

**2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)  
With 1995-2005 Comparative Results**

**Needham High School**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Needham High School 2005 youth risk behavior survey (YRBS) surveyed a total of 1,282 students. The survey was administered to 610 juniors and seniors during the month of January, 2005 and 672 freshmen and sophomores during the month of March, 2005. Students were surveyed during their regularly scheduled health and physical education classes. For the purpose of establishing a unified protocol, surveys were taken in available classrooms or the science lecture hall under the direct supervision of the physical education faculty. All teachers explained that the survey responses would remain anonymous and that students should approach the surveys with seriousness and integrity.

The YRBS was developed by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to monitor the prevalence of health risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death and disability among youth and adults in the United States. State and local officials have adopted the YRBS to monitor youth in much the same way. The YRBS monitors six categories of priority risk behaviors. Leading causes of mortality and morbidity among all age groups in the United States are related to these six categories. They include

- 1) Behaviors that result in unintentional injury and violence;
- 2) Tobacco use;
- 3) Alcohol and other drug use;
- 4) Sexual behaviors that contribute to unintended pregnancy or disease;
- 5) Dietary behaviors that result in disease; and,
- 6) Physical inactivity.

This report represents the sixth YRBS that has been given to Needham High School students since 1995. The ten year history of the use of this assessment instrument provides an opportunity to not only look at the behaviors of our current teens, but to also look at trends in risky behavior among Needham High School students over a significant period of time.

## **RELIABILITY OF THE YRBS**

In an attempt to measure the reliability of the YRBS, Brener et al. (1995) computed a kappa score for each of the self-report items in the original YRBS. The higher the percentage of the kappa score assigned to a test item, the more reliable the item. The researchers explained that because kappa is most commonly used to measure inter-rater reliability, it is unclear what constitutes an adequate level of kappa for behavioral questions. However, they presented Landis and Koch's (1977) qualitative levels for values of kappa.

### Kappa Percentages

<b>Poor</b>	<b>less than 0%</b>
<b>Slight</b>	<b>0% - 20%</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>21% - 40%</b>
<b>Moderate</b>	<b>41% - 60%</b>
<b>Substantial</b>	<b>61% - 80%</b>
<b>Almost Perfect</b>	<b>81% - 100%</b>

Although there are no kappa values available for the 2005 survey items, kappa scores from the original test items can be compared with current test items. Available kappa scores will be presented under each section of this report to provide the reader with some insight into the reliability of the test items within that section. The kappa percentages will be contrasted in gray ink and will appear just below the title of each section.

### Executive Summary

Over the past decade, the YRBS has been administered to Needham High School students on six different occasions and data have been used to inform decisions around curriculum and special programs targeted to reduce the percentages of teens who participate in risky behaviors. This report will focus on the behaviors of students surveyed in the spring of 2005 and will compare survey results to those in previous reports (1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, and 2005).

Because the Needham Public Schools has as one of its core values, a school and community partnership, the YRBS data creates an opportunity for school personnel and officials from other community organizations to discuss youth behavior and identify ways to support positive behaviors and healthy choices among teens. Towards this end, data from the 2005 survey and comparison data from previous reports, have been shared with a variety of individuals and groups that include students, teachers, and administrators. Ideas and recommendations from these groups contribute to the ongoing efforts of reducing risky behaviors among our teens. These conversations will continue as the results from this survey are shared with additional groups that will include parents, school committee members, community leaders, and health professionals.

In most areas, Needham High School students have demonstrated that they are making better decisions than their peers from previous surveys. This is particularly true in the area of unintentional injuries. Trends indicate that the use of seat belts and helmets has increased over time. The number of students who report that they have carried a weapon has remained relatively consistent, and the number of students who report that they have been in a physical fight has declined slightly.

Although trends in suicidal thoughts, plans, and attempts have declined over time, it remains important to continue to address this issue. The Needham High School guidance counselors are trained to deal with students who feel overwhelmed, depressed, or are dealing with feelings of hopelessness. If teachers have any questions or concerns about an individual student, they are trained to contact a school counselor. It is important to know that if a friend or a parent has a

concern about a student, they are also encouraged to contact a school counselor, the Needham Youth Commission, a personal counselor, or a medical professional.

Needham High School trends are similar to national trends that show a decline in tobacco use among teens. National data, however, suggest that the decline in cigarette use among teens is beginning to slow down. This is something we will want to watch for when the survey is given again in 2007. In the meantime, anti smoking messages should continue to target all students. Some students, 7%, identified themselves as regular smokers. A smoking cessation program was introduced to Needham High School during the last school year and will continue to support those students who have become addicted to cigarette smoking and want to quit.

