

REPORT ON
THE 2009 YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY
FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 6, 7, AND 8
FOR THE
BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PREPARED BY:

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INTRODUCTION

For the third time, the Beverly Public Schools contracted with Northeast Health Resources (NHR) to carry out an overview analysis of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey which had been implemented with students in grades 6 through 8. This survey was based on one which was developed specifically for middle school students at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. The survey contains 75 questions. Students responded to questions which fall under general categories of risk behaviors including: safety, violence, suicide, tobacco use, alcohol use, illegal drug use, HIV/AIDS education, sexual behavior, dietary behavior, and physical activity.

SURVEY PROCESS

It was agreed that the Youth Risk Behavior Survey would be distributed to all students in attendance on the day of the survey from grades 6, 7, and 8. The survey was implemented on June 17, 2009. The survey was administered to all students simultaneously on that day by classroom teachers. Teachers were provided with written instructions which were read to all students before taking the survey.

Once all of the surveys were completed, they were gathered and tabulated. There were a total of 856 students who responded to the survey, 287 from grade 6 (females – 161, males – 126), 293 from grade 7 (females – 128, males – 164), and 269 from grade 8 (females – 130, males – 139). Two students did not indicate their gender and seven students did not indicate their grade.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Frequencies of responses are reported for all items in the survey and cross-tabulations are provided for three demographic characteristics: grade, gender, and grade/gender. The results of the survey, including all cross-tabulations, are presented in percentages under separate cover. Please note that the data results were tabulated in percentages, rounded to the nearest tenth of one percent and not all percentages will total exactly 100 due to rounding and no responses in some cases.

OVERVIEW OF MAJOR FINDINGS

There is much important and relevant information to be found in an analysis of the tabulations of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey as taken by students from the Beverly Public Schools. This is true when one looks at the tabulations of all students taken as a group, and is especially so when one looks at the cross-tabulations by grade and gender.

With students having responded to 75 questions, much can be said about the responses to each of those questions. However, it is not the intention here to discuss the results of each question. Rather, it is the intention of this report to highlight certain of the results and to offer comparisons by grade and gender as well as with the results from the 2007 Beverly Middle School YRBS. It is hoped that the following as well as a more detailed analysis of the results of this survey, will assist the Beverly Public Schools and their Health Advisory Committee in their on-going development of health education curriculum.

MIDDLE SCHOOL – GRADES 6, 7, 8

SAFETY

- **7.4%** of all respondents (6.3% - 2007) **report “never” or “rarely” wearing a seatbelt when riding in a car.** The incidence of students reporting never or rarely wearing a seatbelt increased each year by grade (grade 6 – 3.9%, grade 7 – 7.2%, and grade 8 – 10.4%). Males (9.7%) were more likely to never or rarely wear a seatbelt than were females (5.0%).
- **More than one respondent in five (22.8%) (21.8% - 2007) reports having ever ridden in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol.** The incidence of this experience increased each year by grade where respondents from grade 7 (20.7%) and grade 8 (38.1%) were much more likely to have had this experience than were those from grade 6 (10.1%). Female respondents (24.7%) report this experience more frequently than males (20.6%).
- **11.5%** of all respondents **report having ever met someone in person with whom they initially had contact over the internet.** The incidence of this experience increased slightly each year by grade (grade 6 – 8.0%, grade 7 – 12.3%, and grade 8 – 14.2%). There was little variation by gender (females – 10.2%, males – 12.8%).
- **One fifth (20.5%)** of all respondents **report having been threatened, humiliated, or experienced hostile behaviors from others on the internet during the past 12 months prior to the survey.** The incidence of this experience was higher among respondents from grades 7 (23.6%) and 8 (23.8%) than among those from grade 6 (14.4%). Female respondents (25.9%) report this experience more frequently than males (15.3%).

SAFETY (CONT'D)

- **15.2%** of all respondents **report having ever sent or received sexually explicit pictures or messages (also called sexting)**. The incidence of this behavior increased dramatically each year by grade (grade 6 – 4.5%, grade 7 – 11.3%, and grade 8 – 29.9%). Male respondents (17.4%) report having done so more frequently than females (12.9%).

VIOLENCE RELATED BEHAVIORS

- **5.2%** of all respondents (3.8% - 2007) **report having carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey**. Males report having done so more frequently than females.

“During the past 30 days, on how many days did you carry a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property?”

