

## Strategies for Success Youth Survey Results for FY2019

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### Carlsbad Independent School District

The Strategies for Success (SFS) survey was collected online from middle and high school students across the Carlsbad Municipal School District in the fall of 2018. **A total of 1,252 students completed the middle school SFS survey and 1,290 completed the high school version.** High School data include all students from Carlsbad High School, Early College High School, Eddy Alternative School and Jefferson Montessori Academy. Questions on the SFS are used to monitor and measure the Carlsbad Community Anti-Drug and Gang Coalition's outcomes related to youth substance use, access to alcohol and other drugs, and perceptions of risk for using substances in the community and school. In addition to monitoring outcomes, the data help the community plan the most effective and needed prevention services.

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### Highlights from FY 2019

#### Both Middle and High School

- There has been an increase in alcohol use and slight increase in binge drinking among middle and high school students since last year.
- Students report slight increases in availability of drugs on campus since last year.
- Students report an increase in accessing prescription painkillers from non-medical sources such as family and friends, taking them without someone's knowledge, or buying them from someone.
- Students have the lowest perception of risk of harm for using marijuana and e-cigarettes. This corresponds to higher use as these are among the top three substances used by our students.
- Students are reporting concerning levels of mental distress and suicide ideation.

#### Middle School

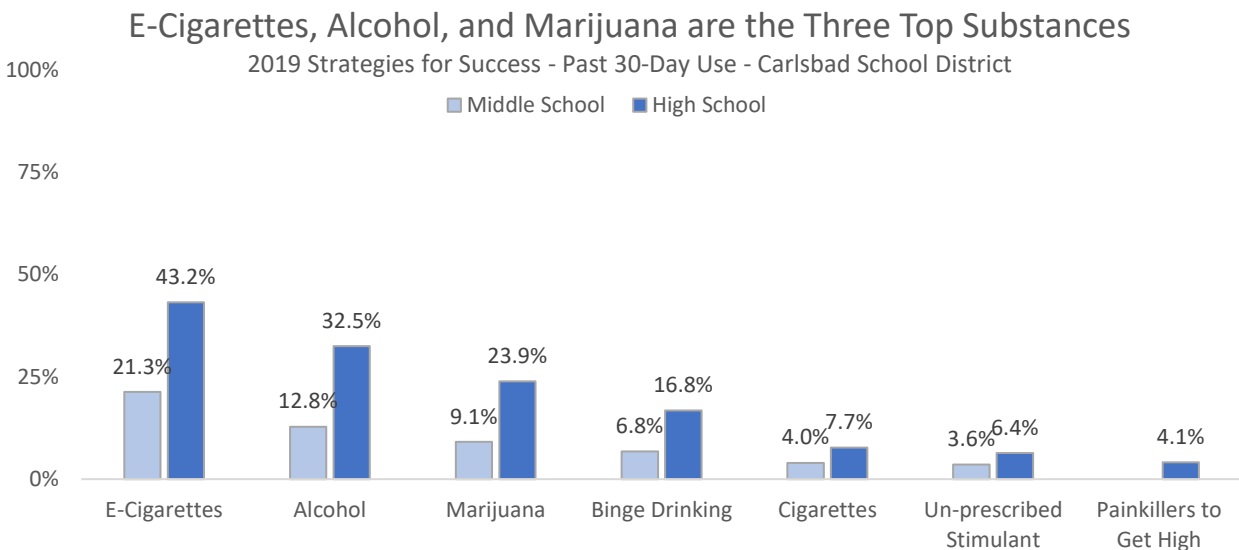
- Increases in e-cigarette use among middle school students from 10.6% in 2018 to 21.3% in 2019 is concerning.
- Middle school students report increases in getting alcohol from parties, unrelated adults, family members, and parents.

#### High School

- + Decreases in e-cigarette use and regular cigarette use among high school students is encouraging.
- + High schoolers report decreases in using prescription painkillers to get high.
- However, they report increases in using alcohol on school property, as well as painkillers to get high.
- High school students also show reductions in perception of risk of getting caught drinking.

## Current Substance Use

Current substance use is measured by the percentage of people who report using the specific substance in the past-30 days. Adolescent substance use is risky because research now recognizes that the brain does not stop developing until the early twenties and substance use during development can have lasting effects.<sup>1</sup> The graph below shows the current substance use among middle and high school students.



### Electronic Cigarettes (e-cigs, vapes, or Juuling)

E-cig use has become an epidemic. The majority of students who used e-cigs report using them 1-2 times in the past month. These devices use a liquid that contains dozens of chemicals, many of which are carcinogenic. Nicotine is usually the base ingredient, which is the addictive component in cigarettes and is also carcinogenic. The vape-pens can also be used to smoke cannabis oils or THC 'wax.' **Among all Carlsbad area high school students who reported using an e-cig device in the past month, 10.2% used it for marijuana and 0.9% used it for methamphetamines.**

### Alcohol

Alcohol has been among the top used substances by youth for decades. Adolescent alcohol use, especially binge drinking, is associated with alcohol problems later in life, poor academic performance, injury and homicide, violent and property crime, and unsafe sex.

