

Middlesex Student Surveys 2013-2015

A Comparison of alcohol, marijuana & Rx drug behaviors

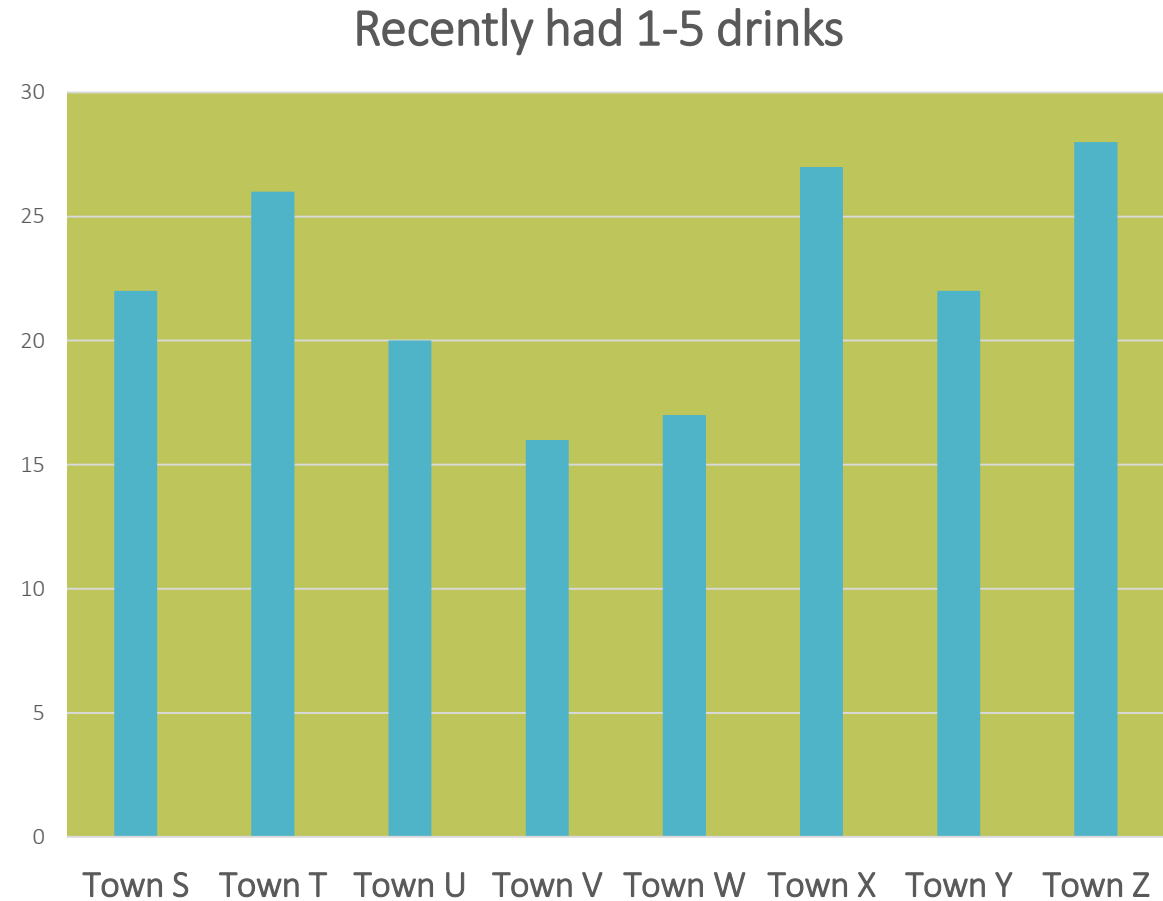
MCSAAC

Alcohol Use, Perception, and Behaviors

84. In the past 30 days I've had one to five drinks.

Percent of students choosing answers "1-2" and "3-5" combined.

This chart tops out at 30%. Visuals are for comparison of light drinkers, town to town.



84. In the past 30 days I've had twenty or more drinks.

Percent of students choosing answers "20-39" and "40+" combined.

This chart tops out at 10%; there are few heavy drinkers overall. However, they are a youth sector in need of intervention services.

