

**TOWN OF SOUTHAMPTON**

# TAP

**T** EEN  
**A** SSESSMENT  
**P** ROJECT

**REPORT 2012**

Tapping into Teen Concerns,  
perceptions and Behaviors in  
Southampton Town, New York



**SPONSORED BY:**

Town of Southampton Youth Bureau

**ADMINISTERED BY:**

Town of Southampton Youth Bureau  
Cornell University—College of Human Ecology

**ANALYSIS AND REPORT BY:**

Town of Southampton Youth Bureau



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 Mr. Chris Richardt, Principal, Hampton Bays High School  
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## INTRODUCTION

The Teen Assessment Project (TAP) is sponsored by the Town of Southampton Youth Bureau with technical assistance provided by Cornell University, College of Human Ecology. In December 2011 the Youth Bureau conducted the TAP, surveying 2,188 students in 8th, 10th, and 12th grades in Southampton Town, asking them specific questions about their quality of life and their sense of the community in which they live. The survey asked students about risk behaviors, health and lifestyle indicators, parental involvement, and the risk and protective factors that affect adolescent lives. The findings of this survey will be used to plan and support programs that address the needs of youth and families in the Town of Southampton and to improve out-of-school resources and supervision.

This is the fourth administration of this survey. The first was conducted in 2002 and included all 7th through 12th grade students in Southampton Town. It was a broader survey, intended to establish a baseline of data with which to compare future data and determine patterns of behavior and community influences in adolescent lives. The second was conducted in November of 2005 and surveyed only 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students. Due to the wealth of national data that exists for students in grades 8, 10, and 12, the Town opted to survey these same three grades in order to best compare local data to national data. The third administration of the survey was conducted in December of 2008, again surveying only 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students.

The TAP survey was originally chosen as the survey instrument for the 2002 project after evaluation of other survey programs. A modified version was used in 2005, reducing the number of questions from 160 to 103 while adding some new topics. The instrument was again modified in 2008 and included some additional topics of inquiry, resulting in an instrument of 100 questions. Another modification was done in 2011, again adding some new topics and removing questions that were no longer providing useful data, resulting in a 100 question instrument.

### Survey Implementation

The Southampton Youth Bureau administers the TAP Survey, with assistance from school personnel and volunteers from community agencies. The seven Southampton Town school districts that participate in the survey are: Bridgehampton Union Free School District (UFSD), Hampton Bays UFSD, Riverhead Central School District, Sag Harbor UFSD, Southampton UFSD, Tuckahoe Common School District, and Westhampton Beach UFSD. All survey data are combined into one database, which includes survey findings from these participating districts.



Prior to filling out the survey, students are encouraged to respond honestly to the questions and are assured that all answers will be anonymous. Survey administrators are given large envelopes in which to seal the survey forms in front of students immediately upon receipt, ensuring confidentiality. The Youth Bureau collects the answer sheets from each school and submits them to Cornell University for creation of a database from survey results. The database is then sent to the Youth Bureau for analysis. Youth Bureau staff developed this survey report.

## PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Youth completing the 2011 Tap survey are 53% male and 47% female. No special needs are reported by 85% of the respondents; 6% report a learning disability, 4% report English as a second language as a special need, 2% report an emotional or behavioral disability, 1% report a physical disability, 1% report multiple disabilities, and 1% report some other disability. The majority of youth, 61%, report living with both parents; 16% report living with their mother most of the time, 10% report living with a parent and a step parent, 8% report some other parental living arrangement, and 4% report living with someone other than a parent. Ten percent (10%) of students identify themselves as an immigrant or refugee. Respondents report little mobility in their lives; 76% report that they have never changed schools and 5% report having changed schools 3 or more times. When queried about school achievement, 40% report earning grades above 90, and another 38% report earning grades above 80. Only 1.3% report earning failing grades. This profile defines the majority of youth as having stable home lives, few special needs, and being successful in school. In the balance of this report, we will look beyond the profile to understand some of the challenges that exist in these young peoples' lives and identify clues as to how the Southampton community can rise to meet those challenges.



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## REPORTED RISK BEHAVIORS

### Substance Abuse

The TAP survey conducted in 2011 finds that local youth continue to abuse alcohol as their primary drug of choice. Binge drinking continues to be a significant problem. Other than alcohol, local youth also report frequently abusing marijuana, tobacco, prescription drugs, and over the counter medications, in that order. Reported use of other illicit drugs in December of 2011 remains under 5%. Sixteen percent (16%) of youth report being high in school at least once, and 5% of youth report being high in school weekly or more often.

### Alcohol

Twenty percent (20%) of all youth surveyed report drinking alcohol regularly – 1% report drinking every day, 4% report drinking several times a week, and another 15% report drinking several times a month. More specifically, students reporting that they have consumed alcohol in the last month are 5% of 8th grade students, 20% of 10th grade students, and 40% of 12th grade students. Those students reporting at least one drink in their lifetime are 15% of 8th grade students, 47% of 10th grade students, and 73% of 12th grade students. Eighteen percent (18%) of all students report that they have engaged in at least one episode of binge drinking in the last month; 10% of all students report more than one episode in the last month. According to the student reports, many students who are currently using alcohol are binge drinking (consuming five or more drinks in a two or three hour period): 43% of 8th grade drinkers, 39% of 10th grade drinkers, and 50% of 12th grade drinkers. When asked about the risks to their health of binge drinking, 62% of students reported no risk or slight risk of harm from binge drinking and 38% reported moderate to great risk of harm from binge drinking. This perception of little risk is almost 20% higher than national reports; in the 2012 Monitoring the Future report, 43% of youth nationwide perceive no great risk from binge drinking. Students reporting that they had their first drink under the age of 15 are 33%; 6% report that their first drink was at age 10 or younger, 7% was at age 11 or 12, and 19% was at age 13 or 14. Thirty-one percent (31%) of students who report drinking got their alcohol from a parent, a friend's parent, or from one of their homes. Fifty-three percent (53%) of students report that it is easy or very easy to obtain alcohol in the Southampton community.

Figure 1.1 - Alcohol Use in the last month

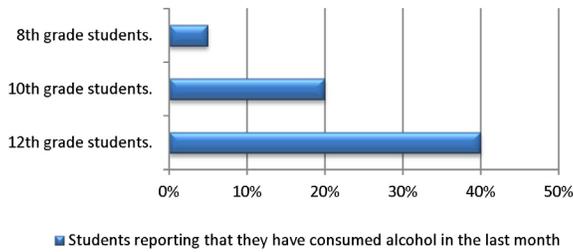
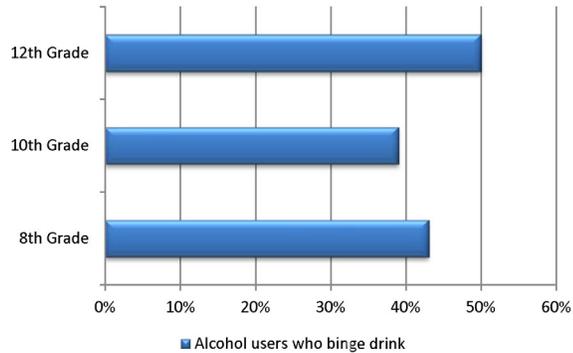