Data across surveys indicate that alcohol and marijuana use have been on the rise among Needham High School students while other drug use has remained relatively low. This trend in increased alcohol and marijuana use has been supported through other surveys that focused more specifically on these behaviors. In addition to student data, a parent survey shows that parents rated alcohol use as the most important problem facing their high school children today and drug use as the second most important problem. For these reasons, alcohol and drug use have been specifically targeted as an issue to address.

In an attempt to reduce the alcohol and drug use among Needham teens, the community was awarded a grant from the MetroWest Health Care Foundation. This grant will pay an onsite program coordinator who will work with school and community groups and departments to create a comprehensive response to this problem. In addition, the grant will provide resources and technical assistance by the Education Development Corporation over a period of three years. The following specific outcomes have been identified as goals for this grant.

- More students will abstain or delay alcohol and drug use
- Students will reduce the frequency of binge drinking
- Students will employ risk reduction strategies
- Parents will work together formally and informally toward the goals of reducing alcohol and drug use
- Social norms will change such that the social atmosphere places less emphasis on alcohol
- At risk students will receive effective and immediate intervention

A surprising number of students, 25%, reported that they had been offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property. When questioned about their drug use, it was revealed that most student use centers around the use of marijuana. Very few students use other drugs. Although this represents an all time low, it suggests that marijuana is readily available and this warrants special attention as part of our efforts in curtailing drug and alcohol use.

A reduction in alcohol and drug use could also result in a reduction in some of the other risky behaviors. Some students are more likely to participate in risky behaviors while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. For example, the number of students who reported that they had used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse increased over the past three surveys. By targeting alcohol and marijuana use, we hope to see a reduction in other risky behaviors.

Although not traditionally part of the YRBS, students were asked a series of questions about cheating on this survey. Over half of Needham High School students (64%) reported that they have actually cheated on an assignment or test. In an attempt to look for reasons why students feel it is necessary to cheat, they were given the following possibilities and asked to what level they agreed with each.,

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I Feel I am in Academic Competition with my Friends at NHS	14%	35%	37%	11%
The Atmosphere at NHS encourages academic competition	20%	44%	28%	5%
Cheating is a Problem at NHS	9%	35%	46%	7%

Although a majority of students reported that they had cheated, more than half disagreed with the statement that cheating is a problem at Needham High School. This may suggest that cheating has become socially accepted among Needham High School teens. In an attempt to help students understand the seriousness of cheating, Needham High School has taken a strong comprehensive approach to achieving academic integrity. School policies have been put in place to discourage students from cheating and a committee has been formed to look at ways of reducing academic stress.

## REPORT OF 2005 DATA

### 1) Unintentional Injury and Violence

Always wore a seat belt (Kappa = 69.1%)

Always wore a bicycle helmet (Kappa = 50.1%)

Rode with a drinking driver with the past 30 days ( Kappa = 61.9%)

Drove after drinking during the past 30 days (Kappa =61.1%)

### Vehicle Safety:

- Seat Belt Use:** Seat belt use has been proven to save lives in motor vehicle accidents. The 2005 survey results indicate that 87% of high school students wore their seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else either most of the time or all of the time. This is above the national average of 68% for all age groups and represents an all time high for seat belt use among Needham High School students. When data was analyzed across grade levels and across gender, juniors were most apt to wear their seat belts (91%) and females wore their seat belts more than males in all four grade levels. Although statistics show that seat belt use is up among our high school students, it is important that we encourage all students to wear seat belts at all times. This will be supported through an awareness campaign to remind students of the importance of using seat belts. In the spring, buckle up signs will be put up in the high school driveway and a series of reminders will be done on the public address system to remind students to wear their seat belts.

- **Bike Helmet Use:** Helmets use can help prevent some head and facial injuries that result from bike crashes. The 2005 survey data reveal that, of those students who rode a bicycle, 39% reported that they wore a helmet most of the time or all of the time. Females were more likely to wear a helmet than males when riding a bicycle. Although this represents the highest percentage for this category to date, 39% remains surprisingly low, given the severe and permanent consequences of head injuries. In an attempt to educate students on the importance of helmet use, this topic will be incorporated into the middle school physical education curriculum starting in the fall of 2005. In addition, an awareness campaign for high school students will take place in the spring of 2006. This will include education in physical education classes along with a poster campaign and public service announcements on the school public address system.
- **Rode in a Car Driven by Someone Under the Influence:** Alcohol and driving are a dangerous combination among any age group, but it is particularly dangerous among teens due to their inexperience behind the wheel. Fewer students, (29%), reported that they had ridden in a car driven by someone who was under the influence of alcohol. This is slightly less than the percentage that was reported in 2003 for this category (32%). When looked at across time, this percentage has remained between 24% - 35% over the history of the survey.