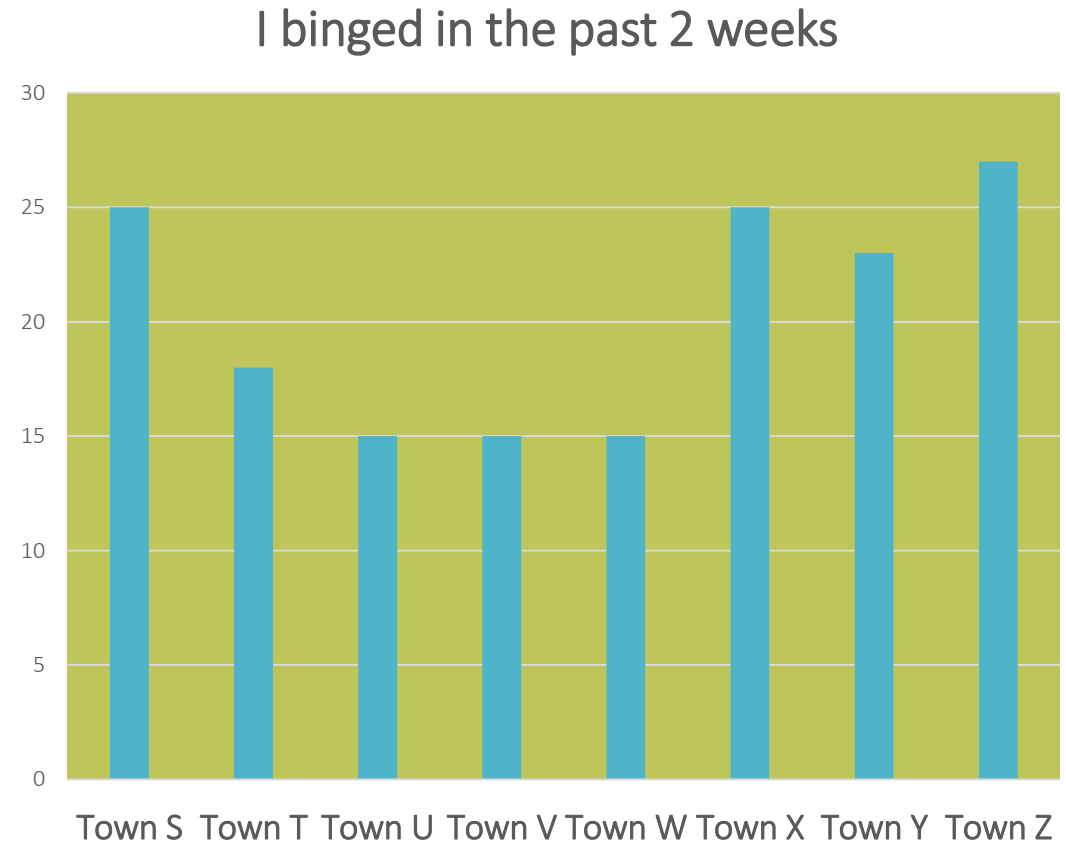
Recently had 20-40+ drinks



85. In the past 2 weeks I've had 5+ drinks in a row.

Percent of students who chose any answer except "none."

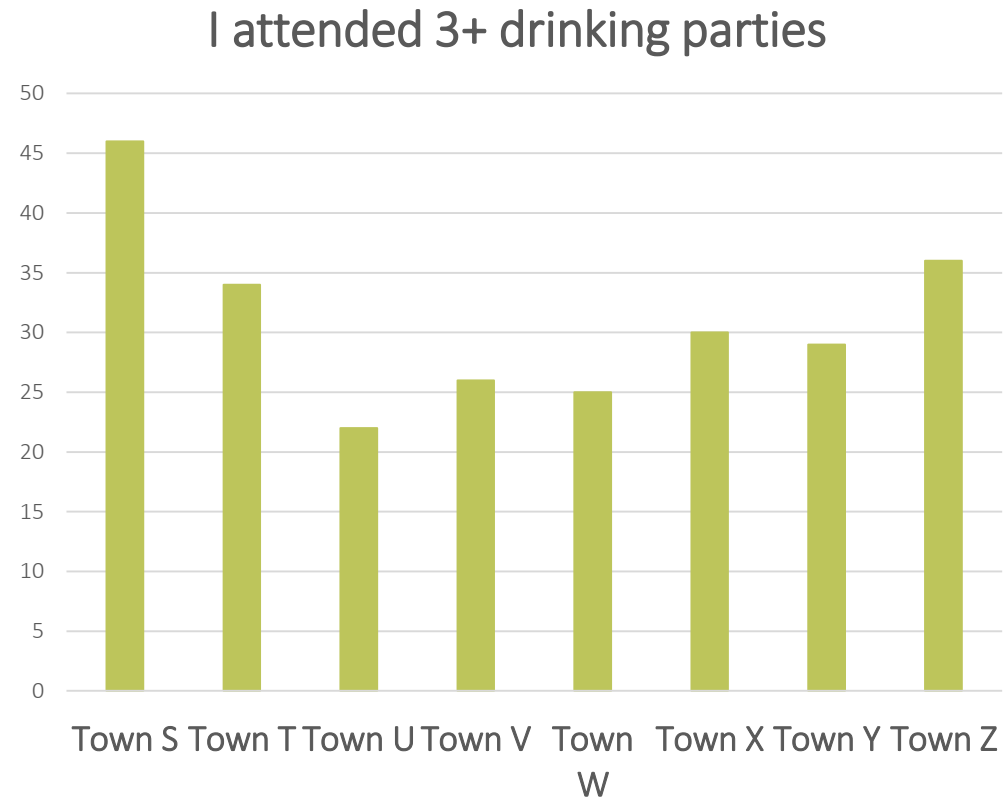
Note that chart tops out at 30%.
Visuals are for comparison of binge drinkers, town to town.



102. In the last 12 months I've gone to three or more parties where kids my age were drinking.

Percent of students choosing answers "3-4 times" and "5 or more times" combined.

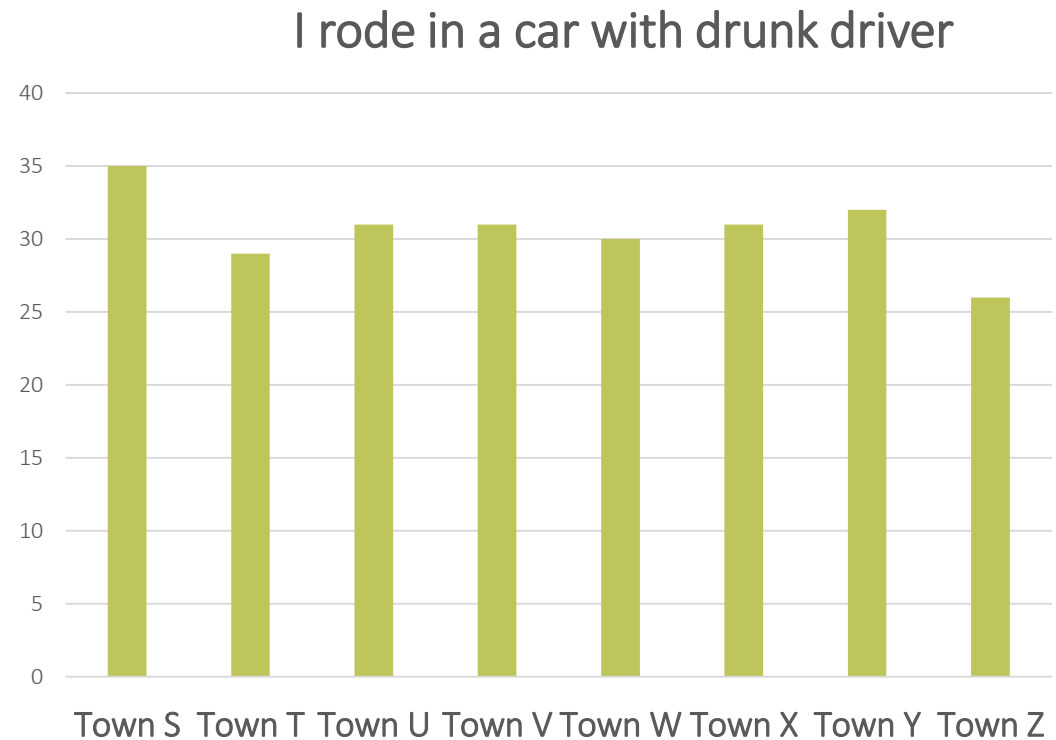
Note that chart tops out at 50%.
Visuals are for comparison of youth attending drinking parties, town to town.



