

Chesterfield County Coordinating Council

Findings from the Student Survey

2003-2011

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Findings from the Student Survey, 2003-2011

Introduction

The Student Survey gauges middle and high school students' attitudes toward family and dating violence; experience of violence in theirs' and their friends' lives; views of the acceptability of violent behaviors in dating and family relationships; views on more general aspects of dating relationships; substance use; and perceptions of the extent of and community response to relationship violence in the community.

The survey began in 2003 as part of a broader effort to examine a range of factors implicated in dating and family violence and included some questions regarding general risk behaviors. For the 2006-2007 school year, the survey was revised to include new items related to substance use and the student's own and perceived parental attitudes toward substance use. The survey was revised again for the 2008-2009 school year, adding items for the use of medications without a prescription and over-the-counter medications, estimated alcohol use among peers, the estimated frequency with which students are offered access to tobacco, alcohol, and drugs, peer attitudes towards substance use, and additional items on types of dating violence. For some measures, then, data are available across seven years, for other factors data are available for four years, and for still other factors data are available for a single year.

Methods

The survey was administered to a convenience sample of middle and high school students in the spring or fall during each of the academic years from 2003 to 2009. Data were not collected in the 2009-2010 school year due to competing demands and data collection resumed in the 2010-2011 school year. Data were collected from at least one classroom at each grade level in all middle and high schools in the County; in the first year of the survey, however, one high school opted not to participate due to competing demands.

An introductory letter that included the date and time for survey administration and the consent and assent forms were sent home with all of the students in the classrooms selected, and students returned these to the school by a specified date. A reminder was sent home with students prior to the date of administration. Various incentives (e.g., pizza party) were used to assure an adequate response. The survey was administered in a group setting by a staff member of the Chesterfield County Coordinating Council (CCCC) or a community volunteer. The sample consisted of 273 students in year 1; 173 in year 2; 327 in year 3; 498 in year 4; 428 in year 5; 351 in year 6, and 490 in year 7.

Results

Characteristics of the Students

Table 1 shows the age, gender, race or ethnicity, and grade level of students in each of the survey years. As may be seen, the average age of students completing the survey has remained fairly consistent across all years of data collection. So, too, has the gender distribution of participants, other than in the first year. It is interesting to note the increase in Latino participants, especially for the most recent data collection period. The proportion of African-Americans and Whites in the sample had been fairly consistent through the first six years but there has been a notable decrease in African-American participation and a small increase in White participation. In addition, the sharp shift in grade level participation that occurred in year three has moved back toward the distribution of earlier years.

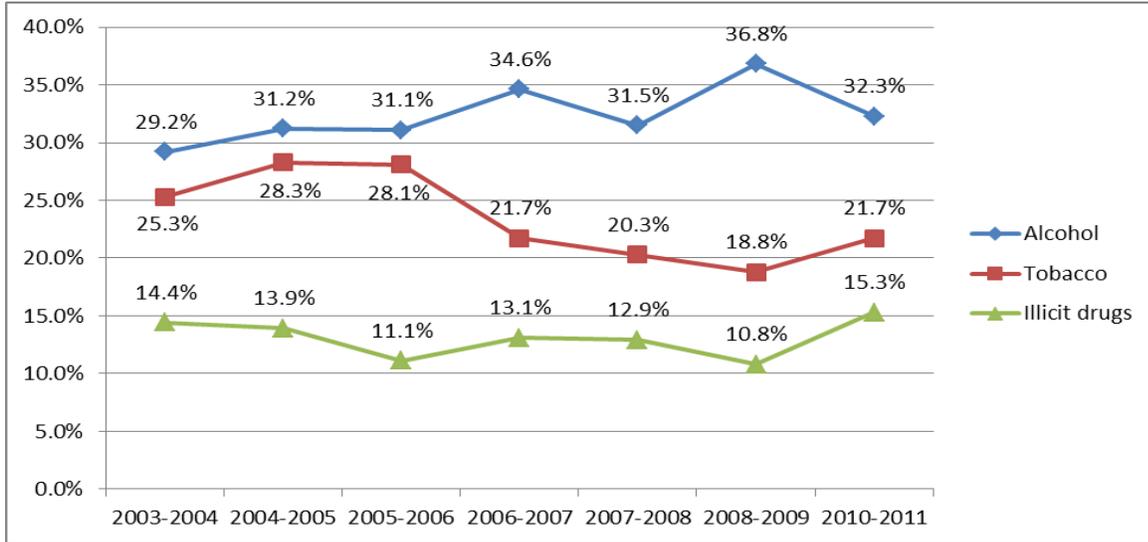
Table 1. Average age, gender, race/ethnicity, and grade level, 2003-2009, 2010-2011

		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7
Average age in years		14.3	14.7	14.3	14.2	14.1	14.2	14.1
Gender	Female	72.7%	61.9%	64.9%	65.3%	62.7%	65.2%	62.9%
	Male	27.3%	38.1%	35.1%	34.7%	37.3%	34.8%	37.1%
Race/Ethnicity	Black or African-American	35.3%	37.3%	34.0%	34.7%	36.2%	34.1%	27.0%
	Hispanic and other minorities	5.3%	9.6%	5.9%	7.4%	5.2%	8.0%	12.0%
	White	59.5%	53.0%	60.0%	57.9%	58.2%	57.9%	61.0%
Grade level	Middle school	45.0%	42.6%	29.8%	38.5%	50.4%	46.1%	45.5%
	High school	55.0%	57.4%	70.2%	61.5%	49.6%	53.9%	54.5%

Substance use¹

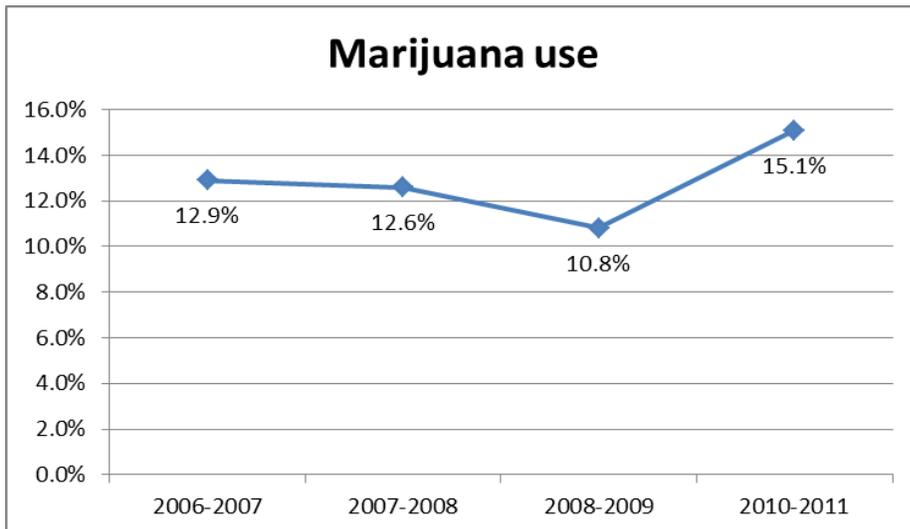
The survey included questions regarding students' use of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, and illicit drugs over the previous six months, age of first use, and students' own and perceived parental attitudes toward substance use. Figure 1 shows the results of past 6 month substance use. While tobacco use appears to be on the rise following a three year decline, the decrease in rates across all years is significant, $\chi^2(6) = 15.4, p < .05$, with rates falling from 25.3% in 2003 to 21.7% in 2011. Alcohol use has increased over time from 29.2% in 2003 to 32.3% in 2011, although a small decrease was found between 2009 and 2011. After a decrease between 2003 and 2009, illicit drug use rose between 2009 and 2011 and at 15.3% is at its highest level since the survey began. The changes in alcohol and illicit drug use were not statistically significant.

Figure 1. Alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use in the past six months, 2003-2011.



Data on marijuana use have been collected separately from other illicit drug use since 2006. Figure 2 shows the trend in marijuana use over that time. The data show that marijuana use increased between 2006 and 2011, from 12.9% to 15.1%. However, this change was not statistically significant. In 2011, for the first time, data were collected on the use of medications without a prescription and the use of over-the-counter medications to get high. Both rates were comparable, at 3.7% for prescription medications and 3.5% for over-the-counter medications. The strength of the relationship between these two measures, $r = .50$, $p < .001$, suggests a strong probability that the same students are using both prescription medications and over-the-counter medicines.

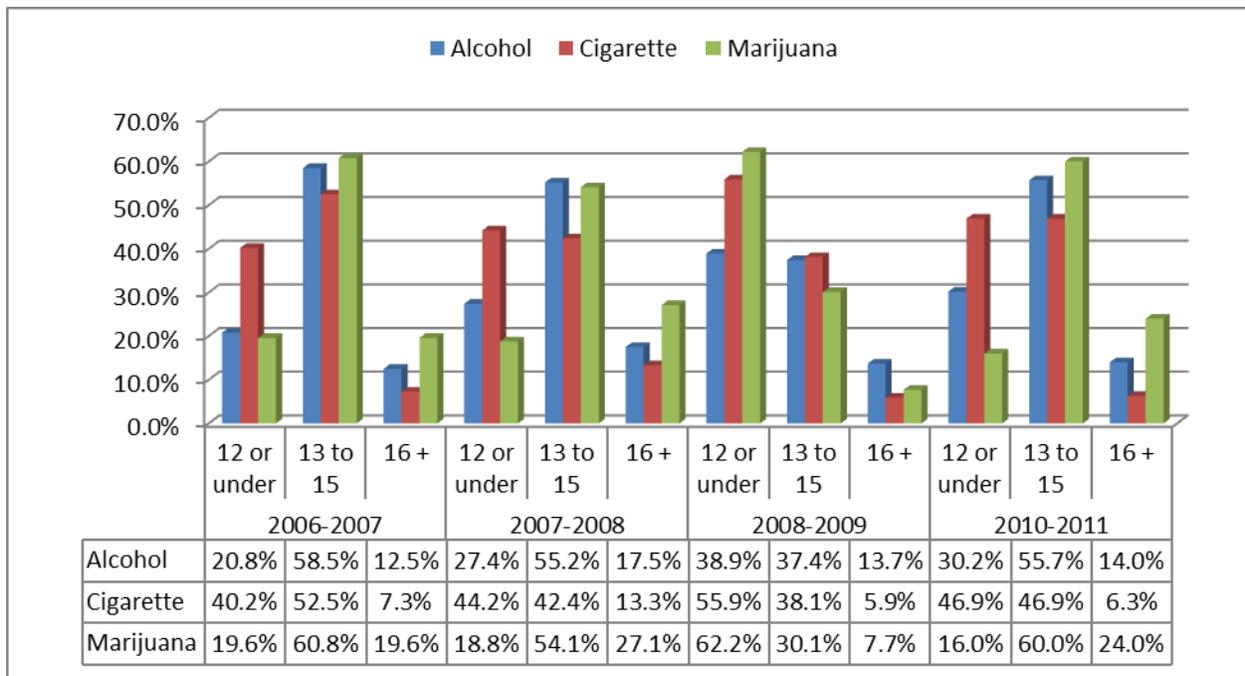
Figure 2. Marijuana use 2006-2011



Data have also been collected on age of first use for cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana since 2006 (Figure 3). These results show a general trend toward early initiation of all substances. The exception is marijuana use, with an increase of 6.7% between 2006 and 2011 in students who reported initiating use by age 12. There also was an increase of 9.4% in the proportion of students who reported alcohol use by age 12, and a decrease of 3.6% in the proportion of students who reported marijuana use by age 12.

It is disconcerting to note that over 90% of students who smoke reported initiating tobacco use by age 15, with half of these having done so by age 12. In addition, over 4/5th of students who reporting alcohol use started drinking by age 15 with nearly 1/3rd initiating alcohol use by age 12. Finally, over 3/4 of students who reported marijuana use began using the drug by age 15 with about 1/6th initiating marijuana use by age 12. This suggests that young students have easy access to substances of abuse. This is supported by the finding that about 20% of students surveyed in 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 reported being offered tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs at least once per month and perceive that about 3/5ths of students at their grade level are offered substances of abuse at least once per month.

Figure 3. Age of first use of cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana, 2006-2011



Data on the frequency of past month cigarette, alcohol, and marijuana use have also been collected since 2006. These results show that the frequency of tobacco use increased between 2009 and 2011 with about 15% of students indicating smoking half a pack of cigarettes or more a day, up from 9.5% in 2009 but still well below the 31.8% who smoked half a pack or more a day in 2006. The four year trend is statistically significant, $\chi^2(6) = 17.4, p < .01$.

