

Middletown Prevention Coalition

Middletown, Rhode Island



Middletown Student Health and Wellness Survey Report

2019-2020

Fifth Edition

Letter to the Reader

The data presented in this guide are intended to evoke questions: while this guide does not provide all the answers for a healthy Middletown, the data, when analyzed collectively, provide insight into our community, our needs, and our resources. The Middletown Prevention Coalition would like to thank Middletown Public Schools' Administration and Middletown High School and Joseph H. Gaudet Middle School Administration and Staff for their participation in conducting surveys to gather this important information. If questions arise as you digest this report, we hope you will reach out to us.

Warm regards,

Lori Verderosa

Executive Summary

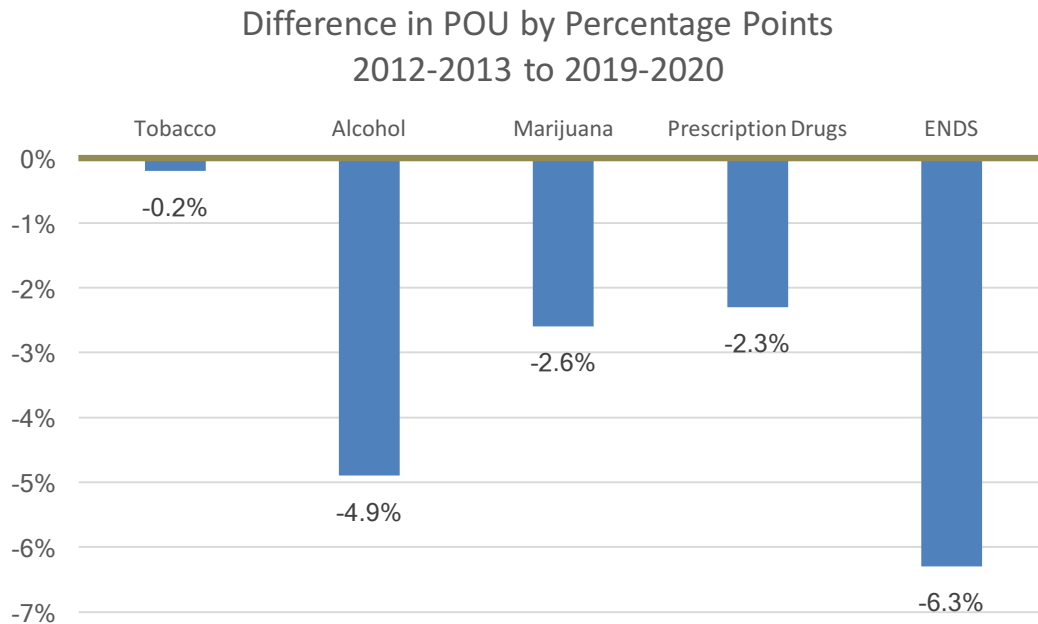
The data presented in this assessment were gathered through quantitative and qualitative methods utilizing the Middletown Student Health and Wellness Survey and the Coalition Snapshot, provided by ICF International, the national evaluation team for the Drug-Free Communities Support Program. The instrument has been administered to 7th through 12th grade students annually at Middletown High School and Gaudet Middle School since the 2011-2012 academic year. While Middletown data show some promising trends indicating a reduction in adolescent use of some substances, other data indicate new and emerging issues.

The Middletown Prevention Coalition is committed to monitoring trends and making data informed decisions to target prevention programs and initiatives that maximize health in the community. Prevention science confirms low perception of harm combined with easy access to substances leads to increased rates of youth consumption. The coalition operates by implementing a comprehensive and complimentary set of strategies, combining both individual and environmental strategies across all sectors of the community to reduce access to substances and increase perception of harm.

Middletown Success

- Reduction in prevalence of use of alcohol, marijuana, and ENDS since 2018-2019¹
- Significant reduction in 11th and 12th grade prevalence of 30-day alcohol use since 2011-2012¹
- Significant reduction in 9th, 11th and 12th grade prevalence of 30-day cigarette use since 2011-2012¹
- Significant reduction in 8th, 9th, 11th and 12th grade prevalence of 30-day marijuana use since 2011-2012¹
- Significant reduction in 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grade prevalence of 30-day prescription drug misuse since 2011-2012¹
- Prevalence of 30-day use changed at the following rates between 2011 and 2019:²
 - Alcohol
 - Middle School: -14.9%
 - High School: -22.9%
 - Tobacco
 - Middle School: +38.5%
 - High School: -41.2%
 - Marijuana
 - Middle School: +95.5%
 - High School: -4.9%
 - Prescription Drugs
 - Middle School: +168.8%
 - High School: -37.7%

- Perception of risk/harm increased for alcohol and marijuana since 2018-2019¹
- Perception of parental disapproval of marijuana and ENDS use increased since 2018-2019¹
- Perception of peer disapproval of alcohol, marijuana, prescription drug, and ENDS use increased since 2018-2019¹
- Perception of easy access of alcohol, marijuana, and ENDS use decreased since 2018-2019¹



Trends to Watch and Emerging Issues

- Teens use alcohol more than any other substance measured, but at similar rates to marijuana and ENDS¹
- Perception of peer disapproval is low for marijuana and electronic nicotine delivery systems¹
- Adolescents report ENDS are the easiest drug/device to access¹
- Substance use shows a significant jump in prevalence of use between 9th and 10th grades¹
- A trend to keep a close eye on is the seemingly interconnected relationship between prevalence of cigarette use and ENDS use: when ENDS use increases, cigarette use seems to decrease; when ENDS use decreased, cigarette use increased¹
- Fewer students overall seem to be using substances; however, those who are seem to be using at earlier ages, suggesting earlier intervention may be necessary²

Middletown Student Health and Wellness Survey Report; 2019-2020 Academic Year

Current Drug Use (Past 30-Day Use) Trends by Substance and Year—Grades 7-12, 2012-2013 to 2019-2020

