

DANVERS MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY

2008 FINAL REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) monitors the behaviors of high school and middle school pre-teens and teens that are related to the leading causes of morbidity and mortality among youth and young adults. The 2008 Danvers Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) was administered to 539 7th and 8th graders during March 2008 for a response rate of 92.7%; 532 valid surveys were analyzed. The survey was adapted from the state 2005 YRBS.

SURVEY METHODS

Most of the 2008 Danvers YRBS questions were taken from the 2005 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Surveys. Please see Appendix A on the attached CD for a copy of the survey instrument.

The survey was administered to Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens in grades 7 and 8 in March 2008. Staff administering the survey were instructed to remind students of the importance and value of the data, and to answer honestly. Instructions were read aloud, affirming that the survey was voluntary and anonymous. Please see Appendix B on the attached CD for “Do Students Tell the Truth on the YRBS?”

A total of 539 surveys were completed. Several surveys were removed because of wrong age, and invalid or other grade. Please see Appendix C on the attached CD for data cleaning process employed by the Northeast Center for Healthy Communities. Percents used in this report for Danvers 2008 data are percent of total surveys analyzed (532) unless otherwise indicated. State and national data are unavailable for comparisons. Results were compared by gender and grade.

Grade	Number of Valid Surveys	Number Enrolled	Response Rate
7 th	265	293	90%
8 th	267	288	93%
Total	532	581	92%

RESULTS

Tobacco Use

- Fifteen percent (15%) of Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens reported lifetime cigarette use. Six percent (5%) reported current cigarette use.
- Eighteen percent (18%) of Danvers eighth grade students reported ever smoking a cigarette, which is higher than the 2006 rate of twelve percent (12%).
- Six percent (6%) of Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens reported smoking their first whole cigarette before age 13.
- Two percent (2%) of survey respondents reported using chewing tobacco during the 30 days prior to taking the survey.
- Seventy-three percent (73%) of Danvers pre-teens and teens reported thinking that people who smoke one or more packs of cigarettes per day are at moderate or great risk of harm.

Alcohol Use

- Lifetime alcohol use among Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens in 2008 was twenty-seven percent (27%).
- Twenty-nine percent (29%) of Danvers eighth grade students reported ever drinking alcohol in their lifetime, down from thirty-five percent (35%) in 2006.
- Sixteen percent (16%) of Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens and reported using alcohol for the first time before the age of thirteen.
- Seventy-three percent (73%) of Danvers Middle school pre-teens and teens and reported thinking that people who drink one or two alcoholic beverages nearly every day are at moderate or great risk of harm.

Marijuana and Other Drug Use

- Seven percent (7%) of Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens reported ever using marijuana in their lifetime.
- Eight percent (8%) of Danvers eighth grade students reported ever using marijuana, slightly down from eleven (11%) in 2006.
- More Danvers Middle School males (8%) reported having ever used marijuana in their lifetime compared to females (6%).
- Eighty-nine percent (89%) of Danvers Middle school pre-teens and teens reported thinking that people who smoke marijuana regularly are at moderate or great risk of harm.

Violence-Related Behaviors and Experiences

- Forty-one percent (41%) of Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens reported ever being in a physical fight. More than twice as many males (59%) reported ever being in a physical fight as females (24%).
- Nearly half (46%) of Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens reported being bullied at school one or more times in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- The most reported types of harassment were unwanted sexual comments and harassment about weight, acne, clothes or physical appearance, which is comparable to the 2006 results.

Suicidal Thinking and Behavior

- Fourteen percent (14%) of Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens reported suicidal thinking, seven percent (7%) reported suicidal planning and five percent (5%) reported making a suicide attempt.

Behaviors Related to Unintentional Injuries

- Six percent (6%) of Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens reported rarely or never wearing a seat belt in 2008.

- Twenty-five percent (25%) of Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens reported riding in a car with a driver who had been drinking alcohol.

Sexual Behaviors and HIV/AIDS Prevention

- Eleven percent (11%) of Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens reported having sexual intercourse in their lifetime.
- Of the pre-teens and teens who reported ever having sexual intercourse, nineteen percent (19%) reported using a condom the last time they had sexual intercourse.
- Twice as many (15%) Danvers eighth grade students reported lifetime sexual intercourse compared to seventh grade students (7%).

Gambling

- Thirty-one percent (31%) of Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens reported playing cards for money in the past year. Twenty-two percent (22%) reported playing scratch tickets in the past year.

Weight Control and Physical Activity

- Even though eighteen percent (18%) of females reported thinking they are overweight at the time of the survey, seventy-nine percent (79%) reported trying to lose weight.
- Fifty-nine percent (59%) of Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens reported participating in regular vigorous activity on three of the past seven days prior to the survey.

Resiliency

- Most (86%) Danvers Middle School pre-teens and teens reported they could talk to a parent, other adult family member, or other adult (non-family member) outside of school about things that were important to them; fewer reported having a teacher they could talk to (56%).

MIDDLE SCHOOL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is a useful tool to address issues that affect youth on a community-level basis. It is important to stress that these issues, while measured in the school setting, are community issues and are best addressed through collaborative community efforts. Regardless of the programs or curricula the community selects to address some of these issues, they should be proven, evaluated models or programs. The Northeast Center for Healthy Communities is funded to work with communities in choosing and implementing appropriate programs.

The following are some options that could be considered:

- Review efforts in the community and school to address youth smoking (e.g. enforcement of local policies including regular compliance checks, review and enforcement of school policy).
- Consider implementing a school-based substance abuse prevention model program. For more information go to <http://modelprograms.samhsa.gov>.
- Consider doing educational forums for students and their parents regarding gambling and gambling addiction and/or implement a gambling curriculum such as the one being designed by Harvard's Division on Addiction. For more information go to: http://www.divisiononaddictions.org/html/facingtheodds_form.htm
- Consider implementing a survey with adults (parents and teachers) to learn more about community norms around and perceptions of risk-taking behaviors among youth and strategies for prevention.
- Review school policies and enforcement regarding harassment and bullying on school property. A bullying prevention curriculum and/or sexual harassment training may be appropriate for pre-teens, teens and staff.
- Continue to promote available resources for teen suicide prevention issues; partner with state or local programs.
- Continue to survey both the seventh and eighth grades in future years so that comparisons can be made.

DEFINITIONS

TOBACCO USE:

Lifetime cigarette smoking: ever tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs.

Early initiation of cigarette smoking: smoked first whole cigarette before age 13.

Past 30 day cigarette smoking: smoked cigarettes on at least one of the 30 days prior to the survey.

Past 30 day smokeless tobacco use: used smokeless tobacco (chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip) on at least one of the 30 days prior to the survey.