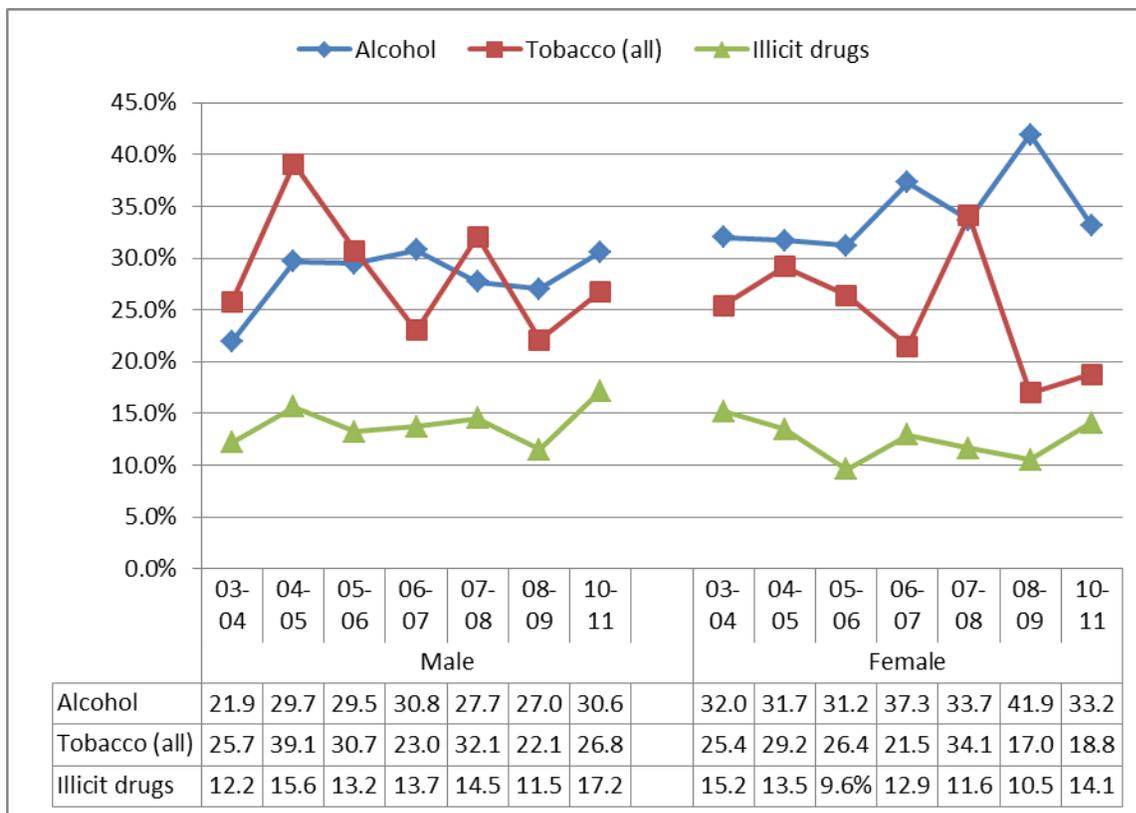
Following a sharp decline in 2009 in the proportion of students reporting drinking alcohol on three or more occasions in the past 30 days, the rate of alcohol use is again on the rise. In 2009, 34.7% of students reported drinking on three or more occasions while 50.8% reported doing so in 2011. This is near the levels found in 2007 and 2008, suggesting that the 2009 result may have been an anomaly. The trend across time is statistically significant, $\chi^2(6) = 22.1, p < .01$.

A similar trend was found for frequency of marijuana use, with use on three or more occasions in the past 30 days increasing from 16.3% in 2009 to 62.9% in 2011. This represents a return to levels comparable to those found in 2007 and 2008. This change across years is statistically significant, $\chi^2(6) = 74.1, p < .001$.

Substance use by gender

The percent of males and females reporting tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drug use by year are shown in Figure 4. As may be seen, the steep decline in tobacco use among females in 2008-2009 gave way to an increase of 3.6% in 2010-2011. However, the tobacco use rate among females remains relatively low in comparison to the trend across all years. Similarly, the rate of tobacco use among males increased in 2010-2011, from 22.1% to 26.8%. These differences across time were not statistically significant.

Figure 4. Substance use by gender, 2003-2011.



Alcohol use among males rose by 3.6% in 2010-2011, from 27.0% to 30.6%, and is now near the highest rate seen over the seven years of the study. The rate of alcohol use among females declined by 8.7% over the same period, from a seven year high of 41.9% to 33.2%, a statistically significant decrease, $\chi^2(6) = 11.8, p < .05$. The differences across all years were not statistically significant either for males or females.

Illicit drug use increased between 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 for both males and females, rising from 11.5% to 17.2% among males and from 10.5% to 14.1% among females. Illicit drug use for males is now at the highest point across the seven year study. The differences across all years and between the last two data collection periods were statistically non-significant for both genders.

Substance use by age

Tobacco use rates among students 14 and younger (Table 5) continued to decline, falling by 13.1% across the seven year study, with 11.1% of students in this age range reporting tobacco use in 2010-2011. The change across all years is statistically significant, $\chi^2(6) = 16.0, p < .05$. For students 15 and older, tobacco use has increased across all study years, from 27.7% in 2006 to 33.3% in 2011. This change is not statistically significant.

Alcohol use rates among students 14 and younger have also declined over the seven years of the study, falling from 23.7% in 2006 to 16.9% in 2011. This change is statistically significant, $\chi^2(6) = 16.8, p < .05$. The decrease in alcohol use rates among students 14 and younger is most dramatic when comparing 2009 and 2011, representing a decline of 10.7%. Alcohol use rates among students ages 15 and older have shown a steady increase over the course of the study, showing an 11.9% increase from 2003 to 2011. While this change is not statistically significant, it is important to note that this rate is near the peak level of 52.5% found in 2006. Illicit drug use among students 14 and younger declined for seventh straight year, falling from a peak of 12.1% in 2003 to 5.1% in 2011. The change across all years, however, is not statistically significant. Illicit drug use among students 15 and older has fluctuated over the seven years of the study but rose 8.6% overall from 17.9% in 2003 to 26.5% in 2011. The 2011 rate is 10.3% higher than in 2009. The change across all years is statistically significant, $\chi^2(6) = 13.0, p < .05$.

Attitudes toward substance use

Beginning in 2006-2007, the survey included items asking students how much harm they saw in substance use at various levels (Table 2). The trend in student beliefs about the harm of smoking a pack of cigarettes a day has been consistent across time but with a 3.2% increase in the proportion of students who see moderate or great harm in tobacco use. However, this change across time is not statistically significant. More striking, however, is the increase in the proportion of students who see moderate or great harm in weekly and daily alcohol use, an increase of 10.4% and 7.0%, respectively. These trends across time are statistically significant, $\chi^2(3) = 14.0, p < .01$ for weekly alcohol use and $\chi^2(3) = 8.7, p < .05$ for daily alcohol use.

Figure 5. Percent of students ages 14 and young and 15 and older reporting tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use, 2003-2011.

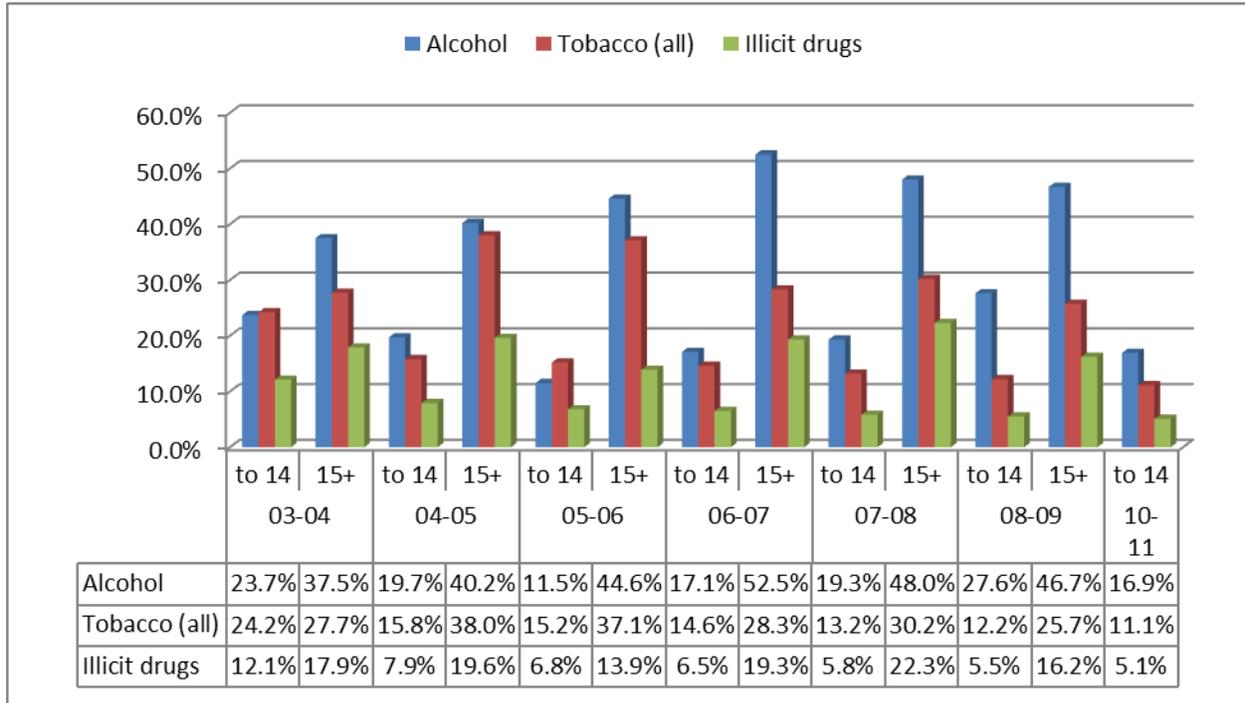


Table 2. Perceived harm of substance use, 2006-2011

Type and level of use	2006-2007		2007-2008		2008-2009		2008-2009	
	Level		Level		Level		Level	
	None or slight	Mod. or great						
1 pack of cigarettes a day	18.2%	81.9%	20.6%	79.4%	19.0%	81.0%	15.8%	84.2%
1-2 drinks 1 or 2 times a week	52.4%	47.6%	54.1%	45.9%	57.8%	42.2%	45.4%	54.6%
1-2 drinks nearly every day	20.5%	79.5%	23.6%	76.4%	23.8%	76.2%	16.8%	83.2%
Smoke marijuana once or twice a month	38.6%	61.4%	38.0%	62.0%	45.5%	54.5%	38.7%	61.3%
Smoke marijuana once or twice a week	21.6%	78.4%	21.2%	78.8%	23.3%	76.7%	21.1%	78.9%

There was also an increase in the proportion of students who saw moderate or great harm in monthly and weekly marijuana use, with increases of 6.8% and 2.2% respectively. However, these proportions have been fairly consistent across all years of the study and there were no statistically significant differences.

From 2006 through 2009 students were also asked their perceptions of their parents' attitudes toward substance use (Table 3). In general, the proportions of students who believed their parents held views that smoking, drinking, and using marijuana was fairly or very wrong changed little over the years. For the 2010-2011 school year, these items were dropped in favor of asking about friends' attitudes towards substance use, since friends' attitudes are generally believed to be a better marker of the extent to which young people experience social pressure to change their behaviors. These results are shown in Table 4.

While comparisons between perceived friends' and parents' attitudes may be made only for tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana, the data show that students perceive friends to be far less critical of the use of these substances.

Table 3. Perceived parental attitudes toward substance use, 2006-2009

How wrong do your parents think it would be for you to...	2006-2007		2007-2008		2008-2009	
	Not at all or a little	Fairly or very	Not at all or a little	Fairly or very	Not at all or a little	Fairly or very
Smoke?	12.5%	87.5%	10.1%	89.9%	12.0%	88.0%
Drink alcohol?	15.5%	84.5%	15.6%	84.4%	13.7%	86.3%
Smoke marijuana?	6.8%	93.2%	5.2%	94.8%	3.7%	96.3%

Table 4. Friends' attitudes towards substance use, 2010-2011

How wrong to you think your close friends would say it is for you to...	Not at all or a little	Fairly or very
Smoke?	29.7%	70.3%
Drink alcohol?	37.5%	62.5%
Smoke marijuana?	26.6%	73.4%
Use medicines without a doctor's prescription?	18.2%	81.8%
Use over-the-counter medicines	14.9%	85.1%

The individual perceived risk of harm items and the perceived parental and friend attitude items may be meaningfully combined to form indices. Each index produces a score between 1 and 4 with higher scores indicating greater perceived risk of harm for substance use in general and greater perceived disapproval by parents or friends for substance use in general. Table 5 shows the means and standard deviations by year for the two indices.

Table 5. Mean and standard deviation for perceived risk of harm and parent and peer attitudes toward substance use, 2006-2011

	2006-2007		2007-2008		2008-2009		2010-2011	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Perceived risk of harm index	3.0	0.8	3.0	0.9	2.9	0.8	3.1	0.9
Parental attitudes toward substance use index	3.6	0.7	3.6	0.7	3.7	0.6		
Friends attitudes towards substance use index							3.2	1.0

As is shown, the mean score for perceived risk of harm from substance use increased between 2009 and 2011. The change across time in perceived risk of harm is statistically significant, $F(3/1,762) = 2.95, p < .05$. There was no substantive change in parental attitudes across the three years these data were collected. The values shown indicate that students believe that substance use poses a moderate risk of harm and that students generally perceive that their parents believe that substance use is very wrong. That students perceive friends to be less critical of substance use is reflected in the lower mean score in comparison to the mean scores for student perceptions of parental attitudes. However, the mean value for perceptions of friends' attitudes still shows that students believe that their peers would say that substance use is moderately wrong.

These indices were analyzed to see if there were differences by gender and age. The results showed that from 2006 to 2011 females were statistically significantly more likely than were males to perceive greater risk of harm from substance use, $F(1/1,753) = 44.45, p < .001$. There was no statistically significant gender difference for perceived parental or perceived friends' attitudes toward substance use.

There was a statistically significant difference by age for the perceived risks of harm from substance use, $F(1/1745) = 7.41, p < .01$, with older students perceiving a greater risk of harm than younger students. There was also a statistically significant age difference across years for perceived parental attitudes, $F(1/1255) = 16.79, p < .001$, with younger students perceiving higher levels of parental disapproval of substance use than older students. Finally, there was also a statistically significant difference by age for perceptions of friends' attitudes towards substance use, $F(1/486) = 62.26, p < .001$, with younger students indicating that friends would be more critical of substance use than would older students.

