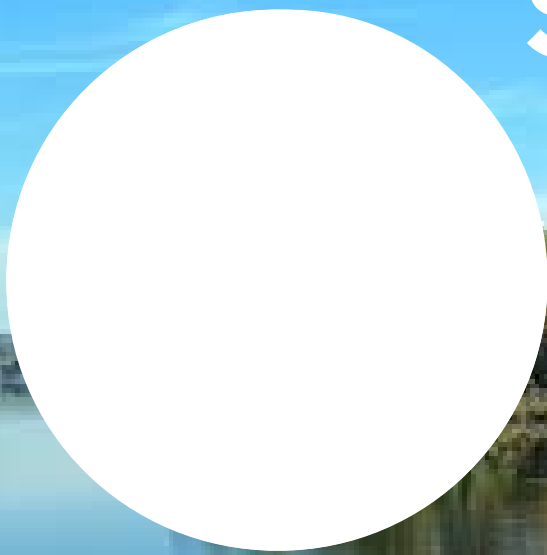




# 2023

## PA YOUTH SURVEY (PAYS)

### Lower Dauphin Snapshot





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## PARTICIPATION

### PA Youth Survey (PAYS)

**PAYS is a primary tool in Pennsylvania's prevention approach of using data to drive decision making. By looking not just at rates of problem behaviors but also at the root causes of those behaviors, PAYS allows schools and communities to address reasons (such as a lack of commitment to school) rather than only looking at the symptoms after the fact (like poor grades). This approach has been repeatedly shown in national research studies to be the most effective in helping youth develop into healthy, productive members of their society.**

This report showcases data retrieved from the 2023 PA Youth Survey (PAYS). Key data points included in this report are those related to the causes of the problem behaviors, also known as **risk factors** and **protective factors**. PAYS was administered in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 in the state of Pennsylvania.

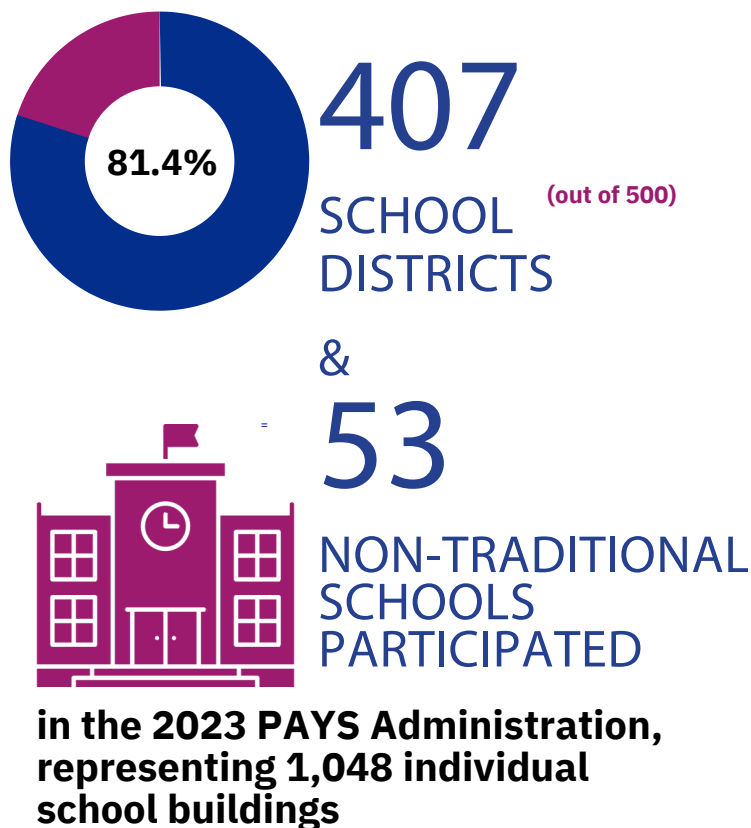
In 2023:

- 262,535 total students participated across 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th grades in Pennsylvania.
  - There were 902 valid surveys in Lower Dauphin among eligible students.
- The participation rate was 72.7% of students eligible to take the survey among all participating schools.
  - 80.9% of all LD eligible students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 participated.