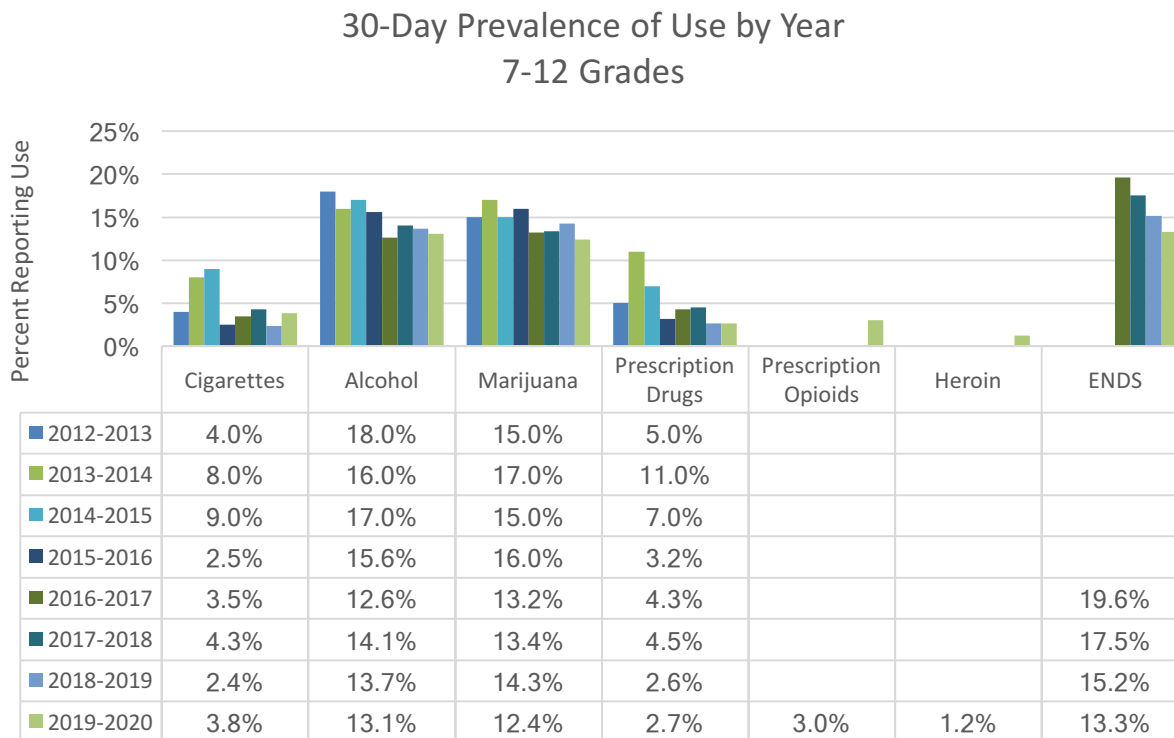


Figure I: Current Drug Use (Past 30-Day Use) by Substance—Grades 7-12, 2012-2013 to 2019-2020¹

Current Drug Use (Past 30-Day Use) Trends by Year—Grades 7-12, 2012-2013 to 2019-2020¹

Fewer teens smoke cigarettes than smoke marijuana in Middletown, which mirrors national trends; however, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) have quickly emerged with a high prevalence of use—higher than any other measured substance (but similar to alcohol). Marijuana use has fluctuated since 2012-2013, but recent data suggest a downward trend in prevalence of use: prevalence of underage drinking has also fluctuated through the years, though there has been an overall decrease since 201-2013. A decrease has also been recognized for prevalence of use of ENDS. Heroin and prescription opioid use were collected as a baseline measures.

Current Drug Use (Past 30-Day Use) by Grade, 2019-2020

30-Day Prevalence of Use by Year
7-12 Grades, 2019-2020

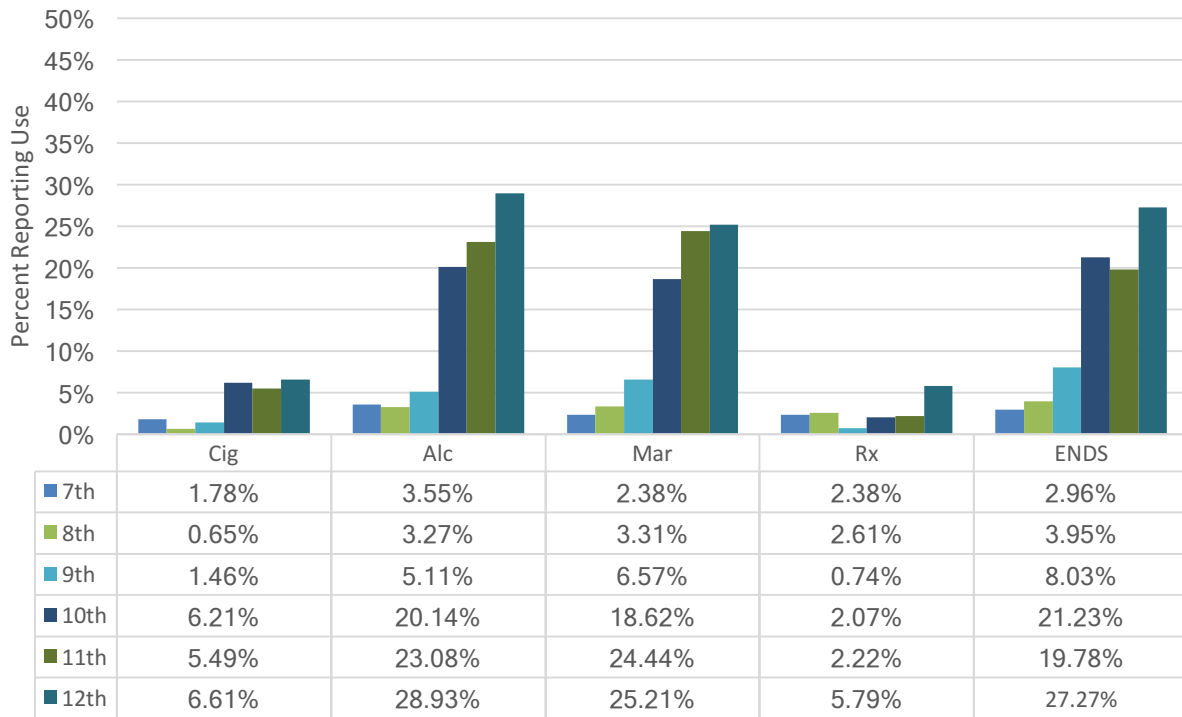


Figure III: Current Drug Use (Past 30-Day Use) by Grade, 2019-2020¹

Middle school trends in 30-day use have decreased. A noticeable increase in prevalence of use has spiked between 9th and 10th grades, which is delayed from previous years, indicating a delay in onset of use. Delaying onset of use is critical to reduce long-term consequences.

