PACIFIC INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Addison County Parent Survey on Youth Substance Use

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

August 2026

Prepared by: Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation

Acknowledgments

The 2026 Addison County Parent Survey on Youth Substance Use was conducted, and this report was prepared, for the United Way of Addison County (UWAC), by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE). Funding was provided by UWAC's Drug Free Communities grant from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The time and willingness of Addison County parents and caregivers to participate in the survey is gratefully acknowledged.

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Background and Methods

Purpose of this report…

The Addison County Parent Survey on Youth Substance Use was conducted in order to provide data that can help inform and improve substance misuse prevention programs for Addison County youth and families. These data are also used to support the evaluation of the United Way of Addison County's Drug Free Communities grants.

Survey methods…

The 2026 survey, which was accessed and completed online, was open for the months of March and April. Parents and caregivers of students in grades 6 through 12 in Addison County were eligible to participate. The survey link was shared and promoted through school newsletters and the newsletter of the Addison County Substance Use and Prevention Coalition, and was promoted at school events. As an incentive to participate, respondents had the option of being directed at the end of the survey to a separate web page where they could enter a random drawing for one of three $100 gift certificates to local restaurants.

What's included in this report…

The items in the tables are ordered as they were ordered in the survey itself. The values in the tables are the percent of parents reporting each response listed. For some items where it may be relevant, these values are reported by grade level of the "referent" child (the child that each parent or caregiver kept in mind when answering the questions). Note that the total sample includes some parents/caregivers who did not report the grade of their child. Percentages reported for questions that allow multiple response options to be selected will sum to more than 100.

Representativeness and sample size considerations…

Because a scientifically developed random sample of parents/caregivers was not possible, the survey findings do not necessarily reflect the overall parent/caregiver population of the county and should be considered only as estimates of the views of parents/caregivers in the county.

The figures provided in the tables are the raw, unweighted estimates taken directly from the survey data. The data used for the significance tests examining changes over time were, however, weighted by whether the referent child was in middle school (grades 6-8) or high school (grades 9-12), to ensure that the characteristics of the respondents match the Addison County population on these variables. Enrollment data from the Vermont Agency of Education were applied for this purpose.

Summary Tables

TABLE 1. Referent child demographics

	2026 Grade Level of Referent Child		Total
	6-8	9-12	2026
What is the age of your child?	(n=50)	(n=63)	(n=113)
10 or younger	0.0	0.0	0.9[1]
11	10.0	0.0	4.4
12	40.0	0.0	17.5
13	34.0	0.0	14.9
14	16.0	9.5	12.3
15	0.0	25.4	14.0
16	0.0	36.5	20.2
17	0.0	20.6	11.4
18	0.0	6.4	3.5
19	0.0	0.0	0.0
20	0.0	1.6	0.9
21 or older	0.0	0.0	0.0
What is the grade of your child?	(n=50)	(n=63)	(n=113)
6th	30.0	--	13.3
7th	46.0	--	20.4
8th	24.0	--	10.6
9th	--	25.4	14.2
10th	--	30.2	16.8
11th	--	19.1	10.6
12th	--	25.4	14.2

[1] In some instances, the overall percentage is greater for the combined group than for either of the individual school-level groups. This is because two respondents did not indicate their child's grade, so they're not included in the MS or HS estimates, but they are included in the overall estimates.