Student estimates of alcohol use and reports of offers of substances

Beginning in 2008 students were asked to estimate the proportion of students at their school who used alcohol in the past 30 days (Table 6). As is shown, estimates of classmates' alcohol use declined among all students and among middle and high school students between 2009 and 2011. Estimates made by male students increased between 2009 and 2011 while estimates among females decreased. Finally, there was a decrease in estimates of alcohol use both for younger and older students between the two survey years. The difference among all students was not statistically significant. The difference by year and grade level was statistically significant, $F(3/817) = 201.0, p < .001$, as was the difference by year and gender, $F(3/818) = 9.64, p < .001$. Finally, the difference by year and age was also statistically significant, $F(3/820) = 176.9, p < .001$.

Table 6. Estimates of past 30 day alcohol use among classmates for all students and by grade level, gender, and age, 2009-2011.

		2008-2009		2010-2011	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
All students		47.8%	32.1%	44.6%	33.0%
By grade level	Middle	28.7%	30.1%	23.2%	29.1%
	High	63.9%	23.0%	62.1%	24.4%
By gender	Male	38.6%	31.8%	40.0%	35.3%
	Female	52.5%	31.2%	46.8%	31.3%
By age	14 and younger	30.2%	29.9%	27.8%	31.2%
	15 and older	66.8%	21.8%	62.8%	24.1%

Also for the first time in 2008-2009, students were asked to indicate the frequency with which they and other students in their grade had been approached with offers of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs. Table 7 shows these results for all students and for students by grade level, age, and gender. As is shown, the majority of all students and students by grade level, age, and gender students report being approached monthly or less. However, the proportions of students reporting being approached weekly or more increased between 2009 and 2011, with the exception of middle school students and students ages 14 and younger.

While students report that they are not approached often, they perceive that their classmates are often approached. However, the proportion of students who believe their classmates are approached weekly or more often generally fell between 2009 and 2011. The differences by year for the frequency with which students are approached was statistically significant for all students, $\chi^2(2) = 44.3, p < .001$; for middle school students, $\chi^2(2) = 81.8, p < .001$; for students 14 and younger, $\chi^2(2) = 59.8, p < .001$; and for male, $\chi^2(2) = 21.9, p < .001$, and female students, $\chi^2(2) = 22.9, p < .001$. The frequency with which classmates are approached was statistically significant for all students, $\chi^2(2) = 23.3, p < .001$; for middle school students, $\chi^2(2) = 34.3, p < .001$; for students 14 and younger, $\chi^2(2) = 31.7, p < .001$; and for male students, $\chi^2(2) = 25.6, p < .001$.

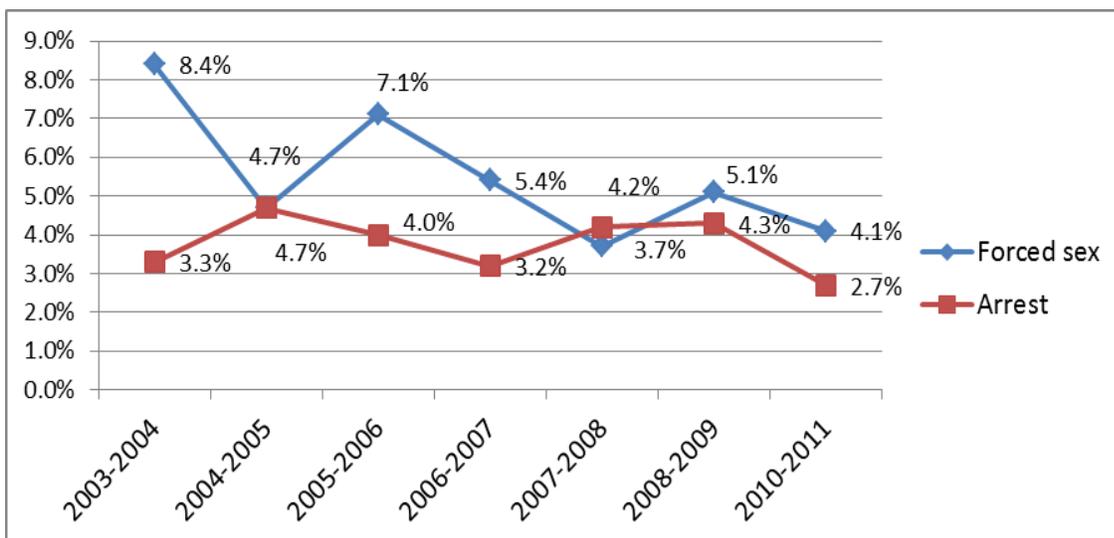
Table 7. Frequency of student reports of self and others being approached with offers of various substances, 2008-2009

Item	Category	2008-2009			2010-2011		
		None	Monthly or less	Weekly or more	None	Monthly or less	Weekly or more
Frequency self	All students	51.9	39.7	8.5	69.9	18.7	11.4
	Middle school	44.3	51.3	4.4	87.5	10.2	2.3
	High School	58.2	29.9	12.0	55.2	26.1	18.8
	14 and younger	48.3	46.1	5.6	82.4	13.2	4.4
	15 and older	54.9	33.3	11.7	56.5	24.6	19.0
	Male	45.4	44.5	10.1	68.2	19.3	12.5
	Female	55.4	37.1	7.6	71.0	18.5	10.6
Frequency others	All students	9.7	51.4	39.0	22.2	40.5	37.3
	Middle school	14.6	67.5	17.9	42.3	40.9	16.7
	High School	5.6	37.4	57.0	5.1	40.1	54.9
	14 and younger	13.3	64.2	22.5	36.7	40.7	22.6
	15 and older	5.8	37.2	57.1	6.6	40.2	53.3
	Male	9.7	55.8	34.5	32.9	31.2	35.8
	Female	9.6	49.1	41.3	16.0	45.7	38.3

Other risk behavior

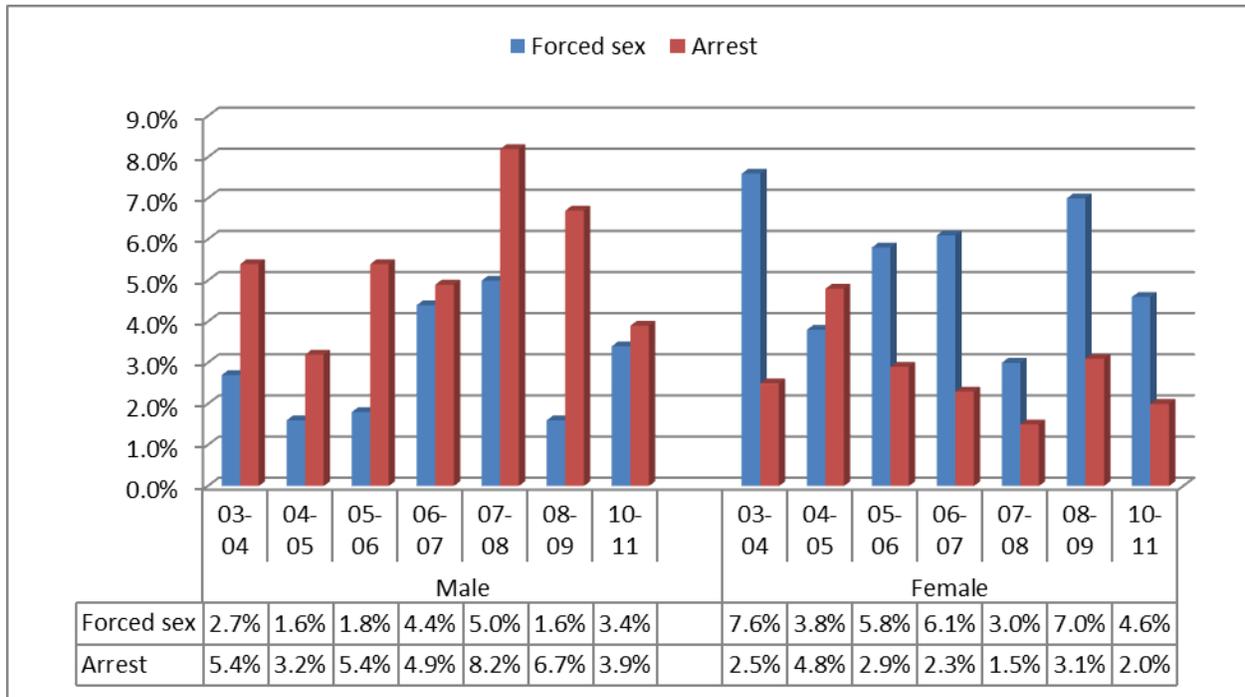
Students were asked whether they had been forced to have sex when they did not want to in the past 6 months and whether they had been arrested by the police over the same time period. These results for all students are shown in Figure 6. As may be seen, these rates declined between 2009 and 2011, with student arrests now at their lowest level since the survey began. The differences in rates across time, however, are not statistically significant.

Figure 6: Percent of students reporting forced sex or arrest in the past 6 months, 2003-2009



The percent of males and females indicating they had been forced to have sex or had been arrested is shown by year in Figure 7. As is shown, there was an increase in the proportion of males indicating they had been forced to have sex between 2009 and 2011, although the rate is lower than the peak rate of 2008. The proportion of females indicating having been forced to have sex also declined between 2009 and 2011. The rate of arrests for both males and females declined between 2009 and 2011, with male arrests approaching their lowest level over the seven years of the survey. These differences, however, were not statistically significant.

Figure 7: Percent of students reporting forced sex and arrest by gender, 2003-2011



Forced sex and arrests for students age 14 and younger are shown in Figure 8 while Figure 9 shows the same data for students age 15 and older. Forced sex and arrests for students age 14 and younger have continued to decrease and both rates are at their lowest level since the survey began. Forced sex and arrests for students ages 15 and older decreased between 2009 and 2011 but are still comparable to those found in the first year of the survey. The differences in forced sex across years is statistically significant for students ages 14 and younger, $\chi^2(6) = 18.8, p < .01$.

Figure 8. Percent of students ages 14 and younger reporting forced sex and arrests, 2003-2011

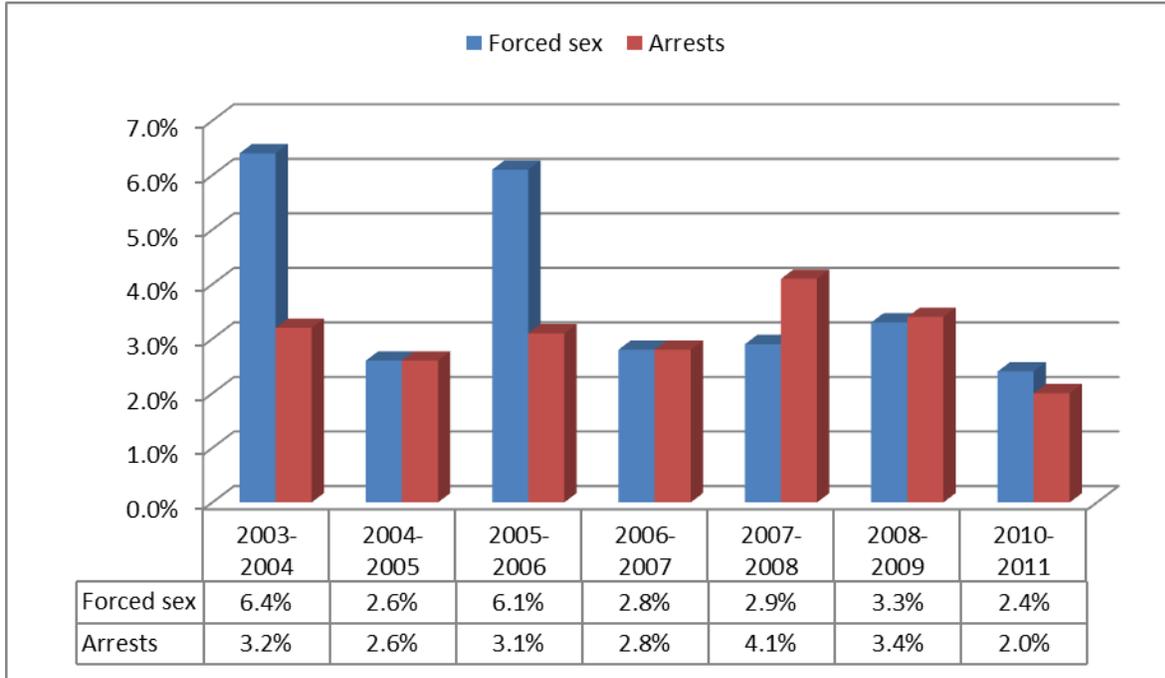
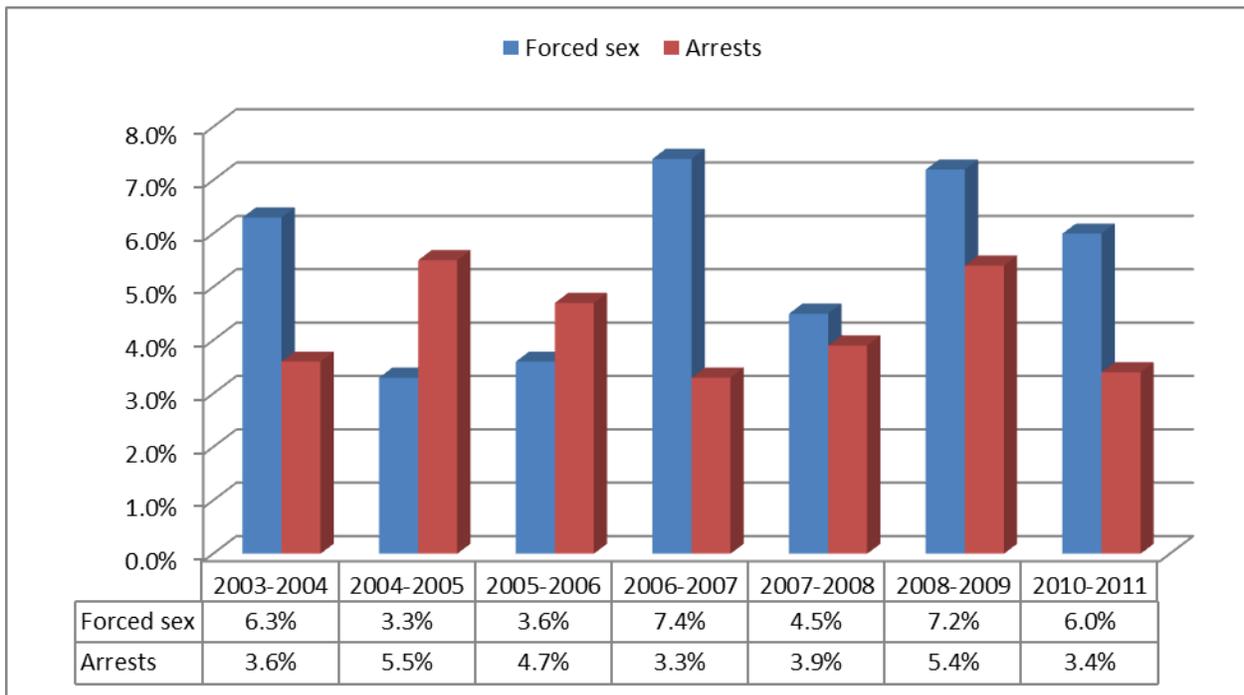


