establishment (bought it myself using a fake ID or without a fake ID)
- Social = from someone else (family, friends)
- Other = asked a stranger to buy it for me



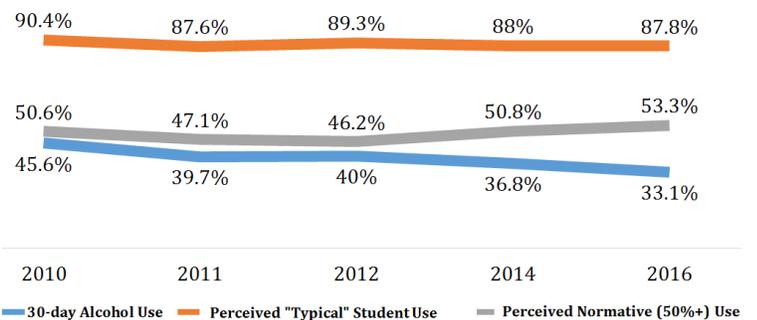
Students who approve of pressuring other students to drink alcohol



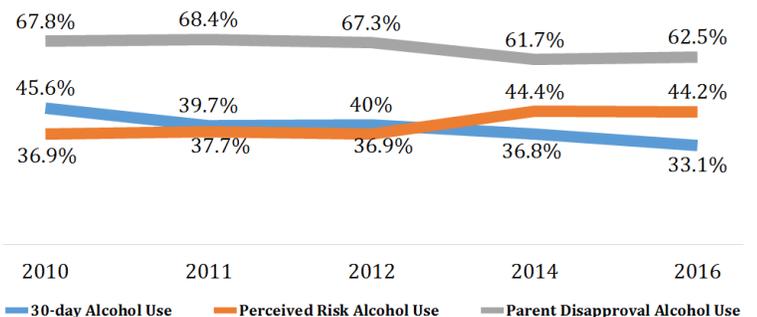
Students who believe their parents think it would be wrong for them to use alcohol



Student Perception of Peer Alcohol Use vs. Actual Alcohol Use in Lincoln County



Student Perception of Alcohol Risk and Parental Approval of Alcohol Use in Lincoln County



Lincoln County Middle School

- 9% had at least 1 drink of alcohol on at least 1 or more days during the 30 days before the survey
- 84% have never tried alcohol
- 2% typically drink alcohol when hanging out with friends
- 61% perceive the "typical" student at their school has drunk alcohol in past 30 days
- 94% who drank obtained from social sources; 6% from retail
- 54% think people are at moderate to great risk of harming themselves if they take 1 or 2 drinks nearly every day
- 88% think their parents feel it would be wrong to very wrong for them to drink regularly
- 6% approve of pressuring other students to drink alcohol

Tobacco Use

Overview

Tobacco use is initiated primarily during adolescence. Nearly 9 out of 10 cigarette smokers first tried smoking by age 18, and 99% first tried smoking by age 26. Each day in the U.S., more than 3,200 youth aged 18 years or younger smoke their first cigarette, and an additional 2,100 youth and young adults become daily cigarette smokers. Tobacco use increases risk for cancer, heart disease and respiratory disease. ¹⁰

Data Summary

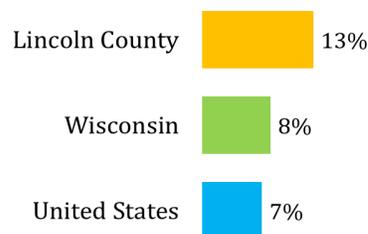
Youth cigarette smoking rates have continued to decline in Lincoln County and throughout the country over the past decade. Lincoln County high school students who reported never trying cigarettes was higher than the U.S. average. However, Lincoln County and Wisconsin students that reported smoking cigarettes was slightly higher than the U.S. For smokeless tobacco use was higher among Lincoln County youth. Although much progress has been made in preventing cigarette use, electronic vapor products were the second most commonly used substance among Lincoln County youth. The number of Lincoln County students who reported electronic vapor product use was slightly lower than the U.S. Lincoln County students also indicated that they view electronic vapor products as having less risk of harm, similar to their view of alcohol being less harmful than other substances.