Perception of Harm by Year—Grades 7-12, 2012-2013 to 2019-2020

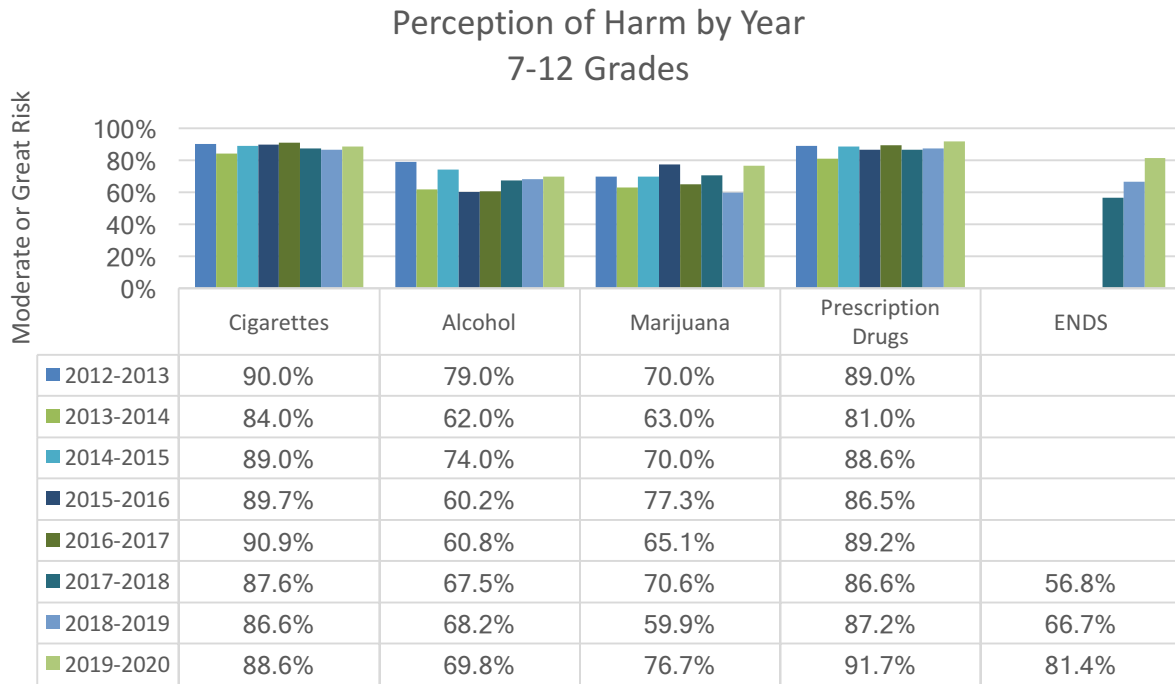


Figure IV: Perception of Harm by Year—Grades 7-12, 2012-2013 to 2019-2020¹

Perception of Harm measures how much risk or harm students associate with use. Historically, when perception of harm is high, prevalence of use is low. This graph illustrates students who associate *great* or *moderate risk* with use. Perception of harm has fluctuated in Middletown in recent years for cigarettes, alcohol, and prescription drugs; perception of harm for marijuana and ENDS has increased significantly over the past year.