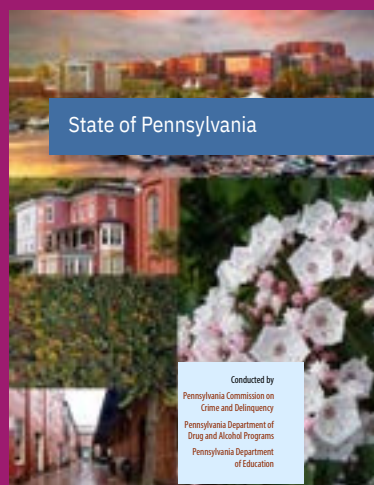
### 3 Validity Checks

Used a fictitious drug  
High level of multiple drug use  
Age inconsistent with their grade

Invalid and incomplete surveys were not included in the final analysis.



To access the full 2023 State PAYS Report, visit: <https://bit.ly/3KTEUjH>



OR SCAN THIS  
QR CODE



LOWER DAUPHIN

*Communities That Care*

Any questions, please contact Angela Durantine, Program Director at [angela@ldctc.org](mailto:angela@ldctc.org) or 717-350-0428



## HIGHEST 2023 RISK FACTORS

### All Grades (% of youth at risk)

#### Low Commitment to School: 53.6%

2021: 52.9%

2019: 48.9%



#### Parental Attitudes Favorable to Anti-Social Behavior: 52.3%

2021: 48.8%

2019: 42.8%



#### Sensation Seeking: 42.3%

2021: 34.9%

2019: 32.3%



#### Attitudes Favorable to Anti-Social Behavior: 41.4%

2021: 38.0%

2019: 34.5%



# 53.6%

## LOW COMMITMENT TO SCHOOL

2021: 52.9%



## TOP RISK FACTORS BY GRADE

### 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Parental Attitudes Favorable to Anti-Social Behavior (60.8% up from 59% in 2021)
- Low Commitment to School (54.3% up from 53.7% in 2021 and 40.9% in 2019)
- Laws & Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use (52.6% up from 44.5% in 2021)

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Low Commitment to School (58.9% up from 53.3% in 2021 and 49.1% in 2019)
- Parental Attitudes Favorable toward Antisocial Behavior (55% up from 47.1% in 2021)
- Sensation Seeking (45.2% up 33% in 2021 and 28.7% in 2019)

### 10<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Low Commitment to School (52.1% down from 60.1% in 2021 and 55.9% in 2019)
- Parental Attitudes Favorable to Antisocial Behavior (48.3% up from 46.4% in 2021)
- Depressive Symptoms (42.1% down from 50.6% in 2021 and 45.3% in 2019)

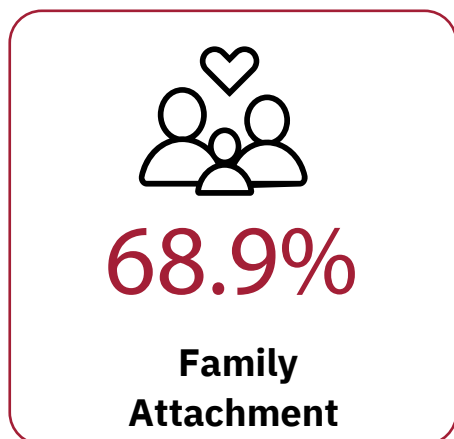
### 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Low Commitment to School (47.6% up from 42.2% in 2021)
- Parental Attitudes Favorable to Antisocial Behavior (44.1% up from 42.5% in 2021)
- Low Neighborhood Attachment (40.3% down from 41.6% in 2021 and 43.8% in 2019)



## PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Highest levels of protection for 2023 remain in the Family Domain:



**Family Attachment and Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement went up from 2021**



**Total Protection is 56.1%, higher than the state average (53.9%) and the BH Norm (44.8%)**



## ALCOHOL DATA

**For the sixth straight administration, lifetime use (ever tried) continued to decrease overall.**

### State Average

LD is lower than the state average in lifetime use for 6th, 8th and 10th grades.

6th: 13.7% (PA) to 10.2% (LD)

8th: 21.5% (PA) to 20.2% (LD)

10th: 32.5% (PA) to 31.6% (LD)

### 30-day Use ↓

30-day use of alcohol decreased in all four grades from 2021.

6th: 3.8% (2021) to 2.1% (2023)

8th: 10.3% (2021) to 4.9% (2023)

10th: 18.4% (2021) to 13.0% (2023)

12th: 30.2% (2021) to 28.9% (2023)

### Binge Drinking ↓

Binge drinking (5+ drinks) rates decreased in all four grades as well.

6th: 0.8% (2021) to 0.0% (2023)

8th: 2.2% (2021) to 1.6% (2023)

10th: 7% (2021) to 3.3% (2023)

12th: 15.1% (2021) to 12.4% (2023)

### Driving Under the Influence:

The rate of 12th graders who reported driving a vehicle after drinking alcohol during the past year declined from 3.7% in 2021 to 1.1% in 2023.