Figure 9. Percent of students ages 15 and older reporting forced sex and arrests, 2003-2011



Experience of violence

Knowledge of girl who experienced or witnessed violence or male who perpetrated violence

The survey asks students whether or not they know a girl who experienced violence in a dating relationship or at the hands of a family member, if they know a male who has perpetrated violence, and whether or not they know a girl who has witnessed violence². Table 8 shows the results for all students by year. From 2009 to 2011, there was a slight increase in the proportion of students who indicated knowing a girl who had been the victim of dating violence while knowing a girl who had been the victim of family violence decreased marginally. Knowing a male perpetrator of violence decreased by 4.7% while knowing a female who had witnessed violence increased by 6.7%. The difference across all study years in knowing a male perpetrator of violence was statistically significant, $\chi^2(6) = 24.8, p < .001$, as was knowing a girl who had witnessed violence, $\chi^2(6) = 14.5, p < .05$.

Table 8. Knowledge of victims, perpetrators, and victims of violence among all students, 2003-2011.

	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2010-2011
Know female victim dating violence	69.8%	64.3%	66.3%	63.7%	62.7%	61.2%	63.0%
Know female victim family violence	50.0%	56.0%	51.5%	47.0%	46.0%	43.7%	43.0%
Know male perpetrator	68.8%	66.0%	61.7%	56.1%	55.3%	56.4%	51.7%
Know female witnessed violence	68.9%	70.4%	61.3%	58.6%	58.5%	54.4%	61.1%

Table 9 shows the percent of students by gender who indicated knowing a female who had experienced or witnessed violence or a male who had perpetrated violence. The proportion of males who indicated knowing a female who had been the victim of dating violence increased between 2009 and 2011 while the proportion of females who knew a dating violence victim decreased over the same period to the lowest level since the survey began. These differences across years, however, were not statistically significant.

While increasing slightly over the last two data collection periods, the proportion of males who indicated knowing a female victim of family violence continued to be much lower than that found over the first several years of the survey. The proportion of females who indicated knowing a female victim of family violence continued to decline between 2009 and 2011 to the lowest level across the seven years of the survey. These differences across years were not statistically significant.

The proportion of males who indicated knowing a male perpetrator of violence also rose slightly between 2009 and 2011 while remaining well below the rate found over the first few years of the survey. Females indicating knowing a male perpetrator of violence decreased over the last two

Table 9. Percent of male and female students who said they knew a victim, perpetrator, or witness of violence, 2003-2011

Know victims, perpetrators, or witness	Percent yes													
	03-04		04-05		05-06		06-07		07-08		08-09		10-11	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Female who experienced dating violence	51.9	75.5	45.5	74.4	47.6	75.2	50.4	70.7	46.4	72.4	44.9	68.6	56.3	66.4
Female who experienced family violence	38.9	53.7	37.2	67.1	30.0	60.0	26.1	58.4	30.3	54.1	26.2	52.4	28.3	50.9
Male perpetrator of dating violence	60.7	71.4	53.1	72.7	47.3	68.4	41.6	64.4	36.9	66.5	43.8	63.0	46.7	54.8
Female who witnessed violence	54.5	73.4	58.5	77.1	43.5	67.6	46.7	64.7	45.3	65.7	36.4	62.3	54.1	64.4

regarding sexual violence victimization and perpetration, forced sexual touching and forced intercourse, and if these had occurred in the previous three months.

Although the first measure was considered an undercount of the true incidence of dating violence, consistently producing rates that fell far below national data, the measure continued to survey periods to the lowest level across all survey years. The difference across all years for females knowing a male perpetrator of violence was statistically significant, $\chi^2(6) = 18.7, p < .01$.

Following several years of decline, the proportion of males who indicated knowing a female who had witnessed violence increased between 2009 and 2011. The proportion of females who indicated knowing a female who had witnessed violence also increased, although marginally. These differences across years were not statistically significant.

Table 10 shows the proportion of students by age who indicated knowing a female victim of dating or family violence, a male perpetrator of violence, or a female who had witnessed violence. As may be seen, the proportion of students age 14 and young who reported knowing a female dating violence victim declined between 2009 and 2011, consistent with the trend across all study years. The proportion of students age 15 and older reporting knowing a female victim of dating violence increased by nearly 10 percentage points between 2009 and 2011, approaching the peak rate found in 2004. These differences, however, were not statistically significant.

Table 10. Knowledge of victimization by age, 2003-2011

Know Victims, Perpetrators, or Witnesses	Percent yes													
	2003-2004		2004-2005		2005-2006		2006-2007		2007-2008		2008-2009		2010-2011	
	Up to 14	15 and up												
Girl who experienced dating violence	62.9	78.6	57.4	68.0	56.5	71.3	52.5	73.4	55.8	71.1	57.1	65.2	50.3	75.3
Girl who experienced family violence	40.2	63.2	43.2	63.8	37.4	59.7	32.5	62.2	36.6	58.0	41.7	46.0	34.6	52.8
Male perpetrator	59.8	79.6	47.3	78.0	53.5	67.1	41.2	70.7	47.3	63.6	46.2	66.2	36.9	66.8
Girl who witnessed violence	61.2	78.5	55.0	78.9	54.1	65.1	46.5	68.0	55.0	62.8	49.5	59.3	52.1	69.7

A similar pattern was found for knowing a female victim of family violence, which decreased by seven percentage points for younger students and increased by nearly seven percentage points for older students. The differences across all study years, however, were not statistically significant.

Knowing a male who perpetrated violence decreased sharply between 2009 and 2011 for students ages 14 and younger, declining to the lowest rate seen since the study began. The rate for students ages 15 and older remained virtually unchanged over the same time period. The difference across all years for younger students was statistically significant, $\chi^2(6) = 20.8, p < .01$.

Knowing a female who had witnessed violence increased between 2009 and 2011 for both age groups, although the rates continued to be well below those seen in the first years of the study. The differences found for older students across all years of the study was statistically significant, $\chi^2(6) = 14.0, p < .05$.

Personal experience of violence

Data on dating violence have been collected in two manners. From the beginning of the survey, students were asked if anyone they had ever dated had acted toward them in a manner they considered violent and if they had ever been the victim of violence in any other close relationship. These responses could then be coded into measures of dating violence only, another relationship only, or both dating and other relationship violence.

This was quickly viewed as an inadequate measure and in the second year of the study, students were asked more specifically about emotional or psychological and physical violence victimization and perpetration, and if the victimization or perpetration had occurred within the past three months. The first measure was continued, however, in the interest of comparability. For the 2010-2011 survey year, the second measure was expanded to include two items be analyzed and presented, again primarily for comparability but also because there was not sufficient trend data using the other method. This latter point is no longer the case, since these data have now been collected for six of the seven years of the survey, other than the sexual violence items which only have been collected for a single year.

In light of the inadequacy of the first measure and the six year trend using the second measure, the original measure is not presented in this report.

Figure 10 shows the proportion of all students who were victims of emotional or physical dating violence at any point in their lives. As is shown, rates of emotional violence victimization have declined over the six years these data have been collected, with a decrease of 1.1% between 2009 and 2011. The difference across all years was statistically significant, $\chi^2(5) = 13.0, p < .05$. Rates of physical dating violence victimization also decreased between 2009 and 2011 and is approaching the low rate found in 2004. These differences across all years, however, were not statistically significant.

As shown in Figure 11, both emotional and physical dating violence perpetration rates decreased between 2009 and 2011 and each is at the lowest level found over the six years these data have been collection. These differences across all years were not statistically significant.

Figure 10. Lifetime emotional and physical dating violence victimization, 2004-2011

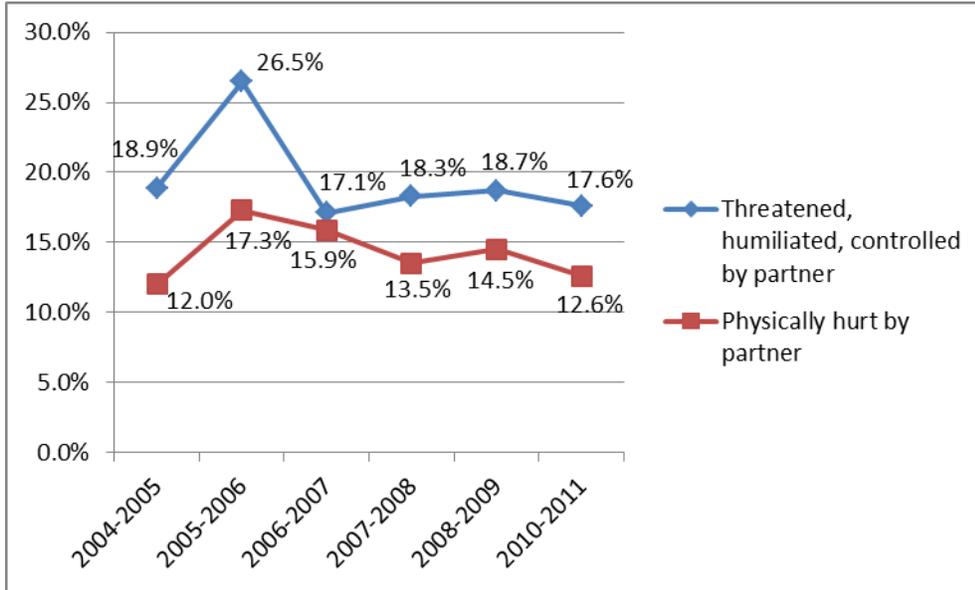


Figure 11. Lifetime emotional and physical dating violence perpetration, 2004-2011

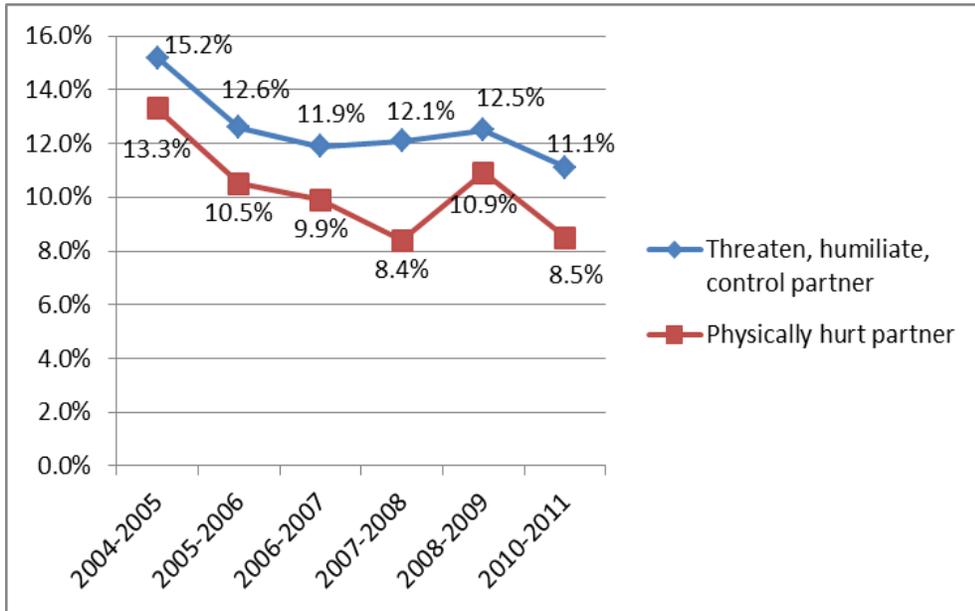


Table 11 shows the rates of sexual dating violence victimization and perpetration for the 2010-2011 school year. As may be seen by comparing the data in Figure 9 with that in Table 10, rates of being forced to touch a dating partner sexually and to have sexual intercourse with a partner are about half the rates of emotional or physical violence while rates of forcing a partner to touch sexually or have intercourse are about one-quarter the rate of emotional or physical dating violence perpetration.