On this survey, students were asked to identify who would most likely be driving when they rode with someone who was under the influence. Students most commonly responded that a friend would most likely be driving. The percentages of students who reported that they had ridden in a car driven by someone under the influence increases as students become older and they have more friends who have a drivers license and access to a car.

Fewer students, 13%, reported that they had actually driven a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol one or more times. This percentage also increases as students get older. This is consistent with the fact that more students have their drivers license and their driving privileges increase as they get older. Percentages for these two categories have been fairly consistent when compared with data from previous surveys.

Drinking and driving and riding with someone under the influence is extremely dangerous and has therefore been targeted as part of the efforts being supported by the grant received by the MetroWest Health Care Foundation. A safe rides program is being considered as an option for those students who chose to drink. This remains somewhat controversial as some believe that a safe rides program will promote teenage drinking. Others, however, believe that it is important to keep those teens who do drink from getting behind the wheel of a car. If adopted, the safe rides program will be part of a comprehensive effort to educate teens against the dangers of both drinking and drinking and driving.

	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
<b>Seat Belt Use</b>	69%	66%	51%	79%	83%	87%
<b>Bike Helmet Use</b>	14%	14%	16%	16%	31%	39%
<b>Rode in a Car Driven by Someone Under the Influence</b>	35%	31%	24%	31%	32%	29%
<b>Drove a Vehicle while Under the Influence</b>	13%	17%	11%	13%	14%	13%

### Violence:

Carried weapon  $\geq 1$  day during the past 30 days (Kappa = 76.3%)

Had a physical fight  $\geq 1$  time during the past 12 months (Kappa = 68.2%)

- Weapons:** Over the past several years, the national news has highlighted tragedies that have increased our awareness of the dangers of weapons in schools. The number of Needham High School students who reported that they had carried a weapon within the past 30 days (e.g., gun, knife, or club) was 7%. This percentage has remained fairly consistent since 1999. Fewer students, 4%, reported that they had carried a weapon on school property one or more times within the past 30 days. Given that no weapon is acceptable on school property, the high school discipline data for the 04-05 school year was studied. This data source indicated that no weapons had been found on school property. This suggests that the weapons that students referred to were most likely knives that remained concealed in pockets or backpacks. Although some females reported that they have carried a weapon, this behavior was most commonly reported by males. A question will be asked on next YRBS to determine why students are carrying weapons.
- Fights:** Physical fights can result in cuts, bruises, broken bones, head injuries, and in severe cases, paralysis and even death. Fights can break out between rival groups or gangs, but are most likely to occur among friends, and even siblings. Fights among these later two groups tend to be short in duration and result in far less severe injuries. Fights often arise when one or more individuals have difficulty managing their anger in socially appropriate ways. In Needham, teachers in all disciplines are engaged in teaching developmentally appropriate social and emotional skills that will help students manage themselves and their anger appropriately.

With the exception of the 1999 data, which represented an all time low, the percentage of students involved in physical fights has declined over time. The 2005 data indicate that 22% of high school students reported that they had been in a physical fight and 7% of high school students have been in a physical fight on school property. Fighting, whether on school property or elsewhere, is more prevalent among males than females and decreases as students get older. As students mature, they develop a variety of skills and gain some maturity that makes them better able to manage their anger and control their temper.

- **Sense of Safety:** School attendance rates tend to support student learning. If students are in school, they are more apt to learn. The 2005 survey data suggest that a small percentage of Needham High School students (3%) reported that they did not go to school due to feeling unsafe at school, or on their way to and from school, one or more times. This is just one percentage point higher than what was reported for this same behavior in the last survey (2003). Trends show that the percentage for this behavior has remained at 5% or below over time. There was very little difference among males and females in this category.

The survey did not provide specific information about why students feel unsafe. It would be helpful to ask a question in the next YRBS to identify what is causing some students to feel unsafe. This group could represent students who have a history of school phobia or other anxiety disorders, or there might be specific reasons why some students are feeling unsafe.