Perceived Parental Disapproval—Grades 7-12, 2012-2013 to 2019-2020

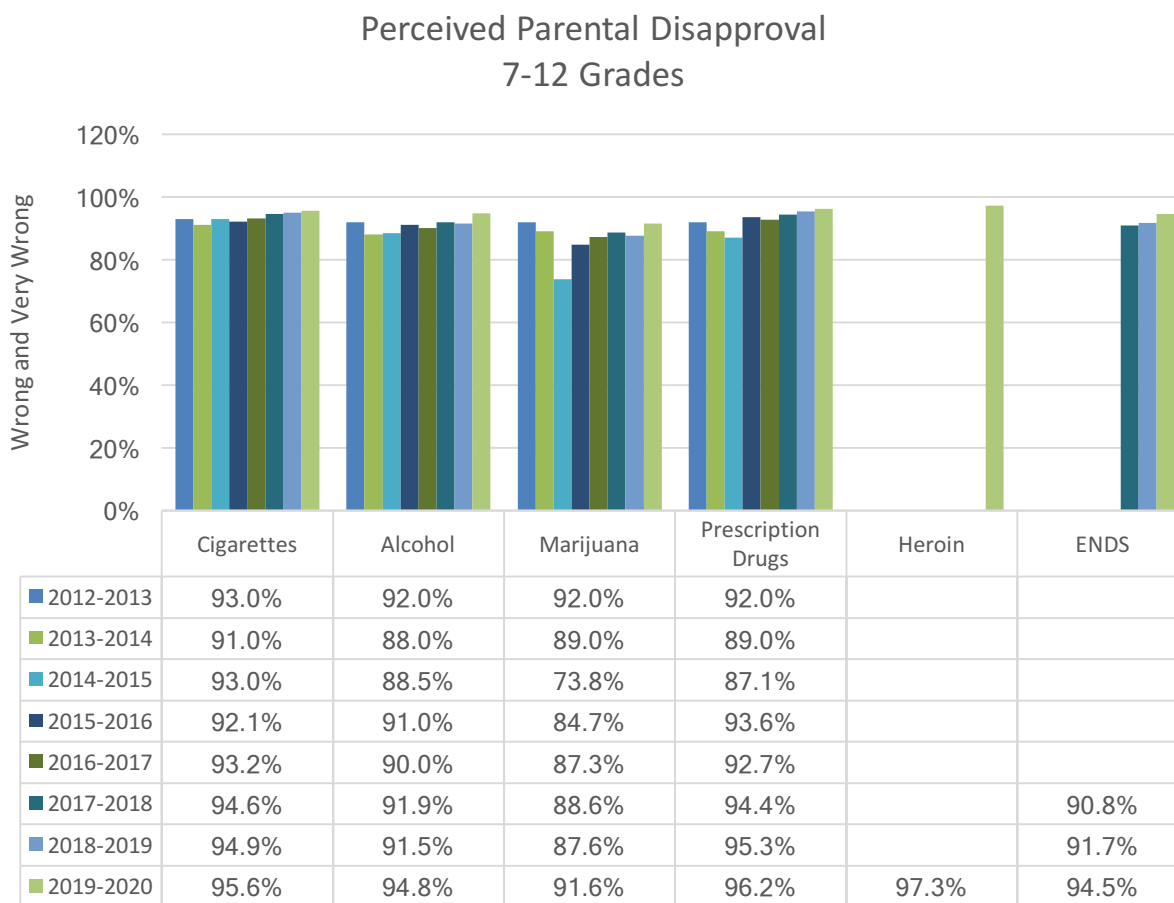


Figure V: Perceived Parental Disapproval—Grades 7-12, 2012-2013 to 2019-2020¹

Perception of Parent Disapproval measures how much students perceive their parents to approve or disapprove of their drug or alcohol use. Research indicates when perceived parent disapproval is high, prevalence of use is low; a low level of perceived parent disapproval is a risk factor for adolescent use. This graph illustrates students who perceive their parents to identify their drug use as *wrong* or *very wrong*. Perceived parent disapproval increased slightly across the board for all substances measured this survey year and heroin was collected as a baseline measure.

Perceived Peer Disapproval—Grades 7-12, 2012-2013 to 2019-2020

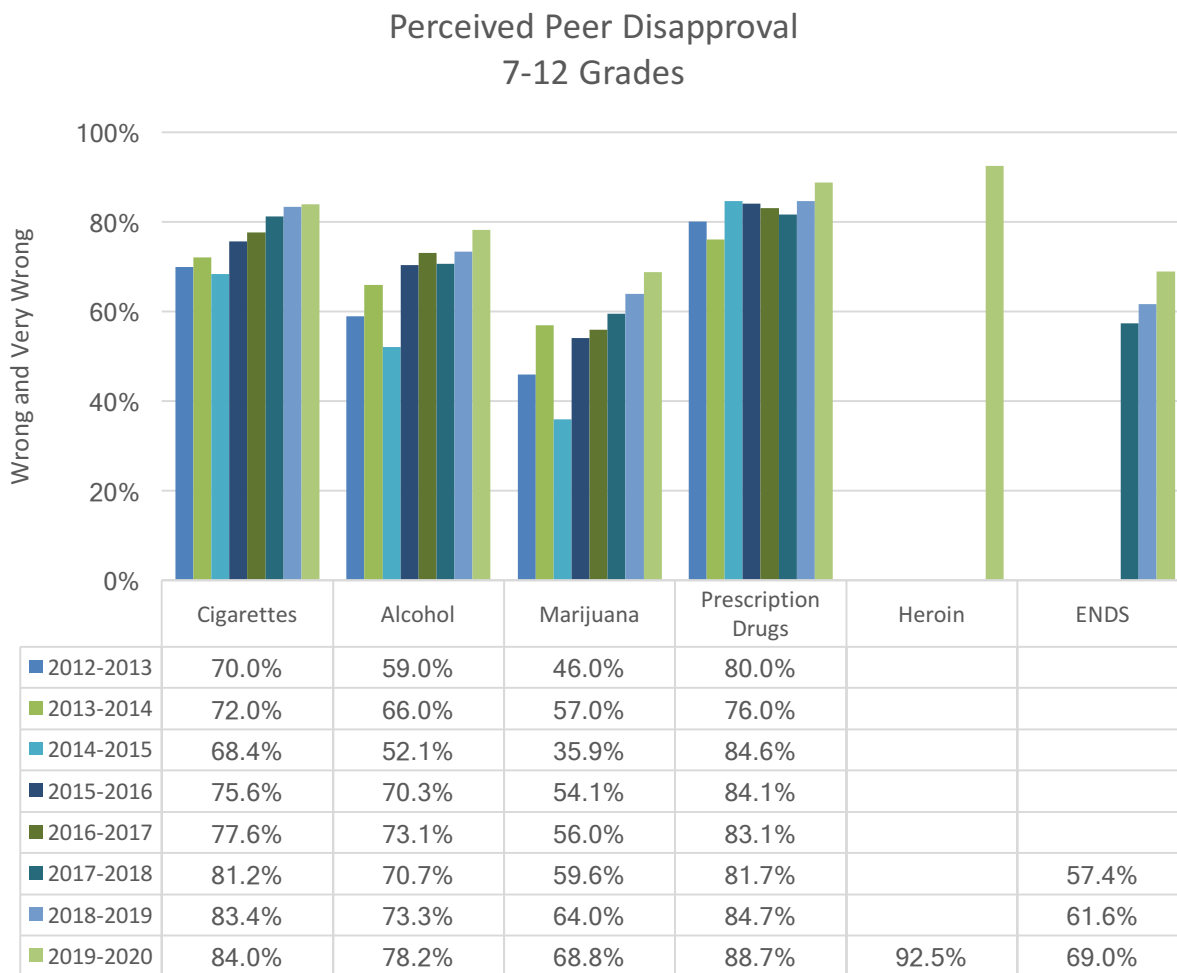


Figure VI: Perceived Peer Disapproval—Grades 7-12, 2012-2013 to 2019-2020¹

Peer influences toward substance use are more pertinent for older adolescents, while parent influences are more pertinent for their younger peers. High rates of perception of peer disapproval is a protective factor for adolescents and increased slightly across the board for all substances measured this survey cycle. Perceived disapproval of heroin use was collected as a baseline measure.

