

# Governor Dan McKee's Overdose Task Force April 12, 2023

**Ana Novais**, MA; Acting Secretary, Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services **Richard Charest**, MBA; Director, Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals **Thomas Joyce**, LCDP, CPRS; Task Force Community Co-Chair **Cathy Schultz**, MPH; Task Force Director, Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services

RHODE ISLAND

# Welcome and Announcements





2022

Rhode Island Student Survey BARRINGTON BRISTOL-WARREN BURRILLVILLE **COVENTRY CRANSTON CUMBERLAND** EAST PROVIDENCE EXETER-WEST GREENWICH JOHNSTON LITTLE COMPTON MIDDLETOWN **NEWPORT NORTH KINGSTOWN** NORTH PROVIDENCE PAWTUCKET PORTSMOUTH SCITUATE SMITHFIELD SOUTH KINGSTOWN TIVERTON WARWICK WEST WARWICK WOONSOCKET

Participating School Districts in 2022. Note: Providence School District not included in survey.

# **Background and Purpose**

- The Rhode Island Student Survey (RISS) is a collaboration among BHDDH, RIDOH, and RIDE
- Examines risk and prevalence of topics such as substance use, bullying, violence, parent support, and mental health in middle and high school students throughout RI
- Aims to identify areas of needs among students and inform the allocation of resources for prevention programs
- The 2022 RISS took place from 3/11/2022 to 6/11/2022
- Data was collected from 51 schools in 23 school districts throughout RI
- The full 2022 RISS report can be found here: <u>2022 (ri.gov)</u>

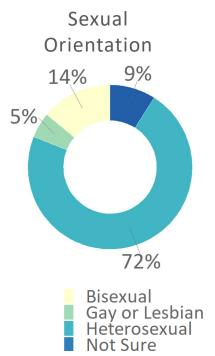


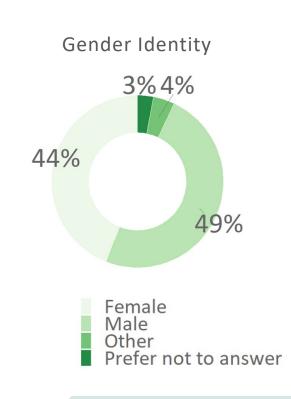
# Demographics

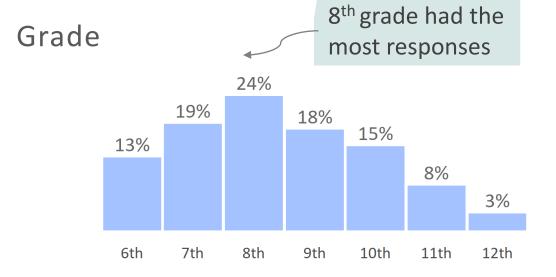


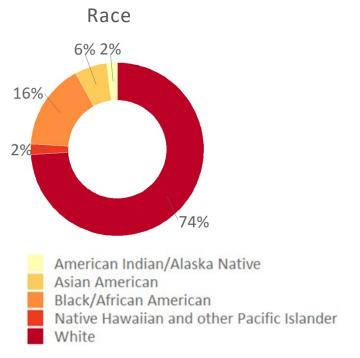
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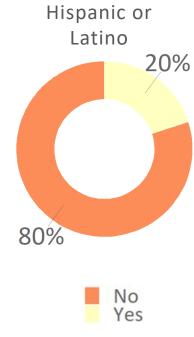
students participated in the survey\*