Figure 1.0 - Alcohol users who Binge Drink

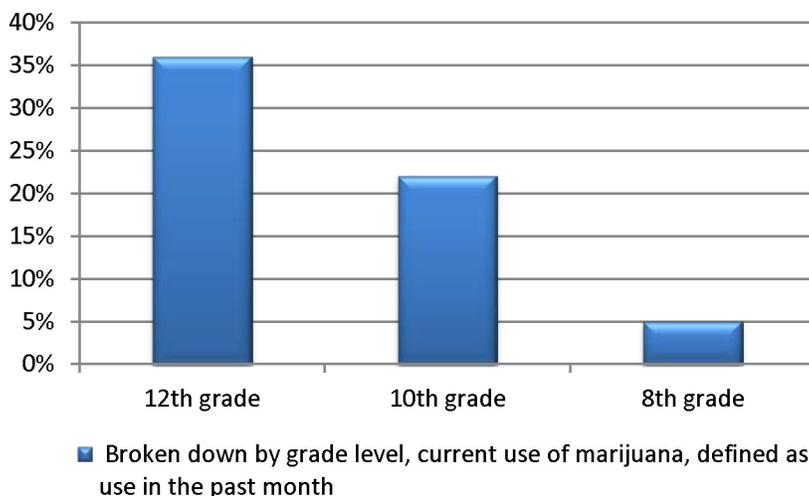


### Marijuana

Overall, 29% of students report ever using marijuana and 15% report current use of marijuana. Broken down by grade level, current use of marijuana, defined as use in the past month, is reported by 5% of 8th grade students, 22% of 10th grade students, and 36% of 12th grade students. Ten percent (10%) of 8th grade students, 31% of 10th grade students and 55% of 12th grade students report ever using marijuana. Students report obtaining marijuana from a friend 55% of the time, and from a dealer 26% of the time.

Synthetic marijuana, or herbal mixtures sprayed with synthetic chemicals to mimic marijuana, is reported to have ever been used by Southampton youth at a rate of 18%. Reported current users are 10% of youth; 3% of 8th grade students, and 13% each of 10th and 12th grade students.

Figure 1.2 - Used marijuana in the last 30 days





## Cigarettes

Eighty percent (80%) of all students surveyed report never using tobacco. Eight percent (8%) of 8th grade students, 18% of 10th grade students and 35% of 12th grade students report ever using tobacco. Current use of tobacco is reported by 3% of 8th grade students, 8% of 10th grade students, and 16% of 12th grade students. Nine percent (9%) of all students report current cigarette use.

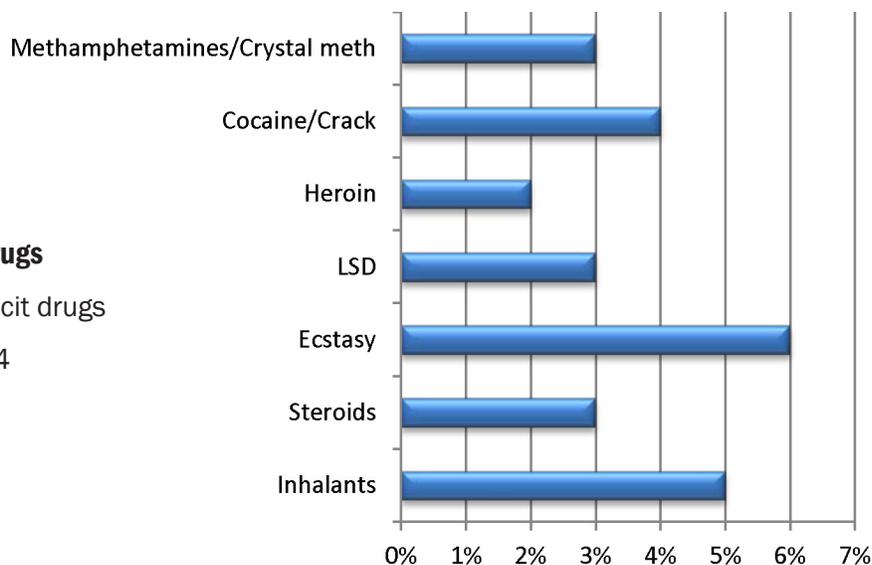
## Prescription and Over the Counter Drugs

Overall, 7% of students report using prescription drugs to get high and 6% of students report using over the counter drugs to get high. Examining the rates by grade level shows that 3% of 8th grade students, 6% of 10th grade students, and 13% of 12th grade students report using prescription drugs to get high. Also, 4% of 8th grade students, 6% of 10th grade students, and 9% of 12th grade students report using over the counter drugs to get high.

## Other Illicit Drugs

Reported use of other illicit substances is illustrated below:

Figure 1.4 - **Other Illicit Drugs**  
Reported use of other Illicit drugs  
is illustrated in Figure 1.4



■ Reported use of other illicit substances is as follows:

## Non-illicit drug use

*Energy Drinks* – Overall, 34% of youth report using energy drinks and the use rate is fairly consistent between grade levels – 33% of 8th graders, 33% of 10th graders, and 37% of 12 graders. These rates mirror use rates reported nationwide. When compared to the amount

of sleep that teenagers report getting, 43% who currently use energy drinks report getting less than 6 hours of sleep and 27% of those who sleep more than 9 hours report use of energy drinks.

*Caffeine* – Youth were asked how many caffeine drinks they consume in a day; 58% report 1 to 2 drinks per day, 11% report 2 to 4 drinks per day, and 4% report 5 or more drinks per day.

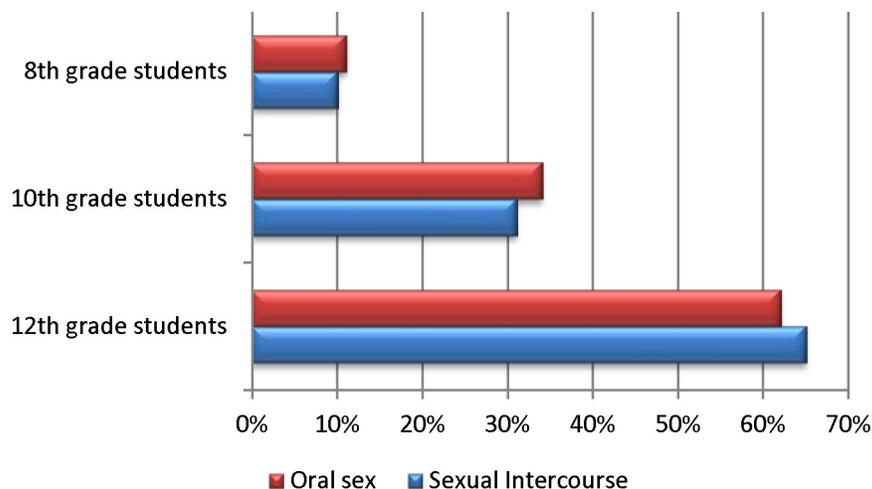
### Perception of risk of using substances

An important predictor of substance abuse is how risky that behavior is perceived to be by the user. Those perceiving higher levels of risk are less likely to use and those perceiving lower levels of risk are more likely to use. For the first time, questions about these perceptions were included in the 2011 survey instrument. Seventy-two percent (72%) of respondents reported no or slight risk in using marijuana and 63% of respondents reported no or slight risk of binge drinking.

### Sexual activity

Students who report having sexual intercourse at least once number 34%, those who report having oral sex at least once also number 34%; those who report having 2 or more sex partners number 20%, and those who report 4 or more sex partners number 9%. Grade-specific reports reveal that 11% of 8th grade students, 34% of 10th grade students, and 62% of 12th grade students report ever engaging in oral sex. The survey findings also show that 10% of 8th grade students, 31% of 10th grade students, and 65% of 12th grade students report having ever engaged in sexual intercourse. Sixty-six percent (66%) of students who report being sexually active also report that they always use birth control, while 14% report that they never use birth control.

