Greater Worcester 2017 Middle School Regional Youth Health Survey – Summary

The purpose of the Greater Worcester RYHS is to learn about youth health by surveying youth about safety, violence, substance use, nutrition, physical activity, mental health, and other health related topics. Every two years, the Greater Worcester RYHS is administered to middle and high school students in the City of Worcester, Massachusetts and surrounding towns by the Worcester Division of Public Health and the UMass Worcester Prevention Research Center.

The 2017 Middle School Regional Youth Health Survey was conducted with 4,417 middle school youth from the following towns of the Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA):

• Grafton   • Millbury   • Leicester   • Shrewsbury   • Worcester

For more information and additional reports, visit **www.umassmed.edu/prc/youth-data**

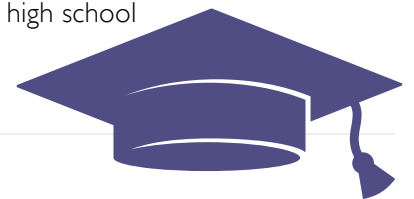## Preparing for the Future

During the past year…

75% of students had **mostly A's or B's in school**

EXAM   A+

85% of students reported **seeing themselves going to college** or other education training programs after high school

84% of students **felt there are adults in their lives who talk with them about planning for the future**

82% of students **felt hopeful about the future**

Healthy Eating and Food Security

In the past week…

42% of students **ate breakfast everyday**

49% of students **drank sugar-sweetened beverages** 1-3 times in the past week

7% of students **were hungry and didn't eat** because there wasn't enough money for food in the house

Physical Activity and Sedentary Behavior

29% of students were **physically active** for a total of 60 minutes every day

40% of students **walked or rode a bike** to school one or more times in an average week

78% of students spent **two hours or more in front of a screen** for activities other than school on an average school day

Self-image

54% of students **said that they are at the right weight**

42% of students **were trying to lose weight**

Mental Health

In the past year…

26% of students **felt sad or hopeless almost every day for at least two weeks**

16% of students **seriously considered attempting suicide**

6% of students **had attempted suicide**

11% of students **have ever made a plan to commit suicide**

Driving Behaviors that Contribute to Unintentional Injuries

18% of students have ever **ridden in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol**

Substance Use

16% of students have had a **least one drink of alcohol**

8% of students have tried a **nicotine product**

2% of students have tried a **flavored cigar**

35% of students first heard about **e-cigarettes** through the media

4% of students have tried a **non-flavored e-cigarette**

1% of students have tried a **non-flavored cigar**

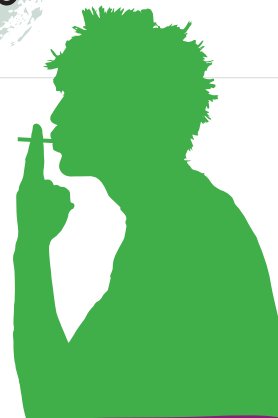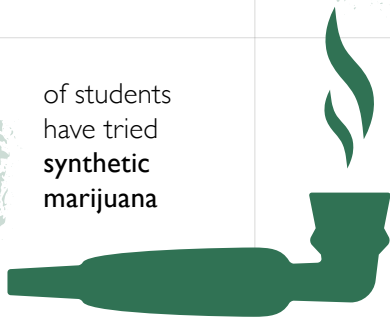**3%** of students have tried smoking a **regular cigarette**

8% of students have tried a **flavored cigarette**

8% of students have tried **marijuana**

1% of students have tried **synthetic marijuana**

Access to Care

87% of students **visited a primary care doctor** for a routine check-up in the past 12 months

Violence and Safety

In the past year...

19% of students carried a weapon

36% of students were bullied on school property

36% of students were in a physical fight

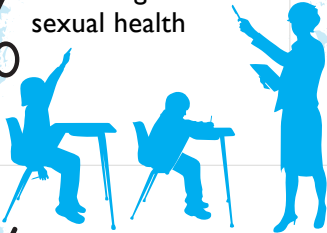**7%** of students were **physically hurt by someone in the family**

8% of students witnessed violence in the home

20% of students **were electronically bullied**

Sexual Health

**65%** of students **have been taught about sexual health**

65% of students **have been taught about healthy relationships**

64% of students **have never been taught about AIDS or HIV infection**

53% of students have **never talked about ways to prevent HIV or sexually transmitted infections (STI's)** with parents or adults in school, family or community

7% of students have **had sexual intercourse**,

43% of students have **never been taught about how to use a condom** or ways to prevent STI's, including HIV
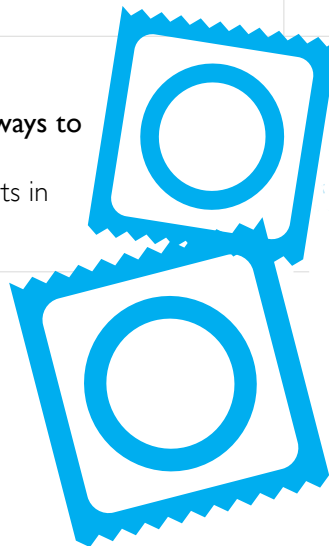
57% of the students who have had sexual intercourse **used a condom**