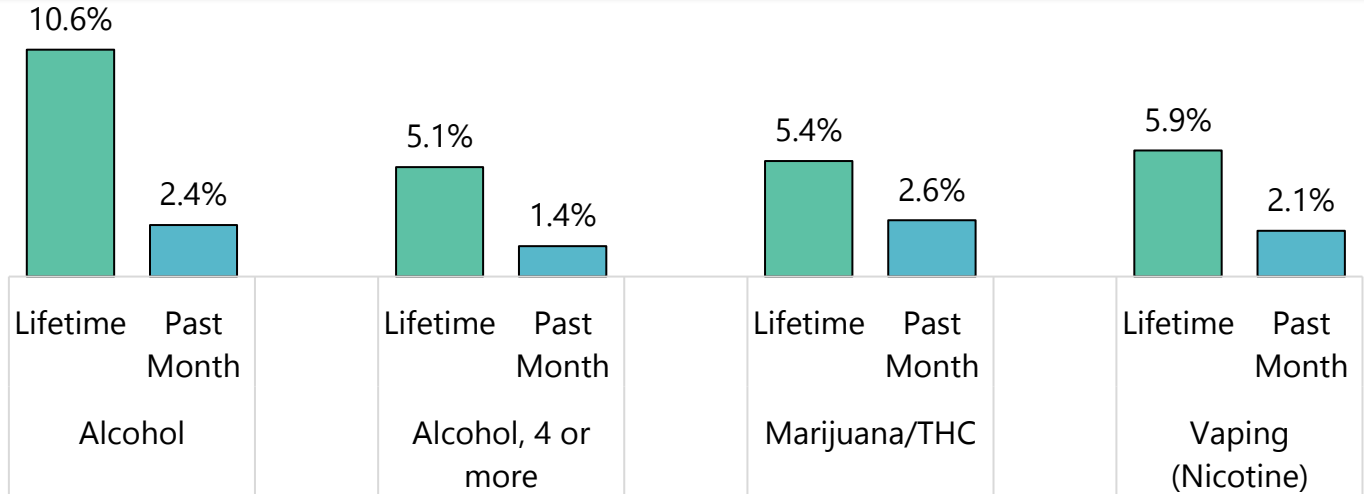




**We.H.O.P.E.**

In November 2023, students in Wethersfield Public Schools grades 7-12 participated in the Youth Voices Count Survey on youth lifestyles, substance use, mental health, related risk and protective factors. The overall response rate was 83%.

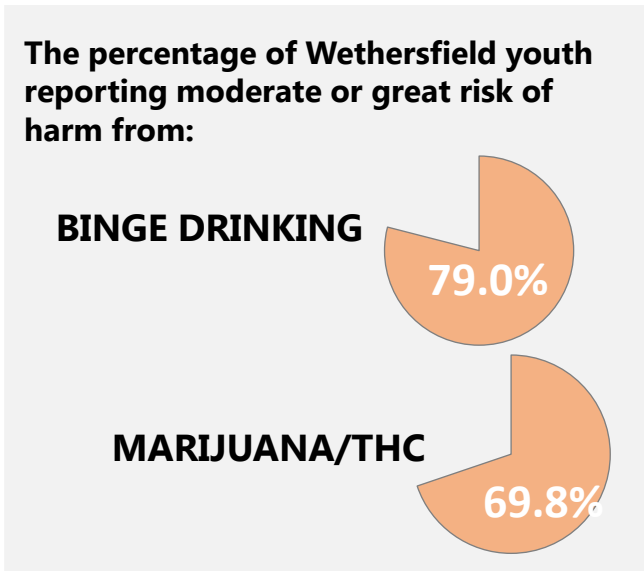
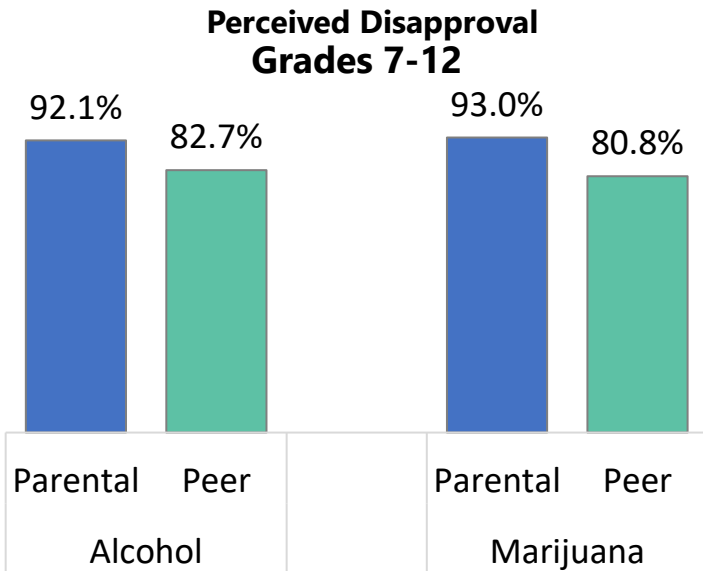
**Alcohol is the most frequently used substance in youths' lifetimes, while marijuana is the most used substance in the past month.**



Wethersfield youth who have used **any substance in their lifetime** are more likely to have increased behavioral health concerns including: having been bullied, thoughts about self-harm and self-harm behaviors, feeling sad or hopeless two or more weeks in a row, having considered suicide in the past year, and feeling less comfortable seeking help from a parent/guardian.