Table 11. Lifetime sexual dating violence victimization and perpetration, 2010-2011

Type of sexual dating violence	Percent of all students
Forced to touch partner sexually	8.8%
Forced to have intercourse with partner	6.9%
Forced partner to touch sexually	2.1%
Forced partner to have intercourse	2.7%

Figure 12 shows the rate of emotional and physical dating violence victimization that occurred in the three months prior to data collection. As may be seen, these rates have generally increased over the six years these data have been collected and both indicators are at their highest level over the six years these data have been collected. The differences across all years, however, were not statistically significant.

Figure 13 shows the rates of emotional and physical dating violence perpetration occurring in the three months prior to data collection. The rate of emotional dating violence perpetration has generally increased since data collection began in 2004 and has risen over each of the last four data collection points. Following several years of decline, the rate of physical violence perpetration rose between 2009 and 2011, although the rate remains lower than the first year these data were collected. These differences across years were not statistically significant.

Figure 12. Emotional and physical dating violence victimization in past 3 months, 2004-2011

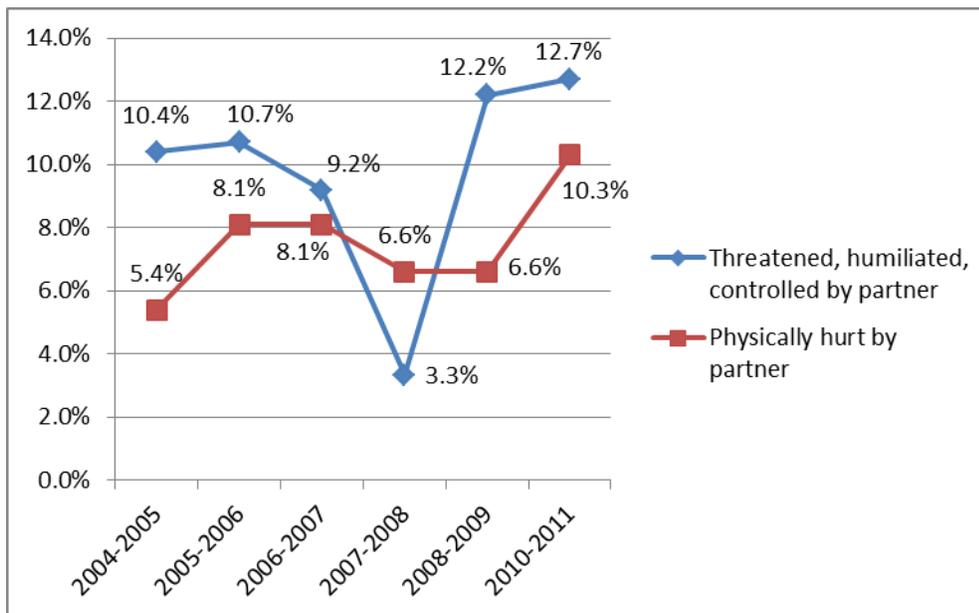
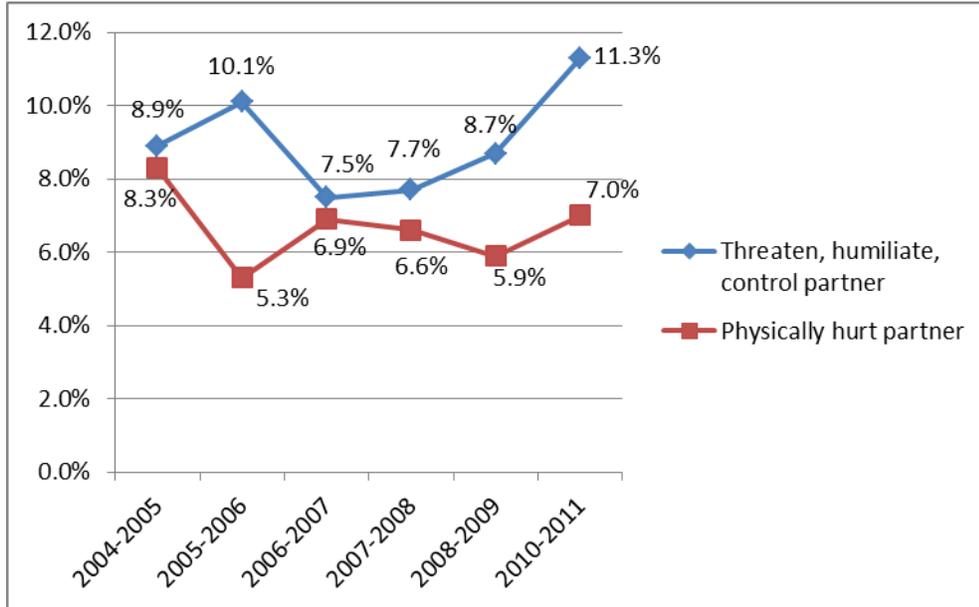


Figure 13. Emotional and physical dating violence perpetration in past 3 months, 2004-2011



Finally, Table 12 shows rates of past three month sexual dating violence victimization and perpetration.

Table 12. Past 3 month sexual dating violence victimization and perpetration, 2010-2011

Type of sexual dating violence	Percent of all students
Forced to touch partner sexually	7.1%
Forced to have intercourse with partner	4.9%
Forced partner to touch sexually	1.6%
Forced partner to have intercourse	2.7%

Figure 14 shows emotional and physical dating violence victimization by gender. Male emotional dating violence victimization has fluctuated from a low of 5.1% in 2004-2005 to a high of 20.6% in 205-2006. The most recent rate stands at 9.2%, down slightly from the 2009 rate and the lowest rate since the first year these data were collected. The difference in rates across all years of the study is statistically significant, $\chi^2(5) = 12.8, p < .05$. The rate of emotional dating violence victimization for females has been steadier across time and the 22.3% rate in 2010-2011 is down slightly from 2008-2009. The difference across all years of the study is not statistically significant.

Figure 14. Lifetime emotional and physical dating violence victimization by gender, 2004-2011

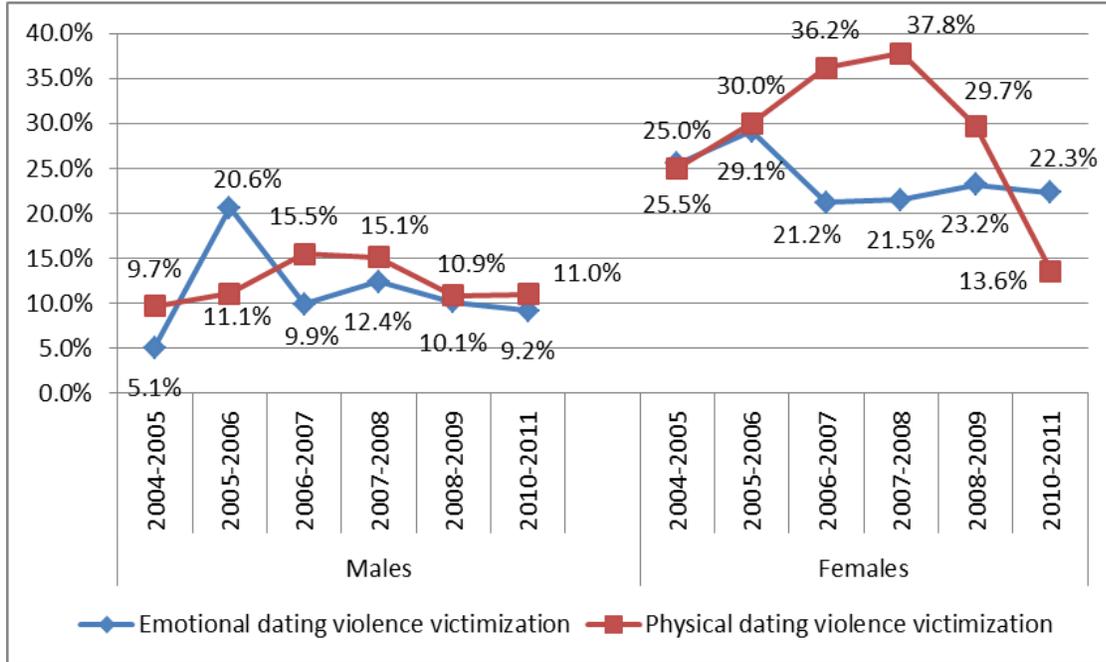


Figure 15 shows the rate of emotional and physical dating violence perpetration by gender. Surprisingly, across type of dating violence perpetration, rates for females have been consistently higher than the rates for males. However, emotional dating violence perpetration increased for males between 2009 and 2011 while decreasing for females over the same period. Physical dating violence perpetration decreased for both males and females between 2009 and 2011. These differences were not statistically significant.

Figure 15. Lifetime emotional and physical dating violence perpetration by gender, 2004-2011

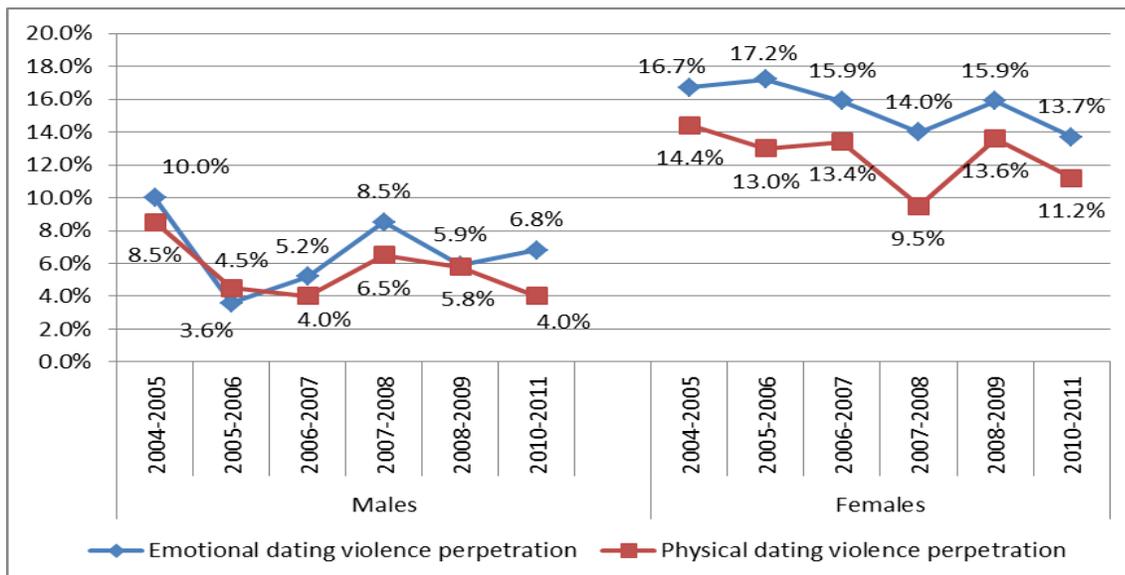


Table 13 shows the lifetime rate of sexual dating violence victimization and perpetration for males and females for the 2010-2011 school year. Here, rates of victimization are higher for females for both forms of sexual dating violence victimization while male perpetration of both forms of sexual dating violence are higher than are the rates for females.

Table 13. Lifetime sexual dating violence victimization and perpetration, by gender, 2010-2011

Type of sexual dating violence	Males	Females
Forced to touch partner sexually	8.5%	9.0%
Forced to have intercourse with partner	5.6%	7.6%
Forced partner to touch sexually	4.0%	1.0%
Forced partner to have intercourse	3.4%	2.3%

The rates of past three month emotional and physical dating violence victimization by gender are found in Figure 16. Both emotional and physical dating violence victimization increased for males, although by small percentages. The rate of male physical dating violence victimization is the highest seen across all years of the study. The rates for females also increased between 2009 and 2011, nearly doubling for physical dating violence victimization. These differences across all years, however, were not statistically significant.

Figure 16. Past 3 month emotional and physical dating violence victimization by gender, 2004-2011

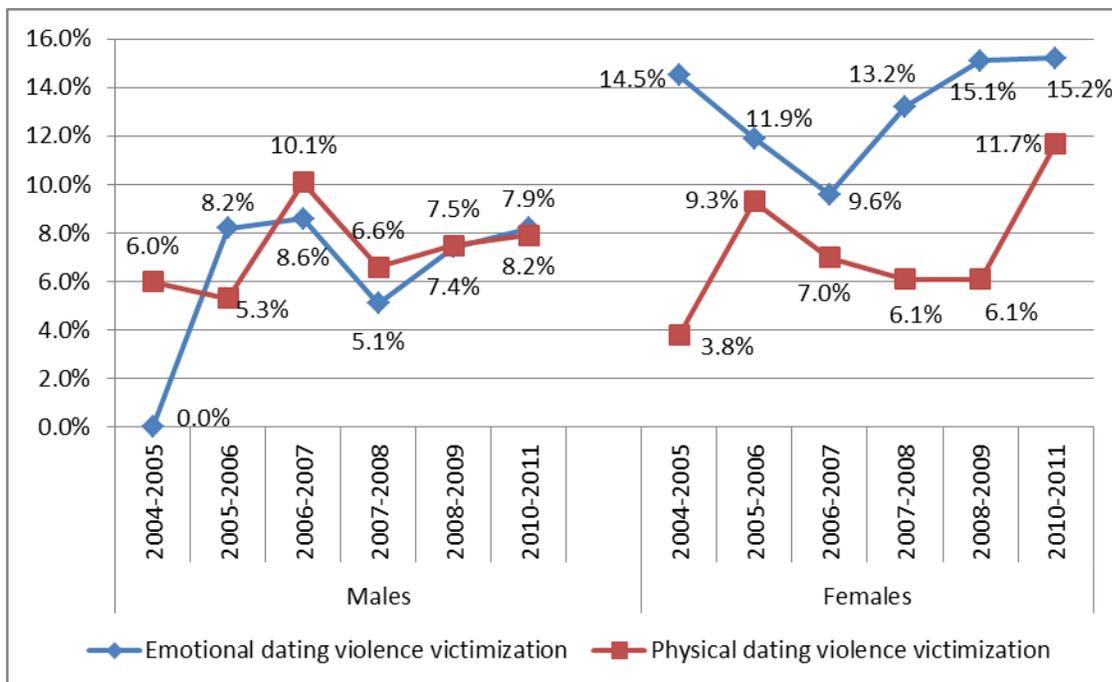


Figure 17 shows the past three month emotional and physical dating violence rates for males and females. As may be seen, emotional dating violence perpetration among males rose dramatically between 2009 and 2011, from 2.8% to 10.5%. While the differences across all years were not statistically significant, the change between 2009 and 2011 was statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 5.1, p < .05$. The rate of physical dating violence perpetration for males decreased slightly since the last data collection session, from 4.6% to 3.1%. The differences across all years of the study and between the last two data collection periods were not statistically significant.