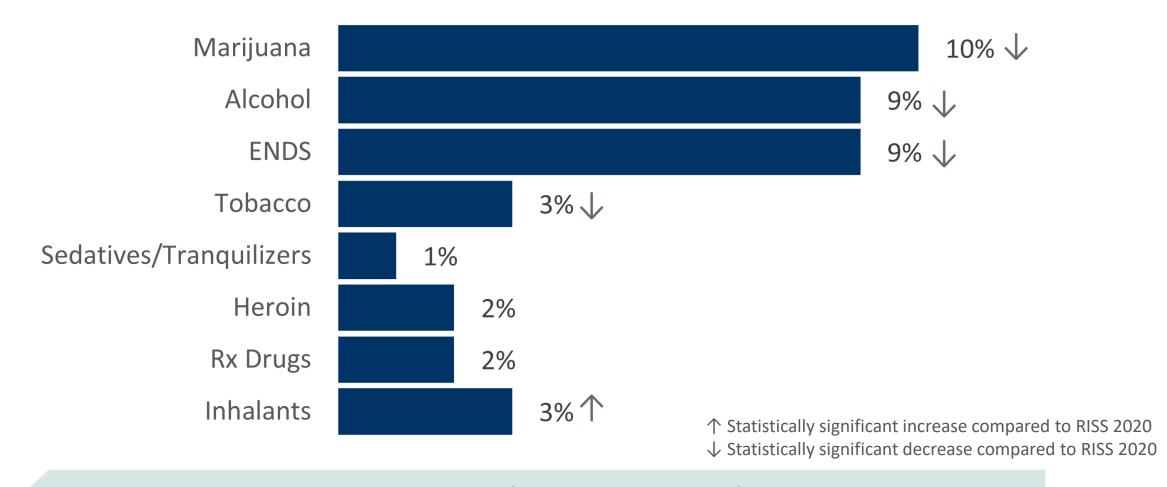






# Substance Use

Past 30-Day Use

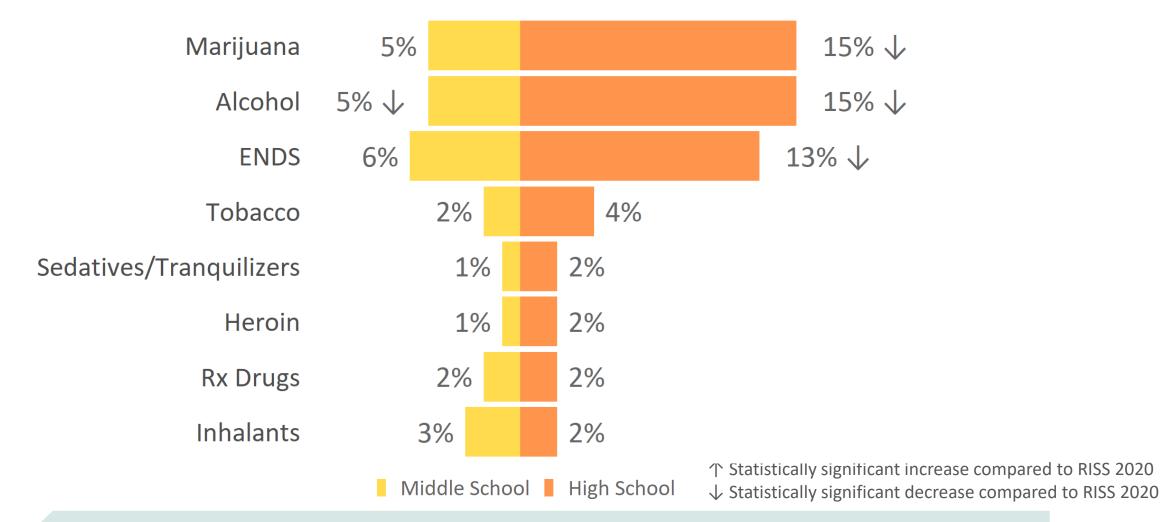




Among all students, there was a statistically significant decrease in use of alcohol, marijuana, ENDS, and tobacco yet a significant increase in use of inhalants.

# Substance Use

Past 30-Day Use

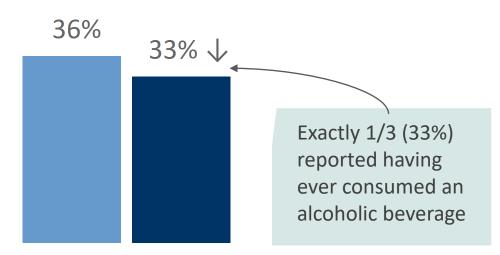




Among high school students, there was a statistically significant decrease in use of alcohol, marijuana, and Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS), also known as e-cigarettes or vape pens or devices.

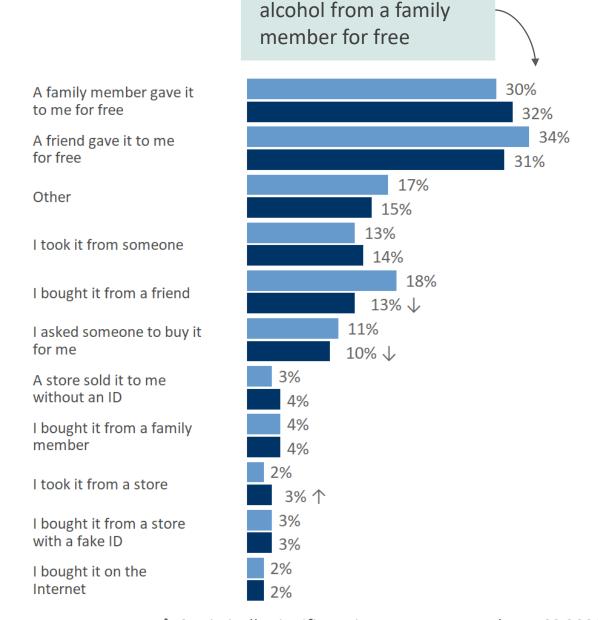
# Alcohol

Among high school students...





High school students are consuming less drinks on average compared to previous years.



