

An insight on what our youth think. . . .

About drugs, alcohol, tobacco, bullying, sexual behavior, safety, and more.



2015 PORTAGE COUNTY YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY



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A special thank you to Tiffany Boak, public health intern, for her dedication in compiling this report. Thank you to all of the community partners who aided in the development of the Portage County Youth Risk Behavior Survey. This report serves to further educate our community on youth behaviors.

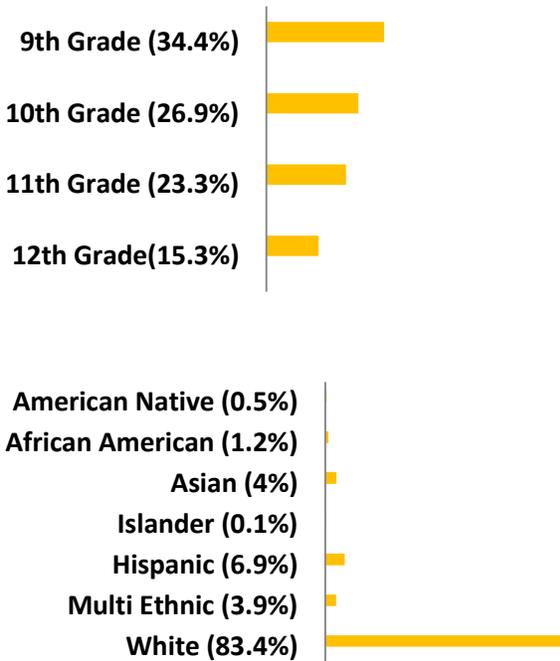
Introduction

During the summer of 2014, community partners met with representatives from the four public school districts in Portage County to discuss mental health within schools and how it impacted academic achievement. Closing the gap on academic achievement has been identified as a priority of the 2012 Portage County Local Indicators of Excellence (LIFE) Report. In order to gauge the status of mental health among local youth, data was needed to reflect youth and their behaviors. As a result, it was decided by the group to utilize the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) offered by the Wisconsin Department of Instruction. This resulted in the creation, distribution, and evaluation of the first county-wide Youth Risk Behavior Survey used by multiple Portage County school districts to gain an aggregate data set, during the 2015 school year.

The YRBS is part of national efforts made by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to monitoring health-risk behaviors of high school students. These behaviors result in causing both mortality and morbidity in an individual's youth and adulthood. The behaviors monitored by the Wisconsin YRBS include traffic safety, weapons and violence, mental health, tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behavior, diet, and nutrition and exercise.

Summary of Findings

Approximately 845 students from 4 public school districts in Portage County completed the survey.



The 2015 YRBS provides insight into the minds of the younger generations on their behaviors and attitudes about a wide variety of topics. In this report, those topics include traffic safety, weapons and violence, mental health, tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behavior, and nutrition and exercise.

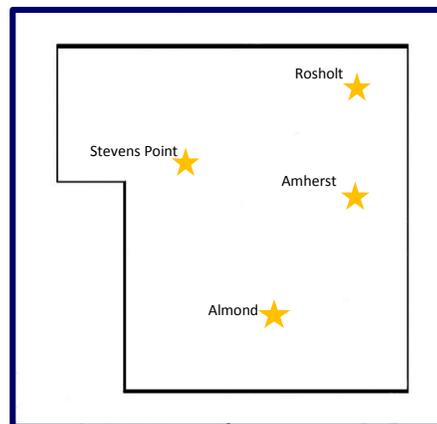
The data provided highlights the positives choices that many Portage County youth who attend area high schools are making. However, there are some concerns that need to be addressed. First off, the rate of underage drinking among Portage County youth was below the Wisconsin and United States average, yet one of four students had

an alcoholic beverage within the 30 days before the survey.

Similar to other counties throughout Wisconsin, Portage County has seen an increase in the use and selling of illegal drugs. Nearly 8% of students were offered, sold, or given illegal drugs by someone on school property in the past 12 months before the survey was distributed.