Past 30 day cigar use: smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars on at least one of the 30 days prior to the survey.

ALCOHOL USE:

Lifetime alcohol use: any consumption of alcohol during one's life, except for religious purposes.

Early initiation of alcohol use: consumption of first alcoholic drink before age 13.

Past 30 day alcohol use: consumed one or more alcoholic drinks on at least one of the 30 days prior to the survey.

Binge drinking: consumed five or more alcoholic drinks in a row, within a couple of hours, on at least one of the 30 days prior to the survey.

MARIJUANA AND OTHER DRUG USE:

Lifetime marijuana/other drug use: any use of marijuana/other drug during one's life.

Early initiation of marijuana use: first use of marijuana before age 13.

Past 30 day marijuana use: use of marijuana on at least one of the 30 days prior to the survey.

Prescription pain reliever use: use of a prescription pain reliever, such as Oxycontin, Vicodin, Percocet, or Tylenol with codeine that was not prescribed to the user by a doctor.

Prescription stimulant use: use of a prescription stimulant, such as Ritalin or Adderall that was not prescribed to the user by a doctor.

Prescription tranquilizer use: use of a prescription tranquilizer, such as Xanax, Valium, Ambien or Klonopin that was not prescribed to the user by a doctor.

OTC medications: use of any over-the-counter medications, such as cough or cold syrups to get high.

Other illegal drug use (lifetime): use of any other type of illegal drug such as LSD, PCP, mushrooms, Ketamine (Special K), Rohypnol (Roofies), or GHB.

Inhalant use: sniffed glue, breathed aerosol spray, or inhaled paints or sprays to get high at least once in one's lifetime.

Past 30 day inhalant use: sniffed glue, breathed aerosol spray, or inhaled paints or sprays to get high on at least one of the 30 days prior to the survey.

Past 30 day illegal drug use other than marijuana or inhalant use: use of any illegal drug other than marijuana or inhalants including drugs such as cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines, or ecstasy on at least one of the 30 days prior to the survey.

SEXUAL BEHAVIORS AND HIV/AIDS PREVENTION

Lifetime sexual intercourse: sexual intercourse ever in one's lifetime.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Regular vigorous activity: participated in physical activity for at least 20 minutes that made respondent sweat and breathe hard, such as basketball, soccer, running, swimming laps, fast bicycling, fast dancing or similar activities on three or more of the past seven days.

Regular moderate activity: participated in physical activity for at least 30 minutes that did not make respondent sweat and breathe hard, such as fast walking, slow bicycling, skating, pushing a lawn mower or mopping floors on three or more of the past seven days.

Regular strength training: participated in exercises to strengthen or tone muscles, such as push-ups, sit-ups or weight lifting on three or more of the past seven days.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

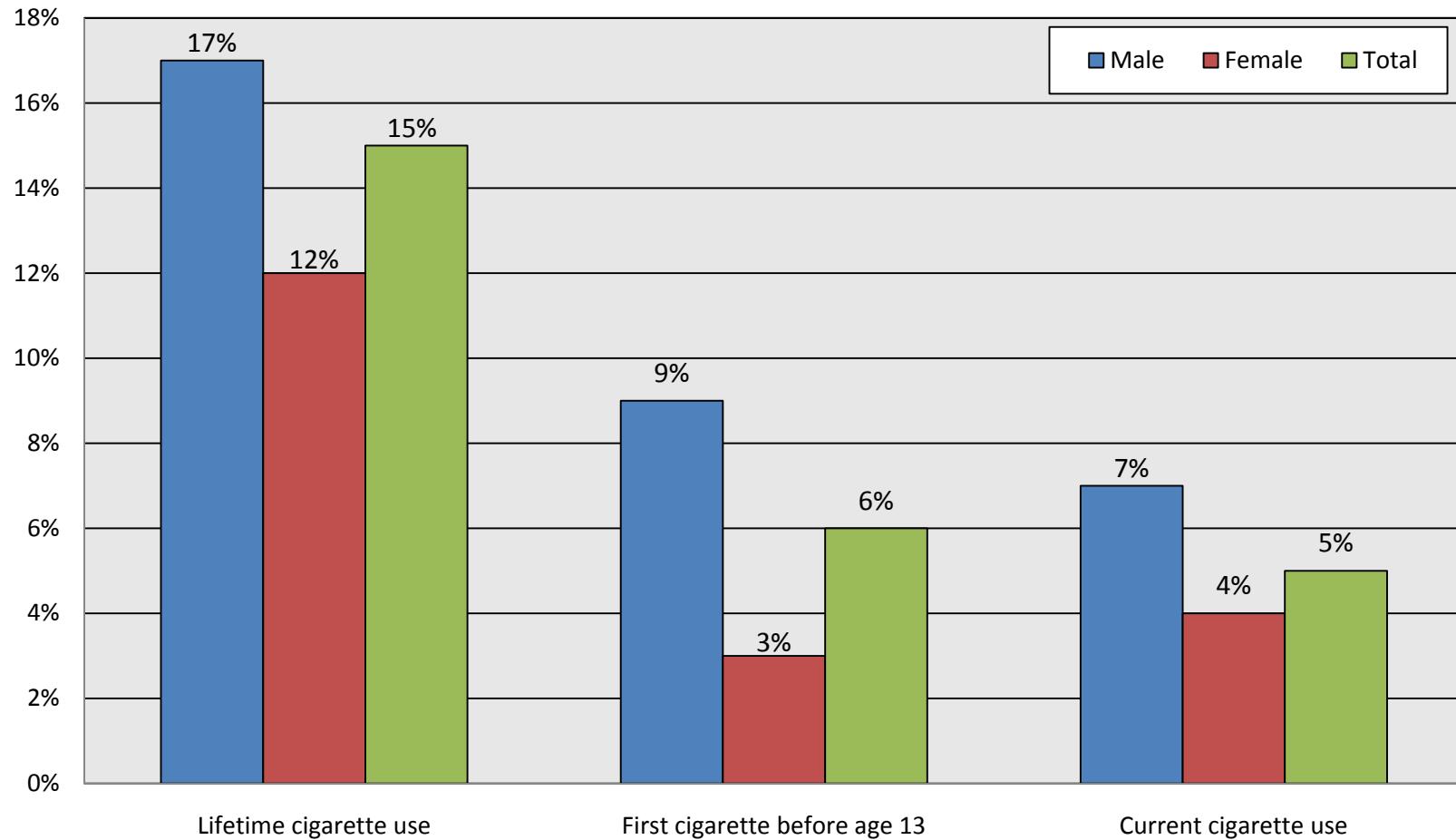
Perceived family support: has at least one adult family member with whom they could talk to about things that were important to them.