104. In the past 12 months I've ridden in a car whose driver had been drinking.

Percent of students who chose any answer except "never."

Note that chart tops out at 40%.
Visuals are for comparison of youth who rode with a driver who'd been drinking, town to town.



126. More than a few of my close friends drink once a week or more

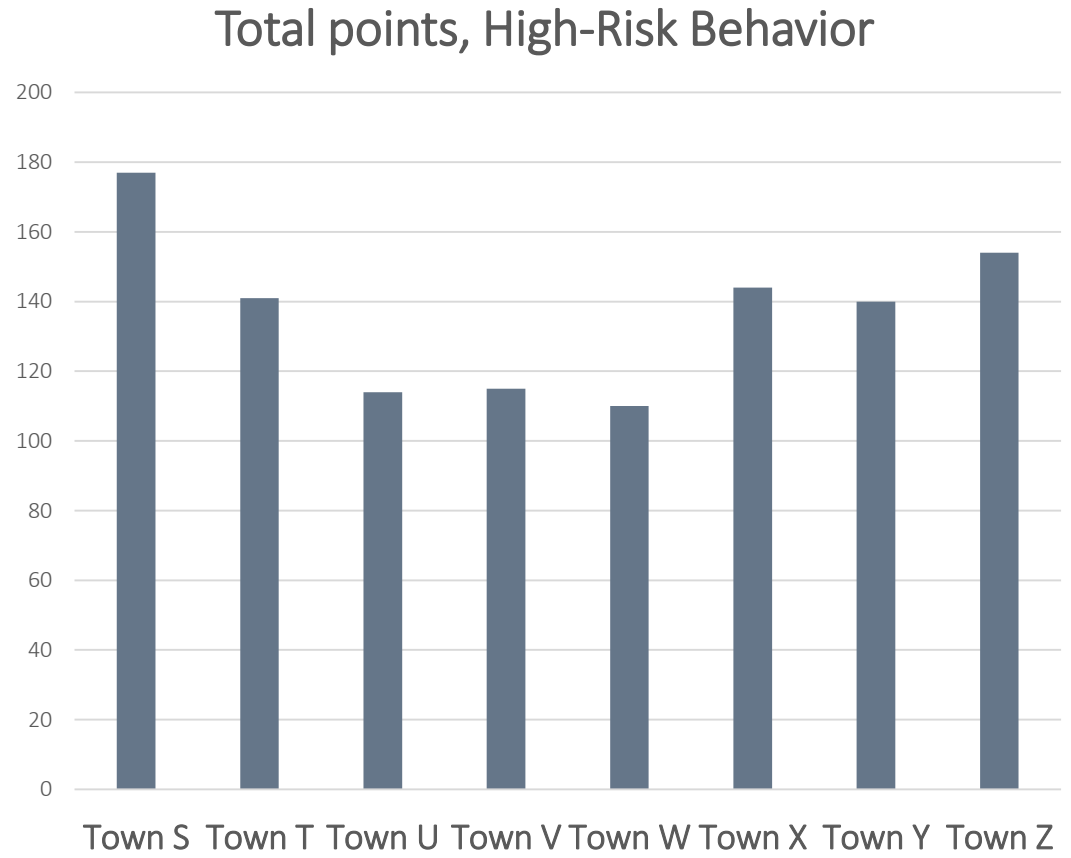
Percent of students choosing “some,” “most,” or “all” of their close friends.

Note that chart tops out at 35%. Visuals are for comparison of youth whose friends often drink.



Total Points High Risk Behavior Around Alcohol

Using percentages as points, all percentages of high-risk behavior were added together, resulting in total points from a low of 110 (Town W) to a high of 177 (Town S).