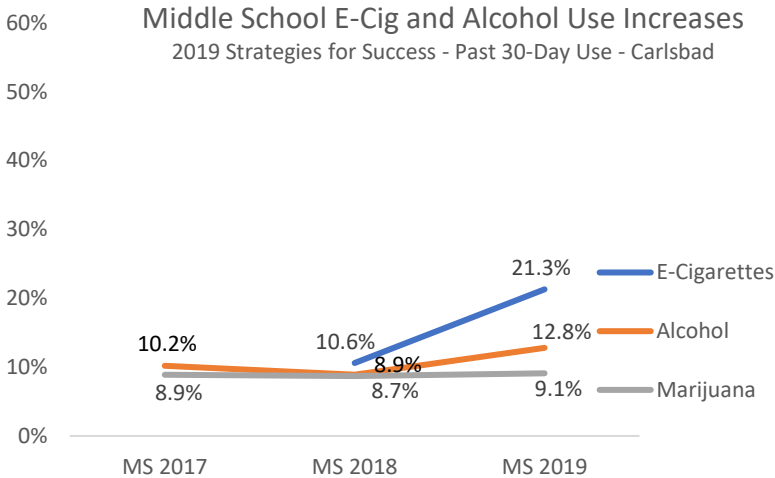
### Marijuana

Marijuana use has been found to impair development of the adolescent brain. Particularly, differences are found among adolescent marijuana smokers in the frontal cortex which is critical

<sup>1</sup> Volkow, ND. (2017). Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcn.2017.10.002>

to judgement, planning, decision-making, personality, and the amygdala, which directs memory, decision-making, and emotion.<sup>2 3</sup>

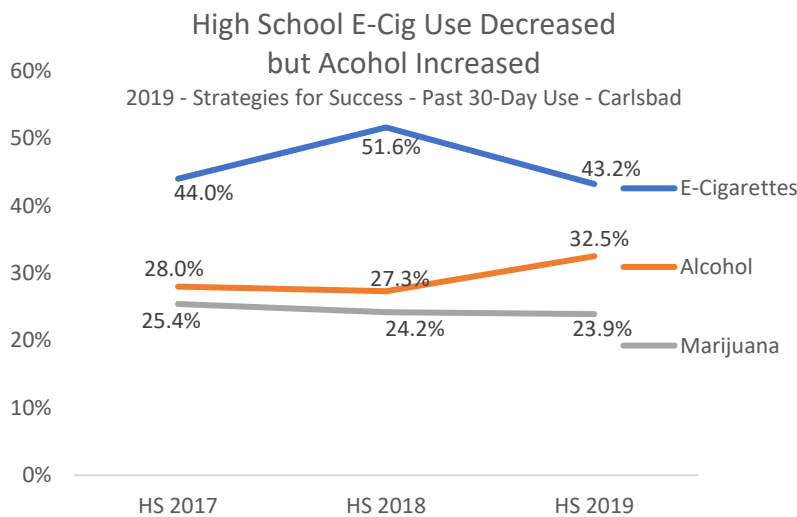
## Trends Among the Top Three Substances



Since last year, middle school e-cig use increased from 10.6% to 21.3% - that is a 100.9% increase.

Alcohol use also increased among middle school students from 8.9% to 12.8% - that is a 43.8% increase.

Marijuana use has remained close to 9% over the past three years.



Since last year, high school e-cig use decreased from 51.6% to 43.2% - that is a decrease of 19.4%.

Alcohol use increased among high school students from 27.3% to 32.5%.

Marijuana use has remained close to 24% over the past three years but has been decreasing slowly.

<sup>2</sup> Weir, K. (2015). Marijuana and the Developing Brain. American Psychological Association, Vol 46, No. 10.

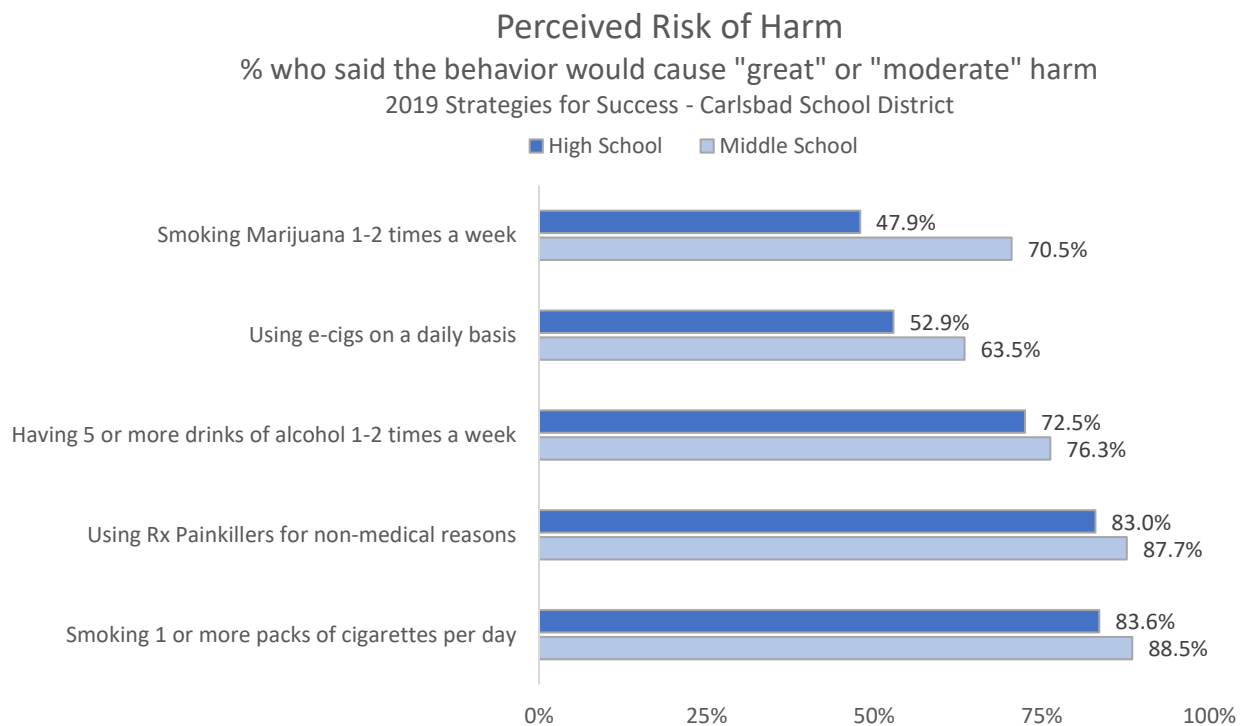
<sup>3</sup> Grubner SA, Sagar KA, Dahlgren MK, Racine M, Lukas SE. (2012). Age of Onset of Marijuana Use and Executive Functioning. Psychology of Addictive Behaviors, 2012 Sep;26(3):496-506.