	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
<b>Carried a Weapon</b>	17%	12%	7%	8%	8%	7%
<b>Carried a Weapon on School Property</b>	9%	8%	3%	5%	3%	4%
<b>Physical Fights</b>	34%	27%	19%	26%	24%	22%
<b>Physical Fight on School Property</b>	11%	15%	7%	8%	8%	7%
<b>Did not go to School due to feeling unsafe</b>	4%	4%	1%	5%	2%	3%

### Depression & Suicide:

Considered suicide during the past 12 months (Kappa = 83.8%)

Planned suicide during the past 12 months (Kappa = 77.0%)

Had < 1 suicide attempt during the last 12 months (Kappa = 76.4%)

Had injurious suicide attempt during the past 12 months (Kappa = 60.2%)

- **Suicidal Thoughts and Plans:** Teen suicide is a frightening issue that is difficult to comprehend. Over the past 25 years, suicides among teens and young adults (ages 15-24) have increased dramatically. Trends among Needham teens show a decline in this area. While most Needham High School students reported that they have not had suicidal thoughts, the 2005 survey revealed that 11% (145 students) reported that they had, 8% (102 students) reported that they had made a plan, and 4% (45 students) reported that they had actually attempted suicide 1 or more times. Of these, 18 students' attempts resulted in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse. Females' percentages were consistently higher than those of males in the areas of suicidal thoughts, injuring self on purpose, and feeling sad and hopeless.

When data was compared across grade level, students in grade 10 had the highest percentages in the area of suicidal thoughts, planing and attempts. Feelings of depression, however, were the lowest among the freshman class and averaged about the same for students in grades 10, 11, and 12.

- **Having a Trusted Adult in their Lives:** The 2003 survey was the first to ask students about having an adult in their life whom they could talk to about things that were important the them. The 2005 data shows a one percentage point decrease in this category since that time. More specifically, 61% of students indicated that there was at least one teacher, or other adult in the school, that they could talk to. This 61% falls short of the goal of ensuring that every student (100%) have at least one adult at Needham High School who they can talk to. As a result, this will remain a major focus of the high school mentor program in the upcoming school year. It should be pointed out, however, that the very nature of this age group is to naturally mistrust adults and separate themselves from most of the adults in their lives. This may provide some explanation as to why this number remains relatively low.

A much larger number of students, 88%, indicated that there was an adult family member, or adult non family member, whom they could talk to about things that were important to them. The percentage was also 88% in 2003 for this category. It is important for adults to initiate meaningful dialog with the teens in their lives. Although teens tend to give the message that they are not interested in what adults have to say, they do look to the adults in their lives to help them make decisions and define their values.

Students were asked if they were thinking about suicide, who they would be most likely to talk to. They were provided with a list of possible choices. From this list, the most common response, 38%, was that they would talk to a friend. Unfortunately, the second most common response was that they would deal with it on their own (32% or 400 students). The third most common response, was that they would talk to a parent ( 22%). This data suggest that both parents and school personnel should work hard to make certain that young people know where they can go if they need help. Students should be taught to seek help for all issues that cause them concern or pain. Seeking professional help, or friendly advise, should be seen as a healthy approach to dealing with life's challenges.

The significance of friends being the adolescents' strongest cohort group should not go untapped. For this reason, students will be taught in health classes to refer a struggling friend to the appropriate school personnel. In addition, signs will be put up around the high school to suggest that students reach out to a school counselor when in need of help.

	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
<b>Thought about Attempting Suicide</b>	18%	20%	10%	14%	13%	11%
<b>Made a Plan</b>	17%	22%	11%	15%	11%	8%
<b>Have Tried</b>	11%	11%	6%	9%	8%	4%
<b>Have a Trusted Adult in School</b>	-----	-----	-----	-----	62%	61%
<b>Have a Trusted Adult Outside of School</b>	-----	-----	-----	-----	88%	88%

## 2) Tobacco Use

Ever used cigarettes (Kappa = 83.8%)

Age first smoked whole cigarette < 13 years (Kappa = 68.1%)

Ever smoked cigarettes regularly (Kappa = 86.8%)

Tried quitting during the past 6 months (Kappa = 52.9%)