Figure 1.5 - **Students who report ever engaging in oral sex or intercourse**





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## **Gambling**

The TAP survey asked youth if they had bet money or something else of value on the result of a card game, sporting event, lottery ticket, internet gambling, video poker, dice, race, bingo, or other game. Responses show that 29% of youth report gambling in the past year. By grade level, 27% of 8th graders, 28% of 10th graders, and 34% of 12th graders reported gambling activities in the past year.

## **Violence/gang involvement**

Eleven percent (11%) of youth report being the victim of violence at home or in school. The same percentage, 11%, report being physically hurt by an adult at home and 10% report being physically hurt by another student at school. Twenty-one percent (21%) of youth report having been bullied by another student: 24% of 8th graders, 22% of 10th graders and 16% of 12th graders; for much of their high school careers, one in four youth experiences bullying or harassment.

Five percent (5%) of youth report being involved in a gang.

## **Getting into trouble**

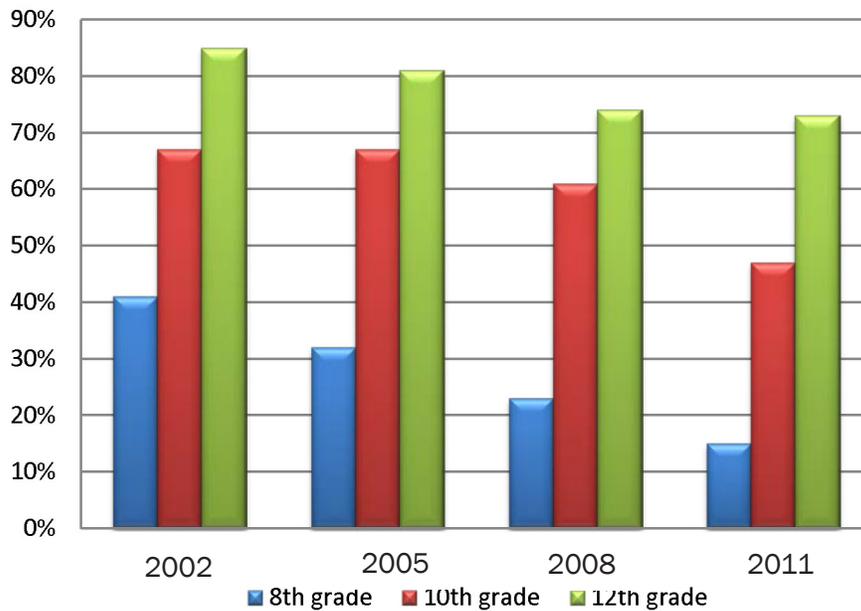
Youth who report being arrested number 6%; 38% report a history of shoplifting or stealing, and 19% report engaging in vandalism. Youth also reported their history of school suspensions – 20% report having ever been suspended.

## **Trends and Comparisons**

Although the numbers are still dangerous, the Southampton Teen Assessment Project has recorded a steady decline in underage alcohol use since 2002:

*Reported alcohol use – at least one drink in your lifetime*

Figure 1.6 - Reported alcohol use trend



**Reported binge drinking – consuming 5 or more drinks in a 2 or 3 hour period**

(among 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students)

|                                     | 2002 | 2005 | 2008 | 2011 |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| One episode in last month           | n/a  | 43%  | 27%  | 8%   |
| More than one episode in last month | n/a  | 19%  | 16%  | 10%  |

**Reported use of drugs other than alcohol has also shown a steady decline:**

|                                  | 2002 | 2005 | 2008 | 2011 |
|----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Ever used marijuana              | 38%  | 37%  | 36%  | 29%  |
| Ever used prescription medicines | 11%  | 12%  | 12%  | 7%   |
| Ever used over the counter drugs | n/a  | 10%  | 9%   | 6%   |
| Ever used tobacco                | 34%  | 29%  | 25%  | 20%  |

In the area of gang involvement, the data below indicate that there is a small group of Southampton youth reporting this behavior, and that this group has been reduced almost by half since 2005.

|                           | 2002 | 2005 | 2008 | 2011 |
|---------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Identify as gang involved | n/a  | 9%   | 8%   | 5%   |



For the first time in the history of the Teen Assessment Project, reported alcohol use rates in Southampton are not soaring above nationwide rates. Current alcohol use rates for 8th graders are significantly less than nationwide rates, for 10th graders they are slightly less than national rates, and for 12th graders they are roughly equal. Marijuana rates are also now being reported at a level that is below the national average. The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance (YRBS) conducted in 2011 for the Centers for Disease Control is the source of national data reported here.

In this report we are also able to compare our data to those reported by youth across Suffolk County in a survey conducted by the New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services in 2010. Current use of alcohol rates reported by Southampton youth are consistently lower than those reported by their Suffolk County peers, but marijuana and cigarette use rates are above their Suffolk County peers.

**Reported alcohol use – at least one drink in their lifetime**

|            | <b>National (2011)</b> | <b>Southampton (2011)</b> | <b>Suffolk Co. (2010)</b> |
|------------|------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 8th grade  | n/a                    | 15%                       | 21% (7th & 8th)           |
| 10th grade | 69%                    | 47%                       | 53% (9th & 10th)          |
| 12th grade | 79%                    | 73%                       | 78% (11th & 12th)         |
| Overall    | 71%                    | 57%                       | n/a                       |

**Reported alcohol use – last 30 days**

|            | <b>National</b> | <b>Southampton</b> | <b>Suffolk Co.</b> |
|------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 8th grade  | n/a             | 5%                 | 10% (7th & 8th)    |
| 10th grade | 36%             | 20%                | 35% (9th & 10th)   |
| 12th grade | 48%             | 40%                | 57% (11th & 12th)  |
| Overall    | 39%             | 20%                | 26%                |

**Marijuana and tobacco – lifetime use**

|                     | <b>National</b> | <b>Southampton</b> | <b>Suffolk Co.</b> |
|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Marijuana - ever    | 40%             | 29%                | n/a                |
| Marijuana – current | 23%             | 15%                | 10% (7th-12th)     |
| Cigarette – current | 18%             | 9%                 | 4% (7th-12th)      |

Nationwide data on sexual behaviors show that Southampton youth are less likely to be sexually active than youth across the US, and more likely to use birth control. In Southampton, 34% of students report ever having sexual intercourse. According to YRBS, in 2011 47% of high school students report ever having sexual intercourse. Nine percent (9%) of local youth report having 4 or more sex partners, nationally 15% of youth report 4 or more sex partners. The YRBS report also shows that 61% of high school students used a condom during last sexual intercourse; Southampton students who are sexually active report always using birth control 66% of the time

### **Escalation of risk behaviors between 8th and 10th grades**

In general, risk behavior reports triple from 8th grade to 10th grade, and then slow to double or less between 10th and 12th grades. For example, reported alcohol use rises from 14% in 8th grade to 47% in 10th grade, a rate that is more than tripled. Twelfth grade reports of alcohol use are at 72% - a still significant increase but less than double the 10th grade use rate. Marijuana use reports reflect the same trend – 10% of 8th grade students report use, 31% of 10th grade youth report use, and 48% of 12th grade students report use. Another example is sexual activity reports - 13% of 8th grade students report being sexually active, but triple that rate, 39%, report being sexually active in 10th grade. Not quite double that amount, 69% of 12th graders report being sexually active.