Another issue seen within Portage County students that requires attention is bullying. 28% of students reported being bullied on school property, and 20% reported being bullied online through e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, web sites, or texting. A positive that can come from this is that 72% of students felt that there was at least one teacher or adult in the school that they could talk to if they were facing a problem.

A positive in regards to the health of Portage County students, 85% of students reported that their health status was good, very good, or excellent.



Personal Safety

Mental Health

Tobacco Use

Alcohol Use

Marijuana/ Other Drug Use

Sexual Behavior

Personal Health

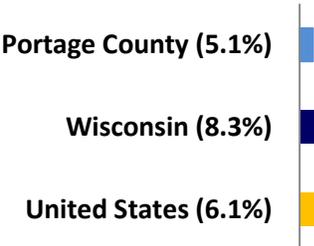
Personal Safety

The first percentage listed represents the responses of Portage County’s 845 students in 2016. The second percentage represents Wisconsin students surveyed in 2013 and the third percentage represents students surveyed in 2013 throughout the U.S. If only one percentage is listed, results from Wisconsin and the U.S. were not available for comparison.

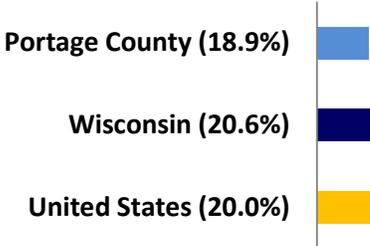
Traffic Safety

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among youth in Wisconsin. Fortunately, we have seen a significant increase in the percentage of high school students who reported wearing a seat belt and not being a passenger in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol. Unfortunately, a significant percentage of high school students reported drinking and driving, not consistently wearing a seat belt and texting while driving.

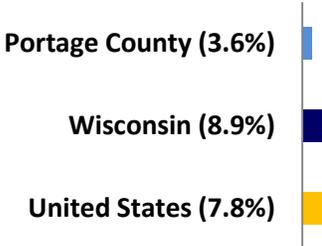
Percentage of students who never or rarely wore a seatbelt when riding in a car driven by someone else.



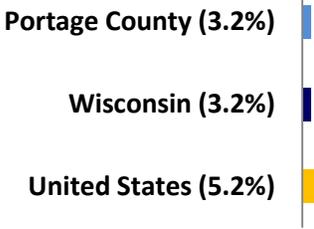
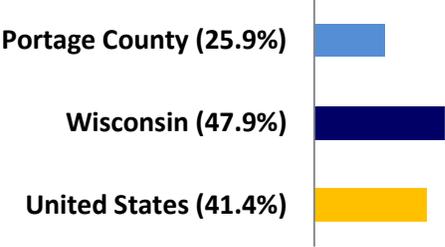
Percentage of students who rode one or more times during the 30 days before the survey in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol.



Percentage of students who drove a car or other vehicle one or more times during the 30 days before the survey when they had been drinking alcohol.



Percentage of students who texted or emailed while driving a car or other vehicle in the past 30 days.

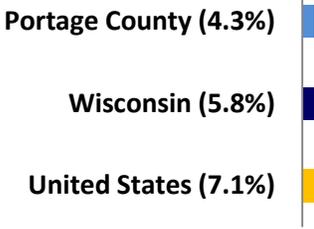
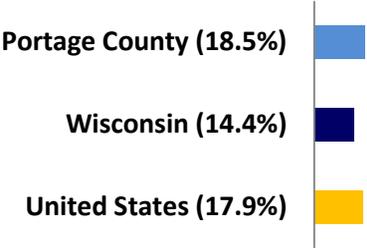


Percentage of students who did not go to school on at least one day during the 30 days before the survey because they felt they would be unsafe at school or on their way to or from school.

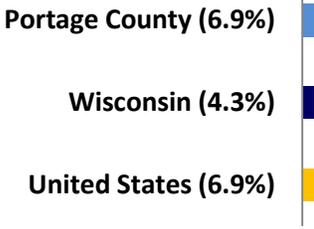
Weapons and Violence

A majority of Wisconsin high school students report feeling safe at school and the report fewer incidents of violence at school than not at school. However, a significant number of students report being harassed and bullied while at school, and violence is an issue of concern for many high school students.