Perceived teacher support: has at least one teacher or other adult in the school with whom they could talk to about things that were important to them.

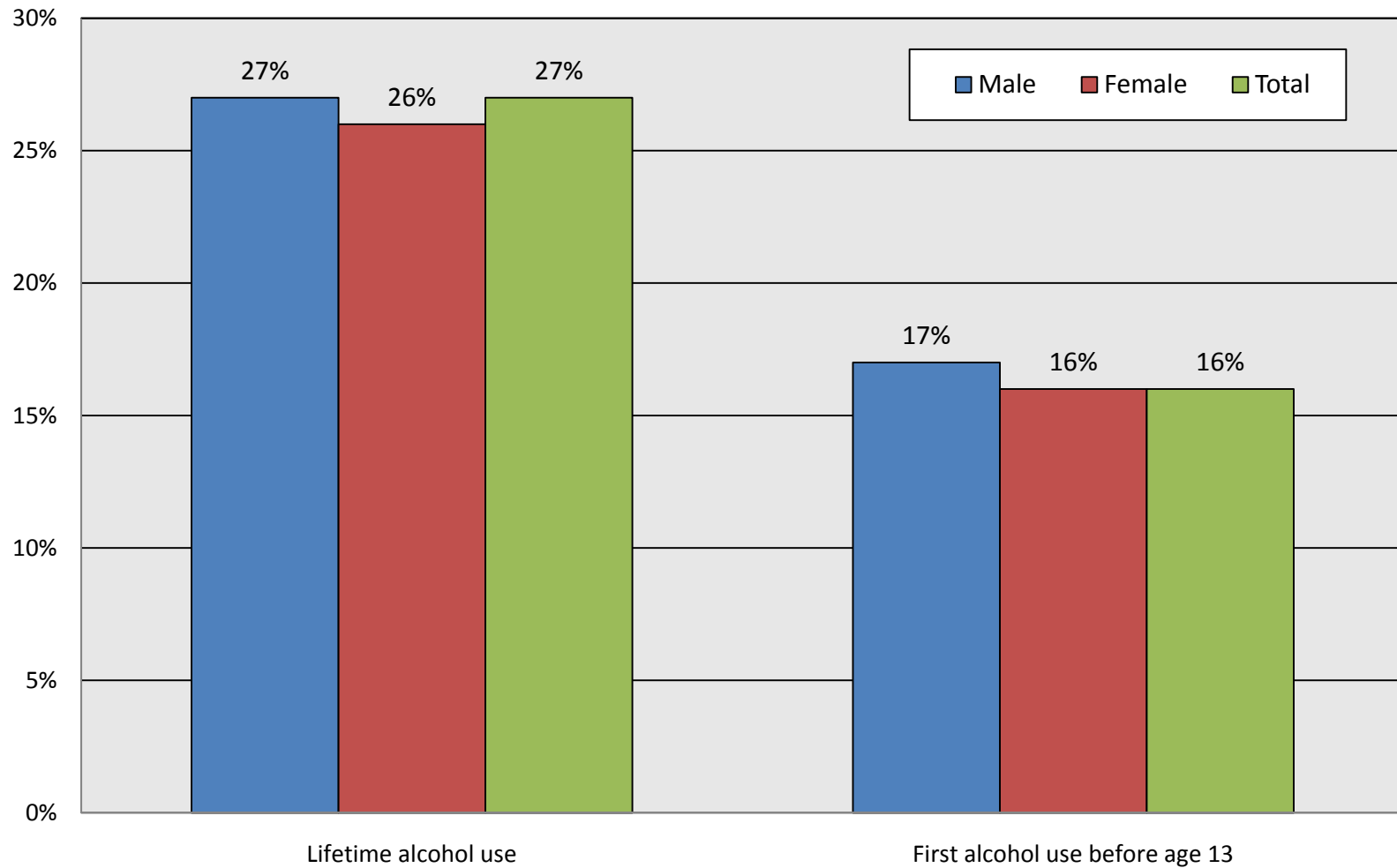
Participation in organized activities: participated in organized after school, evening or weekend activities such as school clubs, community center groups, music/art/dance lessons, drama, church, or other supervised activities on at least one of the past 7 days.

Volunteer work: participated in at least one hour of volunteer work, community service or helping people outside of home without getting paid in the past month. Does not include community service that is required as punishment/restitution.

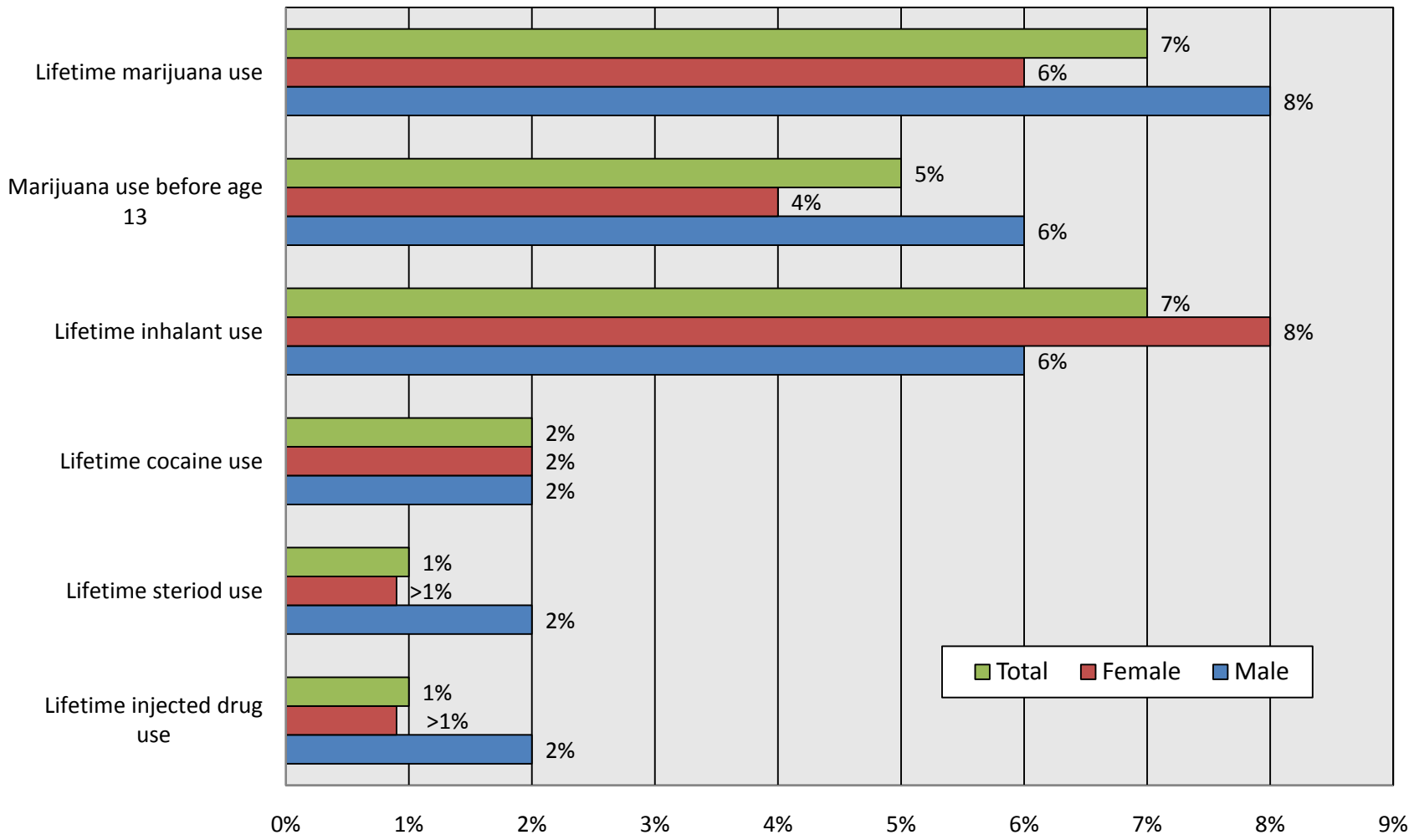
Tobacco Use Among Danvers Middle School Pre-teens and Teens, 2008