TABLE 2. Frequency of talking with child about dangers of using substances

	2026 Grade Level of Referent Child		Total
	6-8	9-12	2026
Using alcohol?	(n=50)	(n=63)	(n=115)
0 times	10.0	6.4	8.6
1 to 2 times	34.0	20.6	25.6
A few times	34.0	36.5	35.0
Many times	22.0	36.5	30.8
Using marijuana or cannabis?	(n=50)	(n=63)	(n=115)
0 times	20.0	9.5	14.5
1 to 2 times	32.0	28.6	29.1
A few times	24.0	34.9	29.9
Many times	24.0	27.0	26.5
Using smokeless tobacco or nicotine products such as chewing tobacco, snuff, dip, snus, dissolvable tobacco products, or nicotine pouches	(n=50)	(n=63)	(n=115)
0 times	24.0	14.3	18.8
1 to 2 times	26.0	27.0	25.6
A few times	30.0	31.8	30.8
Many times	20.0	27.0	24.8
Using prescription drugs that are not prescribed to them or using them in ways other than prescribed by their doctor?	(n=50)	(n=63)	(n=115)
0 times	44.0	31.8	36.8
1 to 2 times	26.0	30.2	28.2
A few times	12.0	25.4	19.7
Many times	18.0	12.7	15.4
Using e-cigarettes or electronic vaping devices?	(n=49)	(n=63)	(n=114)
0 times	22.5	17.5	19.8
1 to 2 times	22.5	23.8	22.4
A few times	28.6	30.2	29.3
Many times	26.5	28.6	28.5
Driving after drinking alcohol or riding in vehicle driven by someone who has been drinking	(n=50)	(n=63)	(n=115)
0 times	32.0	11.1	20.5
1 to 2 times	22.0	19.1	20.5
A few times	26.0	23.8	23.9
Many times	20.0	46.0	35.0
Driving after using marijuana/cannabis or riding in a vehicle driven by someone who has been using marijuana/cannabis?	(n=50)	(n=63)	(n=115)
0 times	50.0	25.4	35.9
1 to 2 times	14.0	20.6	18.0
A few times	20.0	23.8	21.4
Many times	16.0	30.2	24.8

TABLE 3. Perceptions regarding acceptability of teen substance use

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements	2026 Grade Level of Referent Child		Total
	6-8	9-12	2026
It's okay for teens to drink alcoholic beverages occasionally.	(n=50)	(n=61)	(n=113)
Agree or strongly agree	6.0	8.3	7.9
Disagree or strongly disagree	92.0	90.0	89.5
Don't know	2.0	1.7	2.6
It's okay for teens to smoke cigarettes occasionally.	(n=50)	(n=61)	(n=113)
Agree or strongly agree	0.0	0.0	0.9
Disagree or strongly disagree	100.0	100.0	99.1
Don't know	0.0	0.0	0.0
It's okay for teens to use electronic vaping devices like e-cigarettes, Juuls, vape pens, etc. occasionally.	(n=50)	(n=61)	(n=113)
Agree or strongly agree	0.0	0.0	0.9
Disagree or strongly disagree	100.0	100.0	98.3
Don't know	0.0	0.0	0.9
Allowing youth to drink at home is a way of preventing dangerous behavior (like drinking and driving).	(n=50)	(n=61)	(n=113)
Agree or strongly agree	4.0	14.8	10.4
Disagree or strongly disagree	88.0	83.6	85.2
Don't know	8.0	1.6	4.4
Using marijuana/cannabis occasionally is okay for youth under 21 to do as long as it does not interfere with daily activities.	(n=50)	(n=61)	(n=113)
Agree or strongly agree	6.0	8.2	7.8
Disagree or strongly disagree	94.0	91.8	92.2
Don't know	0.0	0.0	0.0
How wrong do you feel it would be for your child to…			
Drink alcohol?	(n=49)	(n=62)	(n=113)
Wrong or very wrong	91.8	75.8	81.7
A little bit or not at all wrong	8.2	24.2	16.5
Not sure	0.0	0.0	1.7
Use marijuana/cannabis?	(n=49)	(n=61)	(n=112)
Wrong or very wrong	91.8	80.3	85.1
A little bit or not at all wrong	8.2	19.7	14.0
Not sure	0.0	0.0	0.9
Use e-cigarettes or electronic vaping devices?	(n=49)	(n=60)	(n=111)
Wrong or very wrong	95.9	96.7	94.7
A little bit or not at all wrong	4.1	3.3	3.5
Not sure	0.0	0.0	1.8

TABLE 4. Perceived risk to teens from using substances

How much do teens risk harming themselves physically and in other ways if they…	2026 Grade Level of Referent Child		Total
	6-8	9-12	2026
Drink alcohol occasionally	(n=49)	(n=62)	(n=113)
No risk or slight risk	10.2	11.3	11.3
Moderate or great risk	89.8	88.7	88.7
Use marijuana or cannabis once or twice a week?	(n=49)	(n=62)	(n=113)
No risk or slight risk	14.3	8.1	11.3
Moderate or great risk	85.7	91.9	88.7
Use e-cigarettes or electronic vaping devices nearly every day?	(n=49)	(n=62)	(n=113)
No risk or slight risk	6.1	3.2	4.4
Moderate or great risk	93.9	96.8	95.7