“At least once”

	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Total</u>
Grade			
6	2.5%	3.2%	2.8%
7	4.7%	8.6%	7.2%
8	2.3%	7.2%	4.9%
Total	3.1%	6.7%	5.2%

- **7.9%** of all respondents (6.8% - 2007) **report not going to school because they felt they would be unsafe at school or on the way to or from school, at least once during the thirty days prior to the survey** (grade 6 – 6.6%, grade 7 – 9.2%, grade 8 – 7.8%). Female respondents (8.8%) report doing so slightly more frequently than males (6.9%).
- **Nearly one-half (47.0%)** of all respondents (49.1% - 2007) **report having been bullied at school at least once during the 12 months prior to the survey**. In a reversal from the 2007 results, the incidence of being bullied was lowest among respondents from grade 6 (grade 6 – 43.6%, grade 7 – 48.3%, grade 8 – 50.0%). Females (50.6%) report being bullied more frequently than males (43.6%).
- At the exact same rate as in 2007, **13.0%** of all respondents **report having hurt or injured themselves on purpose (for example cutting, burning or bruising) at least once during the 12 months prior to the survey**. The incidence of this behavior increased each year by grade (grade 6 – 8.7%, grade 7 – 11.3%, grade 8 – 19.3%) and females (16.4%) report such self-injury more frequently than males (9.5%).

SUICIDE

- **13.1%** of all respondents (10.5% - 2007) **report having seriously thought about committing suicide during the 12 months prior to the survey** and **5.6%** (4.9% - 2007) **report having made a plan to do so**. The incidence of students reporting having seriously considered suicide increased each year by grade (grade 6 – 7.3%, grade 7 – 13.1%, and grade 8 – 19.8%). Females (17.5%) were more likely to have seriously considered suicide than were males (9.0%).
- **3.9%** of all respondents (3.6% - 2007) **report having actually tried to commit suicide during the previous 12 months**. The incidence of this behavior increased very slightly each year by grade and was higher among females, especially those in grades 7 and 8.

“During the past 12 months, did you actually try to kill yourself?”

“Yes”

Grade	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Total</u>
6	2.5%	3.2%	2.8%
7	7.8%	1.2%	4.1%
8	6.9%	2.2%	4.5%
Total	5.5%	2.1%	3.9%

TOBACCO USE

- **16.3%** of all respondents (15.7% - 2007) **report having ever tried cigarette smoking** (even one or two puffs) and **5.0%** of all respondents **report having smoked a whole cigarette for the first time before the age of 12**. The incidence of those having ever tried cigarette smoking was much higher for respondents in grade 7 (15.4%) and grade 8 (24.6%) than for respondents in grade 6 (8.7%) (females – 14.5%, males – 17.6%).
- **5.0%** of all respondents (5.4% - 2007) **report having smoked cigarettes on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey**. This recent cigarette use increased each year by grade and there was very little variation by gender.

“During the past 30 days, on how many days did you smoke cigarettes?”

“At least once”

	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Total</u>
Grade			
6	1.2%	1.6%	1.4%
7	3.9%	4.9%	4.5%
8	8.5%	9.4%	8.9%
Total	4.3%	5.6%	5.0%

- **5.2%** among all respondents (3.7% - 2007) **report having smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey**. The incidence of this behavior increased each year by grade (grade 6 – 1.8%, grade 7 – 4.5%, grade 8 – 8.4%). Males (8.0%) report doing so much more frequently than females (2.2%).

ALCOHOL USE

- **Nearly one-fourth of all respondents (23.6%) (24.3% - 2007) report having ever had a drink of alcohol, other than a few sips and other than for religious reasons.** By grade, 8th grade respondents (37.3%) were most likely to have ever done so while 6th grade respondents (10.5%) were least likely (grade 7 – 23.0%). There was little variation by gender (females – 22.4%, males – 24.4%). Further, **10.6%** of all respondents (9.9% - 2007) **report having had their first drink of alcohol before the age of 12.**
- **10.8%** of all respondents (10.4% - 2007) **report having had at least one drink of alcohol at least once during the thirty days prior to the survey.** The incidence of recent alcohol use increased each year by grade (grade 6 – 3.1%, grade 7 – 10.3%, grade 8 – 19.1%). There was very little variation by gender (females – 9.7%, males – 11.7%).