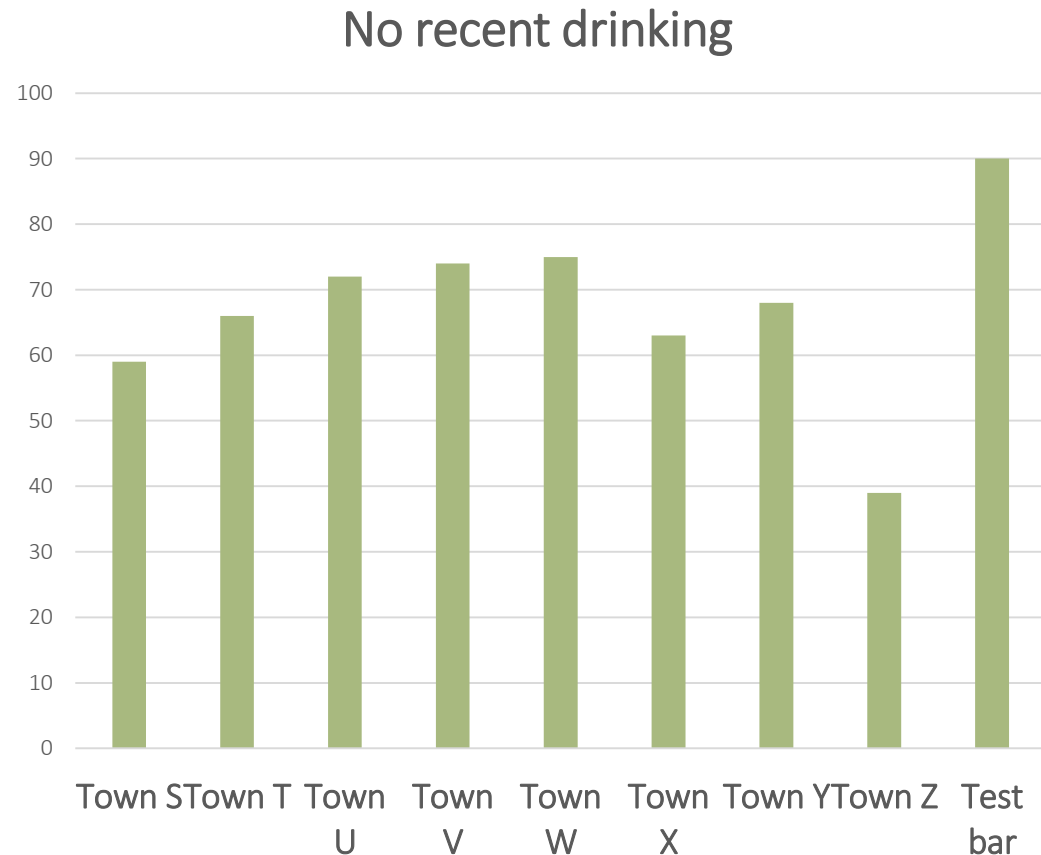


In the past 30 days I've had no alcohol.

Percent of students choosing "0" in response to question 84.

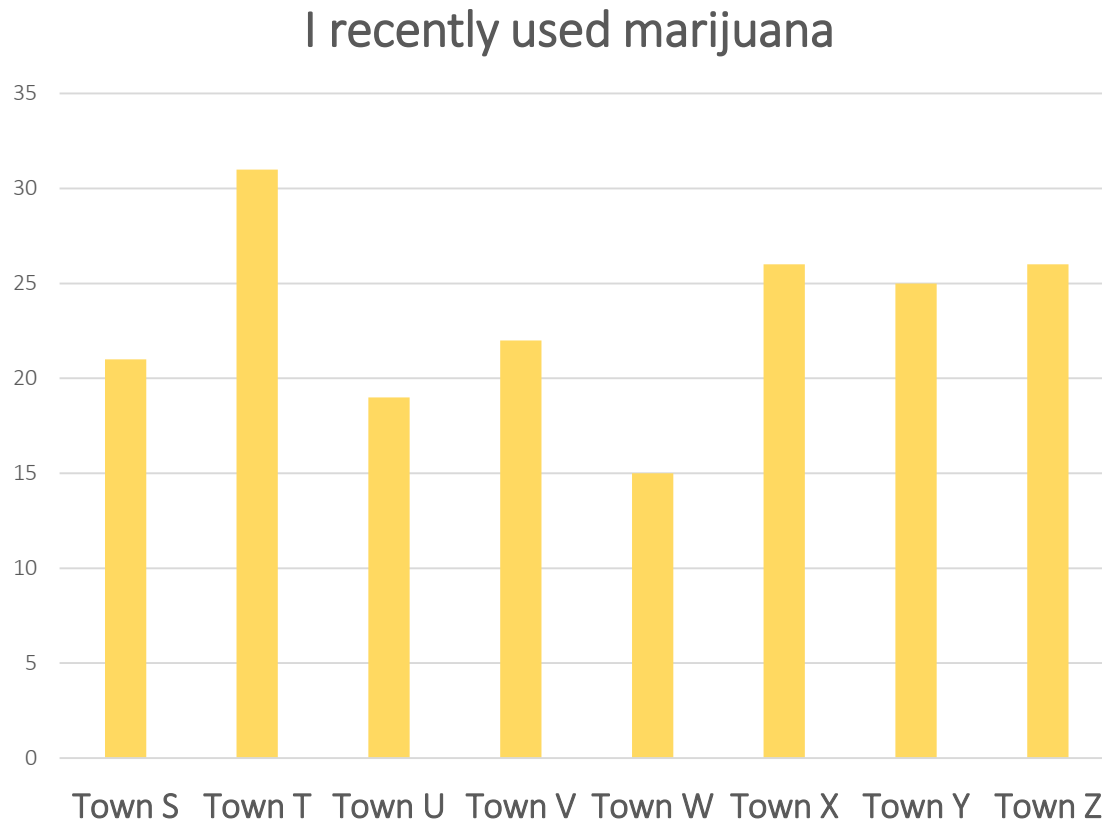
Note that the chart tops out at 100%. The majority of youth in most towns rarely or never drink alcohol.

(Ignore the "test bar," necessary to create a chart that reaches 100%)