This startling increase in risk behavior reports between 8th and 10th grades can be attributable to several factors. These include youth having more unsupervised time, less parent-teacher communication, more important peer influences, and decreased family time (Child Dev. 2011). This combination of family time decreasing and peer influence increasing leads to decreased parental monitoring of teens' behaviors (Larson et al, 1996). In addition, older youth report that substances such as alcohol and marijuana are easier to obtain in the community, and in general there is less focus on prevention based programming as youth leave elementary school and move into secondary schools.

Decreased monitoring at home and in the community and fewer prevention messages in the community suggests that there is an important window of opportunity for intervention during the 8th and 9th grade years. Slowing the rate of increase of reported risk behaviors in this period could lead to healthier lifestyles for local teens.



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## HEALTH AND LIFESTYLE INDICATORS

### Mental Health

Southampton youth continue to report higher than average rates of experiencing symptoms of depression, with little change since the 2005 survey. Rates of contemplation of suicide and self-injury also show little change.

### Depression

Youth were asked to report if they've felt helpless, hopeless, or very sad for a period of two weeks or longer within the last six months. These symptoms are indicators of depression. Overall, 37% of youth surveyed responded that they have experienced these symptoms. Females are more likely to have experienced these feelings, reporting them 48% of the time, as opposed to males who report these feelings 21% of the time. When examined by grade level, 32% of 8th graders, 40% of 10th graders and 40% of 12th graders report these feelings of depression.

### Suicide

Suicidal thoughts are another important indicator of mental health problems. Eleven percent (11%) of students report they have considered suicide, 3% report having made a suicide plan, and 2% report having attempted suicide. In total, 16% of all Southampton youth have at least contemplated suicide. Females are again more likely to report suicidal thoughts, with 20% reporting having these thoughts while 13% of males report them. When examined by grade level, 11% of 8th graders, 18% of 10th graders, and 20% of 12th graders have considered suicide.

### Self-injury

Self-injury can take many forms, but the most commonly reported is cutting. Youth usually engage in self-injury as an attempt to relieve emotional pain – causing physical pain may take one's mind off the invisible trauma that is being felt. The rate of self-injury reported by Southampton youth is 12%, with 5% reporting that they have self-injured once, 4% more than once, and another 3% many times. Self-injury is often thought to be more prominent among females and Southampton data show that this holds true here – the male rate is 8% while the female rate is 15%

## Running away

Thirty-one percent (31%) of youth report having seriously considered running away at least once in the last year; 2% report that they did run away, and less than 1% report that they do not currently live at home.

## Weight control

Forty-six percent (46%) of youth report that they have tried to lose weight in the last 30 days; 10% report that they have used unhealthy methods to lose weight such as laxatives, diet pills, bulimia, or other. Nineteen percent (19%) of youth report trying to bulk up in the last 30 days; 2% report using steroids, 6% report using protein supplements, and 11% report excessive weight lifting.

## Sleep Habits

This administration of the TAP survey asked respondents about their sleep habits. Seventy three percent (73%) of youth reported that they get six to eight hours of sleep on average per-night. Ten percent (10%) of youth reported getting nine or more hours of sleep per-night on average, and 15% report getting less than 6 hours. Research tells us that teenagers should average 9 hours of sleep daily to reduce and eliminate side effects of sleep deprivation. These can include poor grades, symptoms of depression, behavioral problems, weight gain, increase in stress and decrease in ability to listen, concentrate, and problem solve. The findings of this TAP survey reinforce that this is true.

Among Southampton students, 21% of youth who got less than six hours reported symptoms of depression many times over the past six months. Of youth who report more than 9 hours of sleep, 8% reported symptoms of depression many times over the past six months. Seventy-two percent (72%) of youth who reported getting 9 or more hours of sleep reported no symptoms of depression over the past six months. Ninety-three percent (93%) of youth who responded that they slept 9 or more hours on average per-night reported that they never had any self injurious behavior, whereas of those who slept less than 6 hours, 21% reported self injurious behavior and 13% reported that they have self injured more than one time over the past year.

The data also show that youth who get more sleep have reduced risk taking behaviors. Ten percent (10%) of those youth who slept nine or more hours on average per-night reported drinking alcohol in the past month. Of those who slept less than 6 hours on an average night, 32% reported drinking alcohol in the past month. Of youth who report sleeping 9 or more hours on an



average night, 5% reported binge drinking (5 or more drinks in a 2-3 hour period) 2 or more times in the past month and of those who slept less than six hours on an average night, 18% reported binge drinking 2 or more times over the past month.

Of those youth who report smoking marijuana in the past year, 32% got less than 6 hours of sleep on an average night and 13% slept more than nine hours.

### Use of time

Respondents were asked how they spend their time outside of the classroom. The activities reported with the most frequency, in the time frame of 2 or more hours per week, are (Figure 2.1).

The top 5 activities that students report more intense involvement with - 6 or more hours per week - are:

Figure 2.1 -  
**Spending two or more hours  
outside the classroom a week**

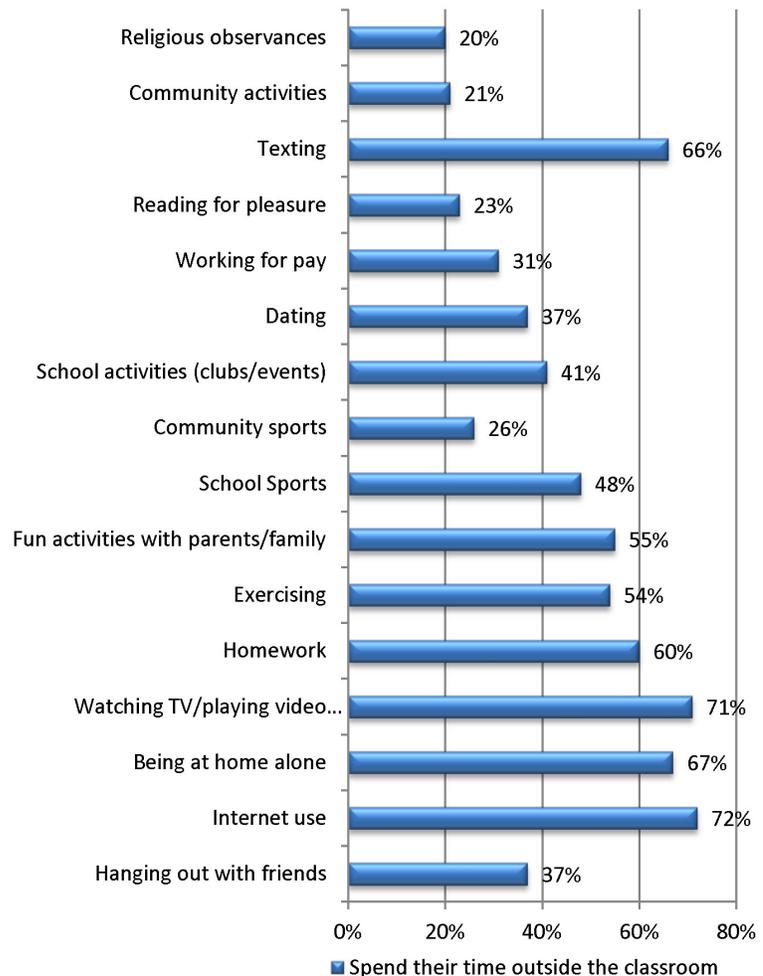
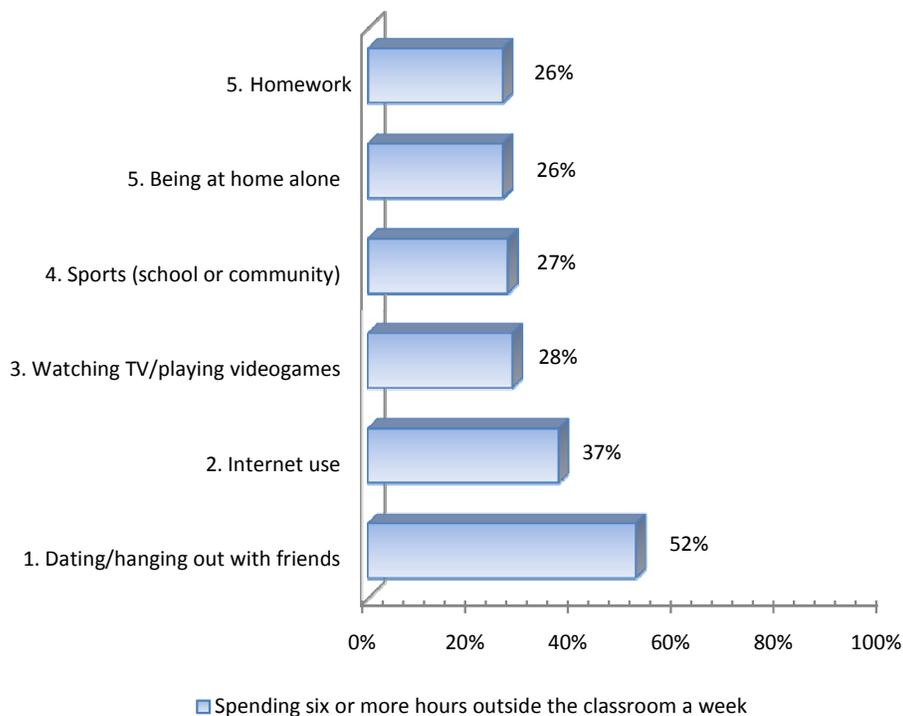