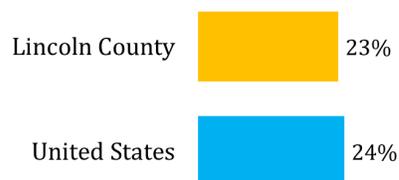
Students who have never tried cigarettes



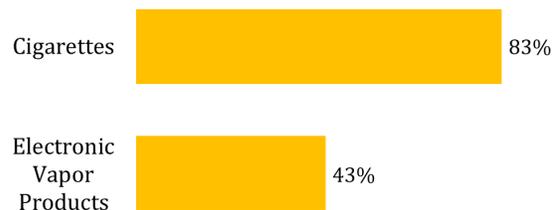
Students who used smokeless tobacco (during the 30 days before the survey)



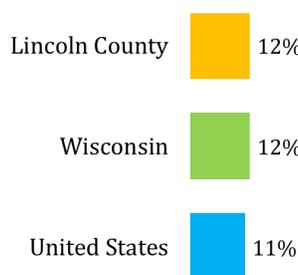
Students who used an electronic vapor product (during the 30 days before the survey)



Students who perceived risk in use of cigarettes and electronic vapor products



Students who smoked cigarettes (during the 30 days before the survey)



Lincoln County Middle School

- **5%** smoked cigarettes during the 30 days before the survey
- **2%** used smokeless tobacco during the 30 days before the survey
- **7%** used an electronic vapor product during the 30 days before the survey
- **91%** have never tried cigarettes
- **87%** perceive risk in using cigarettes; **65%** in using electronic vapor products

Marijuana & Other Drugs

Overview

In addition to alcohol and tobacco, there are a number of other drugs that are of concern to youth. This report captures data on marijuana, over the counter and prescription medications, heroin and methamphetamine use.

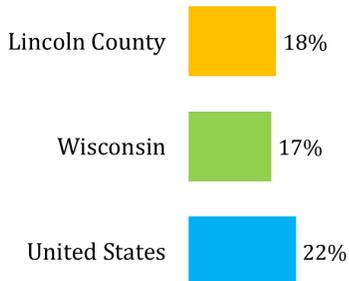
Data Summary

Marijuana use in Lincoln County and has been slightly lower than use among high school students nationally for several years. As states continue to legalize medicinal and recreation marijuana there has been an increase in use as well as a decrease in perception of risk among youth nationally.



Students who used marijuana

(during the 30 days before the survey)

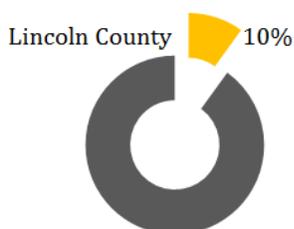


Students who have never tried marijuana



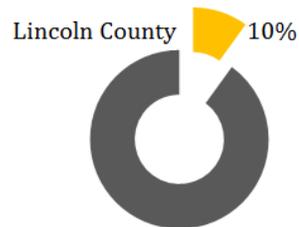
Students that have misused prescription

(during the past 30 days before the survey)



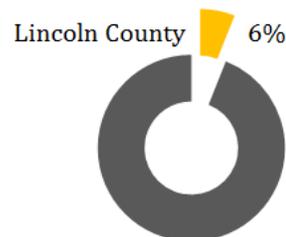
Students who have used over the counter medications for other than the medically intended purpose

(during the 30 days before the survey)



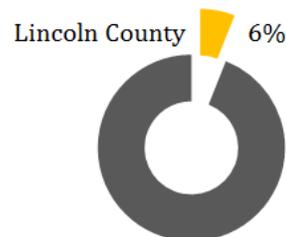
Students who have used heroin

(during the 30 days before the survey)



Have used methamphetamine

(during the 30 days before the survey)