High School Substance Use (in the past 30-days)	U.S. YRBS	New Mexico YRRS	Carlsbad SFS
E-Cigarettes	13.2%	26.4%	43.2%
Alcohol	29.8%	27.5%	32.5%
Marijuana	19.8%	27.9%	23.9%

SOURCES: <http://youthrisk.org/tables/#/2017>

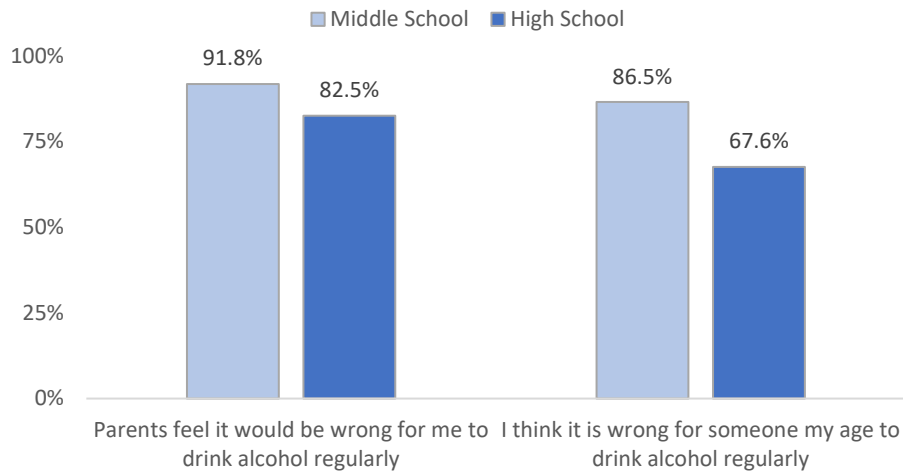
## Perception of Harm from Using Substances

A set of questions on the SFS asks about the perceived risk of harm associated with substance use. The graph below shows the percentage of students who said they risk “great” or “moderate” harm from using the substance as described.



A higher perceived risk of harm is associated with decreased tendency to engage in that behavior. We want to see high perceived harm of using substances among our youth.

### Attitudes toward Alcohol Use % who said "wrong" or "very wrong" 2019 Strategies for Success - Carlsbad



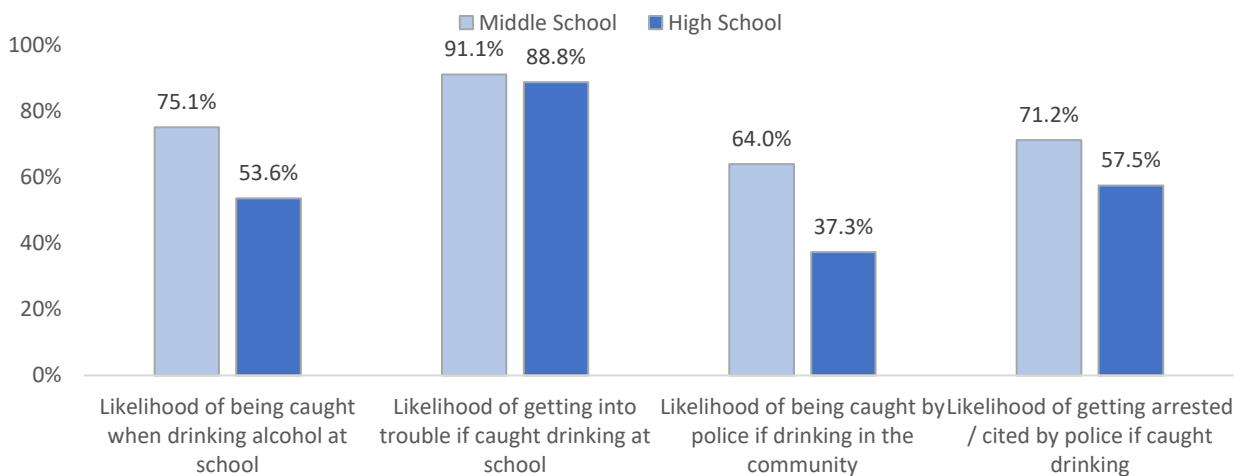
### Attitudes Toward Alcohol Use

Youth were asked “how wrong” they think parents and peers would think it is for someone their age to drink alcohol regularly. The graph shows the percentage of students who answered “wrong” or “very wrong” to the question. Results are similar to last year’s percentages.