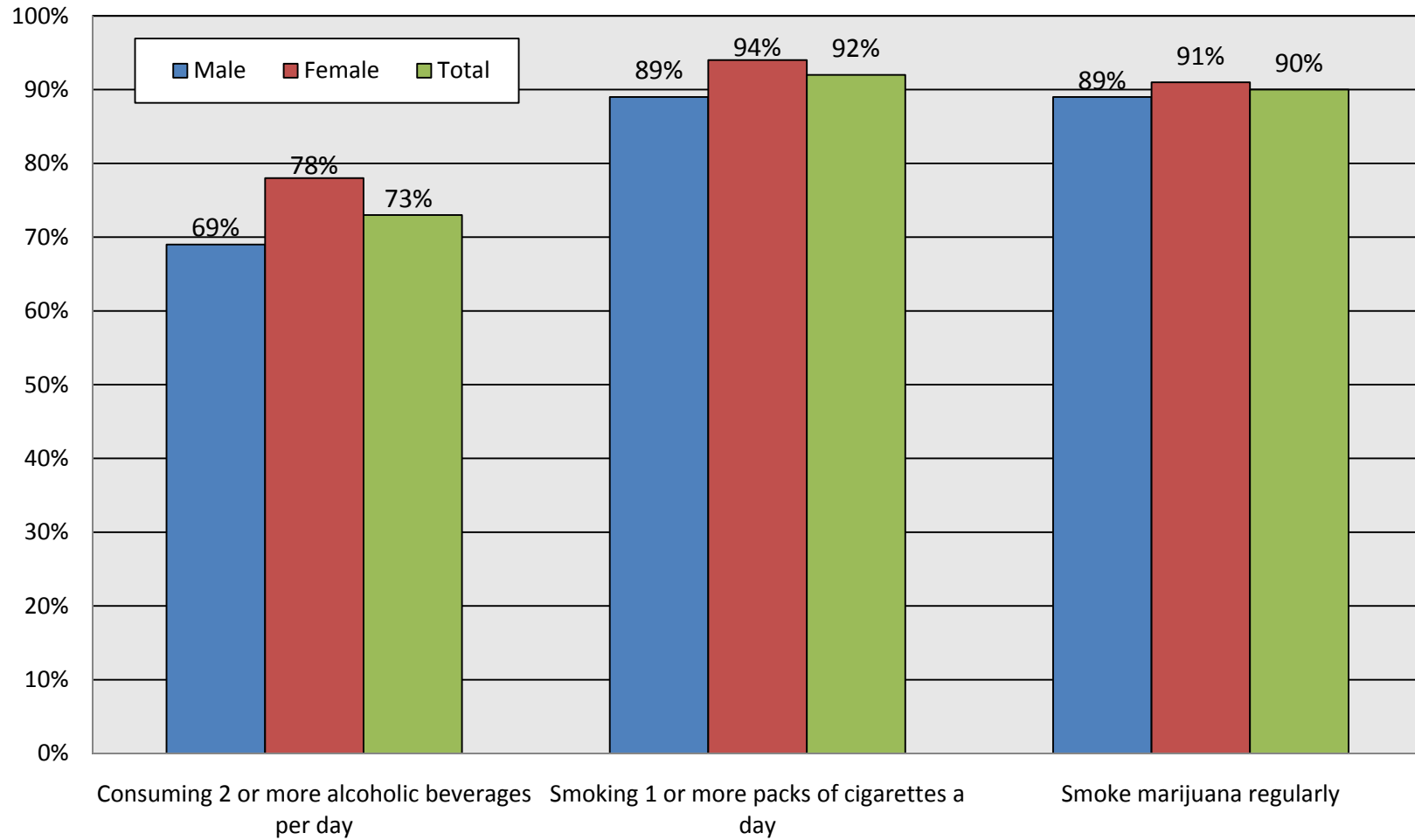
Alcohol Use Among Danvers Middle School Pre-teens and Teens, 2008