The rate of 12th graders who reported driving after using marijuana rose from 4.1% in 2021 to 5.3% in 2023.

**71.8%**  
NEVER USED  
ALCOHOL  
↑ **2019: 66%**



### Obtaining Alcohol

For youth who reported alcohol use in the past year, the two most commonly reported sources were “parents/caregivers provided it to me” and “took it without permission (from home, store, etc.).”

For 12th graders, the most commonly reported source was “friends, brothers, or sisters over 21 provided it to me.”

**46.9% of seniors reported it would be easy or somewhat easy to obtain alcohol.**

**Reported that they would not be caught by the police for underage drinking:**

10th: 70.6%

12th: 70.1%

**38% of seniors reported they would be willing to try alcohol before they were 21.**

2021: 40.1%

2019: 53.1%



## MARIJUANA

LD students are using marijuana at lower levels than their Pennsylvania peers:

### Lifetime (tried at least once)

Change from 2021 to 2023

**6th Grade: 0.0% to 0.9%**

**8th Grade: 3.9% to 6.4%**

**10th Grade: 19.7% to 6.5%**

**12th Grade: 31.5% to 29.9%**

### Last 30-Day

Change from 2021 to 2023

**6th Grade: 0.0% to 0.9%**

**8th Grade: 2.1% to 2.8%**

**10th Grade: 10.2% to 3.3%**

**12th Grade: 14.6% to 13.9%**

10th and 12th grade rates continued to drop while 6th and 8th grade increased

### Willingness to try marijuana

**IN 2023 THERE WAS A CONTINUED DECREASE IN THE WILLINGNESS TO TRY MARIJUANA FOR 6TH, 10TH AND 12TH GRADES, WITH ONLY 22.9% OF SENIORS REPORTING WILLINGNESS TO TRY**



**90.5%**  
of LD youth  
have never  
tried  
marijuana!



## TOBACCO DATA

### Lifetime use of cigarettes

#### 6TH GRADE ↓

2023: 0.0%

2021: 1.5%

2019: 0.4%

#### 8TH GRADE

2023: 4.8%

2021: 4.7%

2019: 4.5%

#### 10TH GRADE ↓

2023: 5.1%

2021: 9.0%

2019: 10.4%

#### 12TH GRADE ↓

2023: 15.0%

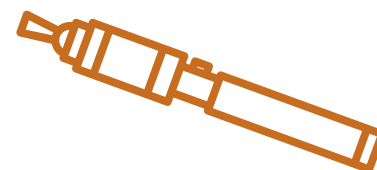
2021: 17.2%

2019: 32.3%

30-Day use of cigarettes ↓  
has decreased in all grades.

The percentage of 12th graders reporting 30-day use of cigarettes has dropped from 16.4% to 5.7% since 2019.





## VAPING & E-CIGARETTES

LD students are reporting 30-day vaping/e-cigarette use **1.1% less** than the state average.

### 30-Day (2021 - 2023)

**6th Grade: 3.1% to 0.9%**

**8th Grade: 4.3% to 4.8%**

**10th Grade: 15.6% to 4.7%**

**12th Grade: 25.6% to 18.8%**



Rates in  
6-10-12th  
grades went  
down from  
2021

### Lifetime (New to PAYS 2023)

**6th Grade: 2.6%**

**8th Grade: 9.6%**

**10th Grade: 11.3%**

**12th Grade: 33.7%**

# 86.6%

**OF ALL 6-8-10-12TH GRADERS  
SURVEYED SAID THEY NEVER  
VAPED.**



### WHAT ARE YOUTH VAPING?

Nicotine is the most common substance youth report vaping.

Among 12th graders who report vaping in the past year, the percent who report vaping marijuana has increased to 43.4% from 31.5% in 2021.

10.1% of the all students surveyed who report trying vaping did not know what substance was used.





## PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

### 12th Grade Lifetime Pain Reliever Misuse Continues to Decrease

**2023: 0.5%**

**2021: 3.0%**

**2019: 5.1%**

12th Grade 30-Day Pain Reliever Misuse  
decreased to **0.0%** from **0.5%** in 2021



#### OVERALL PERCENTAGE

The overall percentage of students reporting it would be easy for them to obtain prescription drugs not prescribed:

22.1%

#### MODERATE/GREAT RISK

The percentage of students reporting moderate or great risk of harming themselves by using prescription drugs not prescribed to them:

91.4%

#### WRONG TO USE

The percentage of students reporting that their friends would think it was wrong or very wrong to use prescription drugs not prescribed to them:

90.1%

#### LIFETIME USE

Lifetime use (tried at least once) of prescription stimulants among all students surveyed:

1.2%

The state rate for 2023 was 1.8%.