### Perception of Risk of Getting Caught Drinking Alcohol

Perception of risk of getting caught is also associated with reduced engagement in the risky behavior. The SFS asked students’ perceived risk of getting caught at school and in the community for drinking, and the likelihood of getting into trouble if caught.

### Perception of Alcohol Enforcement at School and in the Community 2019 Strategies for Success - Carlsbad



**At School**

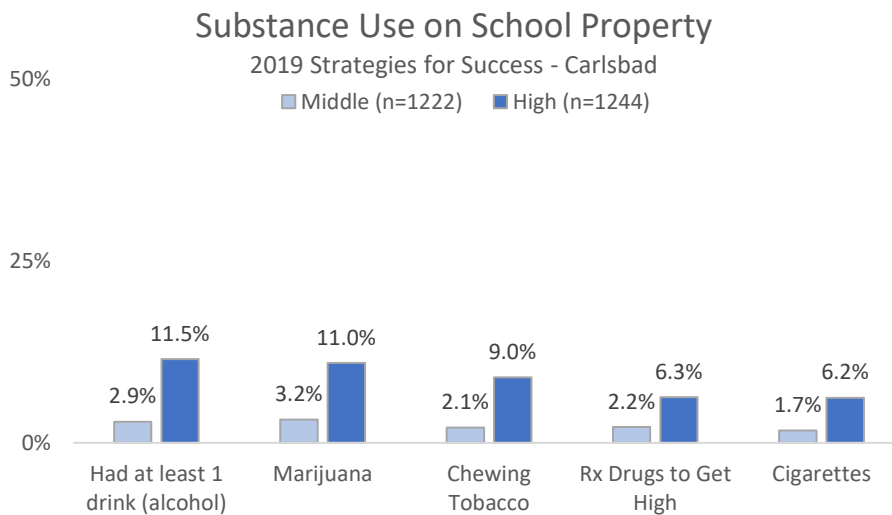
**In the Community**

Perception of risk has remained fairly level since last year and remains higher among middle school students. High school students report a reduction in perceived risk of getting caught for drinking at school and in the community (undesired direction).

Perception of Risk of Getting Caught Drinking Alcohol	Middle School		High School	
	2018	2019	2018	2019
Getting caught by a teacher or other staff at school	77.6%	75.1%	57.5%	53.6%
Getting into trouble if caught at school	91.2%	91.1%	88.6%	88.8%
Getting caught by police	68.8%	64.0%	44.3%	37.3%
Getting into trouble if caught by the police	74.6%	71.2%	62.2%	57.5%

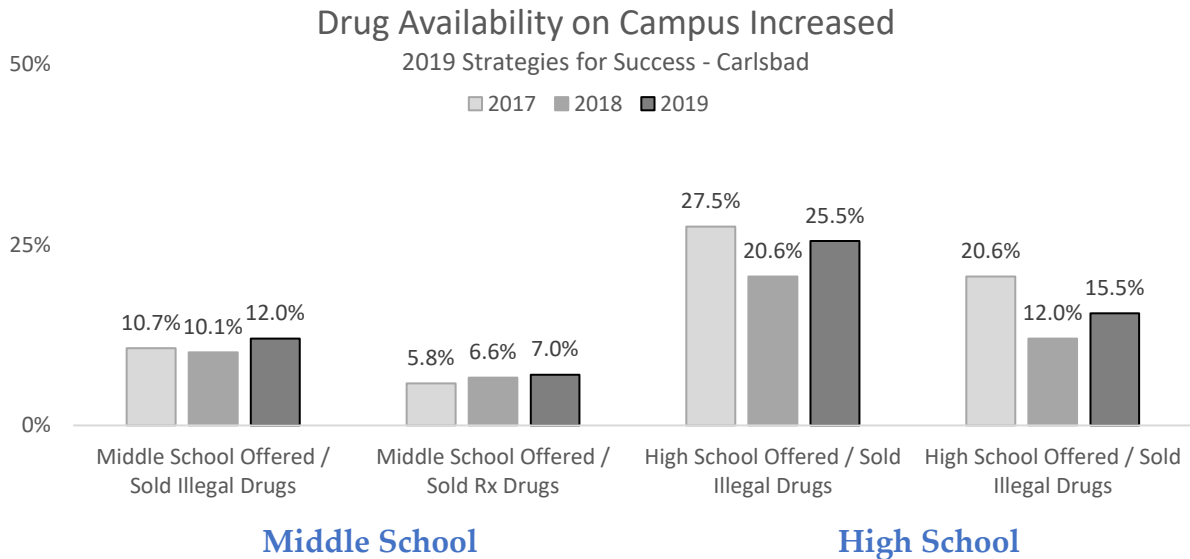
### Substance Use on School Property

The Office of Substance Abuse Prevention supports community programs that reduce or eliminate zero-tolerance policies that kick students out of school for substance use. Zero tolerance policies contribute to academic failure and higher substance use, however, school policies that are clear about rules and punishment help create a climate free of substance use and more conducive to learning. Finding the balance, treating students fairly, and referring students to the appropriate support services, can be challenging.