Percentage of students who carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey.

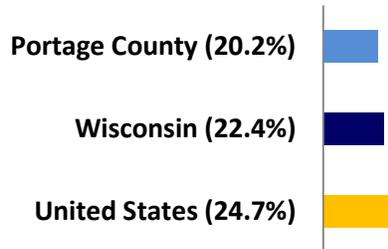


Percentage of students who were threatened or injured with a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.

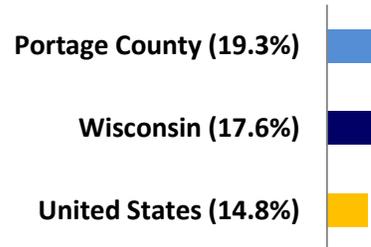


Percentage of students who carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey.

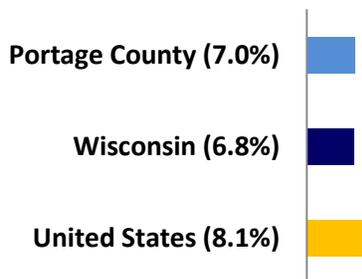
Percentage of students who were in a physical fight one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.



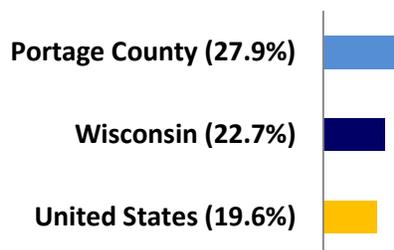
Percentage of students who had been electronically bullied, including being bullied through e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, web sites, or texting during the 12 months before the survey.



Percentage of students who were in a physical fight on school property one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.



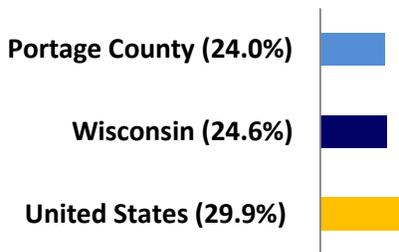
Percentage of students who were bullied on school property during the 12 months before the survey.



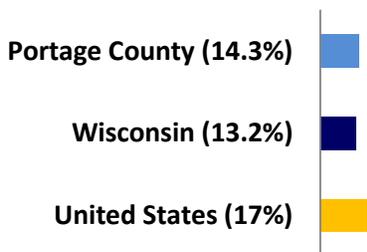
Mental Health

The youth suicide rate in Wisconsin consistently exceeds the national average. Wisconsin YRBS data indicate a downward trend in the percentage of students who reported feeling sad or hopeless and those seriously considering suicide.

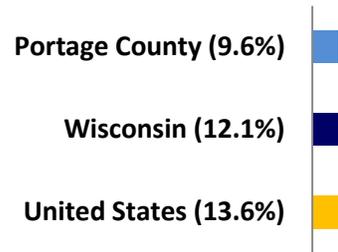
Percentage of students who felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities during the 12 months before the survey.



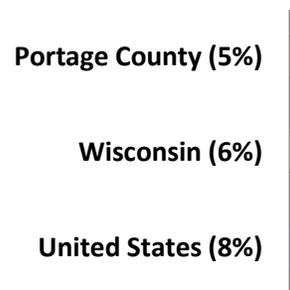
Percentage of students who seriously considered attempting suicide during the 12 months before the survey.



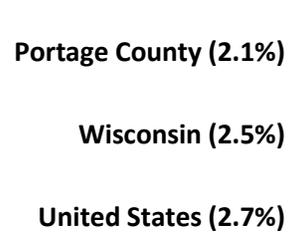
Percentage of students who made a plan about how they would attempt suicide during the 12 months before the survey.



Percentage of students who attempted suicide one or more times during the 12 months before the survey.