Most reported obtaining

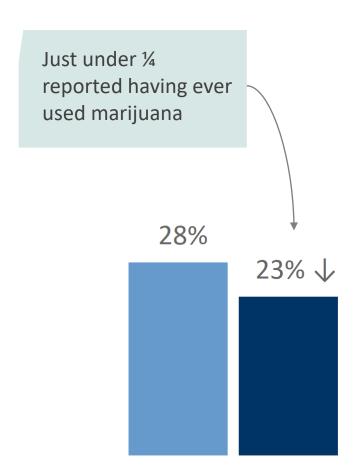


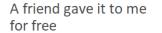




Marijuana

Among high school students...







### Other

A family member gave it to me for free

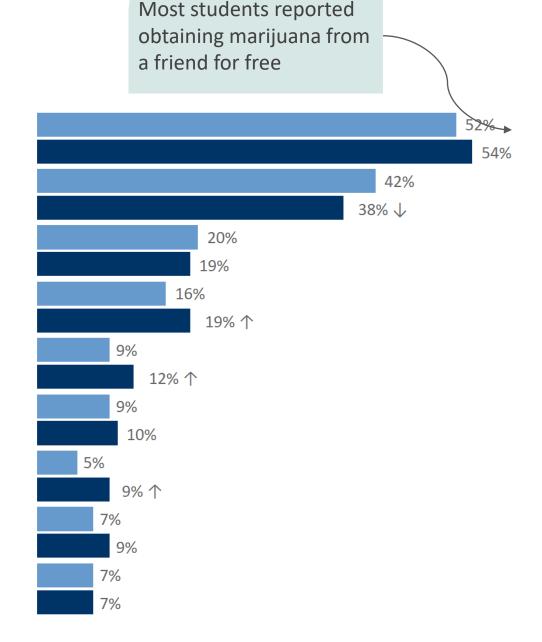
I took it from someone

I bought it from a medical marijuana cardholder

I bought it on the Internet

I bought it from a family member

I got it from a medical marijuana cardholder for free





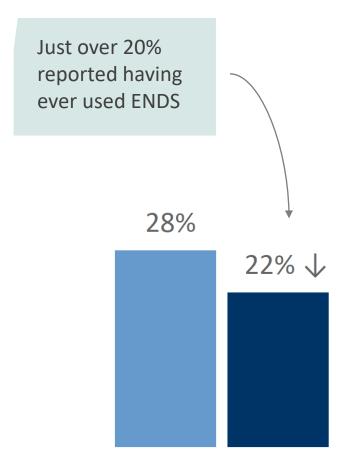




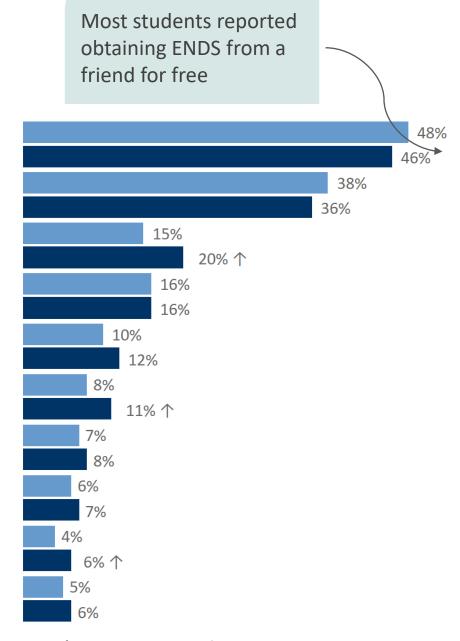
↓ Statistically significant decrease compared to RISS 2020

**ENDS** 

Among high school students...









2020



I bought it from a store

with a fake ID

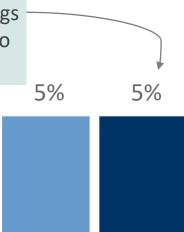
↑ Statistically significant increase compared to RISS 2020

↓ Statistically significant decrease compared to RISS 2020

Prescription Drugs

Among high school students...

5% reported having ever used prescription drugs not prescribed to them

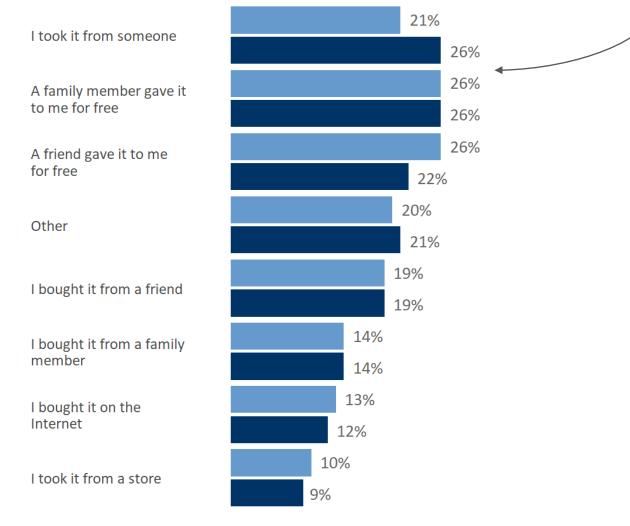




BHDDH

Students reporting use of prescription drugs not prescribed to them listed pain relief pills, ADHD medications, and sedatives