- **Tried Cigarettes:** The American Cancer Society reports that almost all first time tobacco use occurs before high school graduation. For most people, if they haven't started smoking as a teen, they never start. The percentage of Needham High School students who report that they have tried a cigarette has been declining throughout the history of the survey. This is consistent with state and national data. The 2005 Needham High School YRBS data reports that 32% of students have tried a cigarette. This represents an all time low for this category.
- **Early Cigarette Use:** Past survey trends have suggested that students were most apt to try their first cigarette while they were in middle school. The 2005 data reveal a shift in this trend. Of those students who reported that they have smoked, more waited until they were in high school to try their first cigarette. As a result, fewer of these students tried their first cigarette while in middle school or while in elementary school. This is a positive trend in terms of preventing cigarette use at these lower levels. It strongly suggests, however, that anti smoking messages should continue into high school. There was a noticeable jump in the percentage of students who reported that they had smoked a cigarette between freshman year (14%) and sophomore year (32%). This suggests that anti smoking information should be targeted specifically toward freshmen.
- **Regular Cigarette Use:** The 2005 survey indicates that regular cigarette use (smoking everyday for the past 30 days) has increased slightly from the 2003 results. Only 4% of students identified themselves as regular smokers in 2003, whereas 7% (91 students), identified themselves as regular smokers in 2005. Fewer students, (3%) however, reported smoking on school property than ever before. This behavior hit its highest percentage (12%) in 1997. Although regular cigarette use is low, it increases as students progress through high school with more seniors identifying themselves as regular smokers than students in any other grade level.

- **Tried to Quit:** Of the 91 students who identify themselves as regular smokers, 71 have tried to quit smoking at least once. This suggests that some students who have started smoking are wanting to quit. Because quitting smoking is extremely difficult, a smoking cessation program has been made available at Needham High School to support those students who are trying to quit. This program will continue during the 2005-2006 school year.
- **Smokeless Tobacco Use:** The number of students who reported on the 2005 survey that they have used smokeless tobacco was 8%. This is up from the 6% reported in the 2003 YRBS and represents 58 students. Use of smokeless tobacco is more common among males than females.

	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
<b>Have Tried a Cigarette</b>	59%	60%	42%	48%	39%	32%
<b>Smoked First Cigarette</b>						
Elementary	15%	15%	9%	12%	11%	7%
Middle School	59%	61%	64%	59%	47%	42%
High School	25%	24%	27%	29%	44%	51%
<b>Smoked Cigarettes Everyday (Regular Smoker)</b>	19%	8%	5%	5%	4%	7%
<b>Have Tried to Quit Smoking</b>	14%	19%	11%	13%	23%	30%
<b>Smoked Cigarettes on School Property 6 or more times</b>	6%	12%	6%	5%	5%	3%
<b>Current Smokeless Tobacco Use</b>	8%	8%	6%	6%	6%	8%

### 3) Alcohol and Other Drug Use

#### Alcohol:

Age first used alcohol < 13 years (Kappa = 70.9%)

Ever used alcohol (Kappa = 86.0%)

Used alcohol during the past 30 days (Kappa = 67.8%)

Had episodic heavy drinking during the past 30 days (Kappa = 63.7%)

	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
<b>Have Consumed at Least One Drink of Alcohol</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>66%</b>
<b>Have Had 5 or More Drinks of Alcohol in a Row within a Couple of Hours 1 or More Times (Binge Drinking)</b>	<b>No Data</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>Had First Drink Of Alcohol</b>						
~ Elementary	15%	20%	12%	14%	11%	9%
~ Middle School	59%	54%	56%	57%	52%	51%
~ High School	25%	26%	32%	30%	36%	40%
<b>Had one Drink of Alcohol on School Property One or More Times</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>

- Alcohol Use:** The use of alcohol among teens remains an ongoing struggle in all communities. Because alcohol is a socially accepted drug among adults, teens, who see themselves as young adults, tend to regard alcohol use as socially acceptable. As a result, alcohol is readily available and often present at a variety of teen social gatherings. The percentage of students who reported that they have had at least one drink of alcohol during their life has increased to 66%. This represents an all time high for this category. When asked to report on their alcohol use over the past thirty days, about half (49%) reported that they had consumed alcohol on one or more days. While data shows that teen alcohol use is on the rise, it may also suggest more tolerance or acceptance toward teen drinking among teens. Alcohol use in our society is an accepted social behavior among adults and is marketed as part of televised sports, popular music, and movies. As a result, today's teens may be feeling more comfortable reporting their drinking behavior than teens in the past.

Students were also asked about binge drinking (having 5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row within a couple of hours). Thirty-two percent of students reported that they have participated in binge drinking within the past thirty days of the survey date. The percentage of students who report binge drinking increases as students get older. Thirteen percent of freshmen reported that they have participated in binge drinking while over half, 52%, of seniors reported that they have participated in binge drinking.