The pattern was just the opposite among females, where emotional dating violence perpetration decreased slightly between 2009 and 2011, from 12.2% to 11.9%. Over the same period, physical dating violence perpetration increased between 2009 and 2011, rising from 6.6% to 9.3%. The differences across all years of the study and over the last two data collection periods were not statistically significant.

Figure 17. Past 3 month emotional and physical dating violence perpetration by gender, 2004-2011

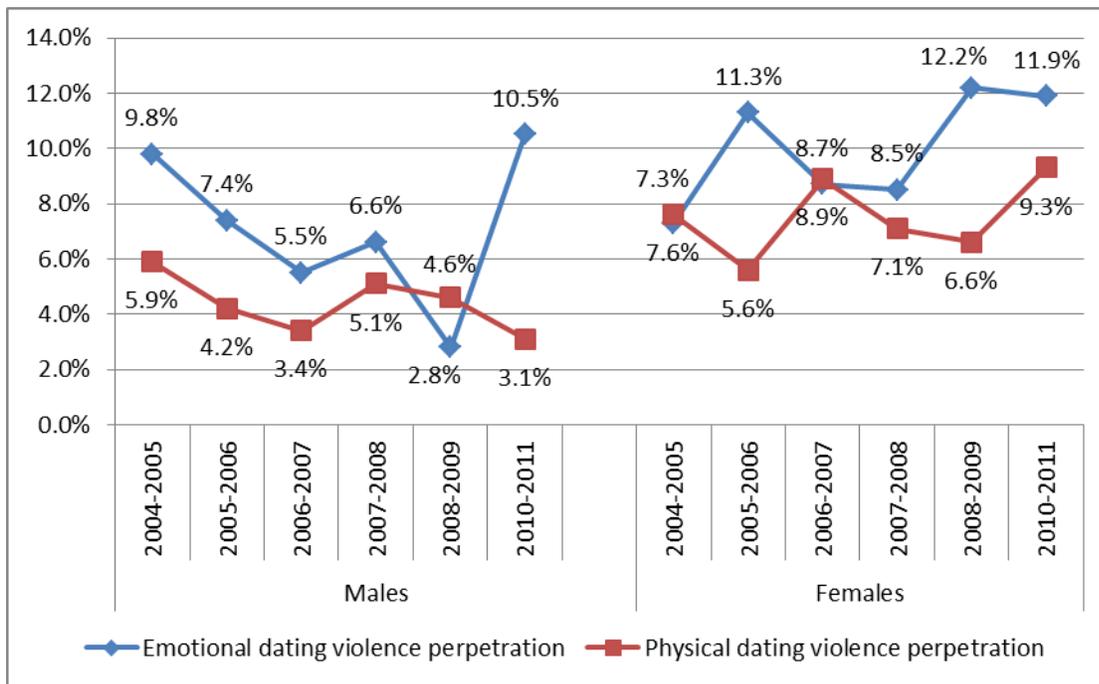


Table 14 shows the rates of sexual violence victimization and perpetration for males and females for the 2010-2011 school year. As may be seen, the rates of victimization are higher for females than for males while the rates of perpetration are higher for males than for females.

Table 14. Past 3 month sexual dating violence victimization and perpetration, by gender, 2010-2011

Type of sexual dating violence	Males	Females
Forced to touch partner sexually	6.1%	7.8%
Forced to have intercourse with partner	5.2%	4.8%
Forced partner to touch sexually	3.1%	0.6%
Forced partner to have intercourse	6.3%	0.6%

Figure 18 shows the rates of lifetime emotional and physical dating violence victimization by age. As is evident, rates of both forms of dating violence victimization decreased from 2009-2011 for students ages 14 and younger while increasing over the same period for students ages 15 and older. These differences, however, were not large but the differences across all years for emotional dating violence victimization for younger students was statistically significant, $\chi^2(5) = 16.5, p < .01$.

Figure 18. Lifetime emotional and physical dating violence victimization by age, 2004-2011

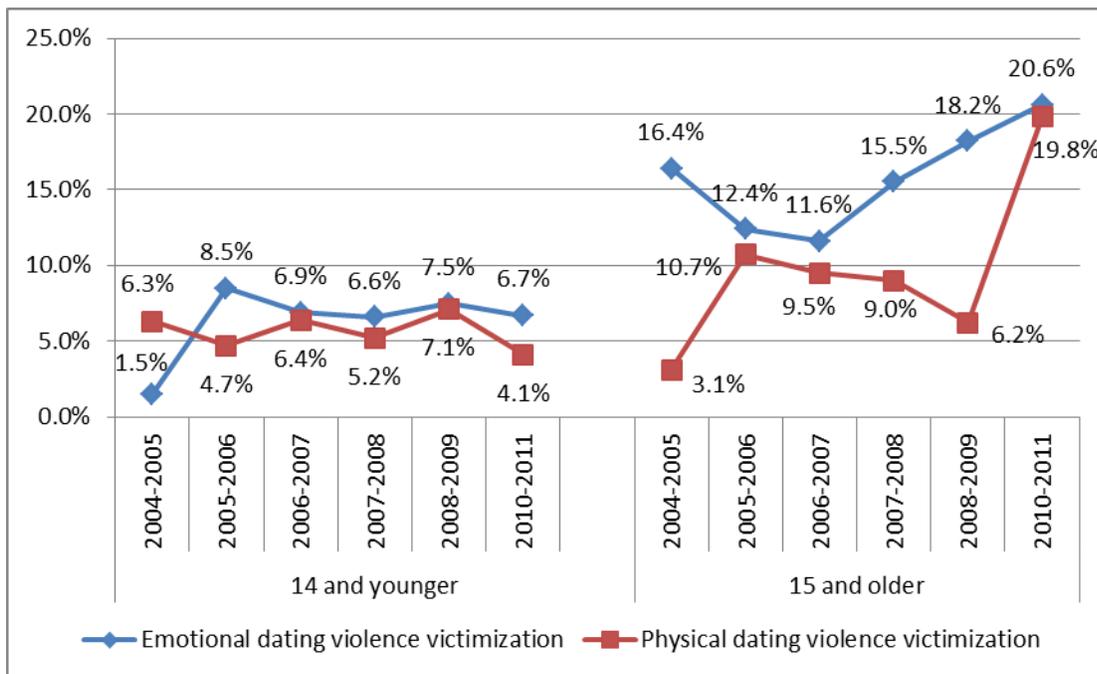


Figure 19 shows the lifetime emotional and physical dating violence perpetration rates by age. Here, rates decreased for both forms of perpetration across the age groups, with the exception of emotional dating violence perpetration among students ages 15 and older which increased marginally from 6.1% to 6.4%. These differences across all years were not statistically significant.

Figure 19. Lifetime emotional and physical dating violence perpetration by age, 2004-2011

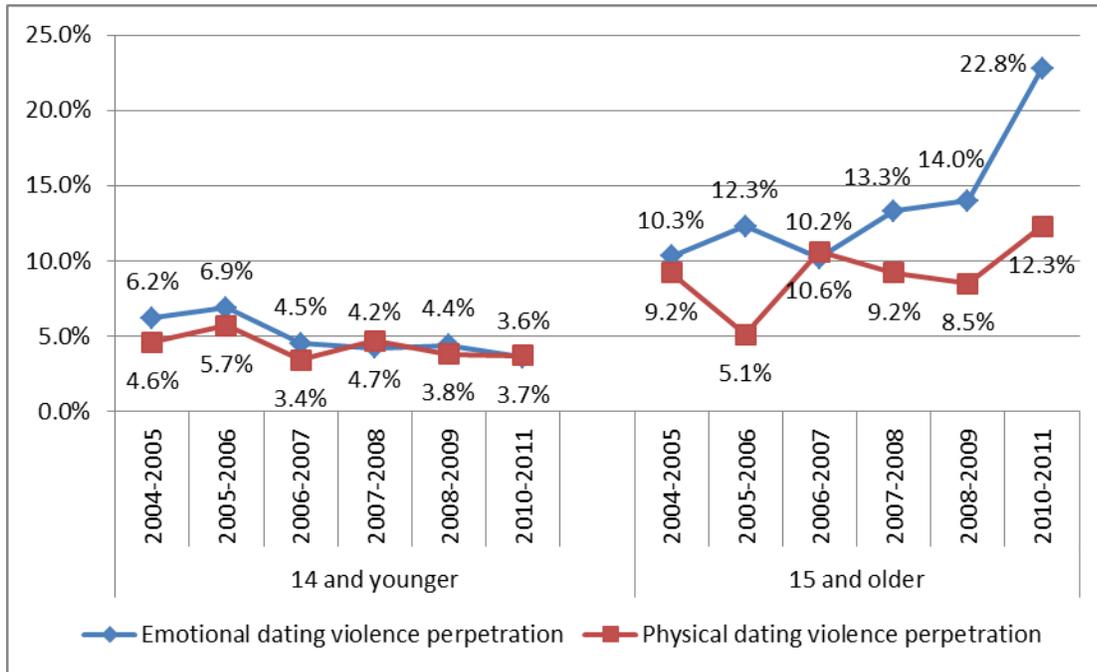


Table 15 shows the lifetime sexual dating violence victimization and perpetration rates by age for the 2010-2011 school year. The table shows that older students are more likely than younger students both to be victimized and to perpetrate sexual dating violence.

Table 15. Lifetime sexual dating violence victimization and perpetration, by age, 2010-2011

Type of sexual dating violence	14 & younger	15 & older
Forced to touch partner sexually	6.3%	11.6%
Forced to have intercourse with partner	2.8%	11.4%
Forced partner to touch sexually	1.2%	3.1%
Forced partner to have intercourse	1.6%	4.0%

Figure 20 shows the rates of past three month emotional and physical dating violence victimization for students ages 14 and younger and 15 and older. Both forms of dating violence victimization decreased between 2009 and 2011 for younger students while emotional dating violence victimization increased slightly and physical dating violence victimization increased dramatically for older students. This latter is noteworthy, as the rate went from 6.2% in 2009 to 19.8% in 2011. Across all years, the rate of physical dating violence victimization in the past three months was statistically significant for older students, $\chi^2(5) = 17.8, p < .01$.

Figure 20. Past 3 month emotional and physical dating violence victimization by age, 2004-2011

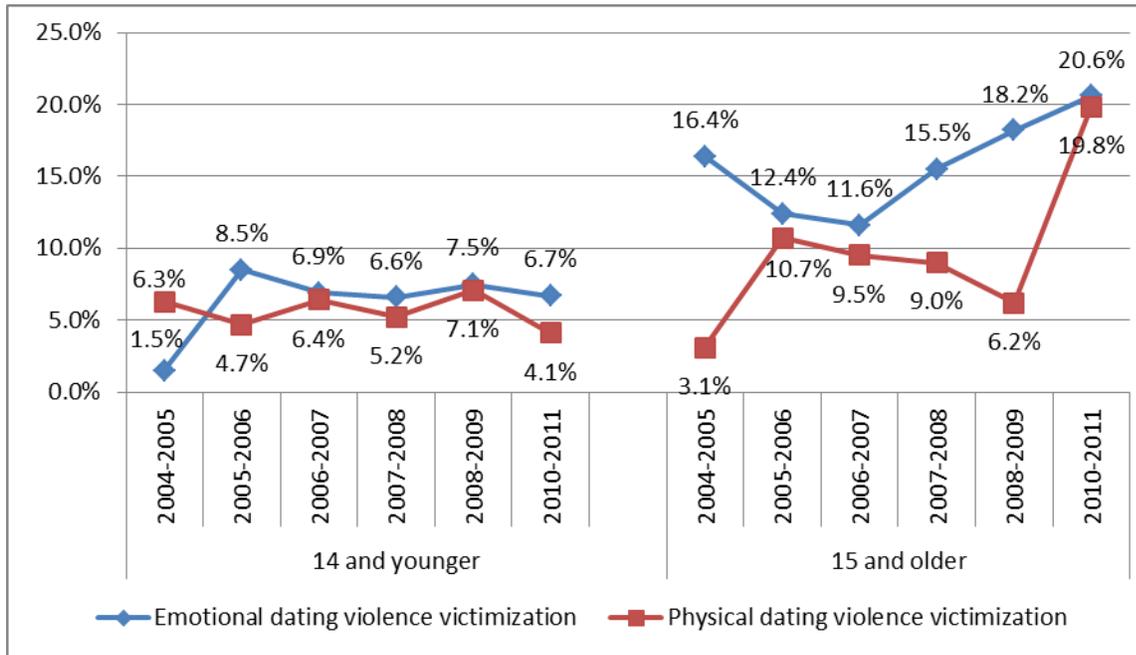


Figure 21 shows the rates of past three month emotional and physical dating violence perpetration by age. Here the pattern was similar to that described for victimization in that rates of both forms of dating violence perpetration decreased between 2009 and 2011 for younger students while increasing over the same period for older students. For older students the rate of emotional dating violence perpetration increased from 14.0% to 22.8% between the last two data collection periods while physical dating violence perpetration rose from 8.5% to 12.3% over the same period. The differences across all years were statistically significant for emotional dating violence perpetration for students ages 15 and older, $\chi^2(5) = 11.1, p < .05$.