TABLE 5. Ease of access to substances kept in the home

How likely is it that your child would be able to access the following substances in your home without your knowledge…	2026 Grade Level of Referent Child		Total
	6-8	9-12	2026
Alcohol	(n=49)	(n=61)	(n=112)
Somewhat or very likely	32.7	37.7	36.0
Not very or not at all likely	38.8	47.5	43.9
Not applicable (alcohol is not kept in our home)	28.6	14.8	20.2
Marijuana or cannabis (in any form including plants, edibles, waxes, concentrates, etc.)	(n=49)	(n=61)	(n=112)
Somewhat or very likely	10.2	14.8	13.2
Not very or not at all likely	28.6	26.2	28.1
Not applicable (marijuana/cannabis is not kept in our home)	61.2	59.0	58.8
E-cigarettes or other electronic vaping devices	(n=49)	(n=61)	(n=112)
Somewhat or very likely	2.0	6.6	4.4
Not very or not at all likely	10.2	21.3	16.7
Not applicable (e-cigarettes or EVPs are not kept in our home)	87.8	72.1	79.0
Prescription medications	(n=49)	(n=61)	(n=112)
Somewhat or very likely	12.2	24.6	20.2
Not very or not at all likely	59.2	59.0	58.8
Not applicable (prescription medications are not kept in our home)	28.6	16.4	21.1
Smokeless tobacco or nicotine products such as chewing tobacco, snuff, dip, snus, dissolvable tobacco products, or nicotine pouches	(n=49)	(n=61)	(n=112)
Somewhat or very likely	0.0	3.3	3.5
Not very or not at all likely	8.2	26.2	17.5
Not applicable (smokeless tobacco is not kept in our home)	91.8	70.5	79.0

TABLE 6. Parent perceptions of substances used by their child and other children

Which, if any, of these substances do you know or suspect that your child has used in the past 30 days?[2]	2026 Grade Level of Referent Child		Total
	6-8	9-12	2026
	(n=47)	(n=59)	(n=108)
Alcohol	0.0	11.9	7.3
Marijuana/cannabis	2.1	11.9	8.3
Tobacco	0.0	5.1	3.7
E-cigarettes or electronic vaping devices	2.1	6.8	5.5
Prescription medications (in ways other than as prescribed to them)	0.0	0.0	0.9
Smokeless tobacco or nicotine products such as chewing tobacco, snuff, dip, snus, dissolvable tobacco products, or nicotine pouches*	0.0	5.1	3.7
Other substances (specify)	0.0	0.0	0.0
I don't think my child has used any substances	95.7	79.7	86.2
What percentage of youth in your child's school do you think have done the following behaviors in the last 30 days?			
Smoked cigarettes			
More than 50%	8.5	6.7	7.3
Between 25% and 50%	21.3	33.3	27.5
Less than 25%	61.7	53.3	56.9
Don't know	8.5	6.7	8.3
Drank alcohol			
More than 50%	10.6	17.0	13.9
Between 25% and 50%	23.4	49.2	37.0
Less than 25%	51.1	25.4	37.0
Don't know	14.9	8.5	12.0
Used marijuana/cannabis			
More than 50%	10.6	13.3	11.9
Between 25% and 50%	25.5	53.3	40.4
Less than 25%	51.1	26.7	37.6
Don't know	12.8	6.7	10.1
Used electronic vaping devices			
More than 50%	14.9	25.0	20.2
Between 25% and 50%	36.2	41.7	38.5
Less than 25%	38.3	25.0	31.2
Don't know	10.6	8.3	10.1
Used smokeless tobacco or nicotine products such as chewing tobacco, snuff, dip, snus, dissolvable tobacco products, or nicotine pouches*			
More than 50%	6.4	12.1	9.4
Between 25% and 50%	17.0	27.6	22.4
Less than 25%	61.7	46.6	53.3
Don't know	14.9	13.8	15.0

[2] Because this item was check all that apply, response options may sum to more than 100%.