Since all Needham High School students are under the legal age for drinking and purchasing alcohol, they were asked how they get their alcohol. Across all age groups, the most common way to get alcohol was to ask an older friend to purchase it for them. Some (13 juniors and 35 seniors) said that they use a fake ID to buy alcohol, and 57 students said they take it from home. In an attempt to help students better understand the legal ramifications of teenage drinking, the health education teachers will receive an inservice on alcohol and the law. This information will be included in the grade 11 critical health issues unit.

- **Early Alcohol Use:** Students surveyed in 2005 indicated that of those who have consumed at least one drink of alcohol, 51% were most apt to have their first drink while they were in middle school. This has been consistent across the history of the survey. Strong anti drinking messages are part of the middle school health curriculum. Because drinking alcohol is observed by students at an early age, these messages should also be targeted at elementary students to help them to develop clear goals around a healthy response to the pressures to consume alcohol.

### **Other Drug Use:**

Age first used marijuana (Kappa = 69.0%)

Ever used marijuana (Kappa = 87.5%)

Used marijuana during the past 30 days (Kappa = 70.8%)

Ever used cocaine (Kappa = 72.5%)

Ever used steroids (Kappa = 41.6%)

Ever used injected drugs (Kappa = 14.5%)

- **Marijuana Use:** Marijuana use among Needham High School students is on the rise. The 2005 data indicate that marijuana has been used at least once in their lifetime by a little more than one third of all students. In addition, the number of students who report using marijuana three or more times has increased by 13 percentage points. This brings the percentage of students who have tried marijuana three or more times very close to the percentage of students who have used marijuana at least once in their lifetime. The percentage of students who report using marijuana increases as students progress through high school and boys are more likely to use than girls. Seniors, therefore, are the biggest users of marijuana with 59% of seniors reporting that they have used marijuana at least once in their lifetime and 51% of seniors reporting that they have used marijuana 3 or more times during their lifetime.

As the percentage of students who use marijuana has increased, the percentage of students who tried it for the first time in middle school has also increased. First time users in both middle school and high school are hovering around 50% which

represents an all time high. We will look for ways to deliver a strong anti drug education message in elementary school to compliment the middle school efforts through health education. In addition, this message should target high school students as well.

	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
<b>Used Marijuana at Least Once</b>	9%	25%	20%	31%	31%	38%
<b>Used Marijuana 3 or more times</b>	11%	16%	13%	18%	19%	32%
<b>Used Marijuana for the First Time</b>						
~ Elementary	10%	9%	5%	6%	4%	
~ Middle School	38%	51%	55%	46%	45%	
~ High School	52%	41%	40%	47%	52%	
<b>Used Marijuana on School Property</b>	7%	8%	4%	8%	6%	4%

- **Other Drug Use:** Other drug use includes all other drugs besides alcohol and marijuana. The use of other drugs has remained relatively low throughout the history of the survey. Drugs not included in this category are prescription drugs taken by students for various physical and mental health issues. There is concern that some students, are selling or giving their drugs to other students. A question will be asked on the next survey to try to gain a better understanding as to how prevalent this practice is among Needham High School students.
- **Cocaine Use:** The percentage of students reporting that they have used cocaine, including powder, crack or freebase three or more times is 3%. This percentages is one percentage point lower than what was reported in the 2003 YRBS. This behavior has remained relatively low, ranging from 1% to 4% during the history of the survey.
- **Inhalants:** The percentage of students reporting that they have sniffed glue, or breathed the contents of spray cans, or inhaled any paints or sprays to get high remains at 4%. The number of students reporting this behavior has steadily decreased over time.
- **Steroid Use:** The percentage of students reporting that they have used steroids has increased by one percentage point from 2% in 2003 to 3% in 2005. This behavior peaked at 6% in 1997.

	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
Have used Cocaine	5%	5%	4%	4%	5%	5%
Have used Oxycontin	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	4%
Have used Cocaine in Some Form 3 or More Times	3%	3%	1%	2%	4%	3%
Have Sniffed Glue, Breathed the Contents of Aerosol Spray Cans or Inhaled Paint or Sprays to Get High	No Data	12%	7%	8%	4%	4%
Have Used Steroid Pills or Shots without a Doctor's Prescription	3%	6%	3%	4%	2%	3%
Have Used Hallucinogenic Drugs	No Data	15%	9%	11%	11%	
Have Used Heroin	No Data	10%	7%	3%	2%	2%
Have Used Ecstasy/MDMA	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	6%	3%
Have Used a Needle to Inject an Illegal Drug into my Body	15%	3%	1%	7%	2%	1%
Have Been Offered, Sold, or Given an Illegal Drug on School Property	25%	48%	34%	34%	35%	25%