## OTHER DRUGS

### Lifetime Use (used at least one time)

#### Inhalants

Higher than the state average: 5.7% in LD compared to 4.0% in PA.

#### Synthetic Drugs

Lifetime use among 12th graders:

0.5% in 2019

0.0% in 2021

1.0% in 2023

**Heroin** lifetime use remains at 0.0% since before 2019

12th graders reported lifetime use of **hallucinogens**:  
5.2%

LESS  
THAN

1%



30-DAY USE OF  
COCAINE, CRACK,  
METHAMPHETAMINE,  
AND HEROIN  
REMAINS LOW



## PERCEPTIONS OF RISK AND APPROVAL

The perceived risk of using marijuana regularly has increased:

Percentage of students who reported the view of moderate or great risk for regular use by grade

6th Grade: 89% (83.7% in 2021)

8th Grade: 86.1% (86.8% in 2021)

10th Grade: 85.3% (75.5% in 2021)

12th Grade: 78.9% (61% in 2021)



# 88.2%

OF 12TH GRADERS  
REPORTED

**MODERATE OR GREAT  
RISK TO BINGE  
DRINKING**

(76.5% in 2021 and 67.6% in 2019)

6<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADE

90.7% reported that their friends would disapprove of using marijuana



8<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADE

86.8% reported that their friends would disapprove of using marijuana

10<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADE

76.8% reported that their friends would disapprove of using marijuana. Compared to 74.8% for daily alcohol use.



12<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADE

56.4% reported that their friends would disapprove of using marijuana. Compared to 67.8% for daily alcohol use.

6th and 8th grades are trending down while 10th and 12th grades are trending up.

92.1% OF STUDENTS REPORTED THAT THEIR PARENTS WOULD THINK IT WAS WRONG OR VERY WRONG FOR THEM TO USE MARIJUANA. THIS IS LOWER THAN THE RATES FOR ALCOHOL (94.7%), TOBACCO, (94%) AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS (94.8%).

82% of students reported they would disapprove of someone their age drinking nearly ever day, including 85.5% of seniors.
















**Overall, 89.9% of students reported it would be wrong for someone their age to smoke cigarettes. This figure has decreased from 91.3% in 2021.**

In 2023, only 63.6% of seniors and 81.6% of 10th graders reported that they would somewhat or strongly disapprove of someone their age using marijuana. For 6th graders, this figure was 91.6% and for 8th graders it was 88.9%.



## SCHOOL STATISTICS

	<p>The rate of students who said they felt school would be important later in life dropped for 8th and 12th grade, but increased for 6th and 10th grade.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>6th Graders: 2023: 61%, 2021: 60.6%</td><td>10th Graders: 2023: 34.1%, 2021: 30.5%</td></tr> <tr> <td>8th Graders: 2023: 39.6% 2021: 44.1%</td><td>12th Graders: 2023: 30.3%, 2021: 33.9%</td></tr> </table>	6th Graders: 2023: 61%, 2021: 60.6%	10th Graders: 2023: 34.1%, 2021: 30.5%	8th Graders: 2023: 39.6% 2021: 44.1%	12th Graders: 2023: 30.3%, 2021: 33.9%
6th Graders: 2023: 61%, 2021: 60.6%	10th Graders: 2023: 34.1%, 2021: 30.5%				
8th Graders: 2023: 39.6% 2021: 44.1%	12th Graders: 2023: 30.3%, 2021: 33.9%				
	Overall, 33.2% of students felt their schoolwork was meaningful and important, down from 37.3% in 2019, but up from 32.7% in 2021. 6th Graders: 56%, 8th Graders: 27.6%, 10th Graders: 28%, 12th Graders: 21.1%				
	Overall, 84.8% of students reported they felt safe in their school. This is down from 87.1% in 2019 and 89.8% in 2021.				
	75.4% of students reported there is an opportunity for students to talk one-on-one with a teacher, down from 79.1% in 2021.				
	17.2% of students reported being threatened at school over the last year, up from 14.6% in 2021. 6th Graders: 14.4%, 8th Graders: 22.6%				
	7% of 6th graders say they were attacked at school during the last year.				
	58.4% of students reported adults stop bullying when they see it or are told about it, up from 55.1% in 2021 and 54.8% in 2019. This ranges from 73.7% of 6th Graders, down to only 49.9% of 12th Graders.				
	23.6% of 10th Graders and 22.9% of 12th Graders reported inappropriate sexual contact when using technology. This is a decrease from 2019 in both grades (37.2% and 31.2%, respectively) and 2021 (28.4% and 29.6%).				
	28.3% of students reported having suffered some bullying over the last year, up from 22.1% in 2021. This was highest among 8th Graders at 34.3%.				
	21.7% of students reported being bullied on school property over the past year, up from 13.2% in 2021. 6th Graders: 20.5%, 8th Graders: 27.5%				
	74.8% of students, including 76.8% of 10th Graders and 76.6% of 12th Graders, reported being emotionally abused through insults or name-calling.				
	12.5% of 10th Graders and 17% of 12th Graders reported being abused by being isolated from friends or family by another person.				
	<p>The most common reasons students reported being bullied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 52.3%: "The Way I Look (clothing, hairstyle, etc.)" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highest rate among 12th Graders (62.9%)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 39.3%: "My Size (height/weight)" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highest rate among 10th Graders (41.7%)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				