Marijuana & Rx Drug Use & Perception

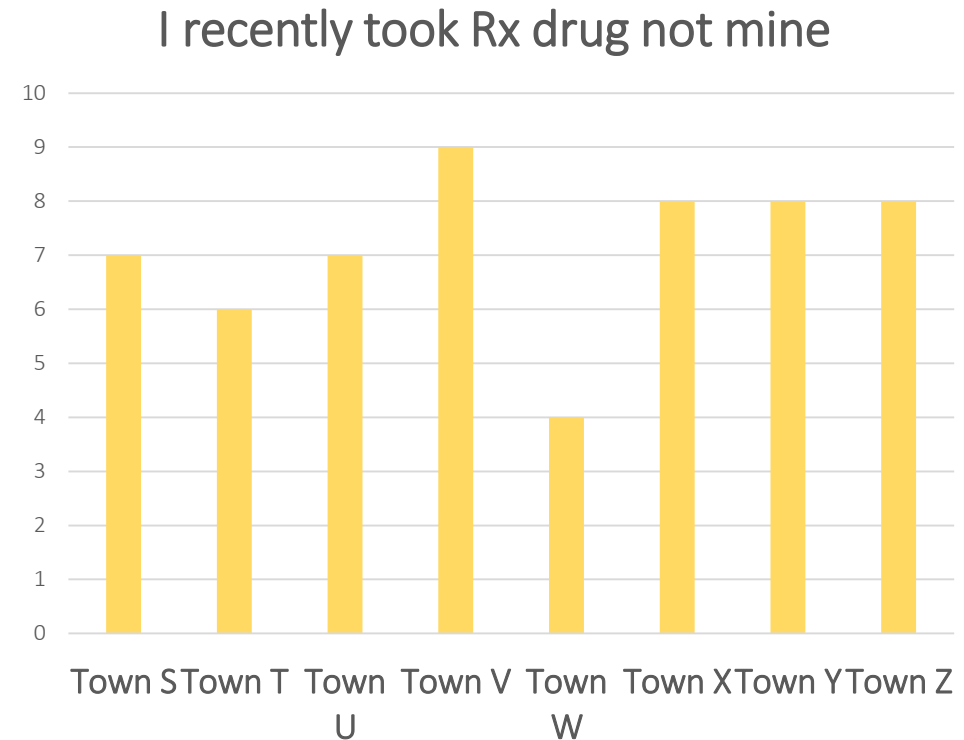
87. I have used marijuana at least once in the past 30 days.



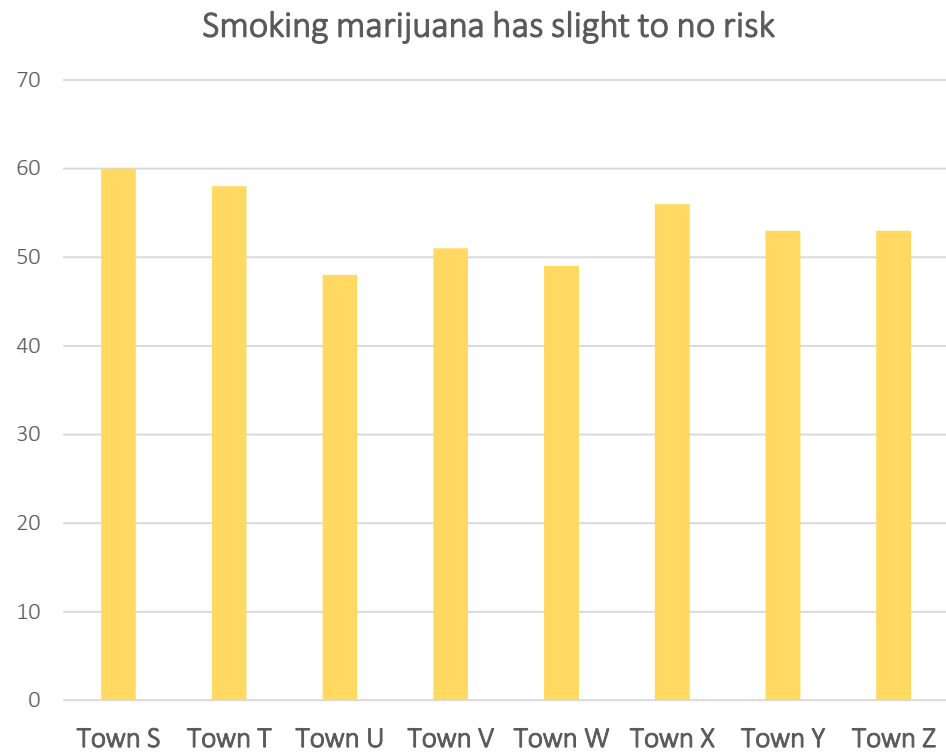
Percent of students reporting "yes."
Note that chart tops out at 35%.
Visuals are for comparison of marijuana users, town to town.

88. I have used an Rx not mine in the past 30 days.

Percent of students reporting "yes."
These are very low numbers; chart tops out at just 10%.



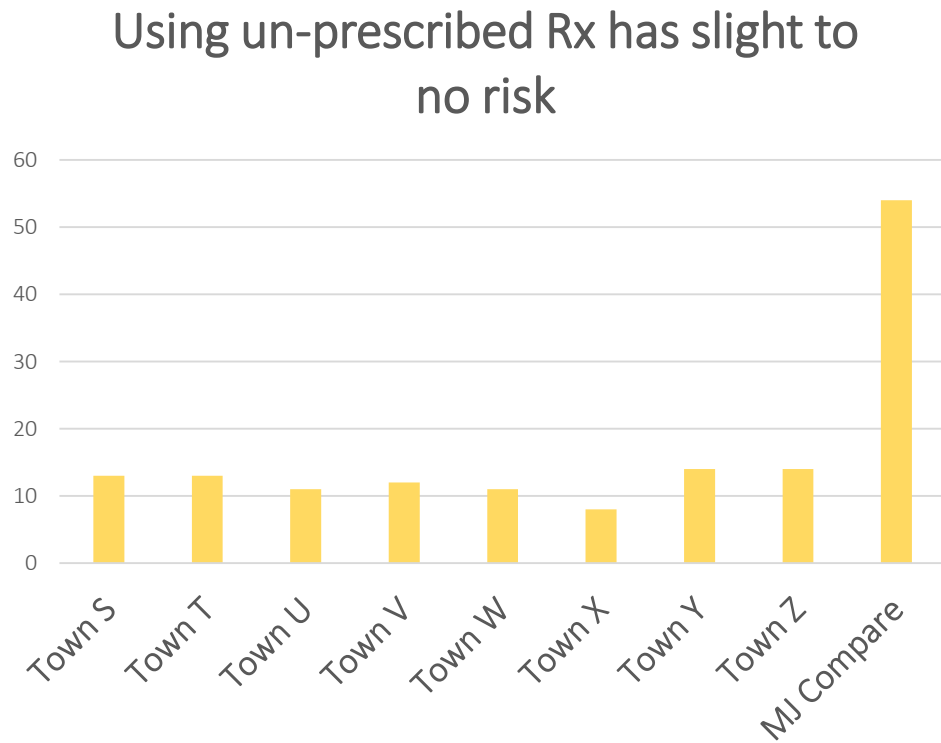
99. I think that smoking marijuana once or twice a week carries slight or no risk.