**Risk Factors**

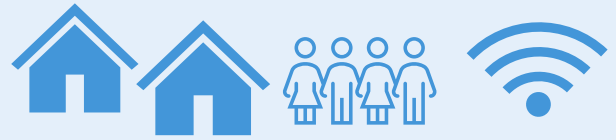
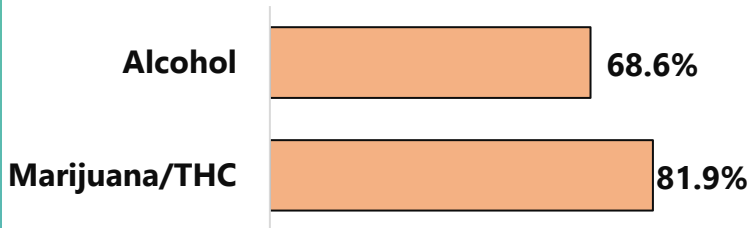
Research shows that parents and peers are the leading influence on youths' decisions on whether to use substances or not. Below shows the percentage of youth reporting their parents or friends feel it is moderately or greatly wrong to use alcohol or marijuana.



## Access

Ease of access to substances has been shown to have a significant relationship with youth substance use. The figure below reflects the percentage of youth reporting it is very or sort of hard to access substances.

### Perception of Access – % of Youth Reporting Very/Sort of Hard



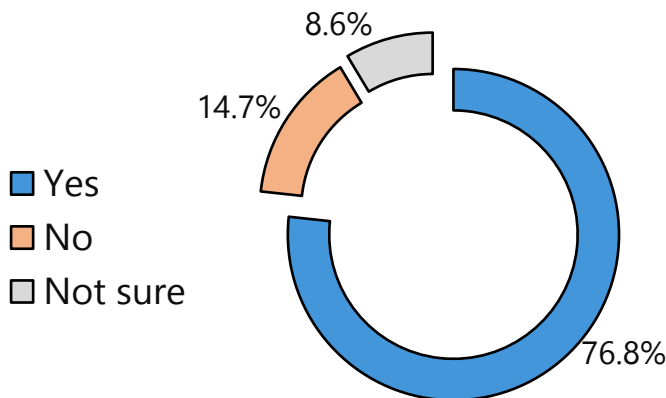
Wethersfield youth reported accessing **alcohol** most frequently from:

- home with parents' permission
- friends/peers
- home without parents' permission

**Marijuana** was most frequently acquired from:

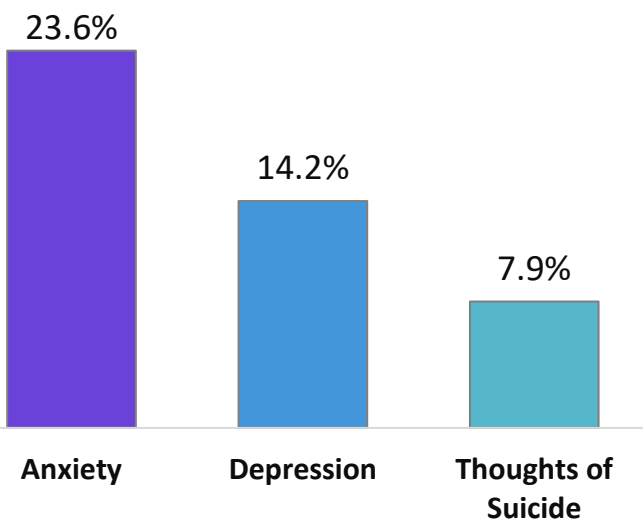
- friends/peers
- home without parents' permission
- internet

### Perception of Clear Family Rules around Underage Drinking



77% of Wethersfield youth (grades 7-12) report clear family rules around alcohol use, compared to 84% around marijuana, and 85% around vaping.

## Mental Health in the Past Year



23.6% of Wethersfield youth reported having anxiety in the past year "always" or "almost always." Most frequent sources of stress and anxiety included academics, post-high school plans, and schedule.

14.2% of youth reported feeling sad or hopeless so much that it stopped them from doing usual activities 2 or more weeks in a row. 7.9% reported having considered suicide in the past year.