Used prescription medication that was not prescribed to them			
More than 50%	6.4	1.7	3.7
Between 25% and 50%	6.4	15.3	11.1
Less than 25%	70.2	61.0	64.8
Don't know	17.0	22.0	20.4

TABLE 7. Perceptions regarding third space activities and community resources

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements			
	2026 Grade Level of Referent Child		Total
	6-8	9-12	2026
Participation in extracurricular/afterschool activities is an important part of my child's healthy development.	(n=48)	(n=61)	(n=111)
Agree or strongly agree	93.8	91.8	92.0
Disagree or strongly disagree	6.3	8.2	8.0
Don't know	0.0	0.0	0.0
There are places in my community where I can learn more about how to help prevent my child from using alcohol and drugs.	(n=48)	(n=61)	(n=111)
Agree or strongly agree	75.0	85.3	80.5
Disagree or strongly disagree	12.5	11.5	11.5
Don't know	12.5	3.3	8.0

TABLE 8. Confidence in ability to talk with child about substance use

How confident are you in being able to talk effectively with your child about alcohol, cannabis, vaping and other drugs?			
	2026 Grade Level of Referent Child		Total
	6-8	9-12	2026
	(n=48)	(n=61)	(n=111)
Somewhat or very confident	97.9	96.7	96.5
Not very or not at all confident	2.1	3.3	2.7
Undecided or don't know	0.0	0.0	0.9

TABLE 9. Aspects of talking with child

Which of the following topics and specific aspects of talking to your child about alcohol, marijuana/cannabis, vaping and other drugs, if any, would you like to have more information and guidance?[3]	2026 Grade Level of Referent Child		Total
	6-8	9-12	2026
	(n=48)	(n=60)	(n=110)
How and when to start these conversations	20.8	8.3	13.4
Facts about the risks of using various substances	33.3	25.0	29.5
How to answer questions about your own past (or current) substance use	18.8	18.3	18.8
How to get your child to open up and share	43.8	30.0	34.8
Knowing how to get help for your child – or another young person – if they are having problems with alcohol, vaping, marijuana (cannabis), or other drugs.	27.1	13.3	20.5
Helping your child connect with positive role models, peers and activities	18.8	18.3	19.6
Ways I can support efforts in my community to prevent and reduce teen substance use	39.6	16.7	26.8
Helping your child deal with stress or mental health issues	54.2	36.7	44.6
Other (please describe)*	2.1	0.0	1.8
None of the above	20.8	38.3	30.4

*Other responses included: A better understanding of clear boundaries for substance use on school grounds, for example vaping during sporting events.

TABLE 10. Recreational opportunities

Which, if any, of the following have ever prevented your child from participating in extracurricular and/or afterschool activities that they were interested in? (Please check all that apply)	2026 Grade Level of Referent Child		Total Sample
	6-8	9-12	2026
	(n=48)	(n=60)	(n=110)
Challenges with transportation	25.0	13.3	19.6
Cost of participation (fees, equipment, etc.)	27.1	16.7	22.3
Time commitment	31.3	31.7	32.1
The activity they are interested in is not available in my area	27.1	23.3	24.1
Not sure what is available	0.0	5.0	2.7
Not sure how to get involved	2.1	1.7	1.8
Other (please describe)*	6.3	5.0	5.4
Not applicable/None of the above	31.3	50.0	41.1

*Other responses included: social anxiety, competitiveness, motivation, scheduling, unsupportive coaches, and concerns about having enough time to complete homework.

[3] Because respondents were able to select all that apply for this question, response options may sum to more than 100%.

TABLE 11. Information and Support Preferences

Where would you prefer to get information or support about youth substance use?[4] (new in 2026)	2026 Grade Level of Referent Child		Total Sample
	6-8	9-12	2026
	(n=45)	(n=57)	(n=104)
Friend or family member	33.3	22.8	26.4
Mental health counselor	46.7	42.2	45.3
Pediatrician	71.1	61.4	65.1
Community group (like a prevention coalition)	40.0	19.3	28.3
Recovery center	6.7	7.0	6.6
Religious leader or clergy	2.2	7.0	4.7
School nurse	55.6	29.8	39.6
School counselor or support staff	66.7	31.6	46.2
A website	31.1	31.6	32.1
Social Media	8.9	17.5	14.2
Other (please describe)*	0.0	1.8	0.9
None of the above	8.9	5.3	6.6

*Other responses included: Newsletter.