Percent of students choosing the answer "slight risk" or "no risk."

Note that chart tops out at 70%. Visuals are for comparison of youth who believe that marijuana carries little to no risk.

100. I think that using prescription drugs not prescribed to me carries slight or no risk.



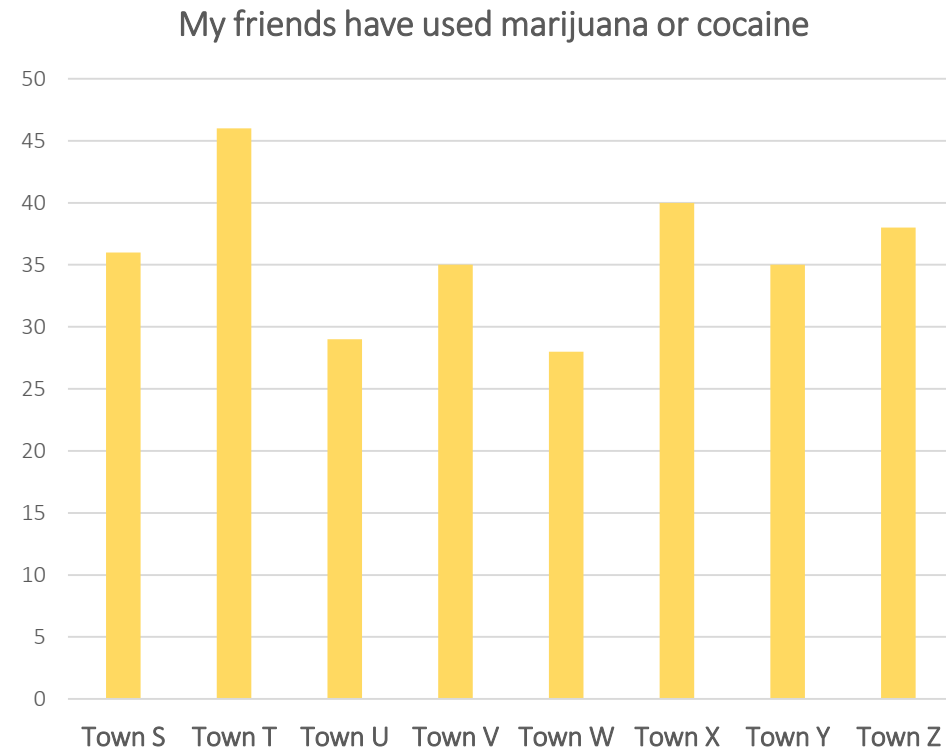
Percent of students choosing the answer "slight risk" or "no risk."

Note the very low percentages. On the other hand, 54% of students believe that using *marijuana* carries little or no risk. By comparison, they believe that using un-prescribed medications is far riskier.

127. More than a few of my close friends have used drugs like marijuana or cocaine.

Percent of students choosing "some," "most," or "all" of their close friends.

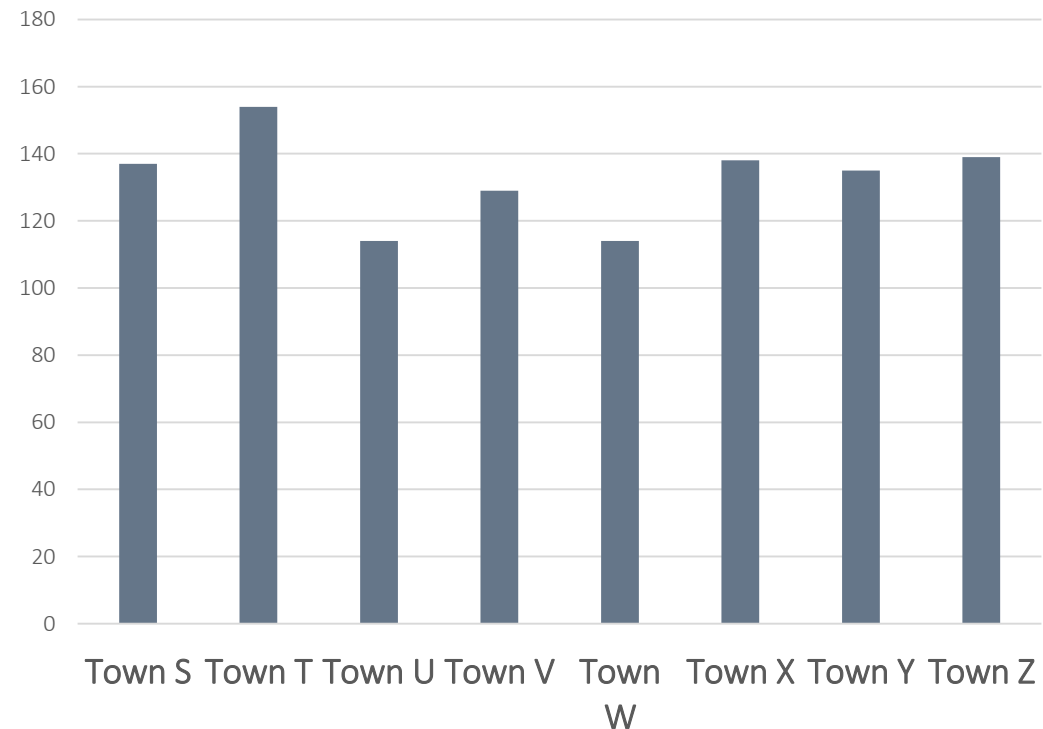
Note that chart tops out at 50%. Visuals are for comparison of youth who claim their close friends use drugs, town to town.