Most students reported obtaining prescription drugs for free from a family member

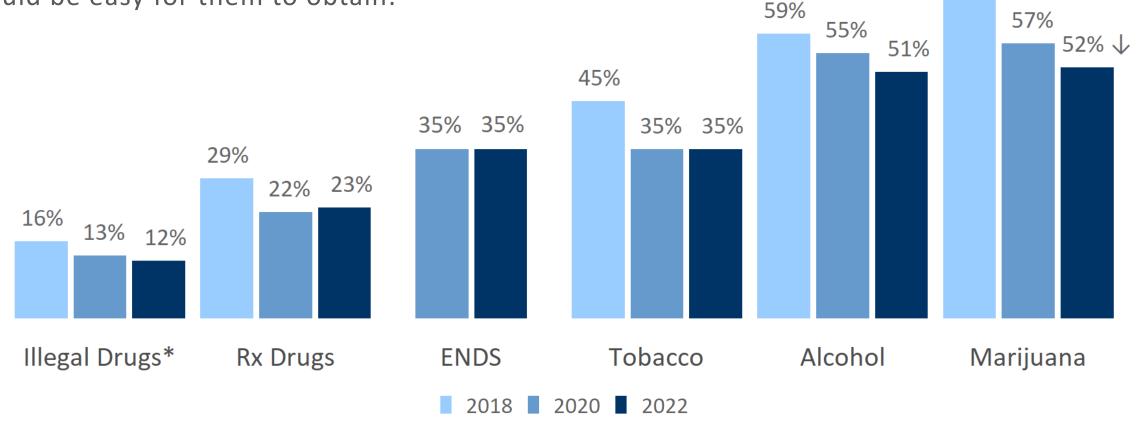


2020 2022



↓ Statistically significant decrease compared to RISS 2020

Percentage of high school students who believe it would be easy for them to obtain:



↑ Statistically significant increase compared to RISS 2020

67%

↓ Statistically significant decrease compared to RISS 2020

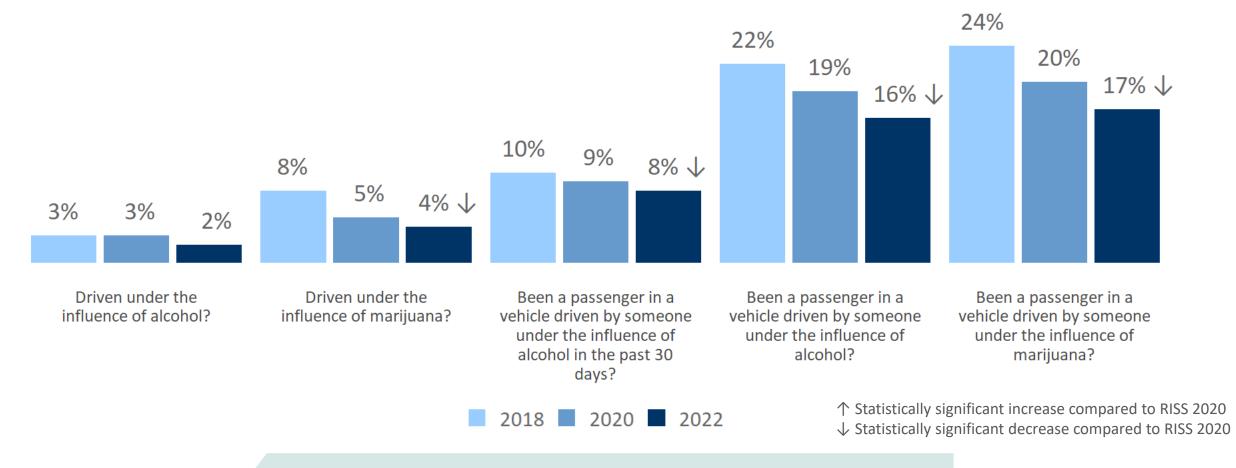


The percentage of students reporting ease of obtaining substances has decreased over time, particularly for alcohol, marijuana, and tobacco.

<sup>\*</sup>Cocaine, LSD (acid), methamphetamine (meth), or club drugs (ecstasy, roofies), etc.

# Under the Influence

Percentage of high school students who have ever:

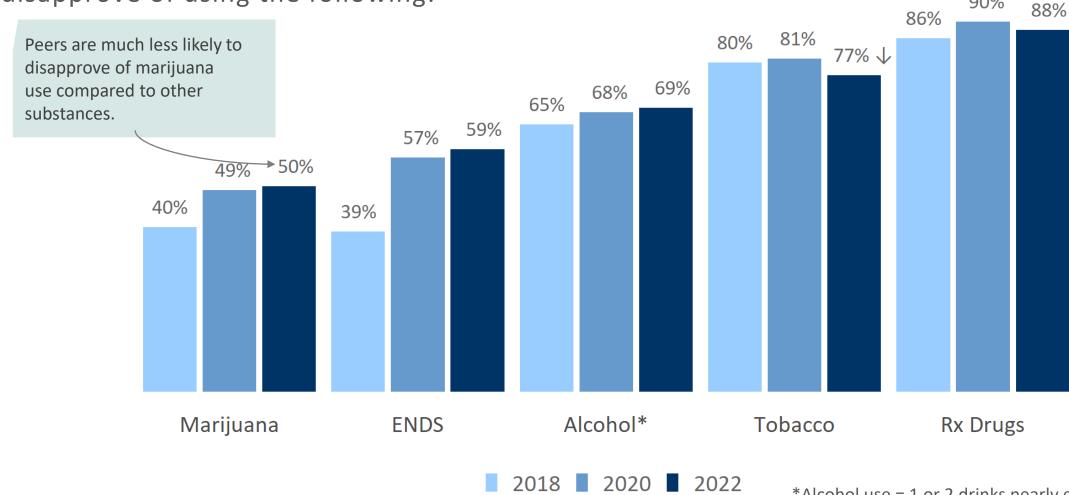




The percentages of students who report driving or riding with under the influence continues to decrease, with rates falling below 20%

# Peer Disapproval

Percentage of high school students who believe peers would disapprove of using the following:





90%

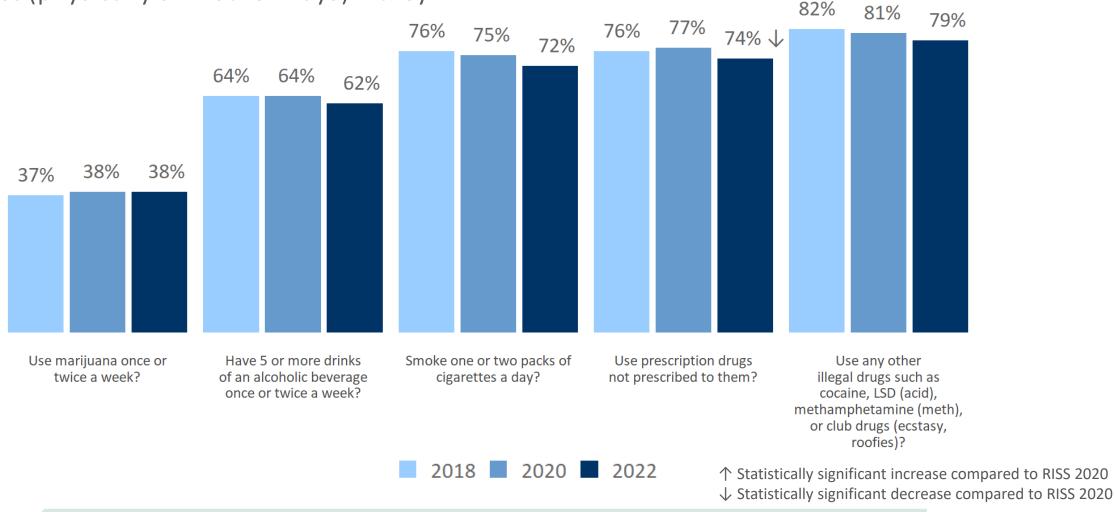


<sup>↑</sup> Statistically significant increase compared to RISS 2020

<sup>↓</sup> Statistically significant decrease compared to RISS 2020

# **Perception of Risk**

Percentage of high school students who agree that people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they:

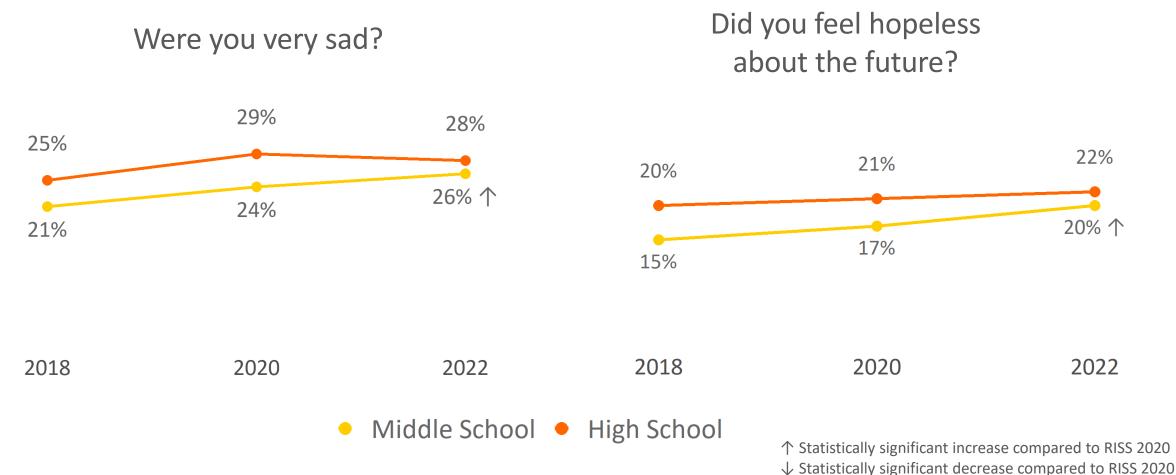




Compared to other substances, students report a low risk of harm with using marijuana, while risk for illegal drugs, prescription drugs, and tobacco remains above 70%

# **Mental Health**

In the last 30 days...