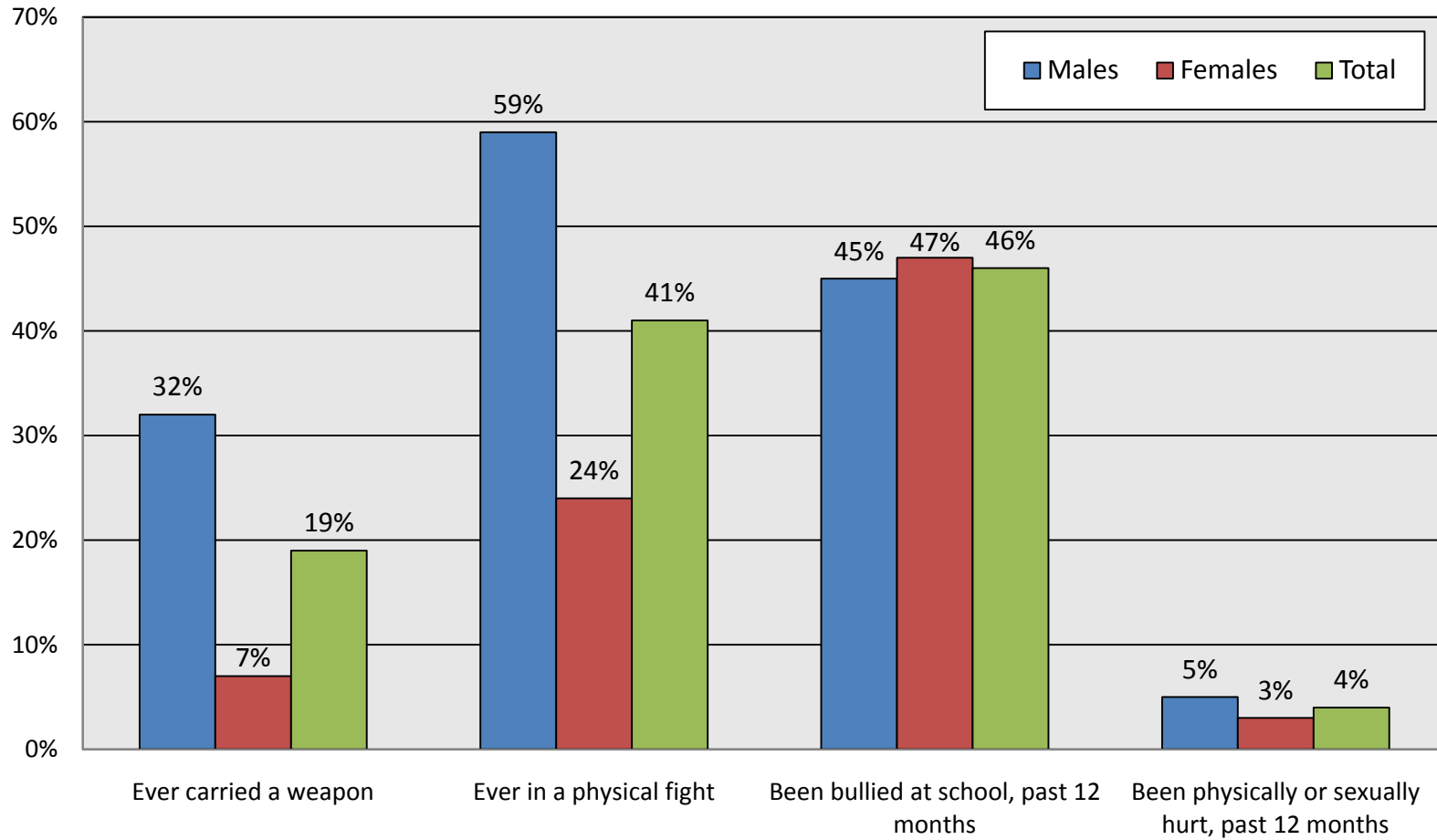
Drug Use Among Danvers Middle School Pre-teens and Teens, 2008



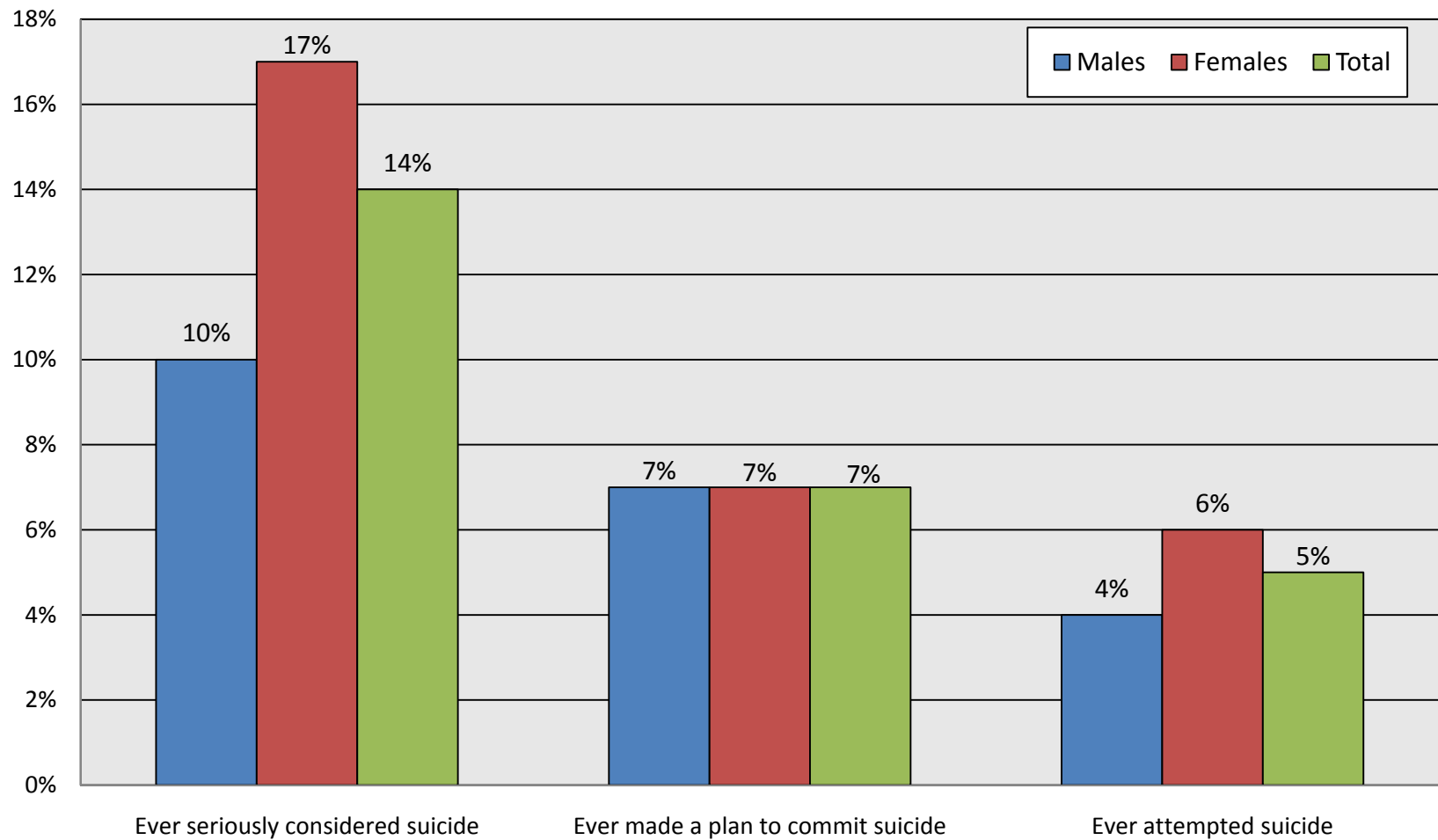
Perception of Moderate or Great Risk of Harm Among Danvers Middle School Pre-Teens and Teens, 2008