- Injected an Illegal Drug:** The percentage of students reporting that they have used a needle to inject an illegal drug into their body as decreased by one percentage point from 2% in 2003 to 1% in 2005. This represents an all time low for this behavior. In 1999 this behavior was also at 1%.
- Been Offered, Sold, or Given an Illegal Drug on School Property:** Although responses in this category have decreased since the 1997 survey, one quarter of our students have been offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property. Given that the responses in drug use among other illegal drugs was relatively low, marijuana is the drug that is most likely changing hands on school property.

#### 4) Sexual Behaviors

Ever had sexual intercourse (Kappa = 86.9%)  
 Age first had sexual intercourse < 13 years (Kappa = 71.0%)  
 Had > lifetime sexual partners (Kappa = 81.4%)  
 Ever taught about HIV in school (Kappa = 49.1%)  
 Ever talked to parents about HIV (Kappa = 57.5%)

	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
<b>Have had sexual intercourse</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Have had sexual intercourse with 4 or more partners during my life</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Of those who report they have had sexual intercourse they had it for the first time in:</b>						
~ Elementary	12%	19%	10%	13%	No Data	No Data
~ Middle School	30%	28%	23%	25%	29%	27%
~ High School	58%	52%	67%	62%	70%	73%
<b>Used alcohol or drugs the last time I had sexual intercourse</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>A condom was used the last time I had sexual intercourse</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>75%</b>

- **Abstinence:** Research suggests that good communication between parents and teens about delaying the first sexual experience and promoting condom use actually influences these healthy behaviors (Whitaker & Miller, 2000). The 2005 data reveal that most high school students, 73%, report that they have not had sexual intercourse. This percentage represents a one percentage point decrease from the 2003 YRBS. The percentage for abstinence has remained relatively consistent over time ranging from a low of 66% in 1997 to a high of 77% in 1999.
- **Sexual Intercourse:** The 2005 data suggest that one quarter of students reported that they have had sexual intercourse. This percentage is one percentage point lower

than what was reported for this category in 2003. The percentage of students who report that they have had sexual intercourse increases as students progress through high school. Forty-one percent of seniors report that they have had sexual intercourse. Of great concern is that 66 students, 41 males and 25 females, have had sexual intercourse with four or more partners.

- **Condom Use:** Of those students who reported that they have had sexual intercourse, 75% reported that either they or their partner used a condom the last time they had intercourse. This is up eight percentage points from the 2003 YRBS results and represents a new all time high for condom use.
- **Early Initiation:** The 2005 data reveal that, of those students who reported that they have had sexual intercourse, 73% report that they had their first experience while in high school. Over one quarter, (27%), however, reported that they had sexual intercourse for the first time while in middle school. Although still much too high, this represents a two percentage point decrease in the number of high school students who report that they had sexual intercourse for the first time while they were in middle school. Health education in middle school and high school should continue to focus on delaying this experience into adulthood.
- **Sexual Harassment:** When asked about sexual harassment, 66% of students disagreed with a statement suggesting that it was a problem at Needham High School. Students were asked questions about the degree of respect shown toward the opposite sex. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of students reported that they agreed that guys treat girls with respect at Needham High School., Seventy-six percent (76%) agreed that girls treat guys with respect at Needham High School.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Guys Treat Girls w/Respect at NHS	5%	68%	23%	2%
Girl's Treat Guys w/Respect at NHS	8%	76%	12%	1%
Sexual Harassment is a Problem at NHS	2%	19%	66%	10%

- **AIDS Education:** The 2005 data indicate that most students, 93%, recalled having been taught about AIDS/HIV infection in school. This same data reveals that over half, 54% of students recall having talked about AIDS or HIV with a parent or other adult in their family. This is up 8 percentage points from the 2003 YRBS. This behavior hit an all time high in 1995 (64%) when HIV/AIDS was more visible in our community. Despite the fact that more people are living longer with AIDS, it remains important for parents to talk to their teens about prevention.

A quarter of students recalled having been taught about how to use a condom. Given that this topic is not covered in health classes until junior year, we would expect that approximately 50% of students would have received this information. In an attempt to

ensure that we reach this goal, health teachers will receive some education and new materials will be purchased to ensure their comfort and enhance their knowledge in this area.