Compared to 2020, there was a statistically significant increase in negative feelings surrounding mental health among middle schoolers.

# Mental Health - Pandemic

Percentage of middle school students who...

Struggled with mental health issues during the pandemic?

Talked with a school counselor either in-person or on zoom?





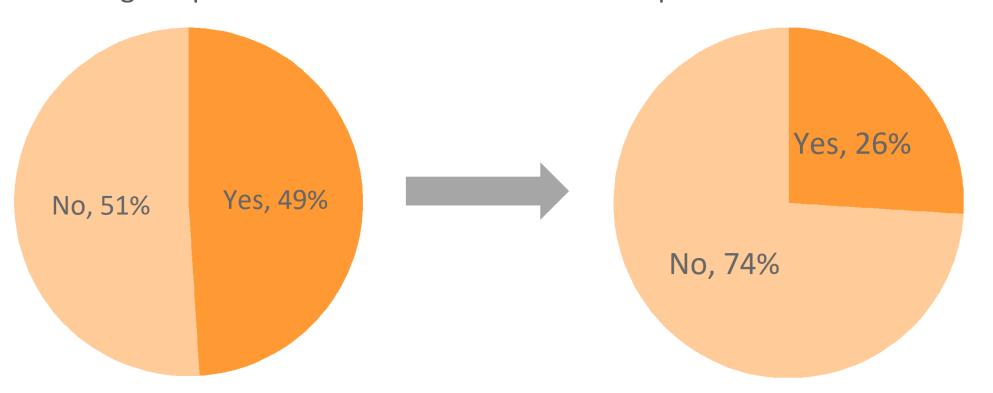
Of the 40% of middle school students who reported struggling with mental health, roughly 1/3 spoke with a school counselor.

# Mental Health - Pandemic

Percentage of high school students who...

Struggled with mental health issues during the pandemic?

Talked with a school counselor either in-person or on zoom?



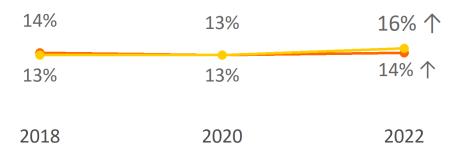


Among the 50% of high school students who reported struggling with mental health, only 25% spoke with a school counselor.

# Suicide

### Among all students...

Number of students who have ever considered attempting suicide



# Among students who have ever considered attempting suicide...

Number of students who have ever attempted suicide



## Among students who have ever considered attempting suicide...

Number of students who have ever made a plan about how they would attempt suicide



# Among students who have ever attempted suicide...

Number of students who have ever attempted suicide which resulted in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse



- ↑ Statistically significant increase compared to RISS 2020
- $\downarrow$  Statistically significant decrease compared to RISS 2020



Suicide rates have started rising back to pre-pandemic levels and has increased significantly among high school students compared to 2018.

# Thank you!

The Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals would like to acknowledge the cooperation and effort of all the schools and students who participate in the Rhode Island Student Survey each administration year.







Anna Novais
Acting Secretary



Richard Charest
Director



**Dr. Utpala Bandy**Interim Director



Angelica Infante-Green
Commissioner,
RI Department of Education







# **Prevention Strategy Work Group**

**Co-Chairs: Elizabeth Farrar, Tara Cooper, and Obed Papp** 

# **Prevention Strategy Work Group Priorities: May 2022-May 2023**

## Goal:

The mission of the Prevention Strategy Work Group is to prevent overdoses, overdose deaths, and opioid misuse by identifying, developing, and evaluating multi-level strategies and interventions. The Prevention Strategy Work Group is a collaboration of state and community partners.

# **Top Evidence Update Priorities**

- A. Invest in mental-health and community resiliency: **Trauma-informed behavioral health services** across the lifespan, with a focus on addressing ACEs, toxic stress, family and community violence-reduction programs
- B. Pursue policies around social determinants or social experiences that help **reduce desires to turn to drug use**. Also, pursue prevention policies that safeguard against social isolation (i.e., against cyber bullying, or to promote grief supports)
- C. Invest in proven **prevention educational programs**, including updated facts about the crisis (i.e., significant rise of fentanyl), the existence of harm reduction strategies (Narcan and fentanyl test strips), and strategies for mental health resilience
- D. Prevention programs should be **across the lifespan**, with focus on youth (high school and middle school) as well as older adults, including seniors who may be at risk of casual opioid, benzodiazepine, or alcohol misuse
- E. Prioritize prevention strategies that **recognize race equity, eliminate structural racism and disparities** based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, and ability