Finally, Table 16 shows the past three month rates of sexual dating violence victimization and perpetration for the 2010-2011 school year. As was the case with rates of victimization, older students are more likely to be victimized by or to perpetrate sexual dating violence than are younger students.

Figure 21. Past 3 month emotional and physical dating violence perpetration by age, 2004-2011

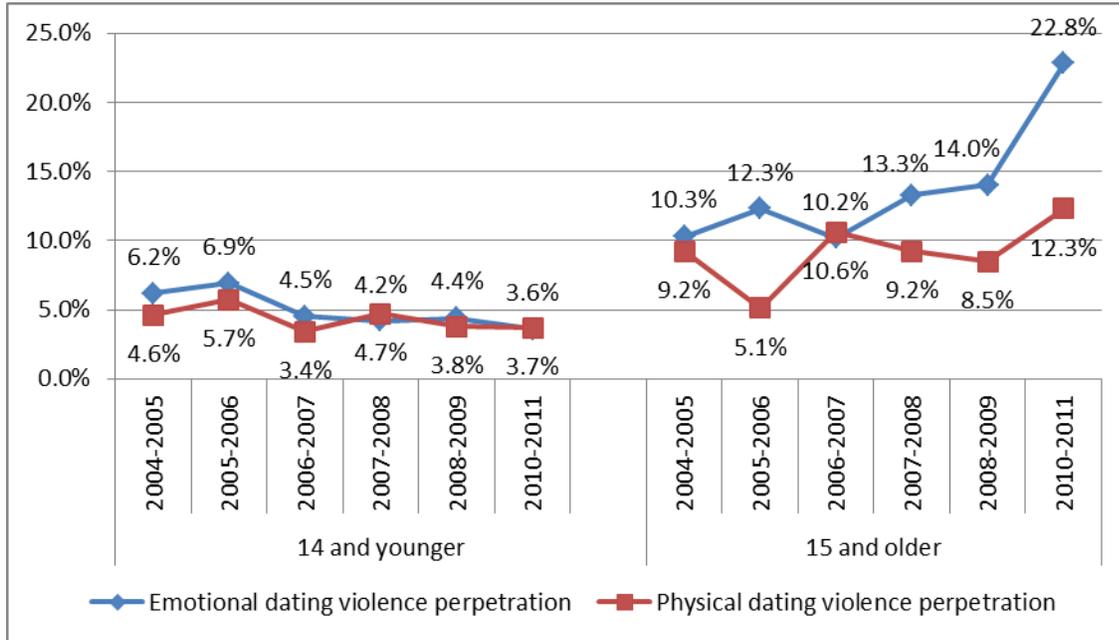


Table 16. Past 3 month sexual dating violence victimization and perpetration, by age, 2010-2011

Type of sexual dating violence	14 & younger	15 & older
Forced to touch partner sexually	3.1%	13.5%
Forced to have intercourse with partner	2.5%	8.9%
Forced partner to touch sexually	0.6%	3.2%
Forced partner to have intercourse	0.6%	6.3%

Violence as a community problem

The survey contains single items asking students their perceptions of the extent to which dating and other relationship violence is a problem in the community and how well the community responds to relationship violence. As Table 17 indicates, across all years fewer than half of all students believe that relationship violence is a statistically significant community concern. In addition, the proportion of students who believe it is a significant community concern has been declining steadily across all years of data collection. The most recent rate of 38.4% is the lowest since the survey began in 2003.

The proportion of students who believe the community does a good job of responding to relationship violence in the community has remained fairly consistent across all years of the

survey and the 2010-2011 academic year marked the highest proportion who viewed the community response positively since the survey began.

Table 17. Perceptions of dating and other relationship violence in the community and the community response, 2003-2010

	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	10-11
Dating and other relationship violence is a significant problem	46.7%	45.8%	44.5%	43.2%	44.7%	43.1%	38.4%
Community responds well to violence	60.4%	53.7%	59.0%	55.3%	58.0%	60.0%	61.6%

Attitudes and Beliefs

Attitudes toward violence

Students were asked for their general attitudes toward violence in a series of 13 items. These items were not reliable as a whole, so are examined individually. Response choices for the items ranged from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” and each item produced a score from 1 to 4 with higher scores showing greater agreement with the items. Though the items do not form scales, they may be logically grouped into two broad categories of causal factors and justification for violence factors. Table 18 shows the means and standard deviations for the causally related items while Table 19 shows means and standard deviations for the justification items.

Table 18. Attitude toward violence: Causal factors

Item	03-04		04-05		05-06		06-07		07-08		08-09		10-11	
	M	SD												
Drugs or alcohol.	2.9	.8	2.8	.8	2.9	.8	2.8	.8	2.9	.8	2.9	.8	2.8	.9
Violence is learned	2.8	.9	2.8	.9	2.7	.9	2.7	.9	2.6	.9	2.7	.9	2.7	.9
Sexist attitudes	3.0	.8	3.0	.9	3.0	.7	2.8	.8	2.9	.8	2.9	.8	2.8	.9
Mental illness	3.1	.8	3.1	.8	3.0	.8	3/1	.8	3.0	.8	3.0	.9	3.1	.8
Racist attitudes	2.9	.8	3.0	.9	2.9	.8	2.8	.9	2.9	.9	2.9	.8	2.9	.9
Showing off differences	2.2	.8	2.1	.7	2.2	.7	2.3	.8	2.2	.7	2.2	.8	2.2	.8
Violent media	2.6	1.0	2.6	1.0	2.6	1.0	2.6	1.1	2.6	1.0	2.6	1.0	2.5	1.0

Table 19. Attitudes toward violence: Justification factors

Item	03-04		04-05		05-06		06-07		07-08		08-09		10-11	
	M	SD												
Only way for people to get what they want	3.3	.8	3.3	.84	3.4	.8	3.3	.9	3.4	.8	3.3	.8	3.4	.8
Okay to defend self from attack	1.8	.9	1.8	.80	1.9	.84	1.9	.8	1.8	.8	1.8	.8	1.8	.8
Gang members have to use violence to survive	2.7	1.1	2.7	1.1	2.9	1.0	2.8	1.0	2.8	1.1	2.9	1.1	2.7	1.0
Okay to get back at someone who disrespects you	3.1	.9	3.0	.9	3.1	.9	3.2	.9	3.1	.9	3.1	.9	3.1	.9
Violence is never justified	2.6	.9	2.5	.9	2.6	.8	2.6	.9	2.5	.8	2.5	.8	2.4	.9

As shown, the mean scores for the causal items have not changed substantially across all years of the survey. Comparatively, beliefs that violence is caused by showing off differences or by violence in the media elicited the lowest rate of agreement. Generally, students indicated moderate to moderately high agreements with the causal items. Across all survey years, the difference in mean values for sexist attitudes as a causal factor was statistically significant, $F(6/2389) = 3.36, p < .01$, as was the mean difference for mental illness as a causal factor, $F(6/2389) = 2.20, p < .05$.

On the justification items, students strongly agreed that violence was the only way for people to get what they want. They indicated moderately strong disagreement that the use of violence was justified to protect oneself from attack. There was moderate agreement that gang members are justified in using violence to survive and indicated moderately high agreement that violence is justified to get back at someone who has shown disrespect. In light of the general strength of agreement with the justification for violence, it is interesting that students showed moderate levels of belief that violence against another person is never justified. Across all survey years, only the mean differences in the item indicating that violence is never justified was found to be statistically significant, $F(6/2434) = 2.29, p < .05$.

Violence in dating and family relationships

Students were given a set of 13 items asking about the acceptability of violence-related behaviors. The same items were presented twice and students were asked, in the first instance, to respond as the items applied to a dating relationship and, in the second instance, as applied to a family relationship. The response choices ranged from “never okay” to “always okay” and the items could be reliably scaled to produce a single score for each relationship area. The scores for

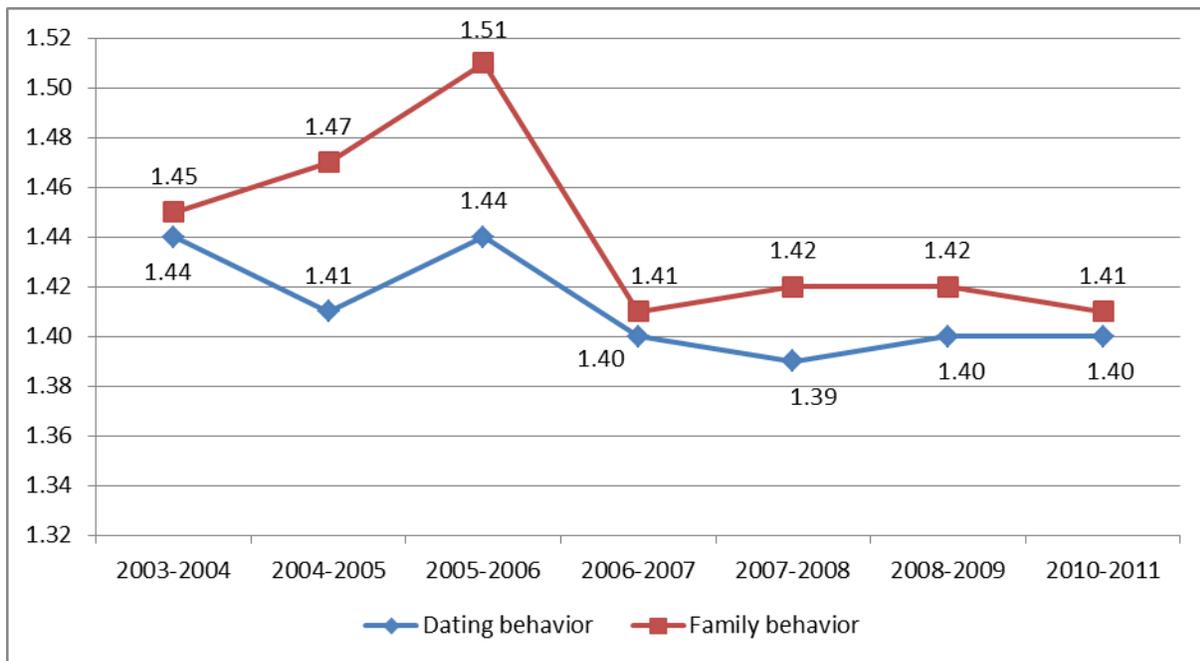
the scales ranged from one to five with lower scores indicating less acceptability of the behaviors in either a dating or a family relationship. The items are shown in Table 20.

The average scores for beliefs about violence-related behaviors in dating and family relationships have remained fairly constant across years, generally showing that students find the behaviors to be never to rarely okay for each context (Figure 22). The differences across years were not statistically significant.

Table 20: Items for the acceptability of dating and family relationship behavior scales

Calling someone names or putting them down.	Ignoring someone or refusing to talk to them.
Making fun of how someone dresses or looks.	Yelling at someone in private.
Telling someone who they can and cannot spend time with.	Yelling at someone in public.
Damaging someone’s belongings.	Deliberately and repeatedly following and harassing someone.
Telling someone what to do	Pressuring someone to perform a sexual act.
Shoving, grabbing, or pushing someone.	Forcing someone to perform a sexual act.
Slapping or hitting someone.	

Figure 22. Average values for beliefs about dating relationships and family relationships by year, 2003-2011.



Qualities of dating relationships

Students were given seven items on the qualities of a dating relationships and were asked to indicate how much importance they placed on each. The response choices ranged from “not at all important” to “very important.” The items did not reliably form a scale, so the individual item scores are presented. Scores ranged from 1 to 3 with higher scores showing greater importance. The direction of the items was mixed; that is, for some items a higher score is the more “positive” direction while for others a lower score is more positive. The items, average scores, and standard deviations are shown in Table 21.

As may be seen, students in each year placed a good deal of importance on listening, honesty, and feeling free to be oneself. Interestingly, students thought it moderately important to spend all free time together. Students placed moderately low importance on getting one’s partner to do one’s bidding and on having sex. The differences across all years were statistically significant for the importance of having sex, $F(6/2494) = 2.81, p < .05$, being honest, $F(6/2494) = 4.06, p < .001$, and being possessive or jealous, $F(6/2494) = 2.1, p < .05$.

Table 21. Average scores and standard deviations for quality of dating relationship items, 2003 to 2011

Item	2003-2004		2004-2005		2005-2006		2006-2007		2007-2008		2008-2009		2010-2011	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Listening to one another.	2.9	.4	2.8	.5	2.9	.4	2.9	.4	2.9	.4	2.9	.4	2.9	.4
Getting your partner to do what you want.	1.6	.6	1.6	.6	1.5	.6	1.6	.6	1.6	.6	1.5	.6	1.6	.6
Spending all your free time together.	2.2	.7	2.1	.7	2.2	.6	2.2	.6	2.2	.7	2.2	.6	2.2	.6
Having sex.	1.5	.7	1.6	.7	1.4	.6	1.4	.6	1.4	.6	1.3	.6	1.4	.7
Being honest with one another.	2.9	.3	2.8	.6	2.9	.4	2.9	.4	2.9	.4	2.9	.3	2.9	.4
Being possessive or jealous of one another.	1.2	.5	1.4	.7	1.3	.5	1.2	.5	1.3	.5	1.2	.5	1.3	.5
Feeling free to be yourself.	2.9	.3	2.8	.5	2.8	.4	2.9	1.4	2.8	.5	2.8	.5	2.9	.4

Individual action to reduce or stop violence

Students were given nine items showing individual actions that might be taken in order to reduce or stop violence. Students were asked to show how likely they would be to engage in each of the behaviors shown with response choices ranging from “not at all likely” to “very likely.” These items could be reliably scaled, producing a single score showing the degree of likelihood of taking action across all of the items as a whole. Scores, then, ranged from one to four with higher scores indicating a greater likelihood of taking action. The items forming the scale are shown in Table 22.