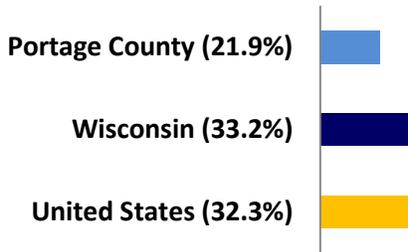
Percentage of students who made a suicide attempt that resulted in an injury, poisoning, or an overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse during the 12 months before the survey.



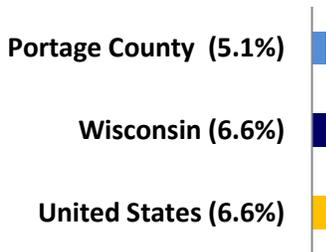
Tobacco Use

The trend of decreasing cigarette and other tobacco use among Wisconsin high school students now stretches over a decade. Since 1993, Wisconsin has seen a significant decrease on most measures of tobacco use on the YRBS.

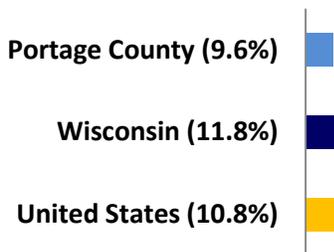
Percentage of students who ever tried cigarette smoking, even one or two puffs.



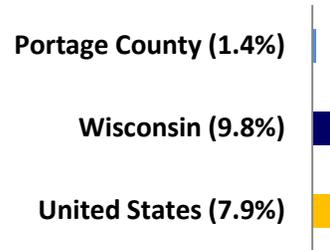
Percentage of students who smoked a whole cigarette for the first time before age 13 years.



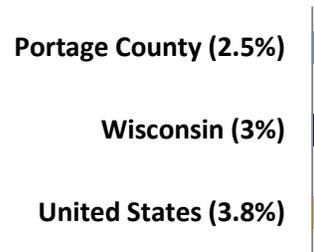
Percentage of students who smoked cigarettes on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey.



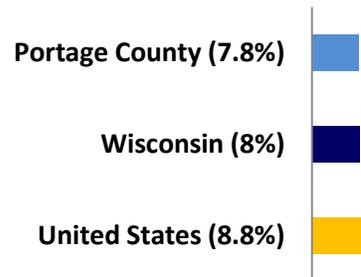
Among students who reported current cigarette use, the percentage who smoked more than 10 cigarettes per day on the days they smoked.



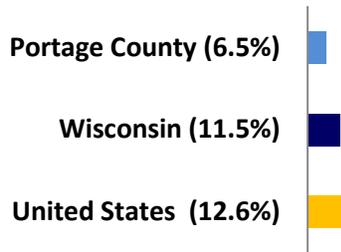
Percentage of students who smoked cigarettes on school property on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey.



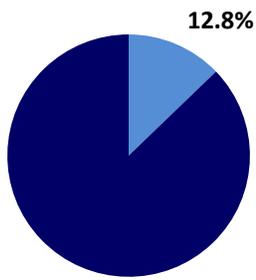
Percentage of students who used chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip on at least 1 days during the 30 days before the survey.



Percentage of students who smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey.



Percentage of students who reported using electronic cigarettes or e-cigs on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey.



Students were also questioned on the methods they used to receive their cigarettes. **2.5%** reported buying them in a store such as a convenience store or supermarket. **0.6%** reported buying them from a vending machine. **2.0%** reported that they gave money to someone else to buy them, while **1.9%** reported borrowing them from someone else. **1.3%** reported being given cigarettes by an individual that was 18 years or older. **0.5%** reported that they took cigarettes from a store or family member, while **1.7%** reported obtaining cigarettes some other way that was not mentioned.