	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
<b>Have been taught about AIDS or HIV infection in school</b>	92%	86%	63%	88%	90%	93%
<b>Have been taught how to use a condom in school</b>	70%	45%	28%	31%	30%	38%
<b>Have talked about AIDS or HIV with a parent or other adult in my family</b>	64%	54%	37%	43%	46%	54%

## 5) Dietary Behaviors and Weight Control

Perceive self as overweight (Kappa = 67.2%)

Trying to lose weight (Kappa = 78.7%)

- **Weight-Perception Versus Reality:** A teens' self esteem is often tied into the way they think, feel and perceive their body size, appearance, and its ability to perform (McConnell, 2001). With pressure to "look good" as defined by Hollywood, teen magazines, and the advertising industry, many teens have unrealistic expectations for their own appearance. The 2005 data showed that 54% of students described themselves as being at the right weight. While almost all (94%) described themselves as being the right weight or being slightly over or under weight, 42% reported that they are trying to lose weight. As one might expect, females were twice as likely to report that they are trying to lose weight than males. This might be a result of societies pressures on women to be thin and the multimillion dollar diet market that targets its marketing campaign at women.

### Weight Perception

	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
<b>Describe Self as Right Weight</b>	45%	46%	37%	52%	51%	54%
<b>Describe Self as very Overweight</b>	5%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%
<b>Trying to Lose Weight</b>	42%	41%	28%	44%	43%	42%

- **Healthy Weight Control:** The 2005 data reveal that 45% of students, reported that they have used exercise to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight. This behavior is up 7 percentage points from the 2003 YRBS data. A lot less, 9% of students, reported that they have eaten less food, fewer calories, or foods low in fat to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight. Twenty-four percent (24%) reported that they have used both exercise and eating fewer calories to lose weight. In health and physical education classes, students will be taught about good nutrition, encouraged to be critical of commercial diets, and use a combination of healthy eating and physical exercise to manage their weight.

### Healthy Weight Control

	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
<b>Exercise</b>	46%	42%	32%	57%	38%	45%
<b>Eat Fewer Calories</b>	15%	No Data	No Data	38%	9%	9%
<b>Both</b>	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	29%	24%

- **Unhealthy Weight Control:** The 2005 data suggest that some students have practiced unhealthy behaviors in an attempt to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight. Within this category, 8% of students reported that they have gone without eating for 24 hours, 5% of students reported that they have taken diet pills, powders or liquids without a doctor's advice, and 5% reported that they have vomited or taken laxatives. While percentages for these categories have fluctuated within a few percentage points throughout the history of the survey, they have consistently remained below 10%.

### Unhealthy Weight Loss

	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
<b>Gone w/out Eating</b>	No Data	No Data	No Data	9%	8%	8%
<b>Taken Pills/Powders</b>	7%	7%	4%	5%	5%	4%
<b>Vomited/Laxatives</b>	3%	8%	3%	6%	5%	4%

- **Skipping Breakfast:** Over half of students surveyed reported skipping breakfast. Only 41% of students ate breakfast everyday for the past seven days prior to the survey. It is not known whether students are skipping breakfast as part of an attempt to lose weight or because they are not allowing enough time in their morning schedule. Chances are its a little of both. The inclusion of vending machines that offer healthy breakfast choices will be looked into as a possibility for students use when they miss breakfast.

## 6) Physical Inactivity

Play on school sports team (Kappa = 69.3%)

- **Vigorous Activity:** Daily physical activity has been proven to reduce the risk of certain diseases, reduce stress, and improve vitality and alertness (Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity, 1996). The 2005 data suggest that three quarters, (75%) of students, reported that they had participated in vigorous physical activities, lasting at least 20 minutes, on three or more of the past seven days. This is up 9 percentage points from the 2003 YRBS and represents an all time high.
- **Lack of Physical Activity:** The 2005 data reveal that about one quarter of all students did not get the recommended amount of physical activity in the previous week. In addition, 46% of students reported that they watch 2 hours or more of television on a school day.
- **Sports Teams:** The 2005 data show that almost three quarters (72%) of all students reported that they play on a sports team. This figure is only 1 percentage point higher that the 2003 YRBS and represents an all time high.

	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
<b>Vigorous Activity</b>	61%	58%	40%	65%	66%	75%
<b>Sports Teams</b>	64%	53%	40%	60%	71%	72%

As students get older, their participation on one or more sports teams decreases for both males and females. Males were more likely to play on three or more sports teams during the school year than females.