Perceived Access of Substances—Grades 7-12, 2015-2016 to 2019-2020

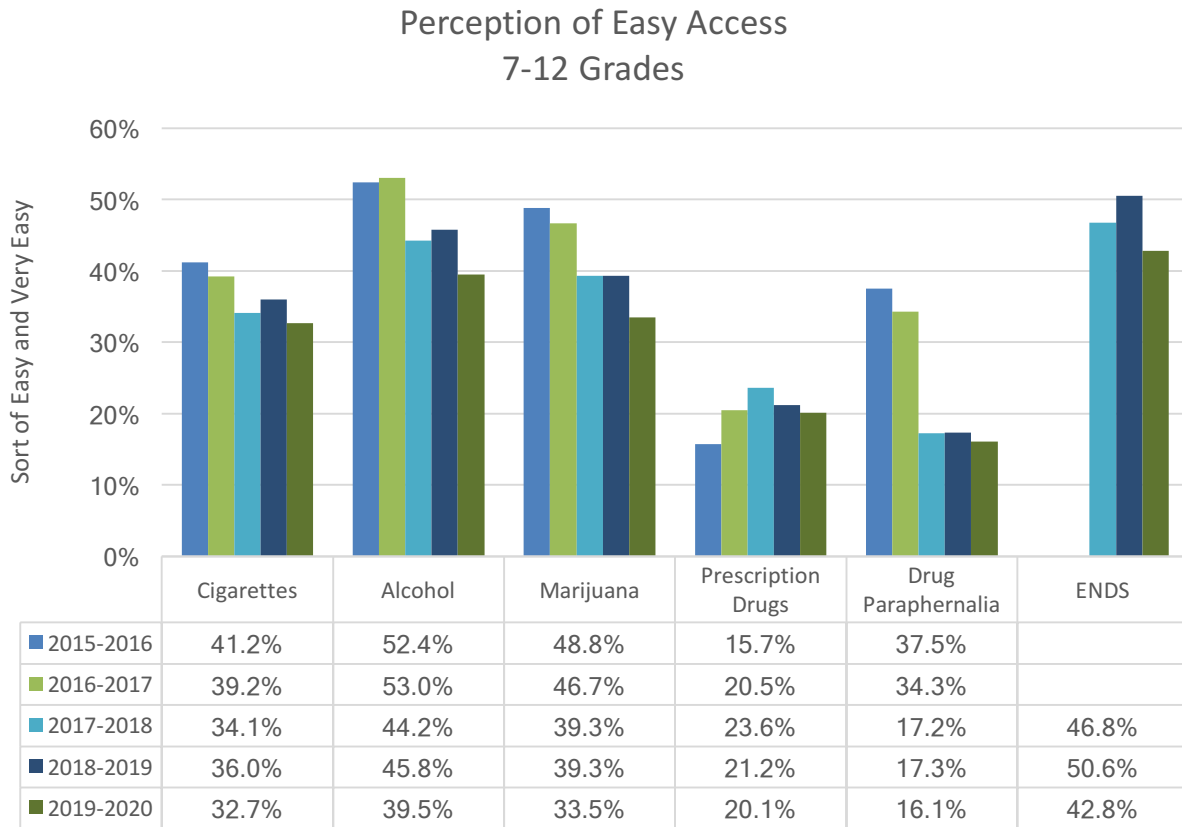


Figure VII: Perceived Access of Substances—Grades 7-12, 2012-2013 to 2019-2020¹

Easy access is a risk factor associated with prevalence of substance use. Middletown students report ENDS being the easiest substance to access, followed by alcohol, marijuana, and then cigarettes. Prescription drugs and drug paraphernalia rank among the most difficult to access.

Point-of-Access of Alcohol—Grades 7-12, 2019-2020 (Among Students Who Report Use)

