



2025 SNAPSHOT OF YOUTH HEALTH IN SPRINGFIELD

This infographic summarizes selected findings from the 2025 Springfield Prevention Needs Assessment Survey. Results reflect responses from participating students and may not represent all Springfield youth. Check out the full results and past surveys at qrco.de/SYHS.

Who Took The Survey?

Total survey takers

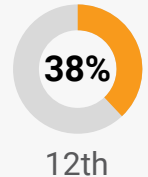
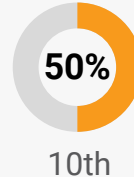
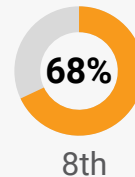
2,613

Grades surveyed

8, 10, 12

Percent of students reached

51% overall



LGBTQ+ identity



30% LGBTQ+

Gender identity

50%

Cisgender male

47%

Cisgender female

3%

Gender expansive*

* "Gender expansive" refers to students identifying as transgender, nonbinary, genderqueer, and other non-cisgender identities.

Race/ethnicity

93% identified as people of color, including Black, Latine, and more identities

92% per DESE enrollment data

Factors That Can Help Young People Thrive

Strong relationships, positive school experiences, and healthy self-esteem provide the foundation for youth well-being and resilience. The majority of youth who responded noted positive experiences at school.

Experiences at school

79%

Teachers **notice** when I am doing a good job & let me know about it

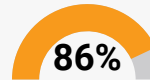
75%

I feel **safe** at my school

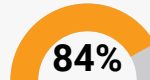
86%

There are lots of **chances to get involved** in sports & clubs

Trusted adults



reported an adult in their life who they **feel very close to**



reported an adult in their life they **could ask for help** if they had a problem

Self esteem

69% reported **feeling satisfied with themselves**, and **77%** reported that they **feel they have a number of good qualities**

Mental Health

Many factors can influence young people's mental health, including the supports they have and the challenges they experience.

Mental health

47% reported feeling **depressed or sad** most days in the past year

54% reported feeling **anxious or worried** most days in the past year



Loneliness

28% reported feeling **lonely often or almost all the time**.

This is reflected in [local](#) and [national](#) data that indicates rising social isolation among young people.



Factors That Can Put Young People at Risk

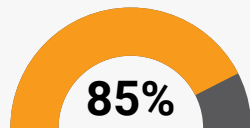
Just as some factors can help young people thrive, others, such as substance use and gambling, can increase the likelihood of health and well-being challenges. These behaviors can both contribute to and result from mental health struggles and other challenges in young people's lives.

Gambling

Gambling advertising is pervasive, with **62%** of students reporting they saw gambling ads in the past year. Students most commonly encountered gambling ads through:

- social media (57%)
- TV (55%)
- sports event (47%)
- video games (46%)

"Don't know" responses were omitted from these calculations



of students reported that seeing a gambling ad had **never** prompted them to spend money on gambling when they had not already planned to do so.

Access to gambling



7% of students have used a parent or guardian's account to access gambling websites or apps, with or without permission

Substance use



20%
ever had alcohol



17%
ever vaped



16%
ever used marijuana

The **most common reasons** for use varied by substance:

- Alcohol: for fun (29%)
- Vaping: curiosity (24%)
- Marijuana: to help with depression or another mental health issue (33%)

The **most common location** for alcohol use (56%) and marijuana use (65%) was **someone else's home without parent or guardian permission.**

Among students who had ever used the substance:

47% used marijuana **3+ times in the past month**

43% vaped **3+ times in the past month**



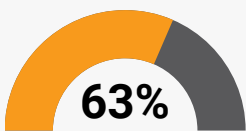
35% of students who have ever tried alcohol reported **binge drinking** in the past two weeks

Here, binge drinking is defined as 5 or more drinks in a row.

Emerging Influences

Emerging technologies and trends can affect young people in different ways, creating both benefits and risks.

AI use



of students reported using an AI tool in the past month

Apps that act like **virtual friends** 20%

Apps that create **images or music** 21%

Learning apps or games 26%

Apps that **answer questions or write text** 52%

Get Involved

- Check out the [Stop Access Coalition](#) and the [Youth Mental Health Coalition](#)
- Stay tuned for our **Youth Health Data Hub of Western Massachusetts**, coming this fall. Sign up for PHIWM's newsletter at qrco.de/PHIWMnews to receive updates.