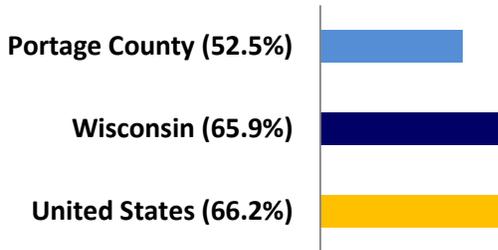
Tobacco Use



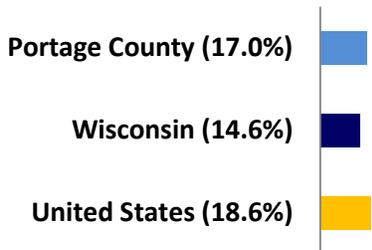
Alcohol Use

In 2013, a large percentage of Wisconsin high school students reported drinking alcohol. In Portage County, alcohol remains the primary substance of choice for youth.

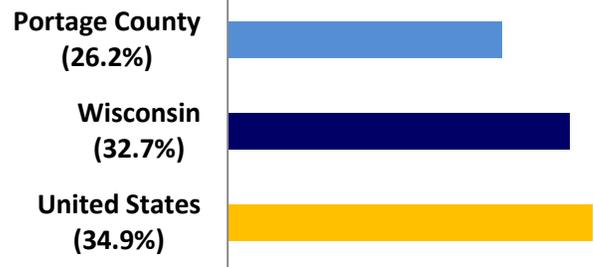
Percentage of students who had at least one drink of alcohol on at least 1 day during their life.



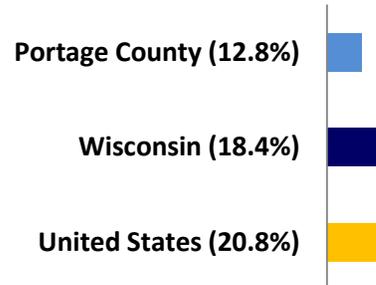
Percentage of students who drank alcohol (other than a few sips) for the first time before age 13 years.



Percentage of students who had at least one drink of alcohol on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey.



Percentage of students who had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours, on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey.

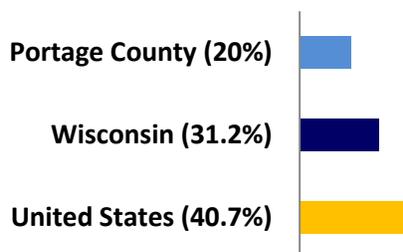


Marijuana Use

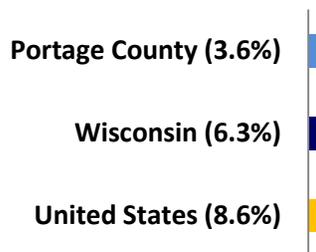


The 2016 YRBS indicates the marijuana usage rates by Portage County youth are lower than both the Wisconsin and national average. While legalization of marijuana has not been address in Wisconsin at the moment, other states continue to legalize marijuana for recreational and medicinal use. Usage rates are anticipated to increase in coming years with a decrease in the perceived risk.

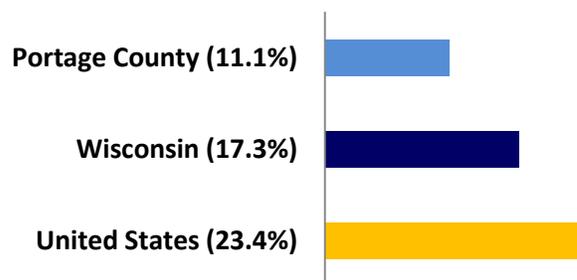
Percentage of students who used marijuana one or more times during their life.