Total Points High Risk Behavior and Beliefs Around Drugs

Using percentages as points, all percentages of high-risk behavior around marijuana and Rx drugs were added together, for a low of 114 points in Towns U & W, to a high of 154 in Town T.

Total points, High Risk Behavior



Assets and High Risk Behavior

Search Institute surveys measure both internal and external developmental assets. In this presentation we consider the External Assets of (1) Support, (2) Empowerment, (3) Boundaries & Expectations, and (4) Constructive Use of Time.

While there is ample evidence to demonstrate that on an *individual* level, strong assets correlate with low substance use, the same does not hold true of school populations as a whole.

“External Assets” are fairly consistent throughout the region

| | Support | Empowerment | Boundaries | Use of Time | Total |
|--------|---------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------|
| Town S | 45 | 44 | 50 | 47 | 186 |
| Town T | 45 | 41 | 48 | 49 | 183 |
| Town U | 39 | 35 | 45 | 44 | 163 |
| Town V | 50 | 44 | 56 | 50 | 200 |
| Town W | 50 | 45 | 55 | 51 | 201 |
| Town X | 49 | 47 | 55 | 50 | 201 |
| Town Y | 52 | 48 | 58 | 47 | 205 |
| Town Z | 51 | 50 | 57 | 50 | 208 |

Using Executive Summary Table 2 of Search Reports, the percentage numbers in each asset category were added together. (If *all* students had *all* assets, the score would be 400.) Scores vary from 163 to 208.

Does a high asset score guarantee a low degree of alcohol and drug use (with a corresponding higher student perception of risk)?

It does not.

Correlation of assets to substance abuse

REALITY

External Assets, High to Low

Town Z

Town Y

Town W

Town X

Town V

Town S

Town T

Town U

(Perfect Correlation)

Drug Use, Low to High

Town Z

Town Y

Town W

Town X

Town V

Town S

Town T

Town U

REALITY

Drug Use, Low to High

Town W

Town U

Town V

Town Y

Town X

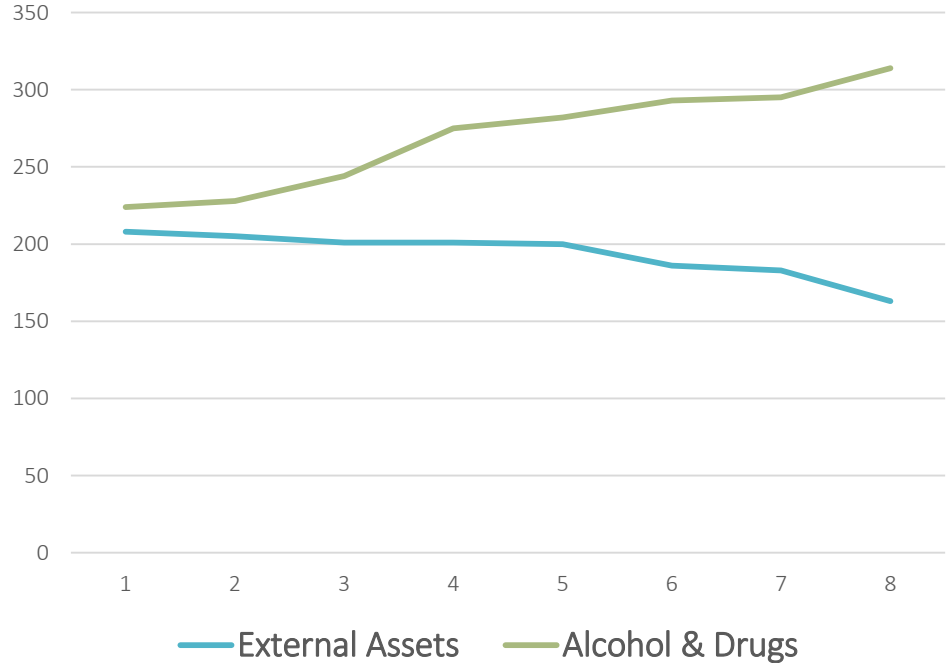
Town Z

Town T

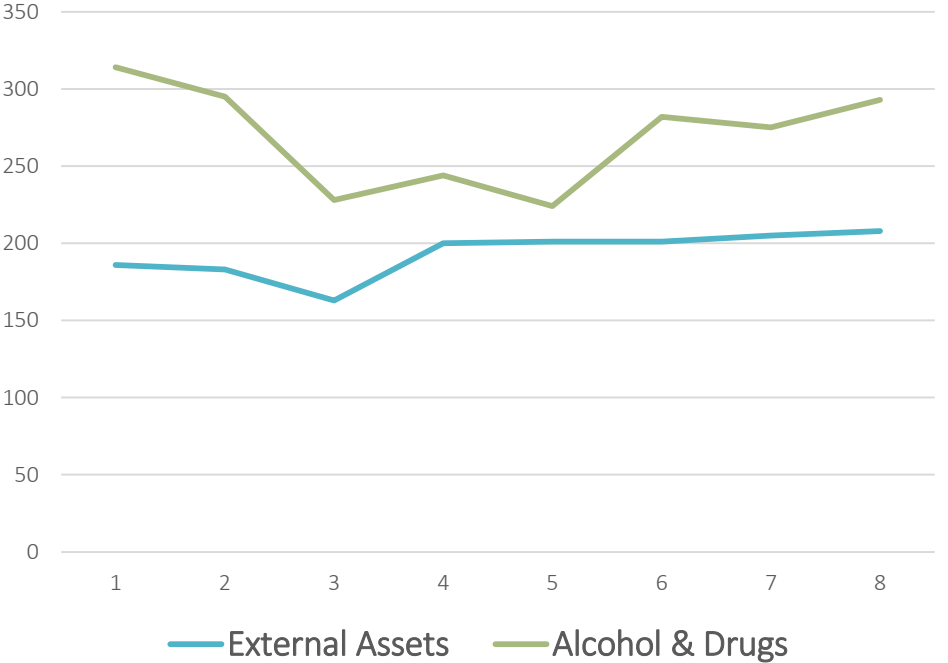
Town S

In graphic form...