[4] Because this item was check all that apply, response options may sum to more than 100%.

TABLE 12. Absenteeism (new in 2026)

	2026 Grade Level of Referent Child		Total Sample
	6-8	9-12	2026
In the past 30 days did your child miss 2 or more whole days of school? (This does not include snow days or other days when the school was closed)	(n=48)	(n=60)	(n=110)
Yes	43.8	31.7	38.4
No	56.3	68.3	61.6
In the past 30 days, what were the reasons why your child missed school? This does not include snow days or other days when the school was closed.[5]	(n=21)	(n=19)	(n=42)
Illness (feeling physically sick), including problems with breathing or teeth	81.0	84.2	83.3
Was being bullied or mistreated at school	4.8	0.0	4.8
Mental Health	14.3	21.1	19.1
Didn't get enough sleep	9.5	21.1	16.7
Didn't feel safe at school or going to and from school	0.0	5.3	2.4
Had to take care of or help a family member or friend	0.0	5.3	2.4
Needed additional time to work on schoolwork and/or prepare for a test or class assignment	0.0	10.5	4.8
Had no transportation to school	0.0	0.0	0.0
Appointment	9.5	21.1	14.3
Family vacation	23.8	5.3	14.3
I am aware my child missed school, but I am unsure as to why.	0.0	5.3	2.4
Other (please describe) *	14.3	10.5	11.9

*Other responses included: specific medical conditions, travel for sports, and travel with friends.

[5] Because respondents were able to select up to three response options for this item, response options may sum to more than 100%.

TABLE 13. Topics of concern to parents

Feel that the following issues related to youth in their community are a big concern	2026 Grade Level of Referent Child		Total
	6-8	9-12	2026
	(n=48)	(n=60)	(n=110)
Bullying/cyberbullying	54.2	48.3	51.8
Child abuse and neglect	17.4	22.0	21.3
Stress/anxiety	71.7	76.7	74.6
Depression/suicide	57.5	48.3	52.3
Alcohol use	15.2	15.0	15.6
Marijuana/cannabis use	19.6	30.0	24.6
Smoking/vaping	45.7	40.0	40.9
Other drug use	21.7	21.7	21.8
Hunger	39.1	40.0	40.0
Lack of physical activity	37.0	30.0	32.7
Overuse of social media/screen time	80.4	80.0	79.1
Parental stress	58.7	41.7	49.1
Poverty	56.5	50.0	52.7
Racism	44.4	30.0	35.8
School violence	30.4	26.7	27.3
Teen driving/accidents	19.6	28.3	23.6
Teen sexual activity	13.0	16.7	15.5
Unsafe neighborhoods	2.2	5.0	3.6
Absenteeism (frequent, unexplained absences from school)*	17.0	15.0	17.1
Other* (N=9)	80.0	75.0	77.8

*Other responses included: Public school funding inequities, youth working to contribute financially at home, community support for LGBTQ+ youth, schools unable to offer level of support youth need, lack of discipline and accountability in schools, schools lacking health and prevention staff/classes, impact of violent student behavior on other students, school administration.

TABLE 14. Respondent demographics

	2026 Grade Level of Referent Child		Total Sample
	6-8	9-12	2026
What is your age?	(n=47)	(n=59)	(n=108)
18-24	0.0	0.0	0.0
25-34	2.1	3.4	2.8
35-44	48.9	28.8	38.0
45-54	48.9	50.9	50.0
55-64	0.0	17.0	9.3
65 or older	0.0	0.0	0.0
What is your gender?	(n=42)	(n=50)	(n=94)
Female	90.5	90.0	90.3
Male	9.5	10.0	9.7
Non-binary	0.0	0.0	0.0
I prefer to self-describe	0.0	0.0	0.0
How do you usually describe yourself[6]	(n=44)	(n=52)	(n=98)
Native American or Alaska Native	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asian	0.0	0.0	0.0
Black or African American	0.0	0.0	1.0
Hispanic or Latino/a	0.0	0.0	0.0
Middle Eastern or North African	2.3	0.0	1.0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.0	0.0	0.0
White	97.7	96.2	95.9
I prefer not to answer	0.0	3.8	1.0

[6] Because this item was check all that apply, response options may sum to more than 100%.