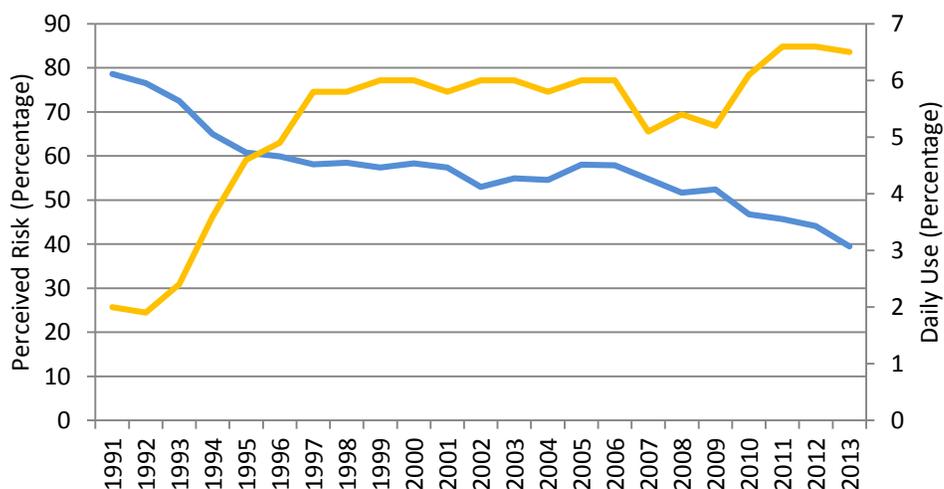
Percentage of students who tried marijuana for the first time before age 13 years.



Percentage of students who used marijuana one or more times during the 30 days before the survey.



Percentage of U.S. 12th Graders Reporting Daily Marijuana Use vs. Perceived Risk of Regular Marijuana Use



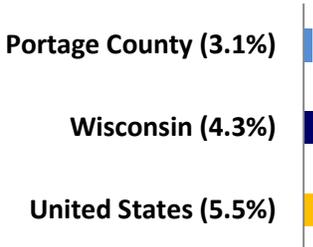
Source: The Monitoring the Future Study, the University of Michigan

Alcohol Use

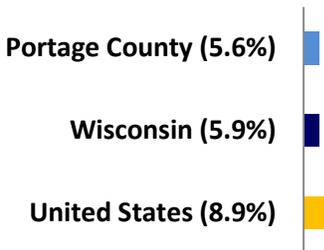
Marijuana/ Other Drug Use

Other Drug Use

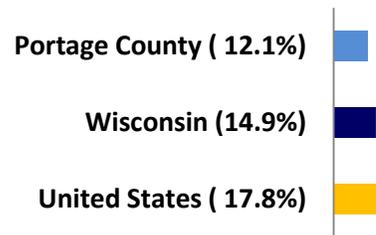
Percentage of students who used any form of cocaine, including powder, crack, or freebase one or more times during their life.



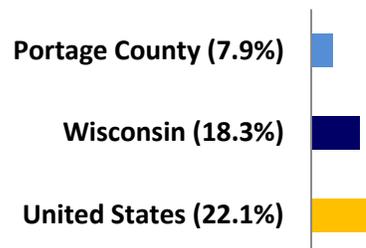
Percentage of students who sniffed glue, breathed the contents of aerosol spray cans, or inhaled any paints or sprays to get high one or more times during their life.



Percentage of students who had taken prescription drugs (e.g., Oxycontin, Percocet, Vicodin, codeine, Adderall, Ritalin, or Xanax) without a doctor's prescription one or more times during their life (i.e., ever took prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription).



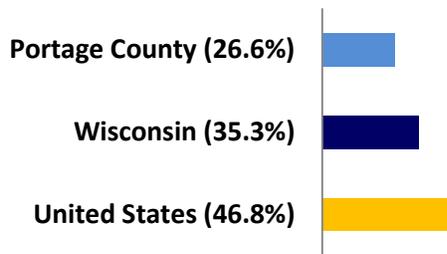
Percentage of students who were offered, sold, or given an illegal drug by someone on school property during the last 12 months before the survey.



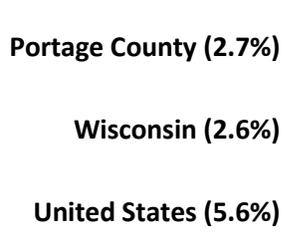
Sexual Behavior

Many of the risky sexual behaviors reported by high school students on the YRBS have decreased significantly since 1993. However, there has been a significant percentage of students who are still engaging in risky sexual behaviors and putting themselves at risk for negative health outcomes.