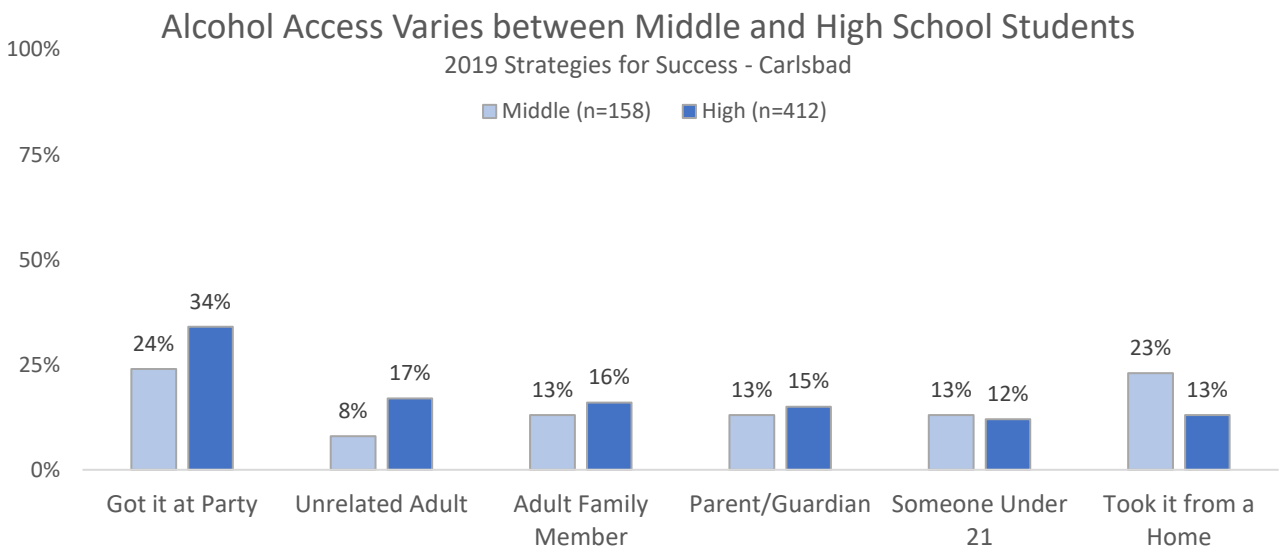
*During this school year, did you ever do any of the following while on school property?*

Answers do not distinguish whether or not the substances are used during school hours, or at school-sponsored events. The next graph displays how students responded to the question of being offered or sold drugs on campus over the past three years.



### Sources for Alcohol for Minors

The Coalition works to reduce social access of alcohol to minors through coordination with law enforcement to hold adults accountable and educating parents and the community that it is a 4<sup>th</sup> degree felony to provide alcohol to minors. The graph shows where students report getting their alcohol. The percentage is only among the students who reported drinking in the past 30 days.



The most common sources of alcohol among high school students includes parties, unrelated adults, family members and parents. Middle school students also report getting alcohol at parties, but they are more likely to report taking it from home than getting it from parents or other adults.

Alcohol Access	Parent Guardian			At a Party		
	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
Middle School	9.4%	9.2%	13%	21.7%	17.6%	24%
High School	12.3%	12.9%	15%	41.3%	36.7%	34%

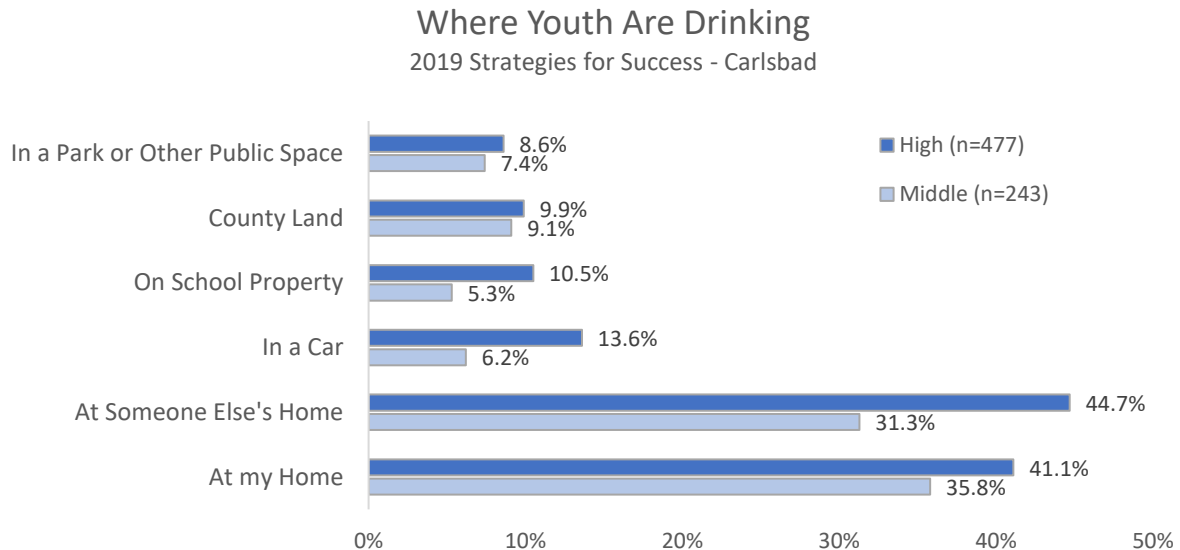
Middle school students are reporting an increase in getting alcohol from parents and parties. High school students are reporting slight increases in getting alcohol from parents, but slight decreases for getting it at parties.