# **PREVENTION STRATEGY WORK GROUP**

- Many partners around the table
  - ▶ Treatment organizations
  - Recovery organizations
  - Individuals with lived experience
  - Prevention organizations



# **BHDDH-Funded Prevention Providers**



Rhode Island Department of
Behavioral Healthcare,
Developmental Disabilities &
Hospitals (BHDDH)

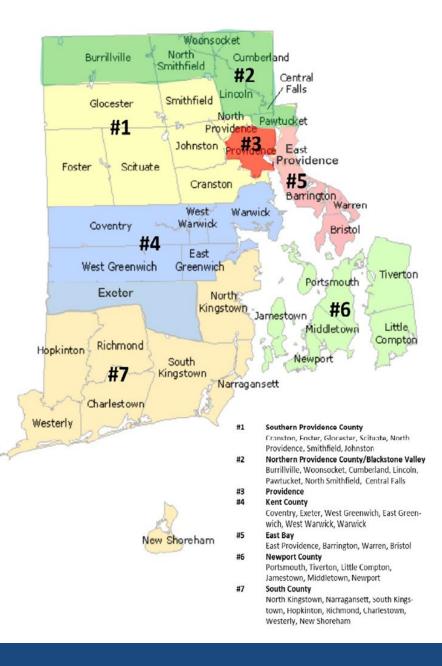
# **BHDDH-Funded Prevention Partners**

- ► RI Substance Abuse Prevention Act (RISAPA) Regional Prevention Task Forces (RPTF)
- ► Student Assistance Program (SAP)
  - Project Success



# Regional Prevention Task Forces (RPTF)

- Funds 7 Regions
- Promotes comprehensive, community prevention programing
  - Local needs assessment and strategic plan created with community input
  - Planning, capacity building, and implementation of evidence-based programs
  - Evaluation of strategies, policies and programs to produce long-term reduction of substance use and misuse and wellness promotion across the lifespan



# **#1: Southern Providence County**

Cranston, Foster, Glocester, Scituate, North Providence, Smithfield, Johnston

**#2: Northern Providence** County/Blackstone Valley Burrillville, Woonsocket, Cumberland, Lincoln, Pawtucket, North Smithfield, Central Falls

**#3: Providence** 

# **#4: Kent County**

Coventry, Exeter, West Greenwich, East Greenwich, West Warwick, Warwick

# #5: East Bay

East Providence, Barrington, Warren, Bristol

## **#6: Newport County**

Portsmouth, Tiverton, Little Compton, Jamestown, Middletown, Newport

# **#7: South County**

North Kingstown, Narragansett, South Kingstown, Hopkinton, Richmond, Charlestown, Westerly, New Shoreham

# **Rhode Island Student Assistance**



Utilizes the evidence-based program Project Success



Implemented in 39 High Schools and 31 Middle Schools



In 2022, more than 10,000 students were served by Master's-level counselors



Use an early identification and referral strategy

# Questions

# **Prevention Strategy Work Group Co-Chairs**

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Student Assistance
Programs: An Effective
Strategy for Preventing
Youth Substance Use
and Promoting Mental
Health

Sarah C. Dinklage, LICSW
Chief Executive Officer
Rhode Island Student Assistance
Services

Samantha Rosenthal, PhD, MPH Epidemiologist Consultant Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals

# Who We Are

Rhode Island Student Assistance Services (RISAS) is a statewide school and community-based substance use prevention/early intervention program operating since 1987.

RISAS is funded by the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals (BHDDH) and Rhode Island school districts

# Who We Serve





By fall 2023, Project SUCCESS will be operating in **80** middle and high schools, representing **32** school districts.

Over 53,000 students have access to a student assistance counselor in their school.

# WHY IS PREVENTION IMPORTANT IN THE EFFORT TO END THE OVERDOSE EPIDEMIC?

 Early age of onset is an important predictor for the development of Substance Use Disorder (SUD) later in life.

• The majority of individuals diagnosed with SUD, including Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) started using substances before age 18.

National Drug Control Strategy Report from The White House Executive Office of the President, 2022

https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/National-Drug-Control-2022Strategy.pdf

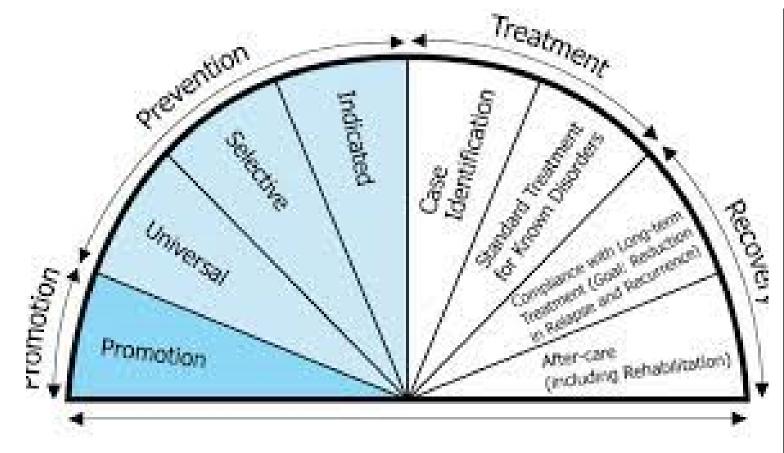
# ROLE OF STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

- Ensuring access to multi-tiered schoolbased prevention programs is "essential to support the health, well-being, and futures of the nation's 74 million children"
- "Student Assistance Programs play a key role in the effort to prevent and reduce youth substance misuse."

