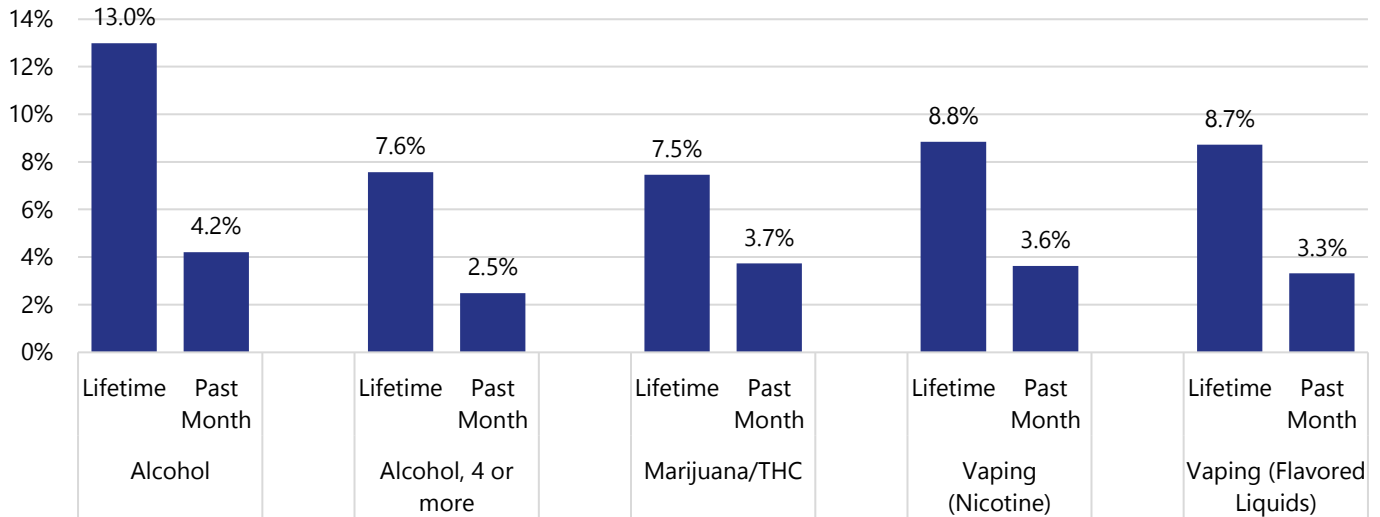


In the fall semester of 2022, students attending Norwalk Public Schools in grades 7-12 participated in the Youth Voices Count Survey on youth lifestyles, substance use, mental health, related risk and protective factors. The overall response rate was 68.7%.

## Alcohol remains the most used substance in youths' lifetimes.

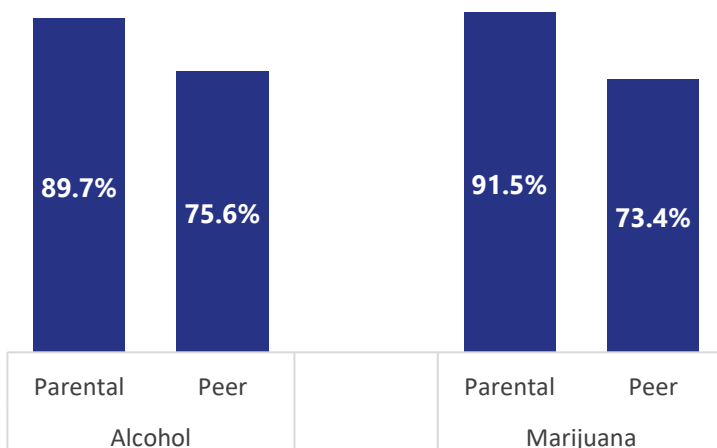


Norwalk youth who have used **any substance in their lifetime** are more likely to have increased behavioral health concerns including: thoughts about self-harm and self-harm behaviors, feeling sad or hopeless two or more weeks in a row, have considered suicide, and feel less comfortable seeking help from a parent/guardian.

## Risk Factors

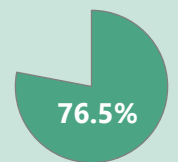
Research shows that parents and peers are the leading influence on youths' decisions on whether to use substances or not. Below shows the percentage of youth reporting their parents or friends feel it is moderately or greatly wrong to use alcohol or marijuana.

### Perceived Disapproval

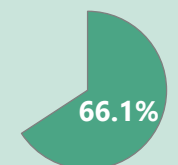


The percentage of Norwalk youth reporting moderate or great risk of harm from:

**BINGE DRINKING**



**MARIJUANA/THC**



## Access

Ease of access to substances has been shown to have a significant relationship with youth substance use. The figure below reflects the percentage of youth reporting it is very or sort of hard to access substances.

### Ease of Access – Percentage of Youth Reporting Very/Sort of Hard



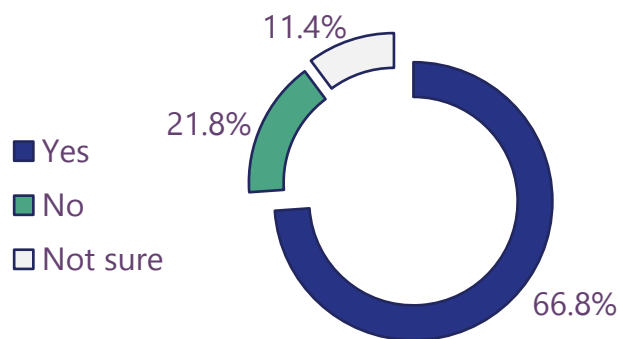
Norwalk youth reported accessing **alcohol** most frequently from:

- home with parents' permission
- home without parents' permission
- friends/peers

**Marijuana** was most frequently acquired from:

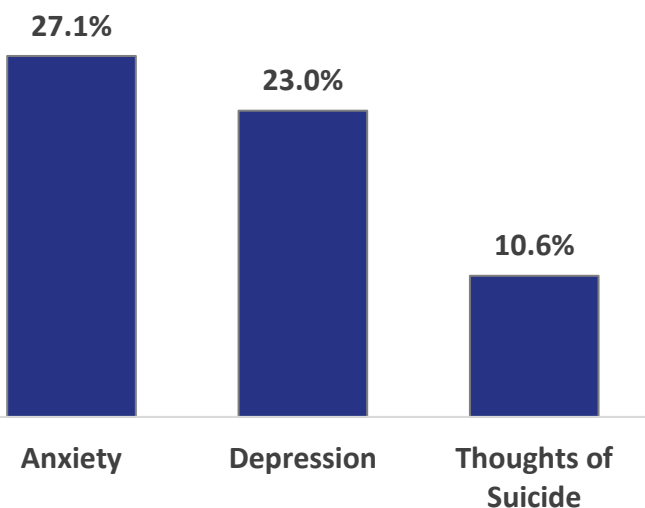
- friends/peers
- home without parents' permission
- home with parents' permission

### Perception of Clear Family Rules around Underage Drinking



66.8% of Norwalk youth (grades 7-12) report clear family rules around alcohol use, compared to 74.7% around marijuana, and 76.5% around vaping.

## Mental Health in the Past Year



27.1% of Norwalk youth reported having anxiety in the past year "always" or "almost always." Most frequent sources of stress and anxiety included academics, post-high school plans, and schedule.

23.0% of youth reported feeling sad or hopeless so much that it stopped them from doing usual activities 2 or more weeks in a row. 10.6% reported having considered suicide in the past year.