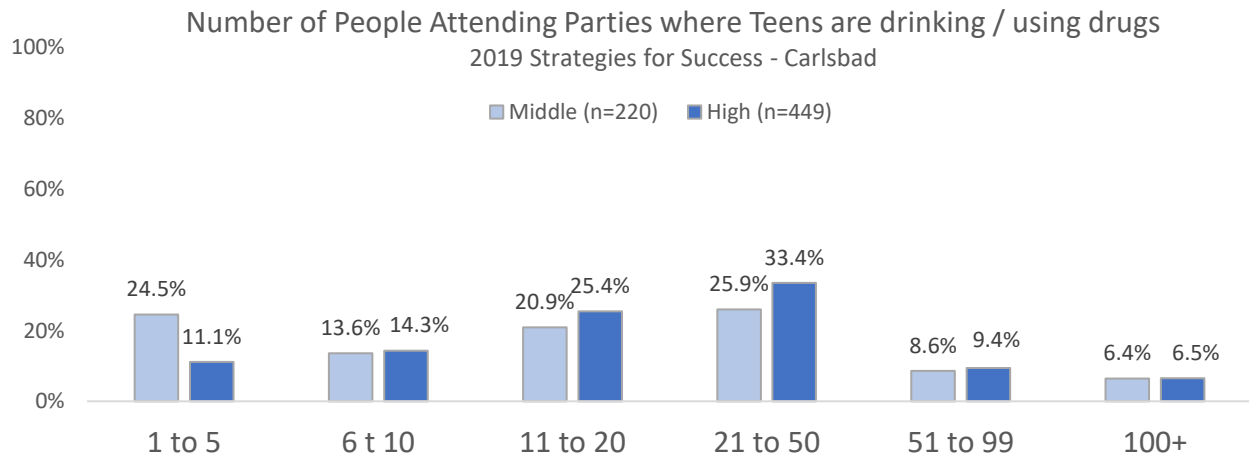
## Underage Drinking Parties

Carlsbad added questions to the regular Strategies for Success (SFS) high school survey to gain a better understanding of the party scene for teenagers. The majority of our youth are not attending parties where drinking and drugs are being used.

**60.8% of high school students** and **75.6% of middle school students** have not attended a party in the past year where teens are drinking.

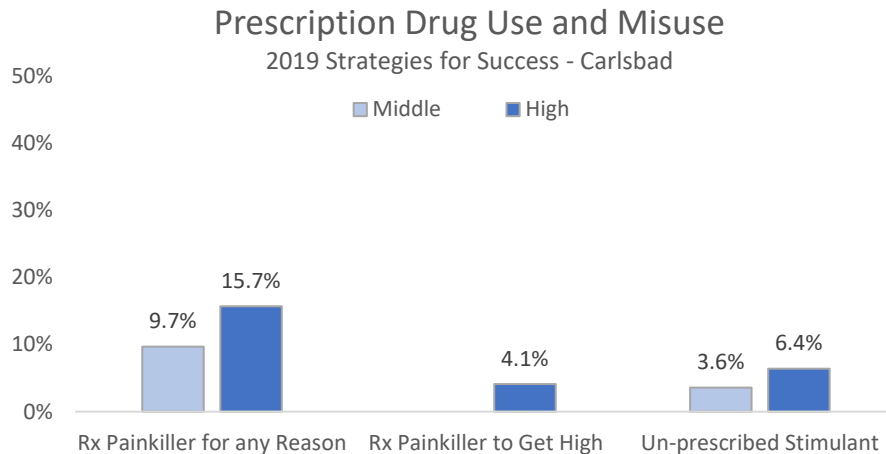


Students who report drinking in the past 30-days are **most likely to drink at their home or someone else's home**. We also asked students how many other people were at the parties they attended. This is important because research shows the bigger the party is, the more likely youth are to experience other negative consequences such as physical fights or sexual assaults. Parties with more than eleven other people are more risky than smaller gatherings.



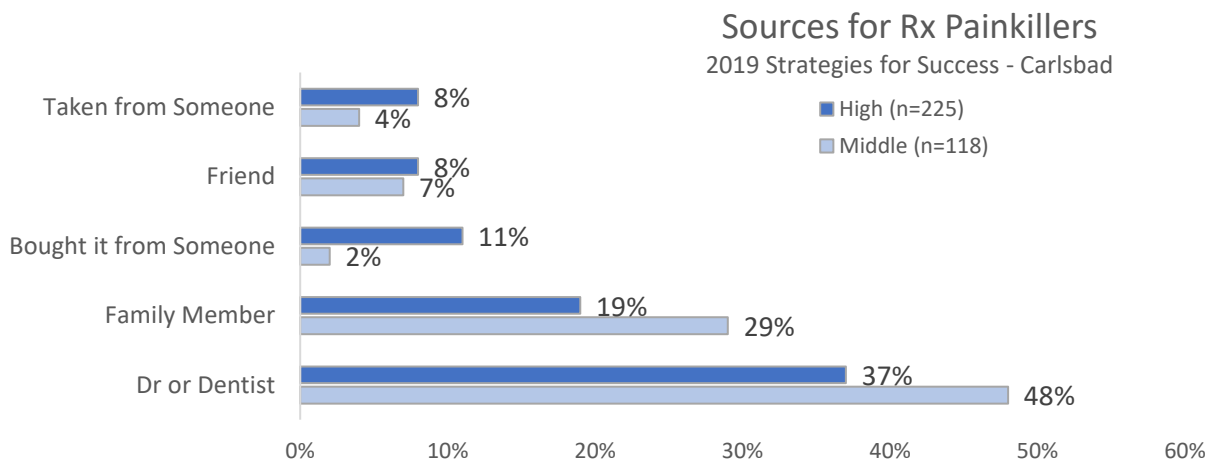
## Prescription Painkiller Use and Access

The Coalition aims to reduce prescription painkiller misuse by educating adults on the dangers of sharing them with anyone to whom they were not prescribed, educating on safe storage and disposal, and promoting Drug Take Back Days. The graph below shows the percentage of students who took a prescription painkiller in the past 30-days for any reason or to get high, or who used stimulants in a manner not prescribed by their doctor.