National Drug Control Strategy Report from The White House Executive Office of the President, 2022

# Project SUCCESS: Schools Using Coordinated Community Efforts to Strengthen Students

- Project SUCCESS is multi-tiered student assistance program model.
- Project SUCCESS is located in schools where adolescents have easy access to highly trained student assistance counselors and where substance userelated risk factors are more likely to be detected.



- П
- Prevention Strategies

- Universal, all youth
- Selected, vulnerable youth
- Indicated, youth already engaged in substance use

#### UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES

#### Prevention Education Series

Topic 1:

Being an Adolescent

Topic 2:

Alcohol, Marijuana, opioids and other drugs Topic 3:

Relationships:

Family and Friends

Topic 4:

Skills for Coping

#### Objectives-RISAS Opioid Module

- Raise awareness about the opioid crisis.
- Identify who is at risk.
- **Define** opioid, medical uses and illicit opioids.
- **Discuss** the dangers.
- **Describe** how opioids work in the brain.
- Examine how people become addicted.
- **Discuss** problems associated with addiction.
- Learn to avoid risks associated with opioids.
- Teach dangers of taking another's prescription.
- Identify support systems and how to seek help.
- Recognize that rescue and recovery is possible.

## Selected Strategies

## Target children and teens at elevated risk for developing substance use disorders

- Individual and group support for children living with a parent or sibling with SUD
- Interventions with youth exhibiting multiple risk factors
  - e.g., Lack of school bonding, parental neglect/abuse, parental rejection of child's sexual identity/orientation, anxiety, depression

## Indicated Strategies

# Target children and teens who have started using substances.

- Motivational Interviewing
- Screening Brief Intervention Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)
- Brief Challenges
- Groups for students who are using substances

How are Students
Referred to the
Student Assistance
Counselor?

Self Referral

**School Administrators** 

**Guidance Counselors** 

**Teachers** 

**Parents** 

Friends

Assessment and Brief Intervention: Individual and group sessions

# Referral and Case Management

Suicide Prevention Screening

Use of the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale

Referral

Follow up

# What are the Qualifications of Student Assistance Counselors?

- Student Assistance Counselors have a master's degree in social work, psychology or other counseling field
- Expertise with adolescents and the ability to connect and engage with substanceusing teens
- Certified or working toward certification for Student Assistance Counselor (CSAC)

Students at schools with Project SUCCESS had . . .

fewer depressive symptoms







lower past month use of cigarettes





20%

lower past month use of alcohol



27%

lower past month use of marijuana



20%

lower suicide ideation

1/1/2023.

NOTE: Results are from the Rhode Island Student Survey 2020-2021 administration. Depressive symptoms were measured by the Modified Depression Score, a continuous score ranging from 0 to 24. Percent difference was calculated by adjusted logistic and linear regressions controlling for age, sexual and gender identity, pre-post COVID lockdown, %White, %Free/reduced lunch, urban classification, and school level. All results are significant at p<0.05. Analyses conducted by SR Rosenthal,



28%

lower past month vaping

## TEEN INSTITUTE

A POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

IDENTIFIES FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEADERS INVOLVED, IN BOTH POSITVE AND NEGATIVE ACTIVITIES

TRAINS, MOBILIZES, AND MOTIVATES YOUTH LEADERS TO BECOME PREVENTION ADVOCATES

### TEEN INSTITUTE 2023

#### **APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED FOR**

#### RI TEEN INSTITUTE!





#### August 21-25, 2023 Camp JORI, Wakefield, RI

Leadership Training for RI Youth entering the 10th-12th grade. Youth are nominated by an adult "sponsor" who recognizes leadership abilities or potential in the

#### \$25 fee includes:

5 days/4 nights lodging and food, teambuilding, action planning, Project Adventure, workshops, talent show, general sessions, dance, process groups, and optional activities such as swimming, athletics, crafts, and more!

#### Scholarships available!

Email RITeenInstitute@gmail.com for a youth application, adult staff application, or adult sponsor form.







## KEY TAKEAWAYS

WE WILL NOT ADDRESS THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC LONG TERM UNLESS WE PREVENT AND REDUCE YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
ARE AN EFFECTIVE, MULTI-TIERED
STRATEGY TO PREVENT AND REDUCE
YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE AND
PROMOTE WELL-BEING.





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# **Public Comment**