Figure 2.2 - Spending six or more hours outside the classroom a week



It is interesting to note that the activities in which youth report spending most of their time are primarily unstructured and unsupervised.

### Trends and National Comparisons

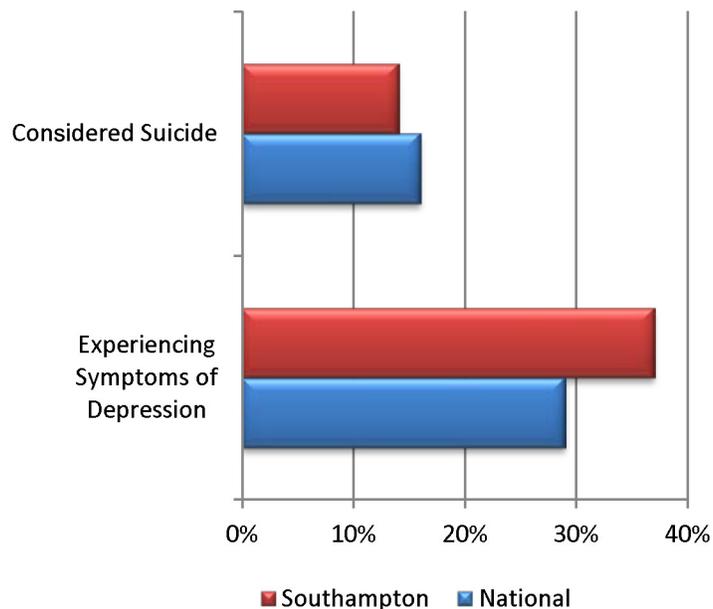
Since the Teen Assessment Project began in 2002, we have seen a slight decrease in youth reports of symptoms of depression, as noted below. However, rates have held steady since 2005. There is a 20% drop in reports of self-injury between 2005 and 2011.

|                        | 2002 | 2005 | 2008 | 2011 |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Feelings of depression | 41%  | 37%  | 36%  | 37%  |
| Contemplated suicide   | 21%  | 14%  | 16%  | 16%  |
| Self-injury            | n/a  | 15%  | 13%  | 12%  |



Southampton youth report symptoms of depression at a higher rate than their peers across the country. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of students nationwide felt sad or hopeless every day for a period of two weeks in a row, as reported in 2011 by the YRBS, compared to 37% of Southampton youth in 2011. Again according to the YRBS, 16% of youth nationwide in 2011 reported that they considered suicide, the same rate reported in Southampton. However, 13% of high school youth nationwide have made a suicide plan, compared to 3% in Southampton, and 8% of youth nationwide have attempted suicide, compared to 2% in Southampton. (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3 - **Mental Health**



In 2011, high school youth nationwide reported in the YRBS that they are trying to lose weight at a rate of 46%. In Southampton, the rate of attempted weight loss is the same – 46%. Ten percent (10%) of Southampton youth report using unhealthy methods to lose weight, again similar to youth nationwide who report not eating for 25 hours or more at a rate of 12%, and vomiting or taking laxatives at a rate of 4%.

According to YRBS 2011, 31% of youth nationwide get 8 or more hours of sleep on average on a school night. The TAP survey instrument broke sleep rates down into 6 to 8 hours, 9 or more, and 6 or less, so a direct comparison cannot be made.

## VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

The research shows that some youth are at higher risk for poor outcomes than the average teenager. The data from the TAP Survey clearly identify who these youth are and the issues they are struggling with. Although the percentages may initially seem small, if we consider that about 2 of every 10 youth are negatively affected, we realize what an impact these young people can have on the community and how important it is to address their needs.

### Special Needs

Fifteen percent (15%) of youth responding to the TAP survey identify themselves as having a special need (learning disability, English as a second language, emotional or behavioral disability, or other disability). These youth report higher rates of risk behaviors and mental health problems, less academic success, and are less likely to have protective factors in their lives.

|                               | Special Needs | No Special Needs |
|-------------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Daily use of alcohol          | 4%            | 1%               |
| Binge drinking                | 22%           | 18%              |
| Tobacco use daily             | 6%            | 2%               |
| Marijuana use daily           | 11%           | 4%               |
| Symptoms of depression        | 45%           | 34%              |
| Self-injury 1+ times          | 21%           | 10%              |
| Four or more sex partners     | 15%           | 9%               |
| Grades over 90                | 22%           | 43%              |
| Grades below 65               | 12%           | >1%              |
| Adult to talk to at home      | 79%           | 91%              |
| Adult to talk to outside home | 73%           | 86%              |
| Changed schools 1+ times      | 37%           | 29%              |

### Immigrant/Refugee status

Ten percent (10%) of respondents report that they are immigrants or refugees, which is 3% lower than in the 2008 TAP survey. Half of youth (51%) who identify themselves as immigrants or refugees report seeing discrimination in their school/community, compared to 44% of non-immigrant youth. Clearly, most Southampton youth see a significant level of discrimination in their daily



surroundings. In further analyzing data reported by immigrant/refugee youth, they also report higher frequencies of engaging in risk behaviors, experiencing symptoms of depression, and earning lower grades than their peers. They are also less likely to have protective factors in their lives:

|                               | <b>Immigrant/Refugee</b> | <b>Non Immigrant/Refugee</b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Daily use of alcohol          | 6%                       | 1%                           |
| Tobacco use daily             | 5%                       | 3%                           |
| Marijuana use daily           | 6%                       | 5%                           |
| Symptoms of depression        | 25%                      | 19%                          |
| Contemplated suicide          | 20%                      | 16%                          |
| Four or more sex partners     | 11%                      | 9%                           |
| Grades over 90                | 30%                      | 41%                          |
| Grades below 65               | 5%                       | 1%                           |
| Adult to talk to at home      | 82%                      | 90%                          |
| Adult to talk to outside home | 76%                      | 85%                          |