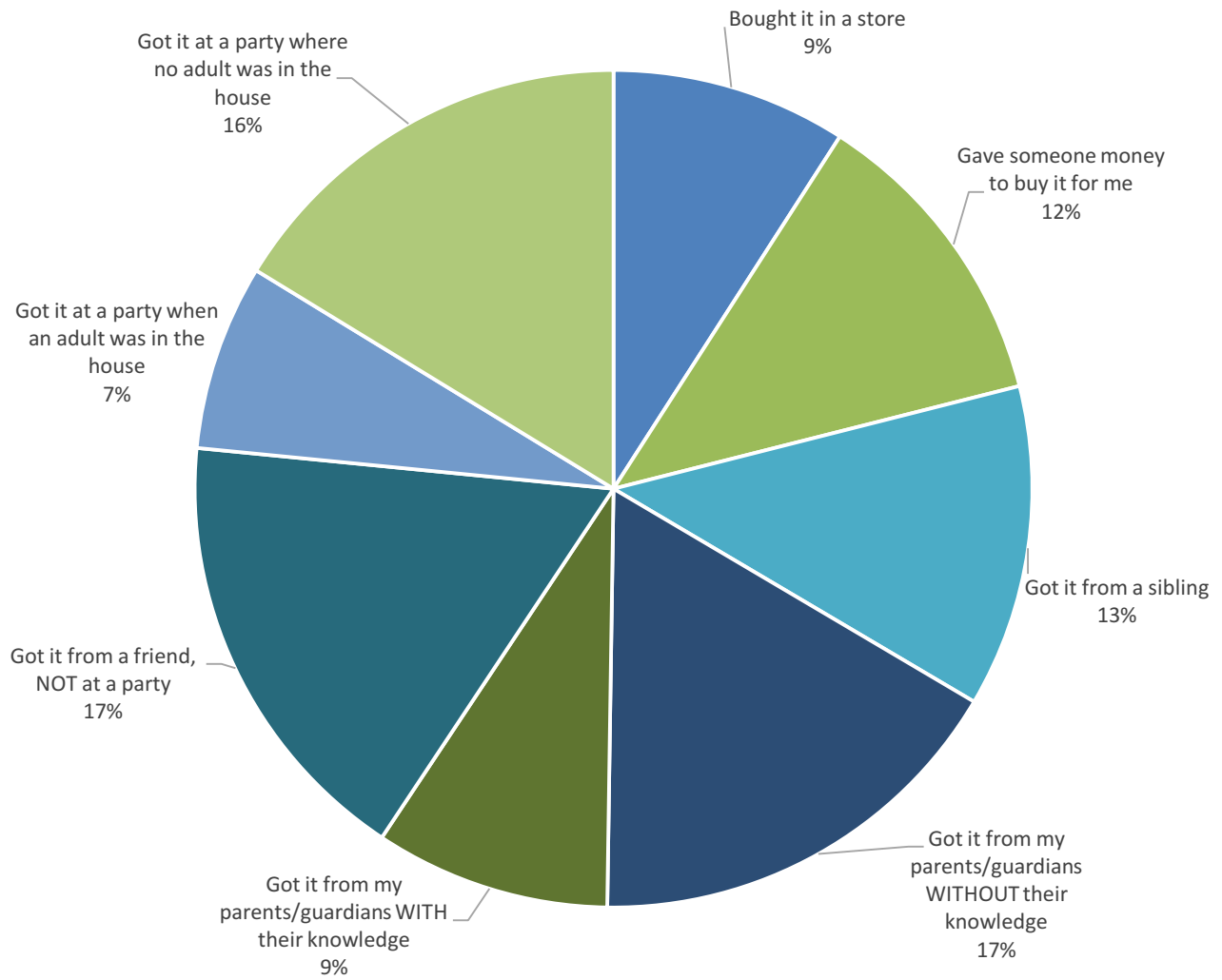


Figure VIII: **Point-of-Access of Alcohol—Grades 7-12, 2019-2020**¹

Among youth who report using alcohol, access points are split across a number of sources. Adolescents report getting alcohol from a variety of sources, primarily from their parents without their knowledge (17%), from a friend (not at a party) (17%), at a party when no adult was in the house (16%), and from a sibling (13%).

Attitude Toward Peer Use—Grades 7-12, 2019-2020 (Required STOP Act Measure)

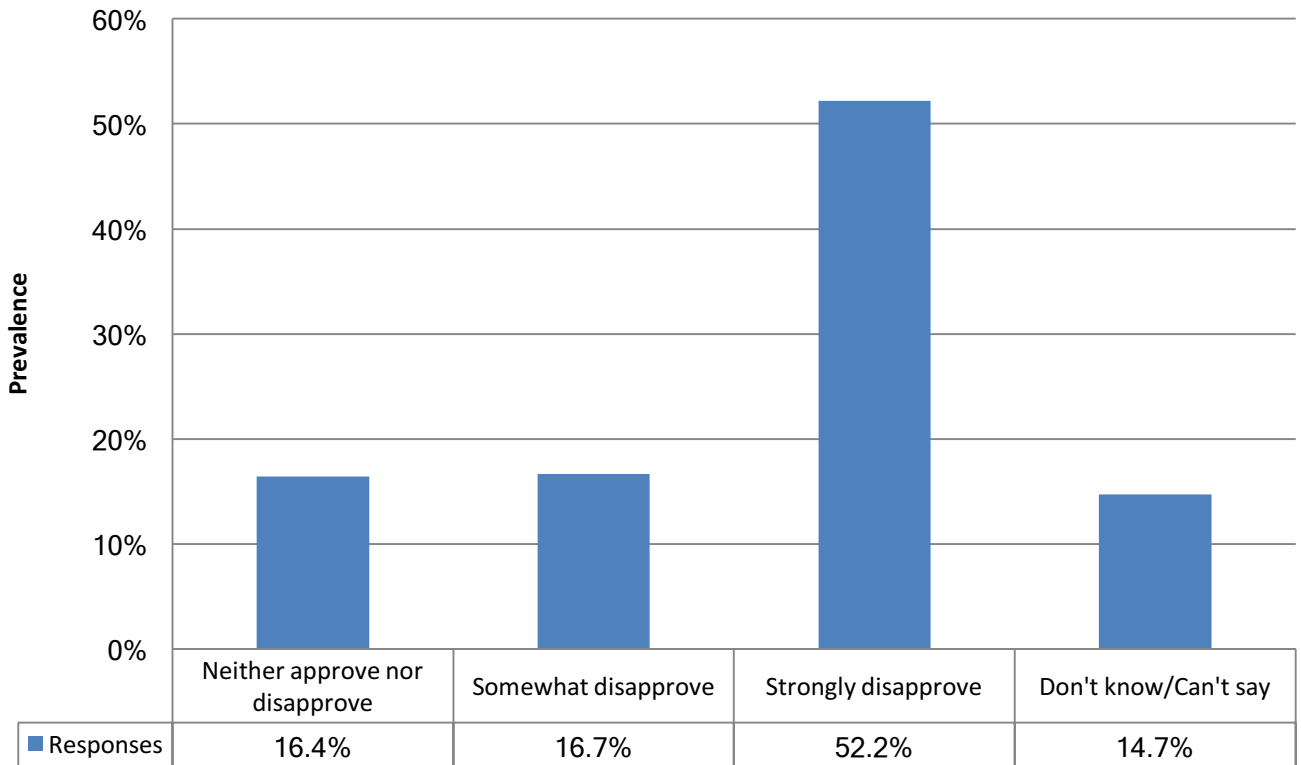


Figure IX: Attitude Toward Peer Use—Grades 7-12, 2019-2020 (Required STOP Act Measure)¹

Attitude toward peer use is a required measure for the Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking (STOP) Act. About half of Middletown youth report strongly disapproving of someone their age having one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day: 68.9% report strongly or somewhat disapproving of peer use. Disapproval of peer use is a protective factor for preventing underage drinking.

