



Communities That Care of Greater Downingtown Community Assessment Report - October 2016

GOALS AND OVERVIEW

The Pennsylvania Youth Survey or “PAYS” is conducted every other year, in the fall of odd-numbered years. PAYS is funded by the Pennsylvania Commission of Crime and Delinquency (PCCDL), the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (PDDAD), and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). The 2015 PAYS was the thirteenth biennial administration (1989-2015). Questions are asked across four domains (community, school, family, and peer/individual) to help determine where strengths and weaknesses lie in order to determine and prioritize prevention decision making. The survey is confidential, anonymous and voluntary, measuring behaviors, attitudes, knowledge and experience of illegal drug use, vaping, gambling, depression and suicidal ideation, violence, bullying internet safety, transitions and mobility and involvement in after school activities in the community.

DEMOGRAPHICS

49.0% of participants were female, 51.0% were male. 8th graders were the best represented, with an estimated 87.3% participation rate based on most recent enrollment. Overall, **77.2% of students** surveyed in this district were white or Caucasian. 10.5% of students were Asian or Pacific Islander, and the remainder were a combination of the remaining categories. 5.2% of students identified as being of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin.

ALCOHOL/TOBACCO and OTHER DRUGS

The most common early initiation/higher prevalence substance used was **alcohol** (41.7% of students in district, compared to 43.9% at the state level – this is based on lifetime use). More importantly, 43.9% of 12th graders report use of alcohol with in the last 30 days. The next most frequent drug used was **marijuana**, with 16.2% indicating lifetime use – this compared to 17.3% at the state level. More importantly, 25.2% of 12th graders report use of marijuana within the last 30 days. The prescription drug most frequently used by students in this district was narcotic prescription drugs (4.4% of students indicating lifetime use, compared to 6.3% at the state level). Binge drinking (drinking to get drunk), as well as driving after consuming alcohol or marijuana continue to be other risky substance-use related behaviors among students. 22.0% of 12th graders report binge drinking during the past two weeks.

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Risk factors are defined as influences in life that predict the increased likelihood of drug use, delinquency, school dropout and violent behaviors among youth. Protective factors exert a positive influence and buffer against the negative influence of risk, thus reducing the likelihood that adolescents will engage in problem behaviors.