### **Sexual Orientation**

Nine percent (9%) of respondents identify themselves as homosexual, bisexual, transgendered, not sure, or other. This response is reported by 10% of 8th graders, 9% of 10th graders, and 9% of 12th graders. These youth are at extremely high risk for poor outcomes, as demonstrated in the data analysis below. As a community, we need to examine how we can provide youth with additional support and alternative means of coping with stressors in order to prevent such risk behaviors.

|                             | <b>other than Heterosexual</b> | <b>Heterosexual</b> |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Daily use of alcohol        | 9%                             | 1%                  |
| Binge drinking              | 16%                            | 10%                 |
| Tobacco use daily           | 13%                            | 2%                  |
| Marijuana use daily         | 10%                            | 4%                  |
| Symptoms of depression      | 41%                            | 35%                 |
| Contemplated suicide        | 37%                            | 14%                 |
| Self-injury 1+ times        | 35%                            | 9%                  |
| Ever engaged in oral sex    | 47%                            | 33%                 |
| Ever engaged in intercourse | 49%                            | 33%                 |
| Four or more sex partners   | 20%                            | 7%                  |

|                                    | Other than Heterosexual | Heterosexual |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Physically hurt by another student | 18%                     | 8%           |
| Grades over 90                     | 30%                     | 40%          |
| Grades below 65                    | 9%                      | 1%           |
| Adult to talk to at home           | 71%                     | 91%          |
| Adult to talk to outside home      | 72%                     | 85%          |
| Sleep less than 6 hrs              | 28%                     | 14%          |
| Running away                       | 10%                     | 2%           |
| See Discrimination in community    | 50%                     | 44%          |

### Victims of Bullying/Harassment

Twenty-one percent (21%) of respondents in Southampton report that they have been bullied or harassed by their peers in the past year. In the United States, 10% of school-age youth will experience some form of bullying in their lifetime. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 20% of youth report being bullied on school property in the last 12 months. Analyzing the Southampton data by grade level reveals that 24% of 8th graders, 22% of 10th graders, and 16% of 12th graders report that they have been bullied or harassed by their peers in the past year. Further data analysis shows small differences in academic success and substance abuse between those who report being bullied and those who do not; however, in regards to mental health and victimization measures there is a significant difference among youth being bullied and those who are not. Victimized youth are more likely to see discrimination in their communities.

|  | Bullied/Harassed | Not Bullied/Harassed |
|--|------------------|----------------------|
| Symptoms of depression                 | 61%              | 31%                  |
| Contemplated suicide                   | 33%              | 12%                  |
| Self-injury 1+ times                   | 24%              | 9%                   |
| Physically hurt by another student     | 26%              | 4%                   |
| Bullied/harassed by adult (non parent) | 11%              | 4%                   |
| Adult to talk to at home               | 86%              | 89%                  |
| Sees discrimination in community       | 61%              | 40%                  |
| Sleep less than 6 hrs                  | 19%              | 15%                  |
| Running Away                           | 5%               | 2%                   |
| Tried to lose weight                   | 55%              | 44%                  |



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## INFLUENCE OF ADULTS

Two sections of questions on the TAP Survey address youth experiences with adults, both in the home and in the community. The data identify common parenting practices that are most successful in preventing engagement in risk behaviors, as well as how the behavior of adults around them influences young people's engagement in risk behaviors.

### Parenting Practices

There is an extensive body of research that tells us that certain parenting practices are very effective at preventing youth engagement in risk behaviors. The TAP findings support this research on the local level. Specifically, setting clear rules, following through with consequences when rules are broken, knowing your child's friends, knowing where your child is and what they are doing, talking with your child about risk behaviors and your expectations, and family dinners are all found to significantly reduce risk behaviors among youth.

### Setting clear rules

Of youth who report that they have never used alcohol, 44% tell us that their parents always set clear rules for them, while 4% tell us that their parents never set clear rules. Of youth who report that they have used alcohol, 61% tell us that their parents never set clear rules for them. One in four youth (28%) who report that their parents never set clear rules tell us that they binge drank four or more times in the last month. Of youth who report that their parents never set clear rules, 19% report daily marijuana use.

We also see a difference in other areas when parents set clear rules for their teens. Nearly half (46%) of youth who report that their parents never set clear rules for them also report experiencing symptoms of depression, as compared to 33% of youth whose parents always set clear rules for them. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of youth who report that their parents never set clear rules experienced symptoms of depression many times in the past six months and 14% report self-injuring many times in the past year. Fifty-two percent (52%) of youth who report that their parents never set clear rules have engaged in oral sex, compared to 29% of youth who report that their parents always set clear rules; 55% of youth who report that their parents never set clear rules have engaged in sexual intercourse, as compared to 29% of youth whose parents always set clear rules.

A difference is also apparent in academic performance. Of youth who report that their parents never set clear rules, 31% report grades in the 90s and 7% report grades below 65. Of youth who report that their parents always set clear rules, 46% report grades in the 90s, and 1% report grades below 65. Lastly, youth who report that their parents always set clear rules are far less likely to use energy drinks and products with caffeine, 29% and 12% respectively, compared to youth who report that their parents never set clear rules at rates of 42% and 33% respectively.

**Disciplining when rules are broken**

Similar to the findings discussed above, youth who report that their parents discipline them when rules are broken report engaging in risk behaviors less often, better mental health, and better academic success. Of youth who report that they have never used alcohol, 12% report that their parents never discipline them while 34% report that their parents always discipline them.

Nine percent (9%) of youth who report that their parents never discipline them report daily use of marijuana, and 3% of youth who report that their parents always discipline them report daily use of marijuana. Of youth who report experiencing symptoms of depression, 43% report that their parents never discipline them, as compared to 40% who report that their parents always discipline them. One in five youth (18%) who report that their parents never discipline them also report experiencing symptoms of depression many times in the past six months.

The following chart shows the percentage of youth who engage in certain risk behaviors who report that their parents either never or always discipline them.