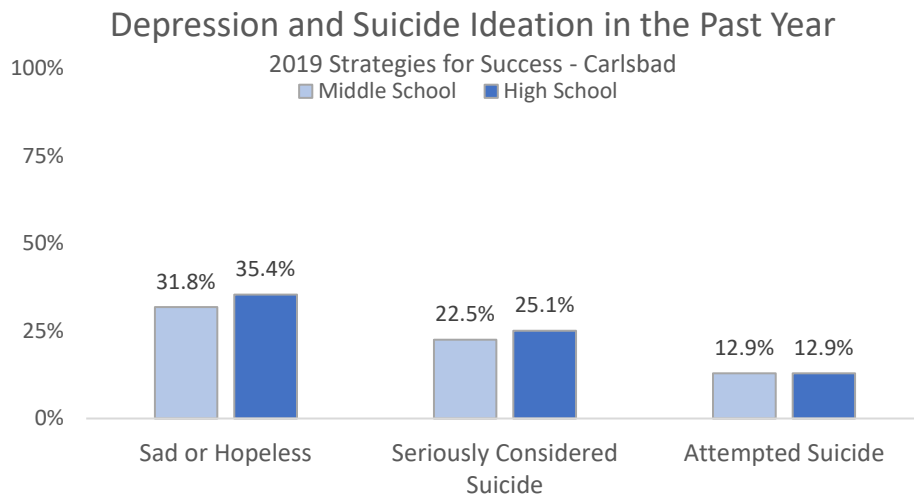
\*A technical error on the middle school survey skipped the question about using painkillers to get high, so we only have data for high school students for that indicator.

The graph below shows where middle and high school students report getting their prescription painkillers. This question is analyzed only using the students who report using a prescription painkiller in the past month.

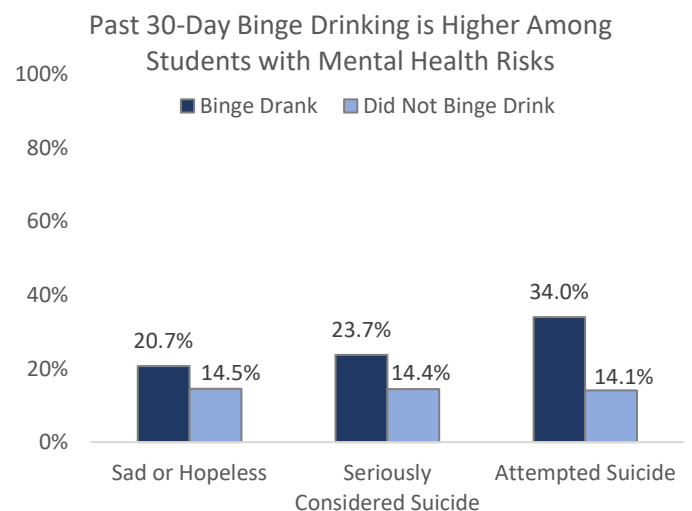
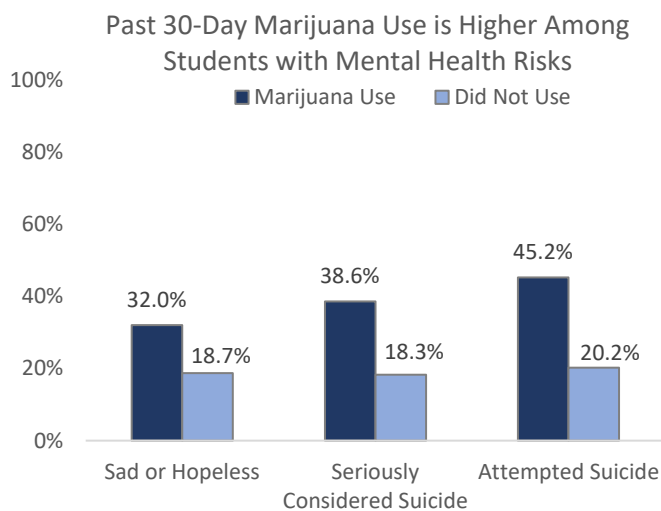


## Mental Health Concerns

In an effort to better track mental health concerns, the Coalition added three mental health questions to the SFS. The graphs show the percentage of students who report feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more that it kept them from doing regular activities, and those who seriously considered suicide and attempted suicide in the past year.