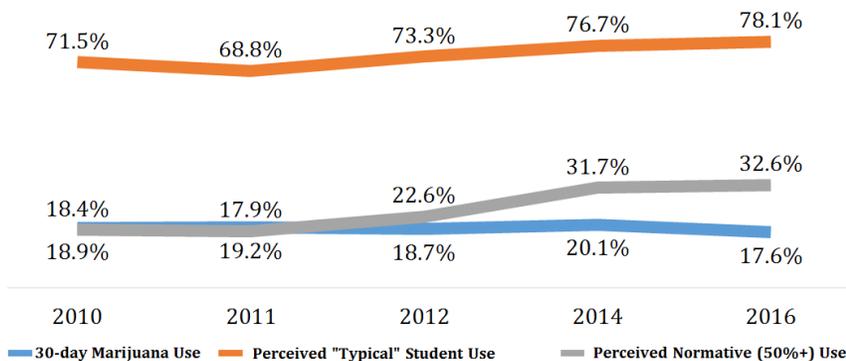


Marijuana & Other Drugs

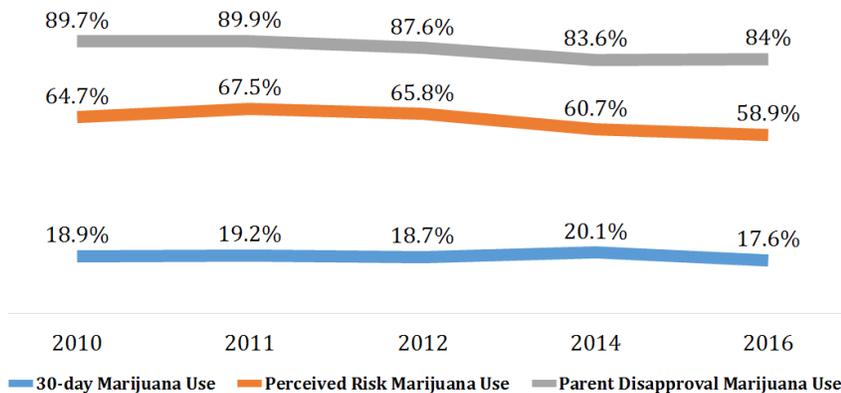
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Student Perception of Peer Marijuana Use vs. Actual Marijuana Use in Lincoln County



Student Perception of Marijuana Risk and Parental Approval of Marijuana Use in Lincoln County



Top 4 Sources of Believable Information about Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drugs Reported by Lincoln County Students

High School

1. Parents
2. Medical Professionals (Nurse, Doctor)
3. Police
4. Teachers

Middle School

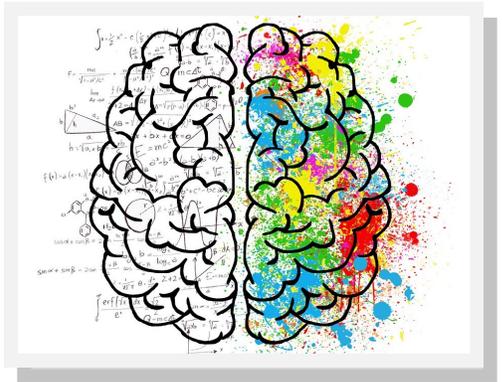
1. Police
2. Medical Professionals (Nurse, Doctor)
3. Parents
4. Teachers

Lincoln County Middle School

- 4% have used marijuana during the 30 days before the survey
- 94% have never tried marijuana
- 37% perceive the "typical" student used marijuana in past 30 days; 4% perceive marijuana use is the "norm" (50% or more of their peers use)
- 94% think their parents would feel it was wrong for them to use marijuana
- 84% think people are at moderate to great risk of harming themselves if they smoke marijuana regularly
- 5% have used over the counter medications for other than the medically intended purpose during the 30 days before the survey
- 5% have used prescription drugs (their own or someone else's) for other than the medically intended purpose during the 30 days before the survey
- 1% have used heroin during the 30 days before the survey
- 1% have used methamphetamine during the 30 days before the survey

Why Do Teens Act The Way They Do?

Have you ever looked at your teenager child and wondered: “Why do you do that?” From mood swings to risk taking, “normal teenage behavior” can appear to be anything but normal to parents and other adults. However, research reveals that patterns of brain development during these formative years play a significant role in shaping your teen’s personality and actions. In other words, there’s a biological reason teens act the way they do. To some degree, you can consider the teen brain still on “training wheels” – it’s not yet able to perform at optimal adult levels. A huge burst of development happens during adolescence, and that burst can explain a lot of unpredictable – and sometimes risky – teen behavior.