Point-of-Access of Marijuana—Grades 7-12, 2018-2019 (Among Students Who Report Use)

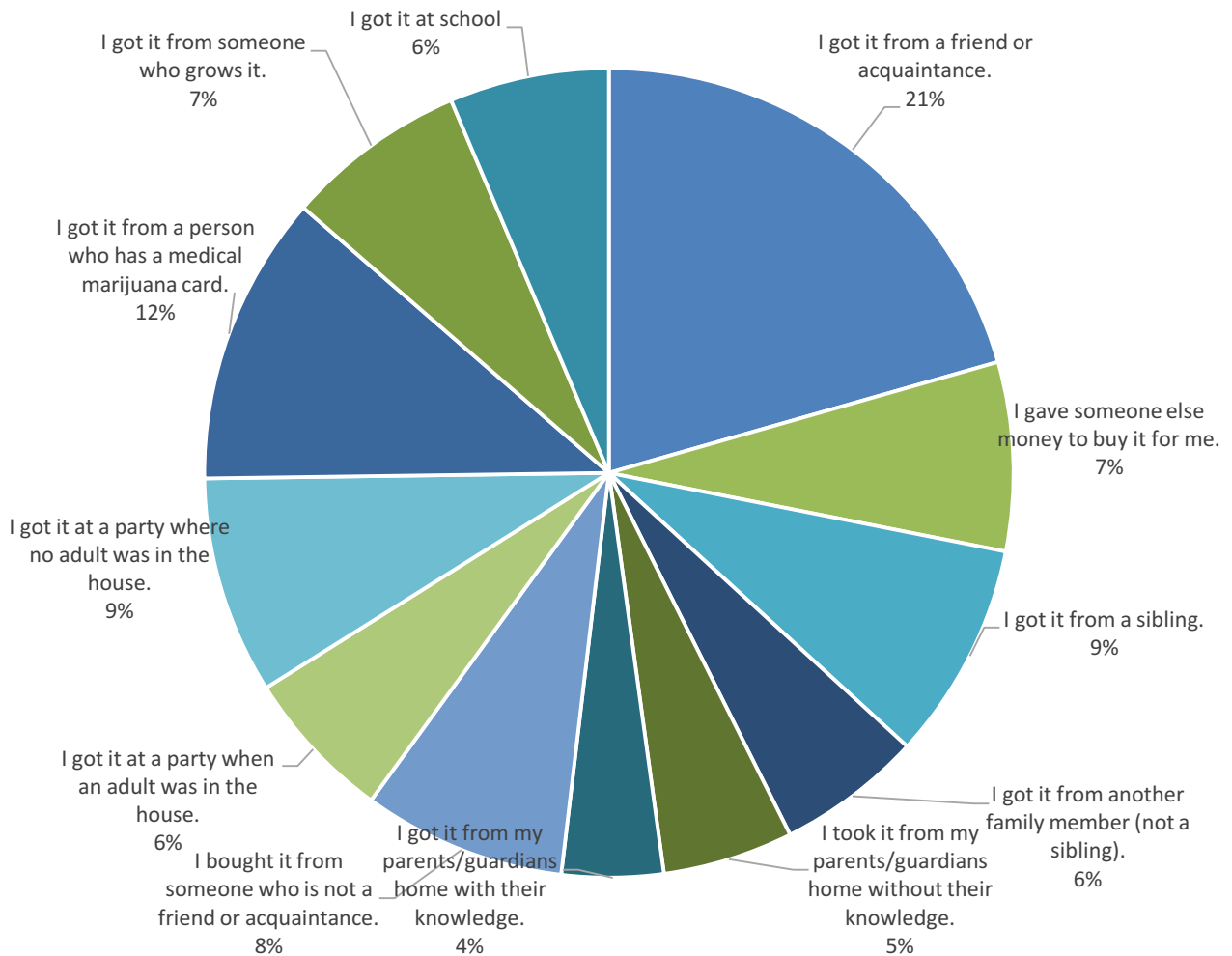


Figure X: Point-of-Access of Marijuana—Grades 7-12, 2019-2020¹

The majority of adolescents who report marijuana use identified **getting it from a friend or acquaintance** (21%) as the most prevalent point-of-access for marijuana, followed by a person who has a medical marijuana card (12%).

