

PAYS AT A GLANCE

 Parents and caregivers... check out what Bucks County youth had to say about substance use, mental health, bullying and more in the 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS)!

Since 1989, the Commonwealth has conducted a survey of school students in the 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grades to learn about their behavior, attitudes and knowledge concerning alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and violence. PAYS is conducted every two years.

HIGHEST LIFETIME USAGE RATES - ALL GRADES

34.2% 

ALCOHOL

State level: 34.8%

30 day and lifetime use
down from 2019 

13.1% 

MARIJUANA

State level: 13.1%

30 day and lifetime use
down from 2019 

10.6% 

VAPING

State level: 13.0%

30 day use down
from 2019 

AVAILABILITY OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Increased percentages that students reported, "Taking prescription drugs from a family member living in my home" (except for 12th graders) and "Took them from other relatives not living in my home" (except for 6th and 8th graders).

 **67.7%** of 6th graders state they took prescription drugs from a family member living in their home.

AVAILABILITY OF ALCOHOL

"Parents gave it to me" went up in 2021 (reported by **30.0%** of students in all grades).

 **51.6%** of 6th graders state their parents provided them with alcohol.

Risk factors = characteristics at the biological, psychological, family, community, or cultural level that precede - and are associated with - a higher likelihood of negative outcomes.

Protective factors = characteristics associated with a lower likelihood of negative outcomes or that reduce a risk factor's impact.

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

HIGHEST RISK FACTORS

 **55.7%**
Low Commitment
Toward School

 **50.2%**
Parental Attitudes
Favorable Toward
Antisocial Behavior

 **46.8%**
Perceived Risk
of Drug Use

HIGHEST PROTECTIVE FACTORS

 **65.1%**
Family
Attachment

 **64.5%**
Opportunities
for Prosocial
Involvement

 **61.6%**
Family Rewards
for Prosocial
Involvement

POSITIVE PARENTING PRACTICES

Research shows that parents play an important role in preventing teens from engaging in substance use. These six parenting skills from PAMStart.org can help you prevent or reduce your teenager's use of drugs and alcohol.

- 1 Clear, calm communication**
Developing good communication skills helps parents catch problems early, support positive behavior and stay aware of what is happening in their children's lives.
- 2 Regular encouragement**
Consistent encouragement helps youth feel good about themselves and gives them confidence to try new activities, develop new friendships, explore their creativity and tackle difficult tasks.
- 3 Negotiating problems and finding solutions**
Negotiating solutions is a way for parents and teens to work together to solve problems, make changes and improve cooperation. Going through the process can teach teens skills that will be valuable in their adult lives.
- 4 Setting limits**
Setting limits helps parents teach self-control and responsibility, show caring and provide safe boundaries. Research shows that parents are most effective in setting limits when they follow through right away. Youth are more likely to follow rules if they know you are checking up on them and will enforce the consequences consistently.
- 5 Supervision**
When teens begin to spend more and more time away from home, monitoring their behavior is challenging. Supervision helps parents recognize developing problems, promote safety and stay involved.
- 6 Knowing their friends**
It's not uncommon for youth to feel overwhelmed by a need to please and impress their friends. These feelings can leave teens open to peer pressure.



RESOURCES

Parents play a big role in preventing youth substance use. Learn about your role as a parent and get additional information by visiting these useful websites.

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
www.drugabuse.gov/parents-educators

SAMHSA's Talk. They Hear You. Underage Drinking Prevention Campaign
www.samhsa.gov/underage-drinking

DEA's Operation Prevention Parent Toolkit
www.operationprevention.com/#parent-toolkit

Partnership to End Addiction
www.drugfree.org

PA Liquor Control Board's Know When. Know How. Campaign
www.knowwhenknowhow.org