The Adolescent Brain and the Behavior it Causes

From early adolescence through the mid-20s, the brain develops somewhat unevenly, from back to front. The parts of the adolescent brain that develop first are those that control physical activity, emotion and motivation, in the back of the brain in the cerebellum, amygdala, and nucleus accumbens respectively. However, the part of the brain that controls reasoning and impulses – known as the prefrontal cortex – is near the front of the brain and, therefore, develops last. This part of the brain does not fully mature until the age of 25.

The development of the adolescent brain and behavior are closely linked. The prefrontal cortex, which could be called the ‘voice of reason’ in the teen brain, isn’t as influential as those parts that place a higher emphasis on emotion, excitement and short-term reward. In an instant, hormones can shift your teen’s emotions into overdrive, leading to unpredictable – and sometimes risky – actions. Unfortunately, developing brains are generally more prone to damage.

The Effects of Drugs on the Teen Brain

Finding ways to satisfy needs and desires is part of life. It’s one of the many skills being fine-tuned during the teen years. When a teen takes drugs in order to feel good, it interferes with the body’s natural ability to do so. Here’s how drugs affect the brain:

The brain is made up of billions of nerve cells. Nerves control everything from when the heart beats to what your teen feels, thinks and does. They do this by sending electrical signals throughout the body. The signals get passed from nerve to nerve by chemical messengers called neurotransmitters.

For example, some of the signals that neurotransmitters send cause a feeling of satisfaction or pleasure. These natural rewards are the body’s way of making sure we look for more of what makes us feel good. The main neurotransmitter of the “feel-good” message is called dopamine.

Drugs overload the body with dopamine — in other words, they cause the reward system to send too many “feel-good” signals. In response, the body’s brain systems try to right the balance by letting fewer of the “feel-good” signals through. As time goes on, the body needs more of the drug to feel the same high as before. This effect is known as tolerance, and it can be especially dangerous in the cases of drugs like heroin and cocaine.

The effects of drugs on the brain don’t just end when the drug wears off. When a person stops taking a drug, dopamine levels remain low for some time. He or she may feel down, or flat, and unable to feel regular pleasures in life. The brain will eventually restore the dopamine balance by itself, but it takes time — anywhere from hours, to days, or even months, depending on the drug, the length and amount of use, and the person.

Because teenagers have an over-active impulse to seek pleasure and less ability to consider the consequences, they are especially vulnerable when it comes to the temptations of drugs and alcohol. And because the internal reward systems are still being developed, a teen’s ability to bounce back to normal after using drugs may be compromised due to how drugs affect the brain.

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What Can You Do?

How to Use this Report?

Everyone plays a role in promoting the health and safety of youth. Collectively, schools, parents, government organizations, clinics, businesses, faith-based groups and community members can influence the health of our youth.



Schools, Organizations & Stakeholders

This report can be used for a number of initiatives to promote health and safety among youth.

Health Improvement Plans

Use data to help prioritize health issues and plan strategies for improvement. Use data to track progress in meeting your goals.

Grant Proposals

Use data to apply for grant and funding opportunities. Data can help justify current programs and show where work is still needed.

Policy Development

Data can be used to identify the need for policy. Once a policy is completed, data can be used as a baseline to identify progress.

Education and Outreach

Incorporate data into programs and outreach for the community. Data can help increase awareness and showcase the extent of an issue.

Media

Strengthen articles, interviews or social media posts by sharing local data.

Parents & Caregivers

Health starts at home. Parents and caregivers play an important role in building lifelong skills and promoting health and safety.

Stay Informed

Share this report with others. Attend community events and join local efforts focused on promoting healthy youth. Stay current on health information.

Be a Healthy Role Model

Model healthy behaviors and decision making skills. Share your core values and ask your child about theirs.

Relationships Matter

Be involved and present in your child's everyday life. Provide unconditional love, security and acceptance.

Take Time to Communicate

Listen and talk with your child about what is happening in their lives each day. Sign up for Know! Parent Tips. <http://bit.ly/2ycKjfr>

Promote Healthy Decision Making

Teach your child how to think through decisions. Help them think about how their decision could affect not only themselves but others, in the short-term and long-term.



Healthy People Lincoln County Mission

Promote partnerships within the community to improve health through advocacy, prevention and implementation of best practices.
