

Joint News Release

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2025 Healthy Youth Survey results point to steady course in Washington youth well-being

Findings provide data to guide local health jurisdictions and community partners

OLYMPIA – The statewide 2025 [Healthy Youth Survey](#) (HYS) results are now available, offering a look at the health and well-being of Washington’s young people. Conducted every two years, this survey is a collaborative effort of the Washington State Health Care Authority’s Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR), the Department of Health (DOH), the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), and the Liquor and Cannabis Board (LCB).

The 2025 HYS results suggest that outcomes in mental health and substance use observed in recent years are holding steady. They also point to teens across Washington having adult support for their health, safety, and school engagement.

Academic outcomes

Youth health and well-being are connected to academic outcomes. Among 10th grade participants in 2025:

- 79% reported that they tried to do their best work in school “often” or “almost always,” compared to 74% in 2023.
- 70% reported that the things they learn in school would be “fairly,” “quite,” or “very” important later in life, compared to 65% in 2023.

“It can’t be overstated how encouraging it is to see that our young people continue to report improved academic and health outcomes,” said State Superintendent Chris Reykdal. “When students feel supported at school and they know how to access additional help when they need it, their academic outcomes improve. Washington State has been intentional about supporting whole-child wellness, and these survey results are a strong indicator of progress.”

Mental health

Most mental health outcomes, including hope, show signs of continued improvement. Hope, defined by the ability to set goals, identify pathways to reach them, and sustain the motivation to pursue those goals, is a skill that many educators support youth in learning.

Among 10th grade participants in 2025:

- 29% reported feeling anxious compared to 31% in 2023.
- Nearly 26% reported depressive feelings compared to about 30% in 2023.
- About 75% of participants expressed strong feelings of hope, compared to 71% in 2023.

In 2025, 61% of 10th graders reported having an adult they can turn to when they feel sad or hopeless. These youth were less likely to report feeling anxious, self-harm behaviors, or contemplating or attempting suicide than their peers who reported no adult support. This reinforces research indicating supportive adults and systems have a positive influence on the health and well-being of youth.

“These trends reflect the strength and adaptability of Washington’s providers, communities, youth, and families,” said Teesha Kirschbaum, DBHR Director. “We’re encouraged to see progress in youth mental health and continued declines in youth substance use. This reinforces the importance of prevention efforts like community-based programs, youth engagement, and early intervention that support behavioral health, reduce risk factors, and expand access to care across the state.”

Substance use

Reported use of substances like non-prescribed painkillers, stimulants, hemp-derived products, kratom, psilocybin, and fentanyl remains low; among 10th grade survey participants in 2025:

- About 1% reported using a painkiller to get high in the past 30 days, which is consistent with data reported in 2023.
- Less than 1% reported using an illegal drug in the past 30 days (not counting alcohol, tobacco, or cannabis), compared to about 2% in 2023.

Since the sharp decline first observed during the pandemic in 2021, substance use among 10th graders has remained low for alcohol, cannabis, cigarettes, and vaping; in 2025, 10th grade survey participants reported the following in the past 30 days:

- About 6% reported cannabis use, compared to 8% in 2023.
- 7% reported alcohol use, compared to 9% in 2023.
- 6% reported e-cigarette or vape use, compared to nearly 8% in 2023.

“This is the result of multi-pronged strategies to limit youth access that include compliance and enforcement efforts in retail businesses as well as effective collaboration and education at the state and local levels,” said Will Lukela, Agency Director of LCB. “These programs help prevent youth from ever starting to use drugs.”

Across most groups, mental health indicators are improving, and substance use remains low, yet some youth still face significant challenges. This is due in part to circumstances that have made them vulnerable, indicating that more needs to be done to support young people. To explore the data by population, visit [AskHYS.net](https://www.askhys.net). If you or a young person you know needs support with mental health or substance use challenges, explore [StartTalkingNow.org](https://www.starttalkingnow.org) and [988Lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org).

“Young Washingtonians show their trust in us by sharing their strengths and challenges through the Healthy Youth Survey,” said Dr. Tao Sheng Kwan-Gett, pediatrician and State Health Officer at DOH. “It’s up to all of us to honor their trust and use this information to foster their resiliency and better support those most in need.”

The HYS has been conducted across the state since 2002. Over 213,000 Washington youth between grades 6-12 participated in 2025. The HYS is always voluntary and does not collect students’ names or any codes that could link survey responses to a student.

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