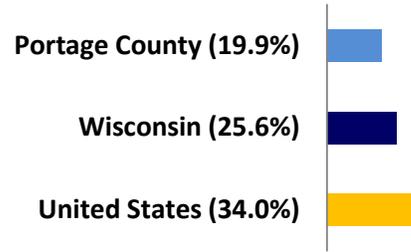
Percentage of students who ever had sexual intercourse.



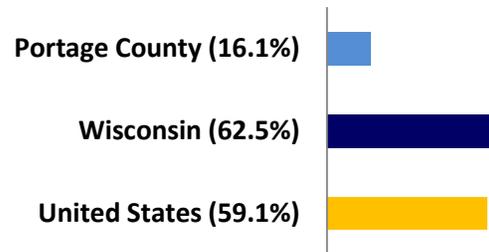
Percentage of students who had sexual intercourse for the first time before age 13 years.



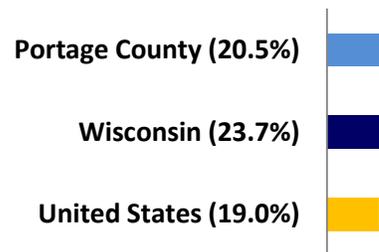
Percentage of students who had sexual intercourse with at least one person during the 3 months before the survey.



Among students who were currently sexually active, the percentage who reported that either they or their partner had used a condom during last sexual intercourse.



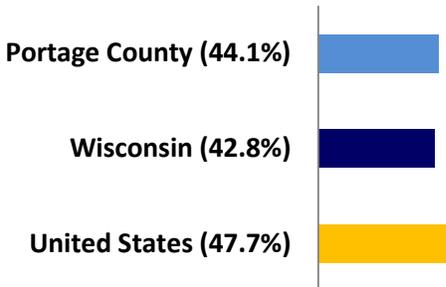
Among students who were currently sexually active, the percentage who reported that either they or their partner had used birth control pills to prevent pregnancy before last sexual intercourse.



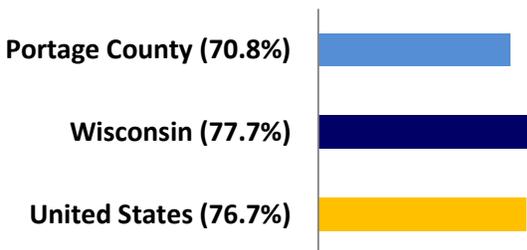
Personal Health

Overall, Wisconsin high school students report inadequate levels of physical activity, consumption of breakfast, and fruits and vegetables. The percent of overweight and obese high school students, as measured on the YRBS, has not changed since 1999.

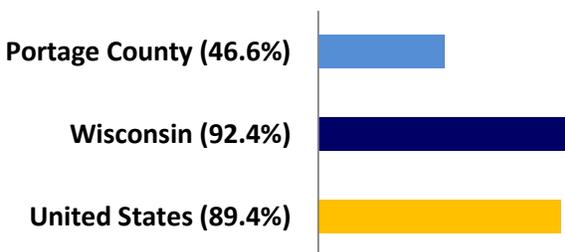
Percentage of students who were trying to lose weight.



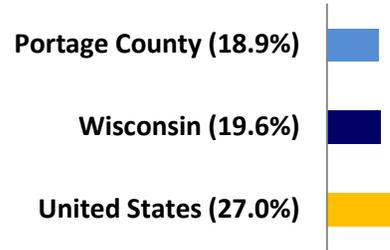
Percentage of students who drank 100% fruit juices one or more times during the seven days before the survey.



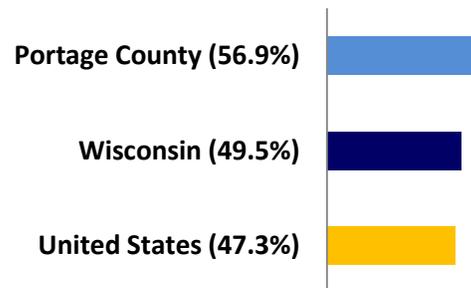
Percentage of students who ate fruit one or more times during the seven days before the survey.