ILLEGAL DRUG USE

- **13.9%** of all respondents (7.7% - 2007) **report having ever used marijuana**. 8th grade respondents (24.9%) were much more likely to have done so than were those from grade 6 (5.3%) or grade 7 (11.9%) (females – 9.8%, males 17.8%). Further **7.1%** of all respondents (3.3% - 2007) **report having used marijuana at least once during the thirty days prior to the survey** (females – 4.0%, males 9.6%).
- **4.5%** of all respondents (3.1% - 2007) **report having ever tried any form of cocaine** (grade 6 – 2.4%, grade 7 – 4.5%, grade 8 – 6.4%). There was no variation by gender.
- **8.0%** of all respondents (8.4% - 2007) **report having ever sniffed glue, or breathed the contents of spray cans, or inhaled any paints or sprays to get high**. 8th grade respondents were most likely to have ever done so. Further, **7.4%** **report using inhalants during the previous 30 days**.

“Have you ever sniffed glue, or breathed the contents of spray cans or inhaled any paints or sprays to get high?”

“Yes”

Grade	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Total</u>
6	3.7%	6.3%	4.9%
7	8.6%	5.6%	7.3%
8	11.6%	12.2%	11.9%
Total	7.6%	7.9%	8.0%

- **5.2%** of all respondents (5.3% - 2007) **report having ever used prescription drugs that were not prescribed for them** (grade 6 – 2.4%, grade 7 – 5.2%, grade 8 – 8.2%). Females (6.7%) report doing so more frequently than males (3.7%).
- **10.3%** of all respondents (5.6% - 2007) **report having been offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property at least once during the twelve months prior to the survey**. The incidence of this experience increased each year by grade (grade 6 – 4.5%, grade 7 – 8.7%, grade 8 – 18.2%). Male respondents (11.1%) report this experience slightly more frequently than females (9.4%).

HIV/AIDS EDUCATION

- **46.1%** of all respondents (58.8% - 2007) **report having ever been taught about AIDS or HIV infection in school** (grade 6 – 15.7%, grade 7 – 29.8%, grade 8 – 94.8%). Male respondents (48.5%) report receiving this education more frequently than females (43.3%).
- **Three-fifths (61.4%)** of all respondents (60.2% - 2007) **report having not had a conversation with their parents or other adults in their family about sexuality or ways to prevent HIV infection, other STD's or pregnancy during the 12 months prior to the survey** (grade 6 – 64.9%, grade 7 – 64.3%, grade 8 – 54.9%) (females – 57.6%, males – 65.1%).

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

- **One respondent in ten (10.8%)** (10.1% - 2007) **reports having ever had sexual intercourse**. 8th grade respondents, in particular 8th grade males, were more likely to have ever done so. Further, **3.4%** **report having done so for the first time before the age of 12**.

“Have you ever had sexual intercourse?”

“Yes”

	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Total</u>
Grade			
6	5.0%	7.2%	6.0%
7	3.9%	9.4%	6.9%
8	10.2%	28.9%	19.8%
Total	6.3%	15.3%	10.8%

- **11.7%** of all respondents **report having ever had oral sex, either given or received**. The incidence of this experience was much higher among respondents from grade 8 (grade 6 – 5.3%, grade 7 – 7.0%, grade 8 – 23.8%) and higher among males (females – 9.4%, males – 13.8%).

DIETARY BEHAVIOR

- While **55.1%** of all respondents **described themselves as being at about the right weight**, **39.4%** (38.8% - 2007) **were trying to lose weight** and **12.1%** (13.6% - 2007) **were trying to gain weight**. Females from all three grades were more likely to be trying to lose weight than were males.

“Which of the following are you trying to do about your weight?”

“Trying to lose weight”

Grade	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Total</u>
6	42.9%	32.5%	38.3%
7	52.4%	29.7%	40.0%
8	53.1%	26.5%	39.4%
Total	48.9%	29.7%	39.4%

- During the previous 30 days, in order to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight:
 - **60.7%** of all respondents (64.9% - 2007) **report having exercised**. (females – 67.0%, males – 54.3%)
 - **35.9%** of all respondents (35.9% - 2007) **report having ever eaten less food, fewer calories, or foods low in fat**. (females – 47.1%, males – 24.5%)
 - **8.1%** of all respondents (7.0% - 2007) **report having ever gone without eating for 24 hours or more**. (females – 11.0%, males – 5.2%)
 - **3.1%** of all respondents (2.4% - 2007) **report having ever taken diet pills, powders, or liquids without a doctor’s advice**. (females – 3.1%, males – 3.1%)
 - **3.0%** of all respondents (2.1% - 2007) **report having vomited or taken laxatives**. (females – 3.4%, males – 2.4%)
- **30.4%** of all respondents **report eating breakfast on fewer than five days during the seven days prior to the survey**. The incidence of this behavior increased each year by grade (grade 6 – 23.7%, grade 7 – 32.2%, grade 8 – 35.4%) (females – 35.0%, males – 25.8%).

