

Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Data Brief

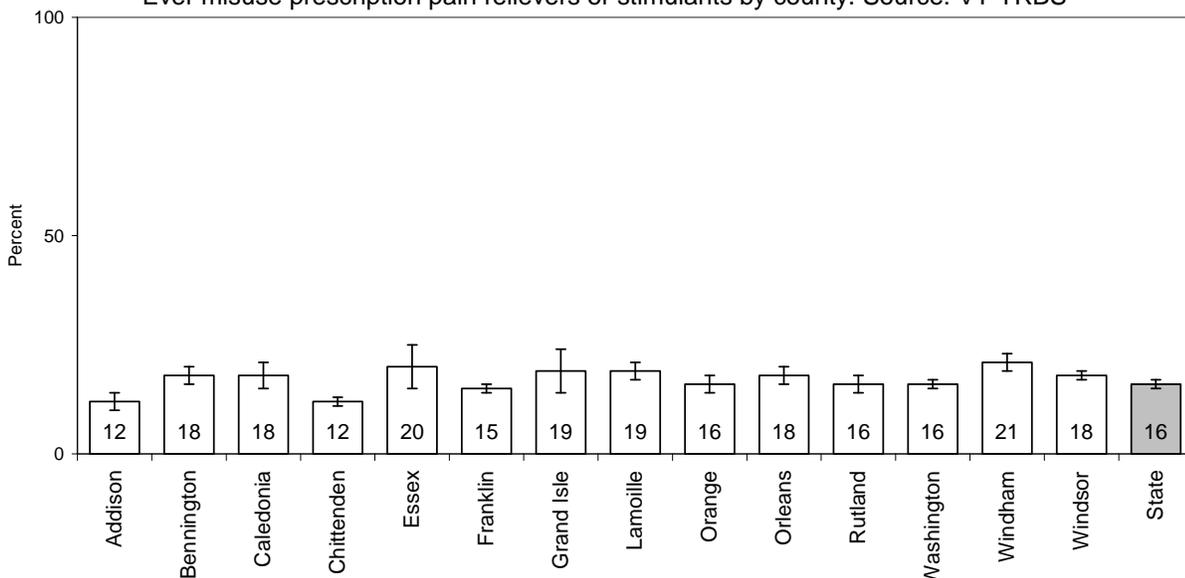
Prescription Drug Misuse

In 2009, 16% of students in grades 8-12 reported ever taking a prescription pain reliever or prescription stimulant without a prescription—the same as 2007. Of all students, 9% ever misused only a pain reliever, 1% misused only a stimulant, and 6% had misused both a pain reliever and a stimulant.

Prescription drug misuse increased with age but did not differ by gender. Students whose mothers did not graduate from high school were more likely to report prescription drug misuse. Students in Chittenden and Addison counties were less likely to report prescription drug misuse.

	Any prescription drug misuse	Any pain reliever misuse	Any stimulant misuse
Total	16%	14%	7%
Sex			
Female	15%	14%	6%
Male	16%	15%	8%
Grade			
8th	8%	7%	2%
9th	11%	10%	5%
10th	16%	15%	6%
11th	19%	18%	10%
12th	20%	18%	10%
Mother's Education			
Did not graduate from high school	29%	25%	15%
High school graduate	17%	16%	8%
Some college	19%	17%	7%
College graduate	12%	11%	5%

Ever misuse prescription pain relievers or stimulants by county. Source: VT YRBS



Students who misused prescription drugs were more likely than other adolescents to report drinking in the past 30 days, smoking cigarettes, and marijuana use.

Distribution of selected risk behaviors by prescription drug misuse

	Ever misused prescription drugs	Never misused prescription drugs
Reported smoking cigarettes before age 13	35%	7%
Smoked in the past 30 days	55%	9%
Drank before age 13	43%	14%
Drank in the past 30 days	75%	28%
Binged in the past 30 days	56%	14%
Used marijuana before age 13	31%	4%
Used marijuana in the past 30 days	64%	14%
Ever use inhalants, heroin, methamphetamines, or hallucinogens	62%	7%

Those who used prescription drugs were less likely to perceive great risk from alcohol, tobacco, or marijuana use, less likely to think that their parents would disapprove of use of these substances, and less likely to express disapproval of peer use. They were more likely to think that it is easy or very easy to obtain cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana than other adolescents.

Students who reported prescription drug misuse were also more likely to say that they knew an adult who used drugs (88%, compared to 50% of students who did not report prescription drug misuse) or sold drugs (71%, compared to 26% students who did not report prescription drug misuse) in the past year.

Students who used prescription drugs were statistically less likely to report all youth assets than other adolescents.

Distribution of youth assets by prescription drug misuse

	Ever misused prescription drugs	Never misused prescription drugs
Parents talk about school at least weekly	66%	80%
Earn mostly As or Bs	57%	78%
Agree or strongly agree that students help decide what goes on in school	38%	53%
Agree or strongly agree that in your community you feel like you matter	32%	49%
Volunteer 1+ hours	39%	43%
Participate in clubs 1+ hours	22%	28%

For more information, please contact Erika Edwards (802-863-7246; erika.edwards@ahs.state.vt.us) or visit: <http://healthvermont.gov/research/yrbs.aspx>