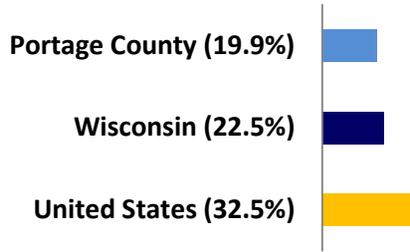
Percentage of students who drank a can, bottle, or glass of soda or pop (not including diet soda or diet pop) at least 1 time per day during the seven days before the survey.



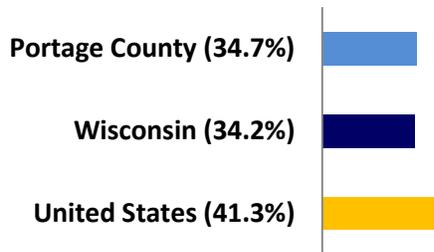
Percentage of students who were physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes per day on five or more of the 7 days before the survey.



Percentage of students who watched television 3 or more hours per day on an average school day.

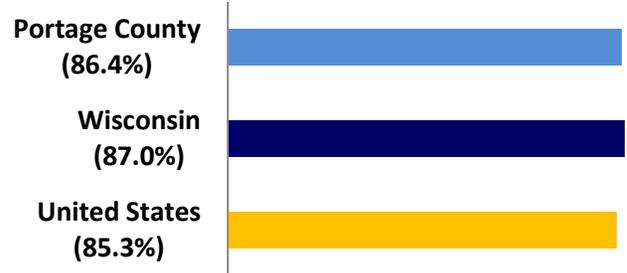


Percentage of students who played video or computer games or used a computer for something that was not school work 3 or more hours per day on an average school day.

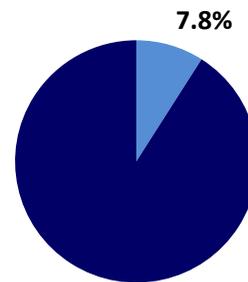


Other Health Issues

Percentage of students who had ever been taught in school about AIDS or HIV infection.



Percentage of students who are receiving special education services as part of an individual plan or IEP.



What can we do as a community to support young individuals?

When it comes to supporting the youth of the community, it's best to look at research to know the steps to take. According to The Search Institute, there are over 40 key developmental assets that help young individuals grow. The most important out of all of these is providing high levels of love and support from family members, especially the parents. This includes positive family communications, parental involvement, and set behavior guidelines.

Along with family support, youth need a caring neighborhood and school climate. In both the neighborhood and school setting, the youth will have the opportunity to build relationships with other adults. This could include neighbors, coaches, and teachers. Once the youth feel more secure in these areas, they will have the confidence to strive for greater goals.

In order for the youth to be supported by the community, the community needs to come together and use their available resources. Continued use and expansion of these resources will result in lasting support for the youth of Portage County.



We All Have a Role to Play.

- Read this report.
- Lead by example.
- Be a role model for others.
- Spend quality time with family and friends.
- Get involved.
- Attend community functions.
- Talk to others. Listen to others. Connect with others.





About Healthy People Portage County

Healthy People Portage County began in 1999 as a community wide initiative with the goal of establishing an ongoing process for identifying and addressing health needs in Portage County.

The intent of Healthy People Portage County's Community Health Improvement Plan is to foster successful partnerships in order to improve the health of our community. Portage County Health and Human Services serves as a community partner in the development of the Portage County Local Indicators For Excellence (LIFE) Report, which not only serves as a community health assessment but also identifies local indicators of excellence that are supported by local data and community input. The Portage County LIFE Report is completed every 5 years with the last report being completed in 2012.

Currently Healthy People Portage County is addressing three health priorities:

1. Alcohol and Other Substance Abuse Use and Addiction
2. Mental Health and Mental Disorders
3. Overweight, Obesity and Lack of Physical Activity