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- **72.9%** of all respondents (72.9% - 2007) **report having exercised or participated in physical activity for at least 20 minutes on at least three occasions during the seven days prior to the survey** (grade 6 – 75.5%, grade 7 – 75.0%, grade 8 – 67.2%). Male respondents (76.0%) report such regular exercise more frequently than females (69.6%).
- **One-fifth (22.3%)** of all respondents (21.6% - 2007) **report that they watch television 3 hours or more per day on an average school day.** The incidence of this behavior increased each year by grade (grade 6 – 17.5%, grade 7 – 23.0%, grade 8 – 27.3%). There was no variation by gender.
- **31.8%** of all respondents **report that on average they get seven or fewer hours of sleep each night.** The incidence of this experience was much higher in grade 8 (grade 6 – 19.1%, grade 7 – 31.9%, grade 8 – 45.9%) and was higher among female respondents (females – 36.9%, males – 26.5%).

APPENDIX

TO THE REPORT ON THE

2009 YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY

FOR THE

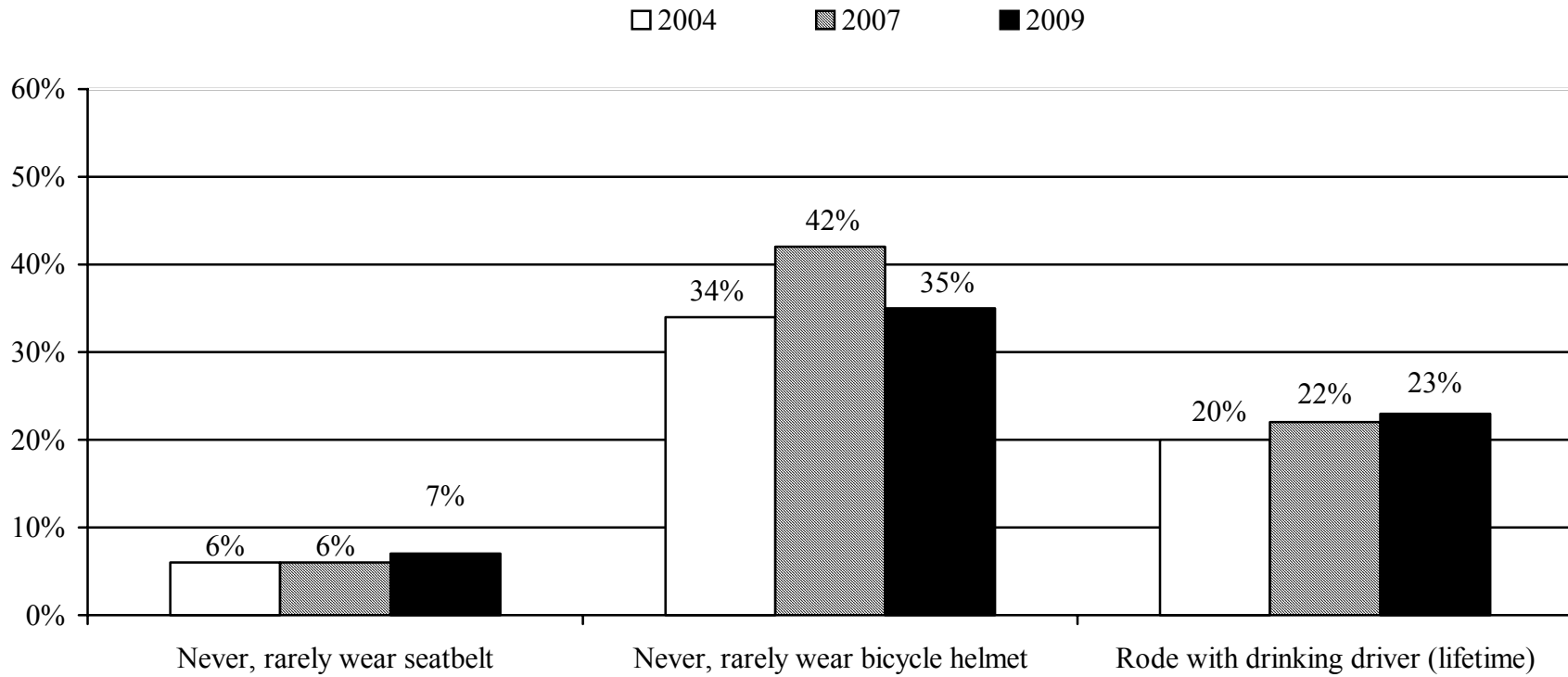
BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MIDDLE SCHOOL