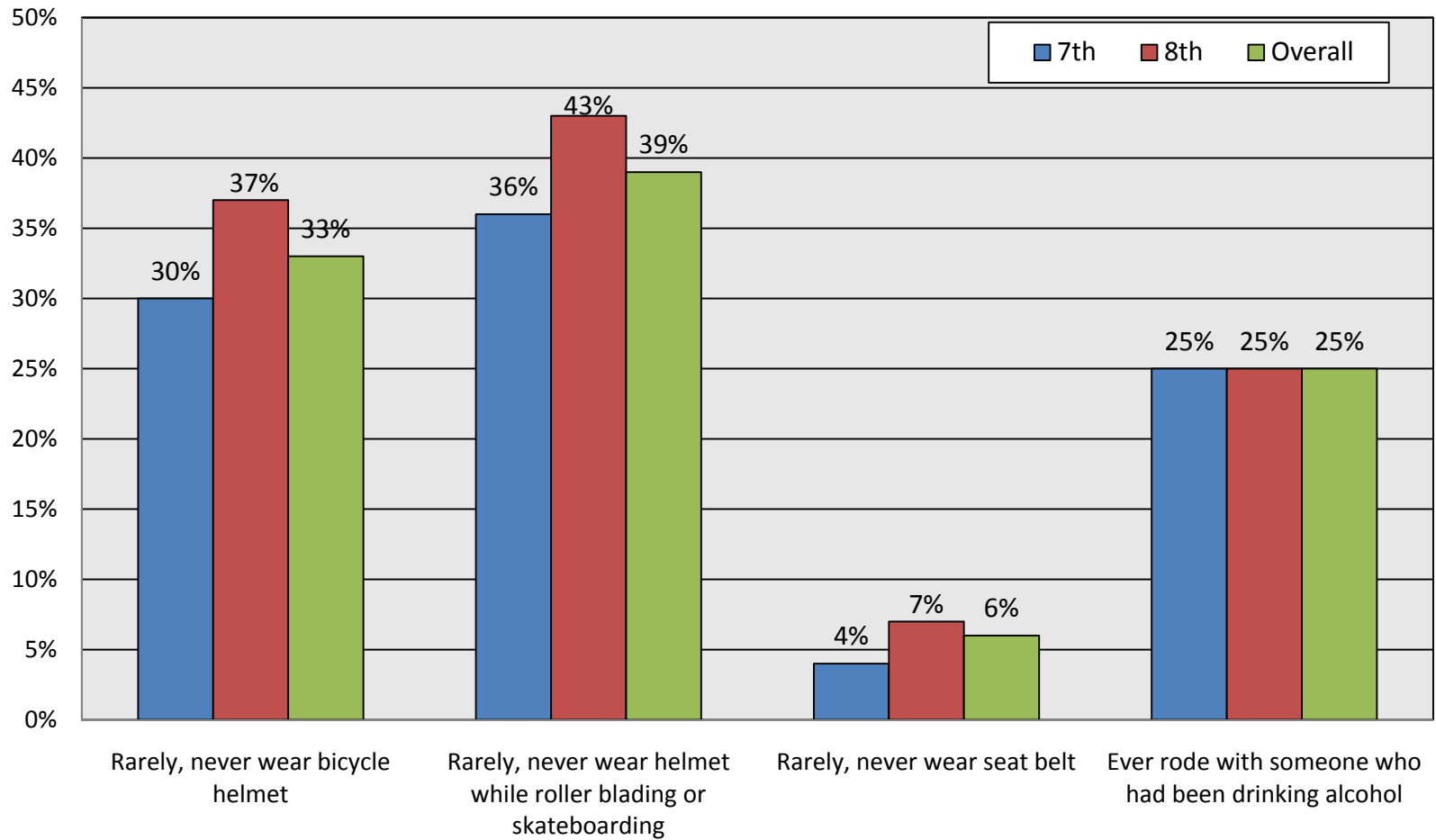
Violence Related Behaviors Among Danvers Middle School Pre-teens and Teens, 2008



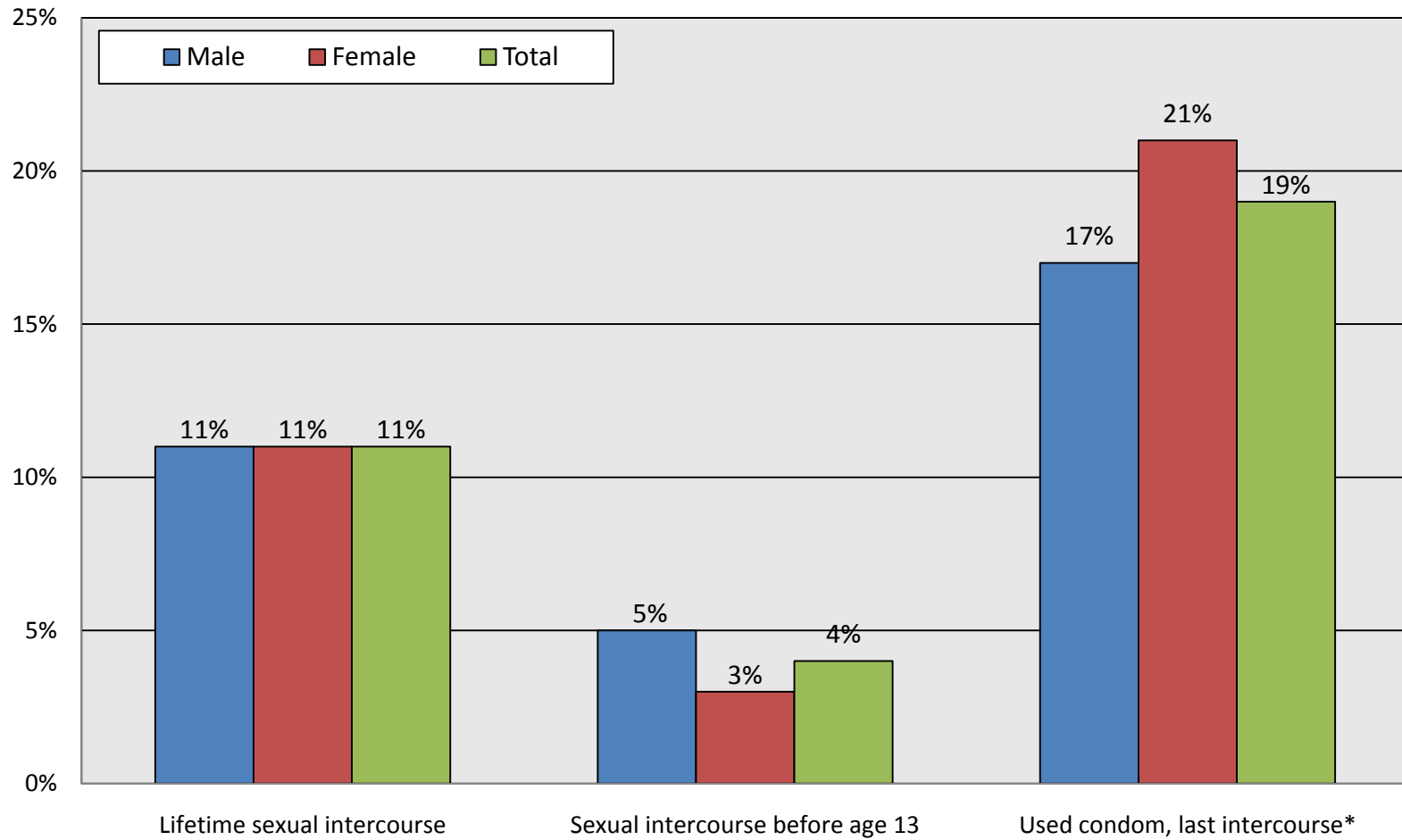
Suicidal Thinking and Behaviors Among Danvers Middle School Pre-teens and Teens, 2008



