The purpose of the Greater Worcester RYHS is to learn about youth health by surveying youth about safety, violence, substance use, nutrition, physical activity, mental health, and other health related topics. Every two years, the Greater Worcester RYHS is administered to middle and high school students in the City of Worcester, Massachusetts and surrounding towns by the Worcester Division of Public Health and the UMass Worcester Prevention Research Center.

The 2017 Middle School Regional Youth Health Survey was conducted with 4,417 middle school youth from the following towns of the Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA):

- Grafton
- Millbury
- Leicester
- Shrewsbury
- Worcester

For more information and additional reports, visit [www.umassmed.edu/prc/youth-data](http://www.umassmed.edu/prc/youth-data)

### Preparing for the Future

During the past year…

- 75% of students had mostly A’s or B’s in school
- 84% of students felt there are adults in their lives who talk with them about planning for the future
- 85% of students reported seeing themselves going to college or other education training programs after high school
- 82% of students felt hopeful about the future
Healthy Eating and Food Security

In the past week...

- 42% of students ate breakfast everyday.
- 49% of students drank sugar-sweetened beverages 1-3 times in the past week.
- 7% of students were hungry and didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food in the house.

Physical Activity and Sedentary Behavior

- 29% of students were physically active for a total of 60 minutes every day.
- 40% of students walked or rode a bike to school one or more times in an average week.
- 78% of students spent two hours or more in front of a screen for activities other than school on an average school day.

Self-image

- 54% of students said that they are at the right weight.
- 42% of students were trying to lose weight.
Mental Health

In the past year...

- 26% of students felt sad or hopeless almost every day for at least two weeks
- 16% of students seriously considered attempting suicide
- 6% of students had attempted suicide
- 11% of students have ever made a plan to commit suicide

Driving Behaviors that Contribute to Unintentional Injuries

- 18% of students have ever ridden in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol
**Substance Use**

- 16% of students have had a least one drink of alcohol
- 8% of students have tried a nicotine product
- 2% of students have tried a flavored cigar
- 35% of students first heard about e-cigarettes through the media
- 4% of students have tried a non-flavored e-cigarette
- 1% of students have tried a non-flavored cigar
- 3% of students have tried smoking a regular cigarette
- 8% of students have tried a flavored cigarette
- 8% of students have tried marijuana
- 1% of students have tried synthetic marijuana

**Access to Care**

- 87% of students visited a primary care doctor for a routine check-up in the past 12 months
Violence and Safety

In the past year...

19% of students carried a weapon

36% of students were bullied on school property

36% of students were in a physical fight

7% of students were physically hurt by someone in the family

8% of students witnessed violence in the home

20% of students were electronically bullied

Sexual Health

65% of students have been taught about sexual health

65% of students have been taught about healthy relationships

64% of students have never been taught about AIDS or HIV infection

53% of students have never talked about ways to prevent HIV or sexually transmitted infections (STI's) with parents or adults in school, family or community

7% of students have had sexual intercourse,

43% of students have never been taught about how to use a condom or ways to prevent STI's, including HIV

57% of the students who have had sexual intercourse used a condom