## MENTAL HEALTH FACTS

	Feeling Sad or Depressed	Self Harm and Suicide Risk
ALL GRADES	<p><b>35.9%</b> of students reported feeling sad or depressed most days 2021: 37.4% 2019: 34.9%</p> <p><b>24.5%</b> ↓ down from 25.3% in 2021 of students stated “Sometimes they think life is not worth it” 2019: 24.8%</p>	<p><b>31.9%</b> of students who reported being bullied also reported seriously considering suicide in the past year</p> <p>Students reporting self-harm (such as cutting) <b>decreased</b> in 10-12th grades</p>
8 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE	<p><b>39.9%</b> of students reported feeling sad or depressed most days</p> <p><b>24.9%</b> said that they are inclined to think they are a failure</p> <p><b>42.6%</b> reported that “at times I think I am no good at all”</p>	<p><b>20.7%</b> student reported self-harm (such as cutting) 2021: 18.9%</p> <p><b>18.8% reported considering suicide and 4.7% attempting suicide</b></p>
10 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE	<p><b>36.7%</b> of students reported feeling sad or depressed most days</p> <p><b>23.1%</b> said that they are inclined to think they are a failure</p> <p><b>34.9%</b> reported that “at times I think I am no good at all”</p>	<p><b>16.2%</b> student reported self-harm (such as cutting) 2021: 20.1%</p> <p><b>18.5% reported considering suicide and 6.9% attempting suicide</b></p>
12 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE	<p><b>37.2%</b> of students reported feeling sad or depressed most days</p> <p><b>22.3%</b> said that they are inclined to think they are a failure</p> <p><b>36.1%</b> reported that “at times I think I am no good at all”</p>	<p><b>17.5%</b> student reported self-harm (such as cutting) 2021: 17.7%</p> <p><b>20.8% reported considering suicide and 3.4% attempting suicide</b></p>

**27.9%** ↓

students who reported they were so sad they ceased doing their usual activities decreased.

2021: 30.2%  
2019: 24.9%



## POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH



**72.6%**  
OF STUDENTS REPORTED  
**IN THE PAST MONTH THEIR  
MENTAL HEALTH HAS  
BEEN GOOD\***

\*New to PAYS in 2023

6th: 82.9%

8th: 74.9%

10th: 62.9%

12th: 68.9%

**19.1%**

of students said they have not felt sad, lonely, or worried in the past 30 days.

## MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

When students feel sad, lonely, or worried they talk to:

**44.1%** A friend

**38.2%** A parent or caregiver

**15.9%** Another family member





## OTHER DATA



**31.5%**

of students reported sleeping less than 7 hours a night on school nights

10th Graders: 38.6%  
12th Graders: 42.8%



**64.4%**

of all students reported engaging in school-sponsored activities



**66.7%**

of students reported feeling tired or sleepy during the day every day or several times during the past two weeks

10th Graders: 75.4%  
12th Graders: 72.5%



**18.6%**

of students worried that food would run out before their family could buy more



**79.5%**

of seniors reported having a job or employment down from 81.7% in 2021; 38.1% reported volunteering



**93.9%**

of students in all grades reported that their parents knew where they were and who they were with

This has remained about the same across all grades from 2021



**84.6%**

of students reported that there are clear family rules about alcohol and drug use

6th Graders: 89.8%  
12th Graders: 83.1%



**87.8%**

of all students said it would be hard or very hard to obtain a handgun

This figure has increased from 86.4% in 2019 and is similar to 2021 (87.9%).