Behaviors Related to Unintentional Injuries Among Danvers Middle School Pre-teens and Teens, 2008

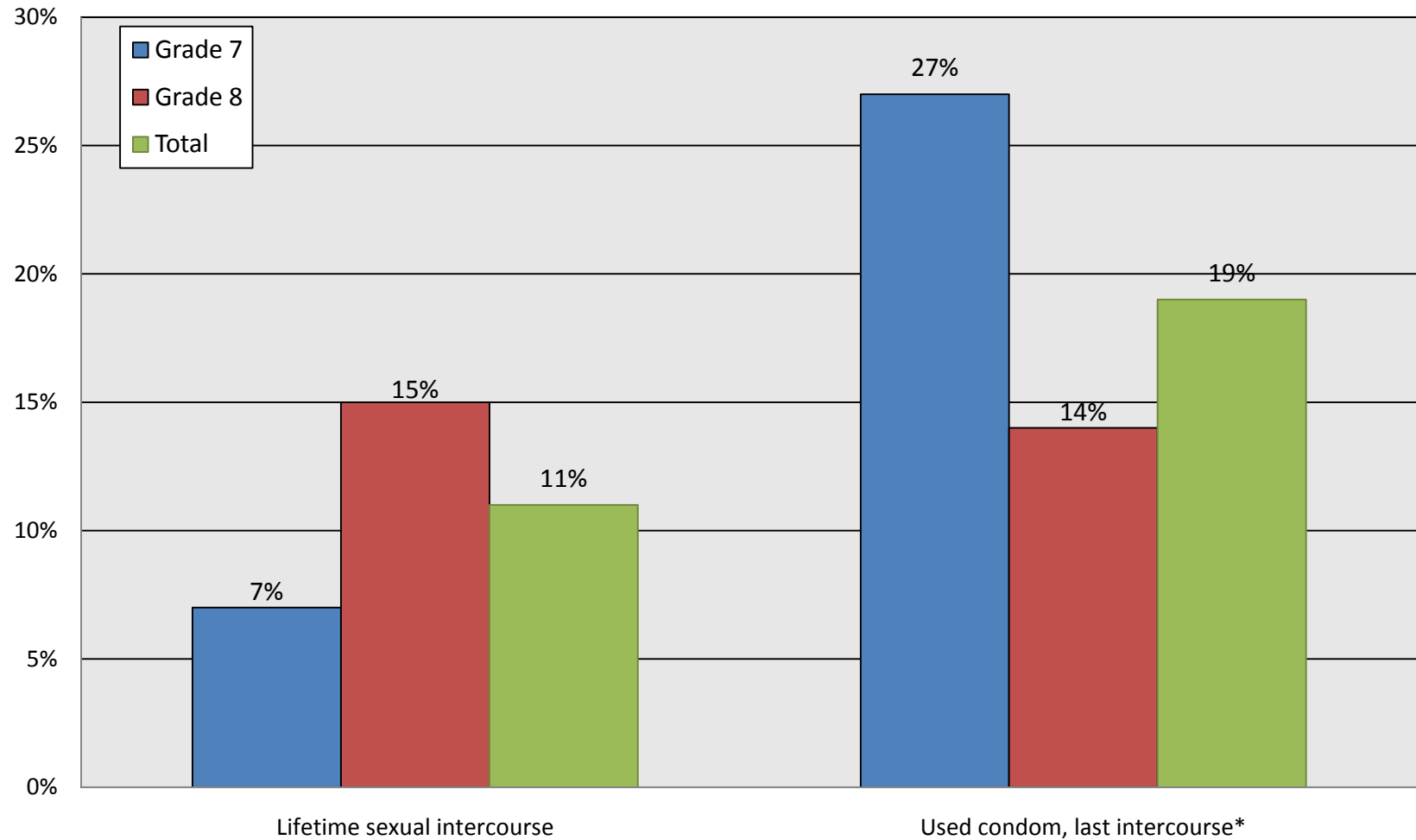


Sexual Behaviors Among Danvers Middle School Pre-teens and Teens, 2008



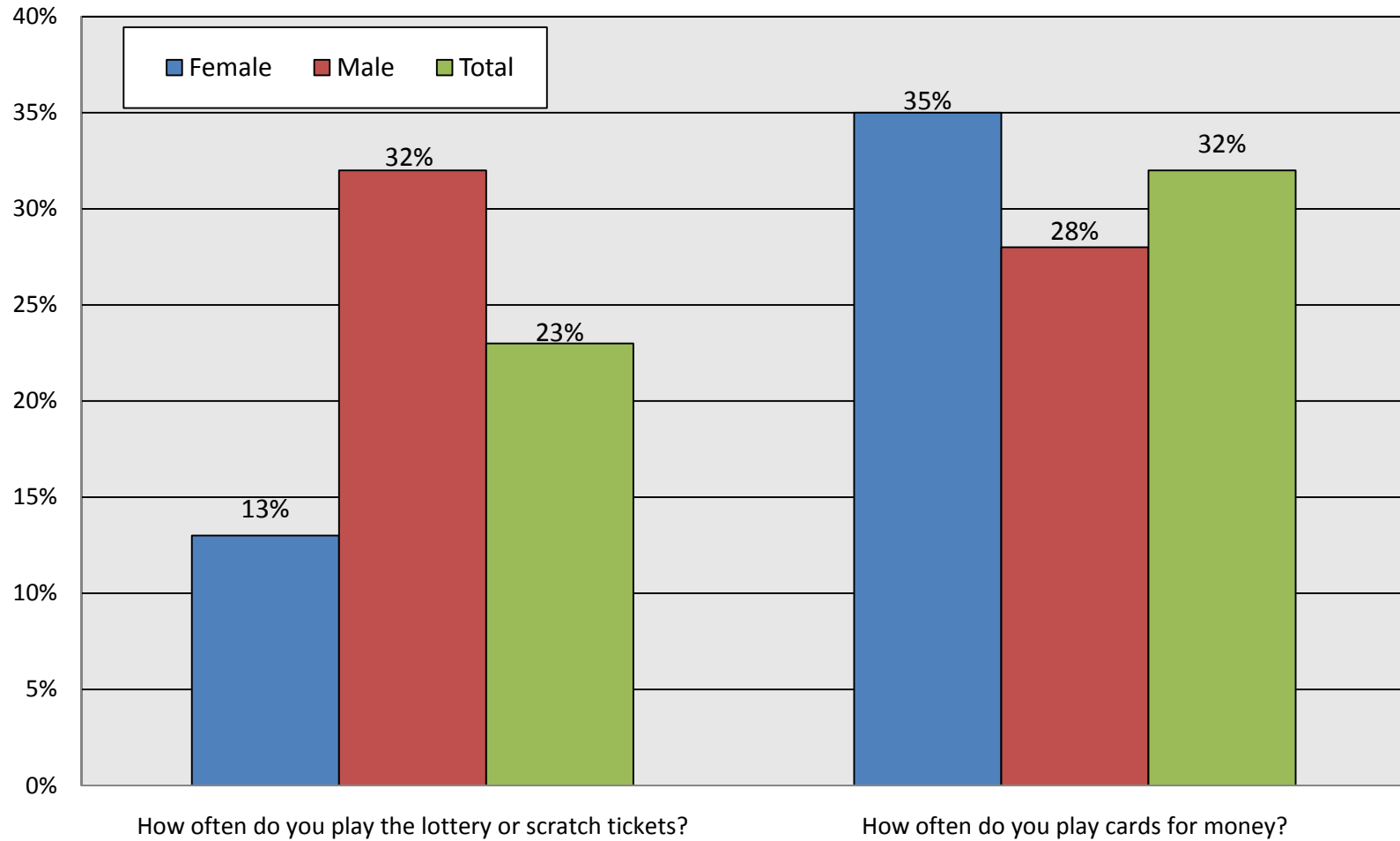
*Of the youth that reported lifetime sexual intercourse.

Sexual Behaviors Among Danvers Middle School Pre-teens and Teens by Grade, 2008