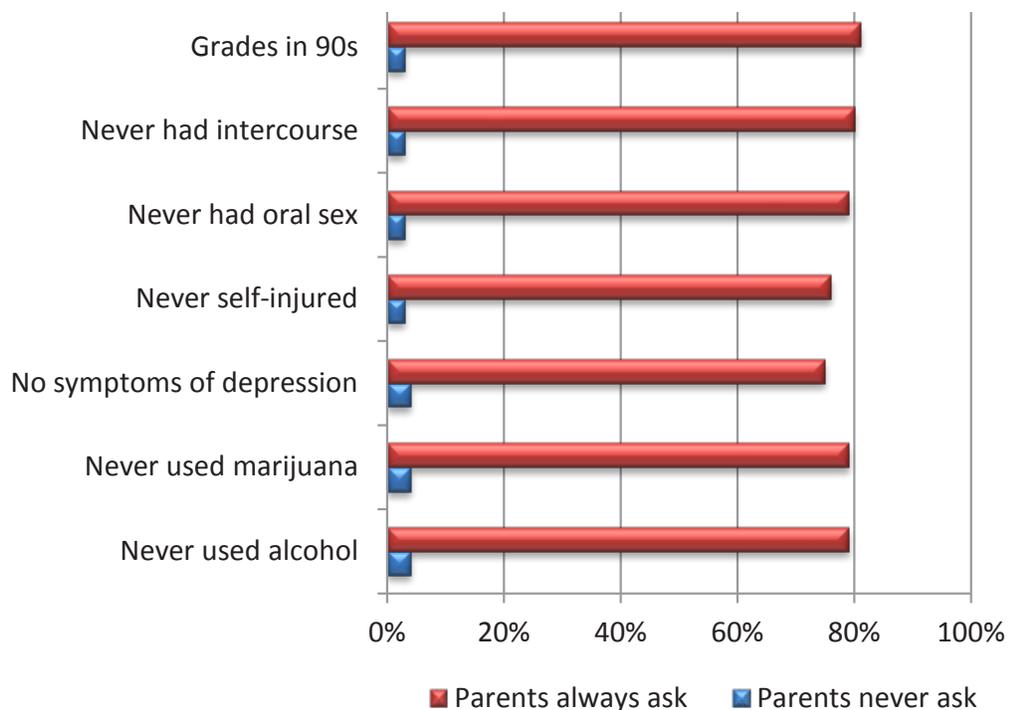
|   | Parents Never Discipline | Parents Always Discipline |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Ever had oral sex   | 41%                      | 31%                       |
| Ever had intercourse                                      | 45%                      | 29%                       |
| Grades in 90s   | 33%                      | 44%                       |
| Grades below 65   | 3%                       | 1%                        |
| Ever used alcohol   | 49%                      | 36%                       |
| Binge drinking 4+ times/mo                                | 6%                       | 2%                        |
| Symptoms of depression<br>(many times in past six months) | 18%                      | 11%                       |
| Use Energy Drinks   | 39%                      | 30%                       |
| Use Drinks with Caffeine                                  | 22%                      | 15%                       |
| Sleep 6 hrs or less                                       | 18%                      | 16%                       |



### Asking where youth are going

Youth responses show that the strongest impact on risk behaviors is when their parents ask them where they are going when they go out. Youth frankly tell us that they aren't always honest when they answer this question, but the data clearly indicate that their parents asking correlates with youth making good decisions, better mental health, and better school performance.

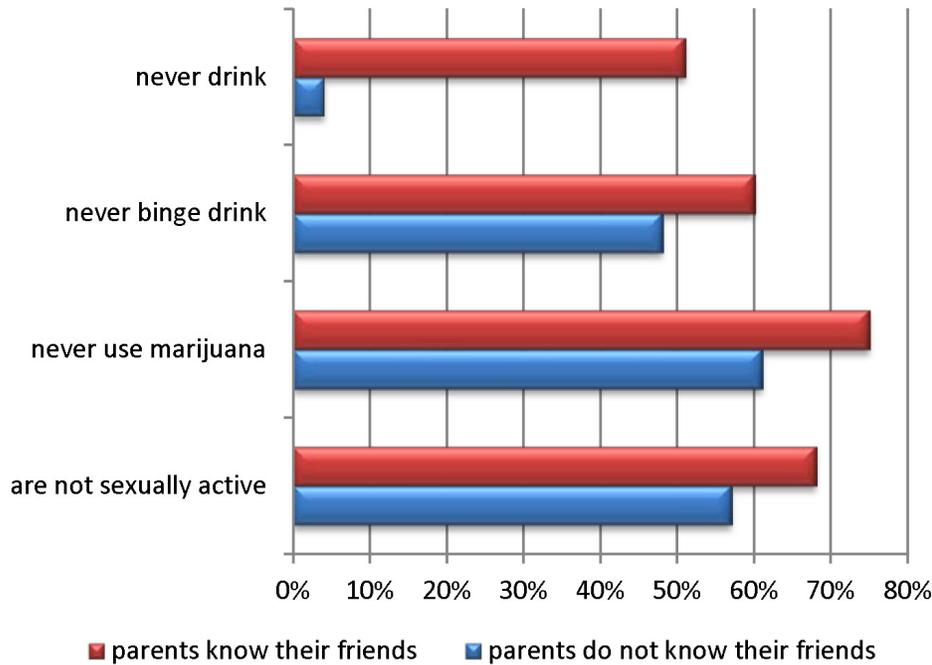
Figure 3.1 - Parents who ask where their child is going



### Know child's friends

Of youth who report that they never drink, 81% report that their parents know their friends, compared to 4% of youth whose parents never know their friends. There are similar differences among youth who report that they do not binge drink – 50% of their parents always know their friends and 4% of their parents never know their friends; and for youth who do not use marijuana, 49% of their parents always know their friends and 4% never know their friends. Similar results are found among youth who report not being sexually active; their parents always know their friends 48% of the time, and never know their friends 4% of the time.

Figure 3.2 - Parents who know their child's friends



**Family dinners**

Again in 2011, youth who report that they eat dinner with their family occasionally are twice as likely to not engage in risk behaviors as those who report never eating dinner with their family; in addition, youth who report eating dinner with their family nearly every night are twice as likely not to engage in risk behaviors as those who eat with their families occasionally. This trend applies to drinking and other drug use, sexual behaviors, mental health indicators, and grades earned in school. Prevention advocates nationwide have been urging family dinners for many years based on similar research, and the Southampton TAP findings reinforce the importance of this activity to the positive development of children and youth.

**Knowing Adults who Engage in Risk Behaviors**

Respondents were asked if they know adults in their community who engage in certain risk behaviors. Forty-two percent (42%) of youth report knowing adults who have used illegal drugs in the past year, 67% report knowing adults who have been drunk or high in the past year, 25% report that they know adults who have sold or dealt drugs in the past year, and 42% report that they know adults who have done something that could get them in trouble with the police in the past year. These youth consistently show elevated abuse of substances. The following chart show youth reports of substance abuse analyzed by whether they know adults who engage in similar risk behaviors.



| <b>Adults Drunk/high</b> | <b>Know adults</b> | <b>Don't know adults</b> |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Ever drank               | 45%                | 15%                      |
| Binge drink              | 24%                | 6%                       |
| High at school           | 28%                | 8%                       |
| High at school events    | 17%                | 4%                       |
| Used rx.meds to get high | 10%                | 3%                       |
| Used otc meds            | 8%                 | 3%                       |
| Suspended from school    | 23%                | 15%                      |

| <b>Adults illegal drugs</b> | <b>Know adults</b> | <b>Don't know adults</b> |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Ever drink                  | 66%                | 27%                      |
| Binge drink                 | 31%                | 7%                       |
| Ever use marijuana          | 43%                | 14%                      |
| High at school              | 28%                | 6%                       |
| High at school events       | 22%                | 5%                       |
| Ever used rx meds           | 14%                | 3%                       |
| Ever used otc               | 11%                | 3%                       |
| Suspended from school       | 30%                | 12%                      |

| <b>Adults deal drugs</b> | <b>Know adults</b> | <b>Don't know adults</b> |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Ever drink               | 67%                | 33%                      |
| Binge drink              | 37%                | 11%                      |
| Ever use marijuana       | 60%                | 18%                      |
| High at school           | 37%                | 8%                       |
| Ever use rx meds         | 8%                 | 4%                       |
| Ever use otc             | 13%                | 4%                       |
| Suspended from school    | 36%                | 14%                      |

| <b>Adults Police Trouble</b> | <b>Know adults</b> | <b>Don't know adults</b> |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Ever drink                   | 64%                | 29%                      |
| Binge drink                  | 30%                | 9%                       |
| Use marijuana                | 48%                | 15%                      |
| High at school               | 27%                | 7%                       |
| Ever use rx meds             | 14%                | 3%                       |
| Ever use otc                 | 11%                | 3%                       |
| Suspended from school        | 29%                | 13%                      |

Youth who report knowing adults involved with drug use, drug sales, or other illegal behaviors are also more likely to be in trouble themselves. They report elevated rates of gang involvement, being arrested, and being suspended from school. Eighty-seven percent (87%) of youth who identify themselves as involved in a gang know an adult who was drunk or high in the last year, compared to 13% who did not. Seventy-four percent (74%) of gang involved youth also know adults who use illegal drugs, 60% know adults who deal illegal drugs, and 73% know adults who could be in trouble with the police. Seventy-nine percent (79%) of youth who report that they have been suspended from school know adults who have been drunk or high in the past year, 73% know adults who use illegal drugs, 64% know adults who sell illegal drugs, and 63% know adults who could have been in trouble with the police. Of youth who report being arrested, 84% know adults who have been drunk or high, 73% report knowing adults who use illegal drugs, 63% know adults that deal drugs, and 79% know adults who could be in trouble with the police.