Perfect World



Middlesex County Reality



In other words...

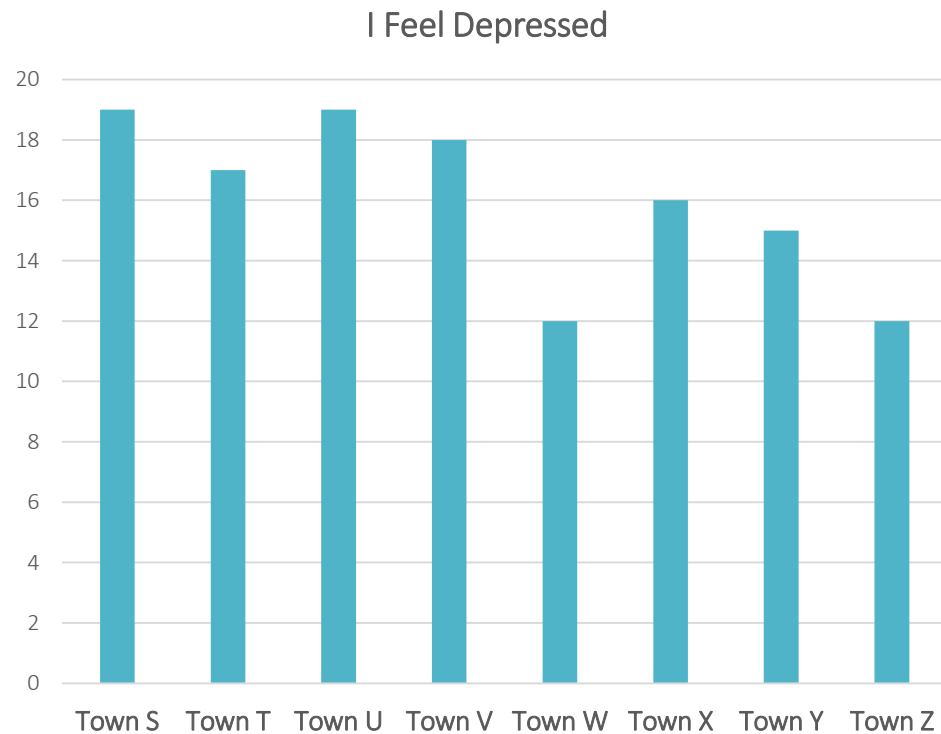
Town Z ranks #1 in external developmental assets. But it ranks only #6 when it comes to a low rate of alcohol & drug use.

Meanwhile, Town U enjoys the second lowest rate of alcohol and drug use in the region. But its asset score is at the bottom.

Keep your eye on ATOD trends to guide prevention work.

Depression and Suicidal Behavior

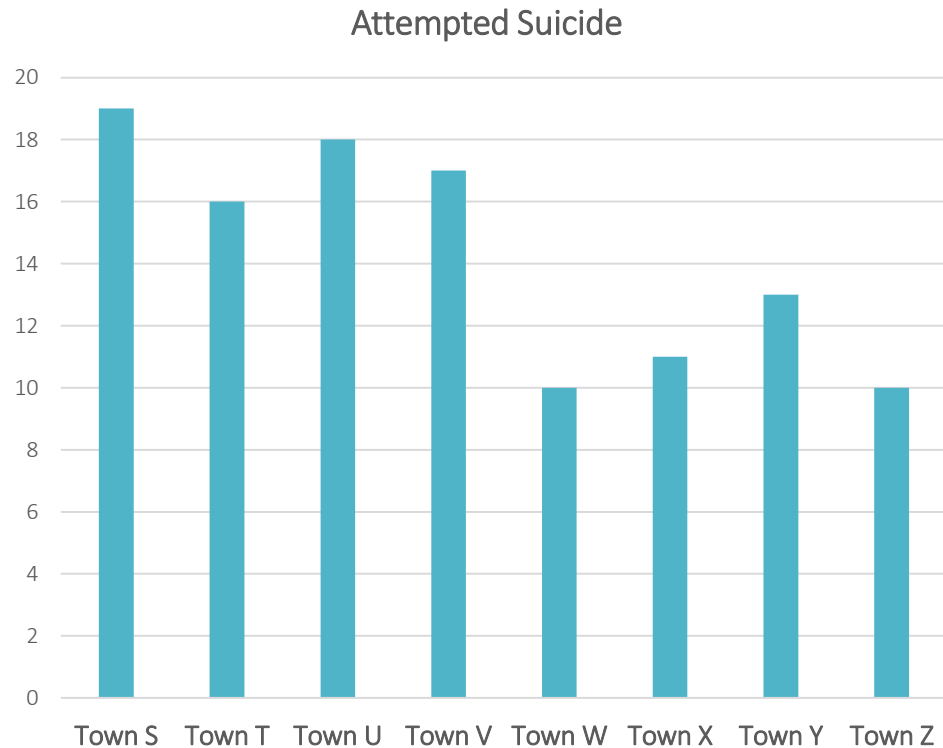
107. In the past month I've felt sad or depressed most or all of the time.



Percent of students choosing the answers "most of the time" or "all of the time."

Note that chart tops out at 20%. Visuals are for comparison of youth reporting depression, town by town.

108. I have tried to kill myself.



Percent of students answering “once” (or more) to the question “Have you ever tried to kill yourself?”

Note that chart tops out at 20%. Visuals are for comparison of youth reporting a suicide attempt, town by town.

External Assets & Depression



Each town's depression and suicidal behavior rates were averaged.

In this graph, that average was compared with the town's external assets score. There appears to be a stronger correlation between assets and depression than between assets and substance use.