The average score ranged from 2.7 to 2.9 out of 4.0 in each year showing that students are fairly likely to take individual action to reduce or stop violence, on average. An examination of the individual items shows that students were least likely to take part in a school meeting against violence, write a letter to a public official, take part in a community rally against violence, or urge their friends to stop buying music and other items in which women are exploited. The mean differences across survey years were not statistically significant.

Table 22. Items measuring the likelihood of taking individual action to reduce or stop violence

Ask male friends to stop calling girls names that put them down.
Take part in an after school meeting to talk about dating violence.
Stop a male friend from verbally abusing his girlfriend.
Write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper to protest sexist advertising.
Take part in a rally against violence in your community.
Urge your friends to stop buying CD’s or videos that show women being exploited.
Ask friends or family for help if someone you were dating became violent.
Help find support for a friend who had been abused.
Do something to stop a group of boys from harassing girls who walked by.

Community response to violence

Finally, students were presented with a series of eight items showing the kinds of things their community could do to reduce the incidence and prevalence of violence against girls and young women. These items could be reliably scaled and students were asked how much importance they placed on each. Response choices ranged from “not at all important” to “very important” with higher scores showing greater value for the item. The items included in the measure are shown in Table 23. Scores ranged from 2.6 to 2.7 out of 4.0 across all years showing that, on average, students place moderately high importance on the responses contained in the items.

Table 23. Community response items

Make sure that victims of violence have a safe place to go.
Increase the services available to victims of violence.
Make sure that girls who have been victims of violence have a say in planning programs.
Make sure that services are relevant to girls of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.
Develop leadership among girls who have been victims of violence.
Educate people who make laws and policies so they are better informed about violence against girls.
See that community groups and organizations work together to help end violence against girls.
Make sure that domestic violence and sexual assault programs get the funding they need.

There were few differences when the items were examined individually although students generally placed the least importance on increasing services and assuring that victims are involved in planning programs. The greatest importance was given to assuring that victims have a safe place to go, collaboration among community groups and organizations, and assuring that programs have the funding they need. The mean differences across survey years were not statistically significant.

Discussion

There is mixed news with respect to substance use. After several years of decrease, tobacco use rose in 2010-2011, although it is still well below the high rates seen in the first several years of the survey. However, it still indicates that one in five students has used a tobacco product at some point in their lives. On the positive side, alcohol use rates declined in 2010-2011, indicating, perhaps, that the relatively high rate seen in 2008-2009 was an anomaly. Still, nearly 1/3 of students have used alcohol at some point in their lives. Unfortunately, marijuana use increased in the most recent survey and now stands at the highest level seen since the survey began. The data show that about one in seven students have used marijuana at some point.

Tobacco use rates increased for males and females, with just over 1/4 of male students and nearly 1/5 of female students using tobacco. It is important to note that female tobacco use decreased for the second survey period in a row. In 2010-2011, male alcohol use increased to the highest level seen across all survey years, with nearly 1/3 of male students reporting lifetime alcohol use. Alcohol use declined sharply among female students, although the data still indicate that nearly 1/3 of female students have used alcohol at some point. It is disturbing to note that marijuana use increased in 2010-2011 for both male and female students.

All substance use decreased in 2010-2011 for students ages 14 and younger, with slightly more than a 10 percentage point decrease in alcohol use. However, this is counterbalanced by an increase in the use of all substances for students ages 15 and older. Fully 1/3 of older students report tobacco use, about 1/2 report alcohol use, and just over 1/4 report marijuana use.

There was an overall shift in past 30 day substance use among all students reporting use, with fewer students indicating smoking five or fewer cigarettes a day and larger proportions of students reporting smoking a half a pack of cigarettes or more a day. Similarly, students who reported using alcohol are drinking more, with about 1/2 indicating drinking one or two times in a 30 day period, down from about 2/3 in 2008-2009, slightly more than 1/3 indicating drinking on three to nine occasions in the last 30 days, up from just over 1/4 in 2009, and one in seven students indicating drinking on 10 or more occasions in the past 30 days, up from one in fifteen in 2009. For the 2010-2011 academic year, nearly 2/3 of students reported using marijuana on three or more occasions in the past 30 days, up from about 1/7 of students in 2008-2009.

Students reported using medications without a doctor's prescription and over-the-counter medications at relatively low rates, with fewer than 4% of students indicating the use of substances in each category.

Finally, there was a slight increase in student perceptions of the risk of harm in using all substances, with students reporting a moderately high risk in doing so. This perception is quite close to the perception students have of the extent to which their friends would say that using substances is wrong.

Interestingly, students report infrequent offers of various substances at school, with about 19% of older students reporting being approached at least weekly and less than 5% of younger students reporting being approached at least weekly. However, students generally report that other students at their grade level are being offered substances more frequently, with just over 50% of older students reporting their classmates being approached at least weekly and nearly 1/4 of younger students so reporting.

Overall rates of forced sex and arrests decreased slightly between 2009 and 2011, with a decrease in forced sex being reported by both males and females. There was also a decrease in forced sex and arrests for students ages 14 and younger and 15 and older.

There was a slight increase in the proportion of students who knew a female who had been the victim of dating violence and a larger increase in the proportion of students indicating knowing a female who had witnessed violence. There were also small declines in the proportion of students who knew a male perpetrator of violence and who knew a female who had been victimized in a family or other non-dating relationship. Still, from 1/2 to nearly 2/3 of students said they knew a female victim of dating violence, a male perpetrator, or a female who had witnessed violence, and just over 2/5 indicated knowing a female victim of other relationship violence. These findings continue to indicate that knowledge of violence is fairly widespread among students. Even such indirect exposure to violence may have detrimental effects on student well-being.

There is good news in the finding that emotional and physical dating violence victimization and perpetration declined among all students between 2009 and 2011, and are near the lowest levels seen since these data have been collected. However, rates of dating violence victimization and perpetration in the past three months increased among all students, suggesting that even while overall rates are lower, the dating violence that is being reported is occurring in the recent past with increasing frequency.

While rates of emotional violence victimization among males declined between 2009 and 2011, the rate of physical violence victimization increased. The data suggest that one in ten males is victimized in a dating relationship. Emotional and physical dating violence victimization declined among females, with physical dating violence victimization decreasing by more than half. Still, the data suggest that one in five female students is the victim of dating violence.

Emotional dating violence perpetration increased among males between 2009 and 2011, although the recent rate is less than the peak year of 2005. Physical dating violence perpetration among males decreased between 2009 and 2011 and both forms of perpetration decreased among females over the same period. The data suggest that about one in 15 males perpetrates dating violence while one in seven females perpetrates dating violence. This is consistent with recent national data showing that females initiate dating violence more often than do males, although males are more physical perpetrators.

Dating violence victimization appears to be occurring more recently for both males and females, with slight increases between 2009 and 2011 in the proportion of males and females reporting dating violence victimization in the past three months. Emotional dating violence perpetration within the past three months increased substantially for males, with about a five-fold increase between 2009 and 2011. Past three month physical dating violence perpetration among males decreased slightly over the last two data collection years and is at the lowest level seen since 2005. Emotional and physical dating violence perpetration among females declined between 2009 and 2011 but both rates are higher for females than for males.

Not surprisingly, emotional and physical dating violence victimization rates are lower for students age 14 and younger than for students age 15 and higher. In addition, these rates declined between 2009 and 2011 for younger students while increasing for older students. It is noteworthy that dating violence victimization occurs among about one in 15 students ages 14 and younger but occurs among about one in four among students ages 15 and older.

Interestingly, the rate of emotional dating violence perpetration increased slightly among students ages 14 and younger between 2009 and 2011 while the rate of physical violence perpetration among this age group decreased over the same period. The rates of both forms of dating violence perpetration decreased for older students between 2009 and 2011. The data show that about one in 15 younger students and one in seven older students perpetrated dating violence by report in 2011.

Rates of past three month emotional and physical dating violence victimization declined between 2009 and 2011 for younger students while the rates increased for older students over the same time. About one in 15 young students perpetrated dating violence in the latest reporting year while about one in five older students perpetrated dating violence in the same period.

There has been little change in students' attitudes towards violence or in students' beliefs about the qualities they find desirable in dating relationships. Students also continue to say that they will take action to stop violence and value what their community is doing to stop violence.

Conclusions

The findings contained in this report show mixed results in efforts to reduce substance use among young people in the County. While tobacco use rates among all students decreased by 14.2% between 2004 and 2011, alcohol use rates increased by 10.6% and illicit drug use rates increased by 6.3% over the same period. However, there have been fairly substantial changes in patterns of use when examined by age. For those age 14 and younger, tobacco use decreased by 54.1%, alcohol use decreased by 28.7%, and illicit drug use decreased by 57.9% between 2004 and 2011. For those age 15 and older, tobacco use increased by 20.2%, alcohol use increased by 31.7%, and illicit drug use increased by 48.0% over the same period.

These findings suggest the possibility that students in lower grades are being reached by substance use prevention messages, although other factors may well be at work (e.g., improved law enforcement, increased parental monitoring). If this is the case, it is apparent that prevention measures wear off as students age. It seems critical that prevention efforts continue as students move from middle- to high-school and beyond. Young people are endangering their physical and emotional health in staggering numbers

While rates of dating violence victimization and perpetration showed some decline between the last two reporting periods, rates remain unacceptably high. As in recent years, as many as one in four students experiences dating violence by the time they graduate from high school. While fluctuations are evident in these rates, no clear trend emerges and it is reasonable to believe that high rates of dating violence will continue to occur among Chesterfield County students.

These findings are alarming, all the more so because there appears to be few policy or program efforts to respond to the challenge. A generation of young people is at substantial risk of a diminished quality of life as a result. As has been noted in previous reports, dating violence has profound consequences for young people, including depression and anxiety (Shorey, Cornelius, & Bell, 2008); physical health problems (Munõs-Rivas, Graña, O'leary, & González, 2007); increased risk of HIV, STDs, and pregnancy (Silverman, Raj, & Clements, 2009); eating disorders (Acker, & Neumark-Sztainer, 2002); substance use (Buzy, et al., 2004; Howard & Wang, 2003); and poor academic performance (Craigén, Sikes, Healey, & Hays, 2009), among others.

This report is a clarion call to action. Young people in Chesterfield County are subjected to violence in various forms on a nearly continuous basis. The high proportions of students who know someone who has been victimized by, perpetrated, or witnessed violence cannot be ignored. As many as one-quarter of young people have been emotionally or physically injured in a dating relationship, a finding that is staggering in its implications for the health and well-being of the young people involved. The time for action has long passed and continued inaction simply condemns these young people to a future of diminished personal and professional prospects.

There are reasons for hope. Young people are well aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviors in dating and other intimate relationships, suggesting a wide gap between what students value and the reality of their experiences. One can only hope that students will draw on

the sound judgment imbedded in their beliefs to change their experiences to match their values. Their ability to do so will have far reaching influence on younger siblings, their own children, their dating partners and love interests, and others. However, they cannot do so without the guidance and support of important adults. The failure of adults to take action, to show the care and compassion critical to positive growth and development, will only perpetuate a cycle in which young people will learn to expect very little beyond violence from those who purport to care for them.

Even while young people say that they have caring adults in their lives to whom they might turn in times of distress, there is considerable evidence that young people do not, in fact, turn to adults for help for relationship problems. It is up to adults, then, to make the first move. The failure to intervene to disrupt the cycle of violence will only teach young people that adults cannot be counted on to keep them safe from harm.

Now more than ever, there is a need for effective programs targeting violence, especially dating violence, in the lives of these young people. Doing so should be at the top of the political and policy agenda. Young people need to learn skills in recognizing and countering violent behaviors in dating relationships and need to know that the adults in their lives care deeply about their safety and well-being.

Early intervention is critical in preventing substance use in the lives of young people. The evidence shows that substance use is beginning at a very early age for many young people. There is a pressing need to begin teaching very young students about the risks associated with substance use and to help them develop the kinds of resilience skills that will help them make decisions regarding substance use before reaching their teen years.

This is also true with respect to relationship violence. While it is useful to intervene with students in middle and high school who experience dating violence, it is also critical to help very young students learn how to deal with violence and violence-related behaviors, especially the kinds of peer to peer violence characterized by bullying and other forms of interpersonal interaction.

Students are all too aware of the state of things and are likely to welcome prevention and intervention programs. The risk in not responding to students' experience of dating violence and substance use is in relegating them to a life with little hope for the promising future they so richly deserve.

Endnotes

¹ Caution is needed in interpreting these results. In the first three years of data collection, items on past six month use of tobacco, alcohol, alcohol to excess, and illicit drug use included an option for “does not apply.” Since 2006-2007, a change in funding sources led to changes in survey items, including deleting “does not apply” as a response option. For this analysis, “does not apply” was re-coded as “no” since, presumably, the item does not apply because the individual responding did not use that substance in the previous six months. It is possible, however, that the response in question may have been endorsed for other reasons.

²These questions are specific to girls and young women because the project for which the survey was originally designed was intended to reduce violence among girls and young women. While these questions could now be broadened to include male victims and female perpetrators, they have been kept as is for ease of comparisons across years.