Lastly, when looking at students who report spending more than 20 hours per week at home alone, 90% report knowing adults who get drunk or high, 68% know adults who use illegal drugs, 53% know adults who deal drugs, and 60% know adults who could be in trouble with the police.



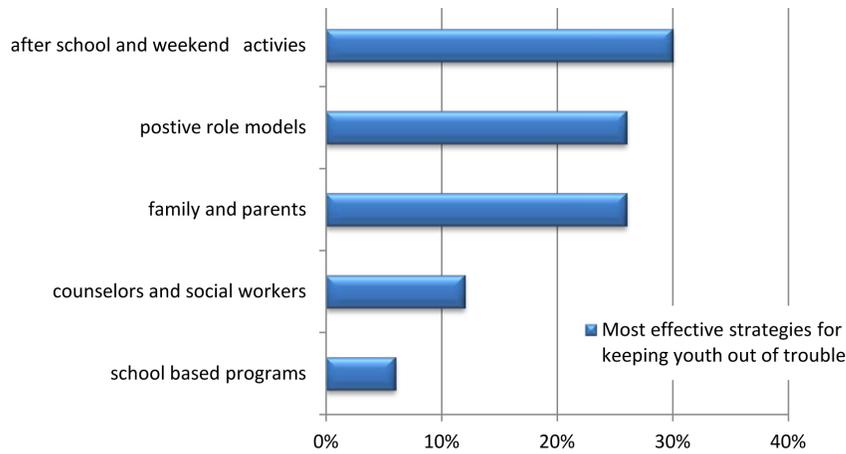
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## PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Research shows that the most effective risk prevention strategies are to increase the protective factors in a young person's life. Protective factors serve to protect youth from choosing risky behaviors or experiencing mental and physical health problems. The parenting practices discussed in the previous section are one example of protective factors. When parents use these strategies with some consistency, their children are less likely to make poor decisions.

The TAP Survey has one question that asks students directly their opinion on the most effective strategy for keeping them out of trouble. Their responses show that the community and their parents play equally important roles; 30% identify after school and weekend activities, 26% identify positive role models, and 26% believe family and parents are most effective. Counselors and social workers are identified by 12% of youth surveyed, and school based programs concerning drug and alcohol prevention are selected by 6% of the respondents. Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondents report that there are fun things to do in the community, which is an increase from previous years, while 38% disagree with that statement. Despite the lack of public transportation in the community, 93% of respondents report that they have reliable access to transportation to get them to community activities. Eighty-four percent of respondents report that there is an adult in the community that they can go to with a serious problem.

Figure 4.1 - Most effective strategies for keeping youth out of trouble



**Trends**

Since 2002, TAP respondents report an increase in resources available to them in the Southampton community:

**Which of the following is most helpful in keeping you from illegal or harmful activities?**

|                          | 2005 | 2008 | 2011 |
|--------------------------|------|------|------|
| Activities out of school | 25%  | 31%  | 30%  |
| Positive role models     | 26%  | 26%  | 26%  |
| Parents/family           | 28%  | 25%  | 26%  |
| Counselor                | 15%  | 13%  | 12%  |
| School programs          | 5%   | 6%   | 6%   |

**In my community, there are fun things for kids my age to do**

|          | 2002 | 2005 | 2008 | 2011 |
|----------|------|------|------|------|
| Agree    | 32%  | 55%  | 59%  | 62%  |
| Disagree | 68%  | 45%  | 41%  | 38%  |

**There is an adult in the community that I can talk to**

|  | 2002 | 2005 | 2008 |
|--|------|------|------|
|  | 76%  | 85%  | 84%  |



## CONCLUSION

*The findings of the 2011 administration of the Teen Assessment Project indicate some significant improvements in risk behavior reports from previous administrations. At the same time, they also indicate continuing problem areas that need to be addressed.*

*Significant differences primarily lie in the area of reported alcohol use; these rates continue a declining trend, but the drop is sharper this year than has been seen in the past for 8th and 10th grade students. Binge drinking reports also have significantly dropped for all grade levels. These data could indicate that an increase in local community education activities over the last few years is having a positive impact on behaviors.*

*We also see continued decline in the reported use of cigarettes, which mirrors national trends and reflects national public health efforts to curb smoking. Illicit prescription and over the counter drug use reports also show a decline larger than expected. Marijuana use rates show a slight decline.*

*These data could indicate a meaningful reduction in the use of substances that are the primary drugs of choice among local youth, which is a heartening development. This good news is tempered by the fact that any use of these substances is dangerous and there is much work to be done to prevent use at any level.*

*Reports of being gang involved have also dropped significantly, down from 9% to 4% since data were first collected in 2005. This is another area that has seen an increase in local community education efforts over the last few years.*

*Indicating a need for strengthened prevention efforts are the reported rates of symptoms of depression, contemplation of suicide, and self-injury, which show no improvement in the last three years. Efforts to address mental health concerns have stalled in recent years because of budget constraints, which may be reflected here. Also indicating a need for continued concern are the rates of risk behaviors among our vulnerable populations of youth – those who have special needs, are immigrant or refugees, are victims of bullying or harassment, or whose sexual orientation is not heterosexual. Nationwide incidents of violence perpetrated by individuals who fall into these vulnerable population categories indicate the imperative for closer attention and much improved services to these groups.*

*The findings in this report also indicate the need for continued support of preventive measures that may be having an impact on reduction in some risk behaviors. These measures*

*include parent education regarding preventive parenting strategies, educating and mobilizing communities to have a positive impact on youth engagement in risk behaviors, and providing a broad range of positive youth development opportunities, both in our communities and in schools. Specific recommendations in each of these areas are listed below.*

**Parenting for prevention strategies:**

- *Family dinners as often as possible, ideally twice a week at least*
- *Asking your teen where they're going when they go out*
- *Knowing your child's friends*
- *Setting clear rules*
- *Disciplining when rules are broken*

**Educating and mobilizing communities:**

- *Ensure that adults in the community understand the importance of their status as role models for all children and youth*
- *Limit youth access to alcohol, including aggressive education about and enforcement of all laws regarding underage alcohol use*
- *Supporting community coalitions that address prevention of youth risk behaviors*

**Providing a broad range of positive youth development opportunities:**

- *Provide youth with a broad range of accessible, affordable, healthy and positive youth development opportunities in both the community and the schools*
- *Identify youth in need of mental health counseling and support, and ensure that they and their families have access to the services that they need*
- *Provide additional support to youth who fall into the vulnerable population categories, ensuring that their individual needs are addressed*
- *Provide youth with accurate information on the potential consequences of engaging in risk behaviors*



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