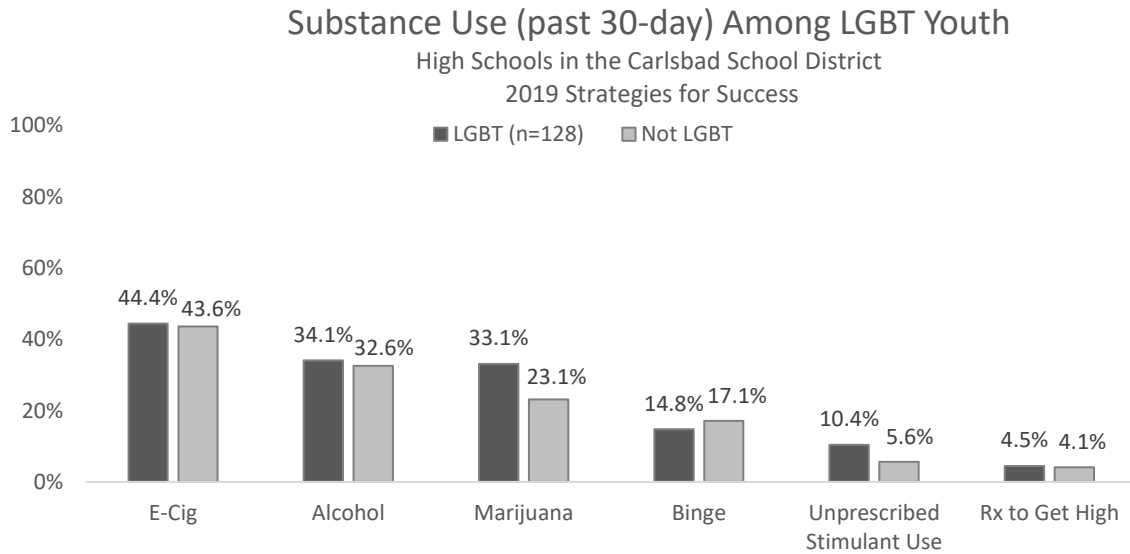
The survey asks students if they experienced these mental health concerns in the past 12 months. The graph below shows how substance use and mental health issues co-exist. **Students who report experiencing these mental health concerns are also more likely to report substance use.**



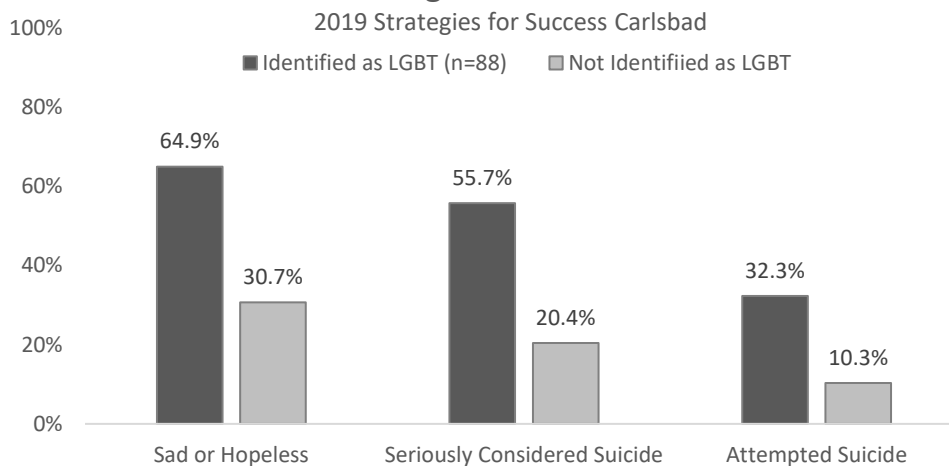
The two graphs above show all the students who said they experienced the mental health concern in the past 12 months, and whether or not they used marijuana or binge drank in the past month.

## Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators Among LGBT Youth

Studies have shown youth who identify as being lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) often exhibit higher risk factors, including mental health issues and substance use. The graph below shows the percentage of students who report using the substance in the past 30-days according to how they identify. **LGBT students are much more likely to report marijuana use and unprescribed stimulant use than students who do not identify as LGBT.**



## Mental Health Concerns are Much Higher Among LGBT High School Students



## Recommendations

- Have clear rules about what youth can and cannot do at school and at home.
- Support programs, teachers, students, and staff who strive to make school the safest and best part of each students' day.
- Encourage students to think about going to college or technical school after they graduate high school.
- Tell students you believe in them.
- Show interest in students' school work.
- Encourage students to pursue their interests and get involved in drama, debate, art, music, math league, sports, or other hobbies and areas of interest.
- Give students opportunities to use their skills and recognize them for trying.

**These are all protective factors that help buffer youth from risks and help them succeed. [Read more here:](https://youth.gov/youth-topics/substance-abuse/risk-and-protective-factors-substance-use-abuse-and-dependence)** <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/substance-abuse/risk-and-protective-factors-substance-use-abuse-and-dependence>

## Thank You!

We would like to THANK everyone who played a role in helping us collect these data.

- All the students who took the time to answer the questions honestly;
- All the teachers who helped give instructions to students on completing the survey, took time out of their busy day, and gave up precious instruction time; and
- The school administration and staff who supported the data collection and want to use the findings to plan, implement, and evaluate programming.

## 2019 Strategies for Success - Demographics

### Carlsbad Municipal School District

School	Number of Surveys
Carlsbad High School	1,059
Carlsbad Early College High School	190
Eddy Alternative	10
Carlsbad Intermediate School	783
Carlsbad Sixth Grade Academy	427
Jefferson Montessori School	83
	<b>2,552</b>

# of Surveys by Grade	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	Total
Middle School	438	413	397					<b>1248</b>
High School			5	393	353	305	227	<b>1283</b>

	Middle School		High School	
	#	%	#	%
N	<b>1252</b>		<b>1290</b>	
<b>Gender</b>				
*Male	612	48.9%	602	46.7%
*Female	620	49.5	665	51.6%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
Hispanic	709	55.1%	707	52.5%
White	415	33.5%	458	36.4%
Native American	46	4.5%	33	2.8%
Other	92	6.8%	92	8.3%
<b>Mean Age</b>	<b>12.4</b>		<b>15.7</b>	
Identify as LGBT	--	--	144	11.1%

\*Not all students answered this question