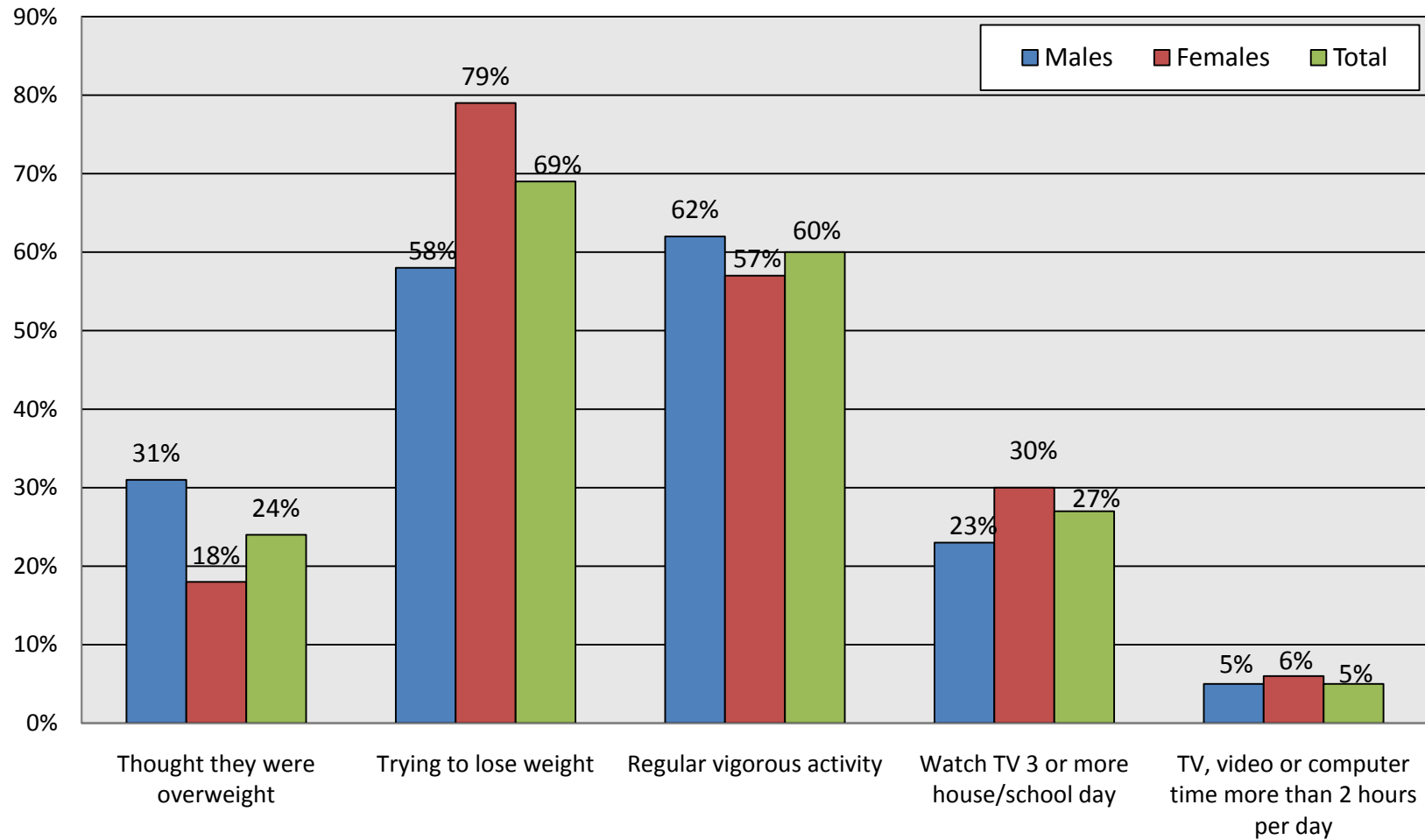


* Of the youth that reported lifetime sexual intercourse.

Gambling Behaviors Among Danvers Middle School Pre-teens and Teens, 2008



Weight Control and Physical Activity Among Danvers Middle School Pre-teens and Teens, 2008



Resiliency Factors Among Danvers Middle School Pre-teens and Teens by Grade, 2008