Location of Marijuana Use—Grades 7-12, 2019-2020

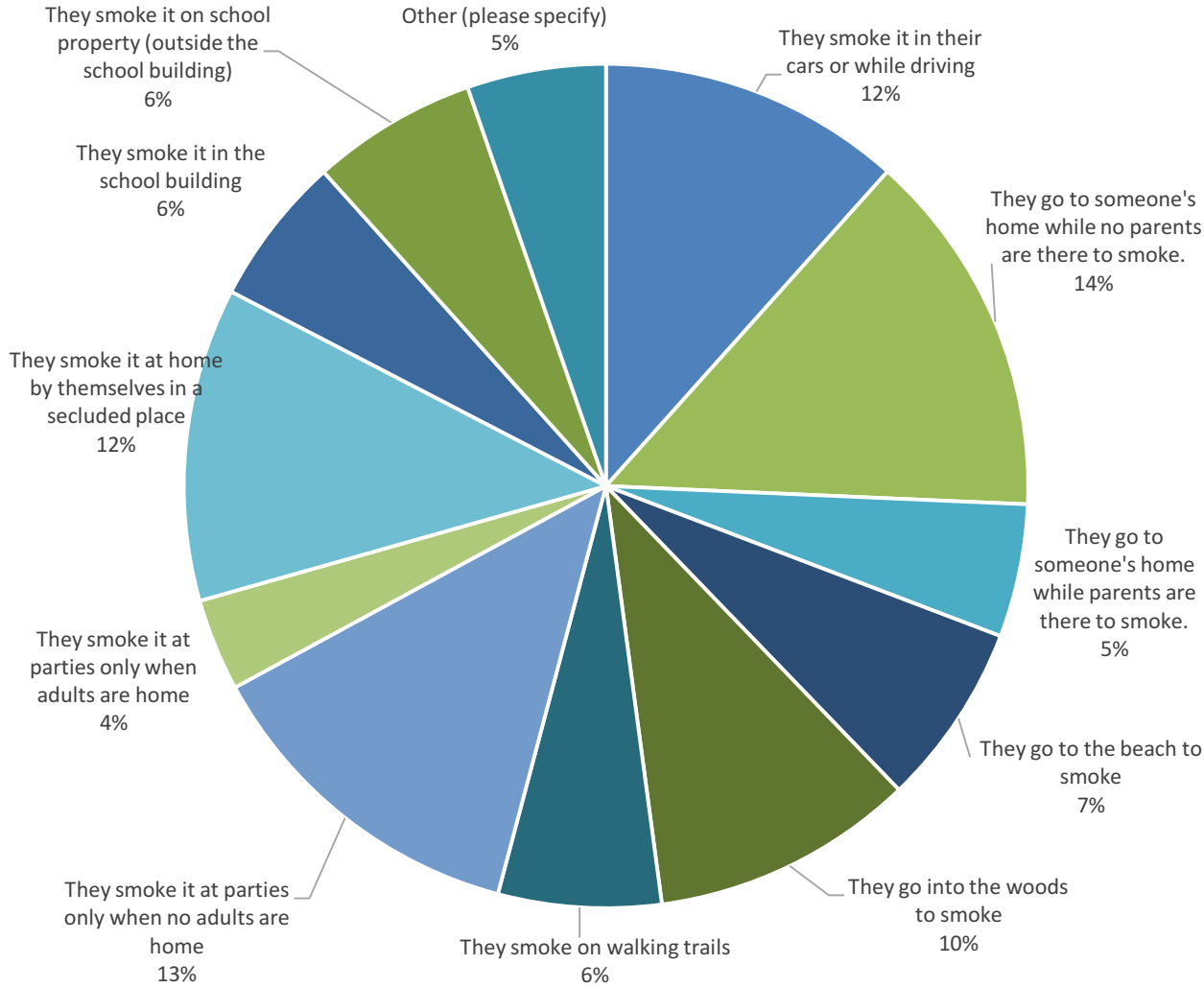


Figure XI: Location of Marijuana Use—Grades 7-12, 2019-2020¹

The locations adolescents report people going to use marijuana are divided: most common locations are someone’s home when no parents are home (14%), parties when no adults are home (13%), at home by themselves in a secluded place (12%) and in their car while driving (12%). Other locations identified include bathrooms, school bathrooms, behind buildings and in alleys, public places, and football games.

Method of Marijuana Use—Grades 7-12, 2018-2019 (Among Students Who Report Use)

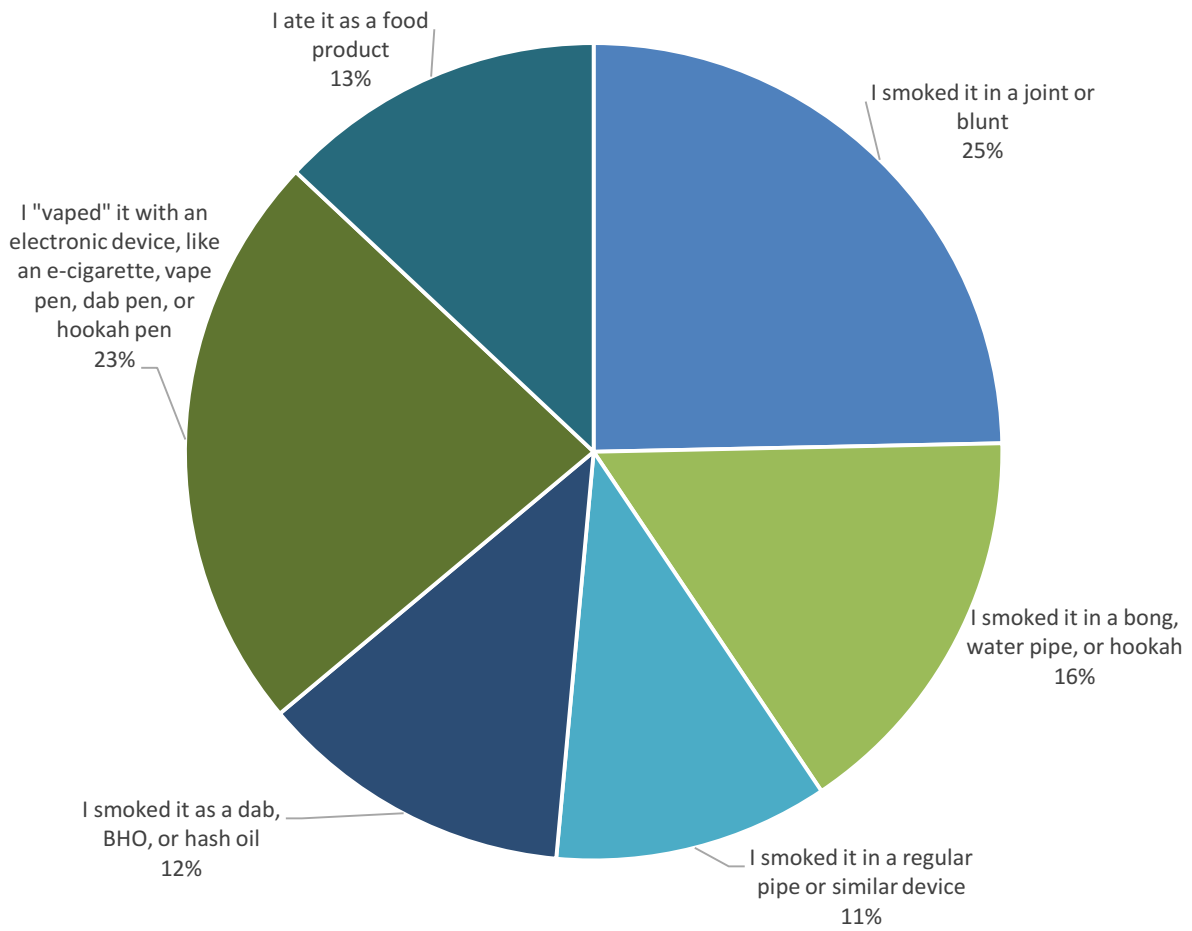


Figure XII: Method of Marijuana Use—Grades 7-12, 2019-2020¹

There are a number of prevalent methods of marijuana use reported by adolescents, as illustrated in the chart above. Data suggest most students smoke marijuana in a joint or blunt (25%), followed closely by vaping marijuana (23%).

Call To Action

If you have questions or comments or if this report is compelling to you and you want to be part of the solution, please contact the Middletown Prevention Coalition at (401) 845-0409 or mpc@middletownri.com.

Resources:

¹ Middletown Student Health and Wellness Survey. Administered 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016, 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020; grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

² Middletown Prevention Coalition Snapshot, February 2019. ICF International, Drug-Free Communities.