(GRADES 6, 7, AND 8)

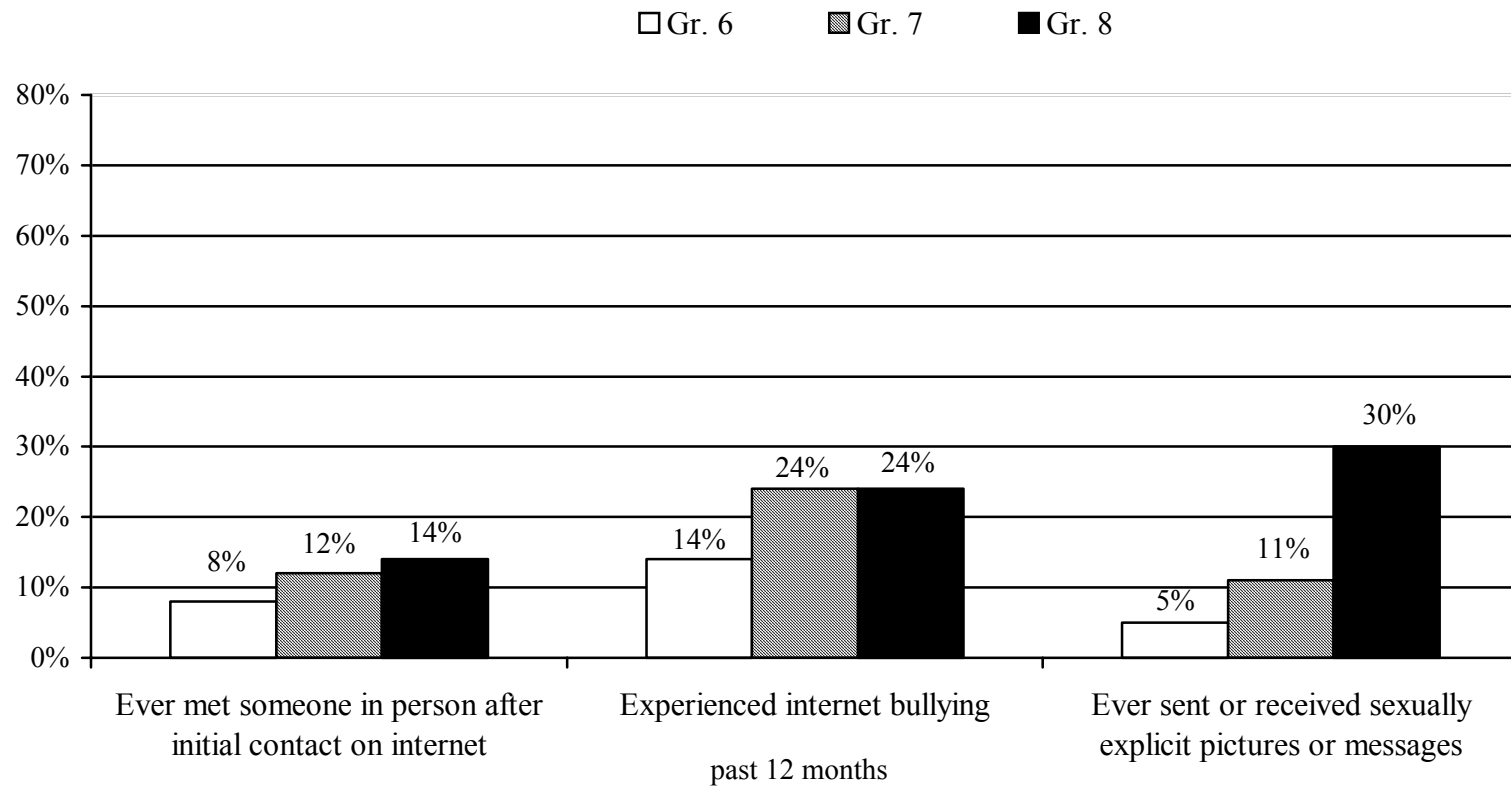
**BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2009 YRBS**

**VEHICLE RELATED SAFETY
MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6, 7, & 8 COMBINED)**



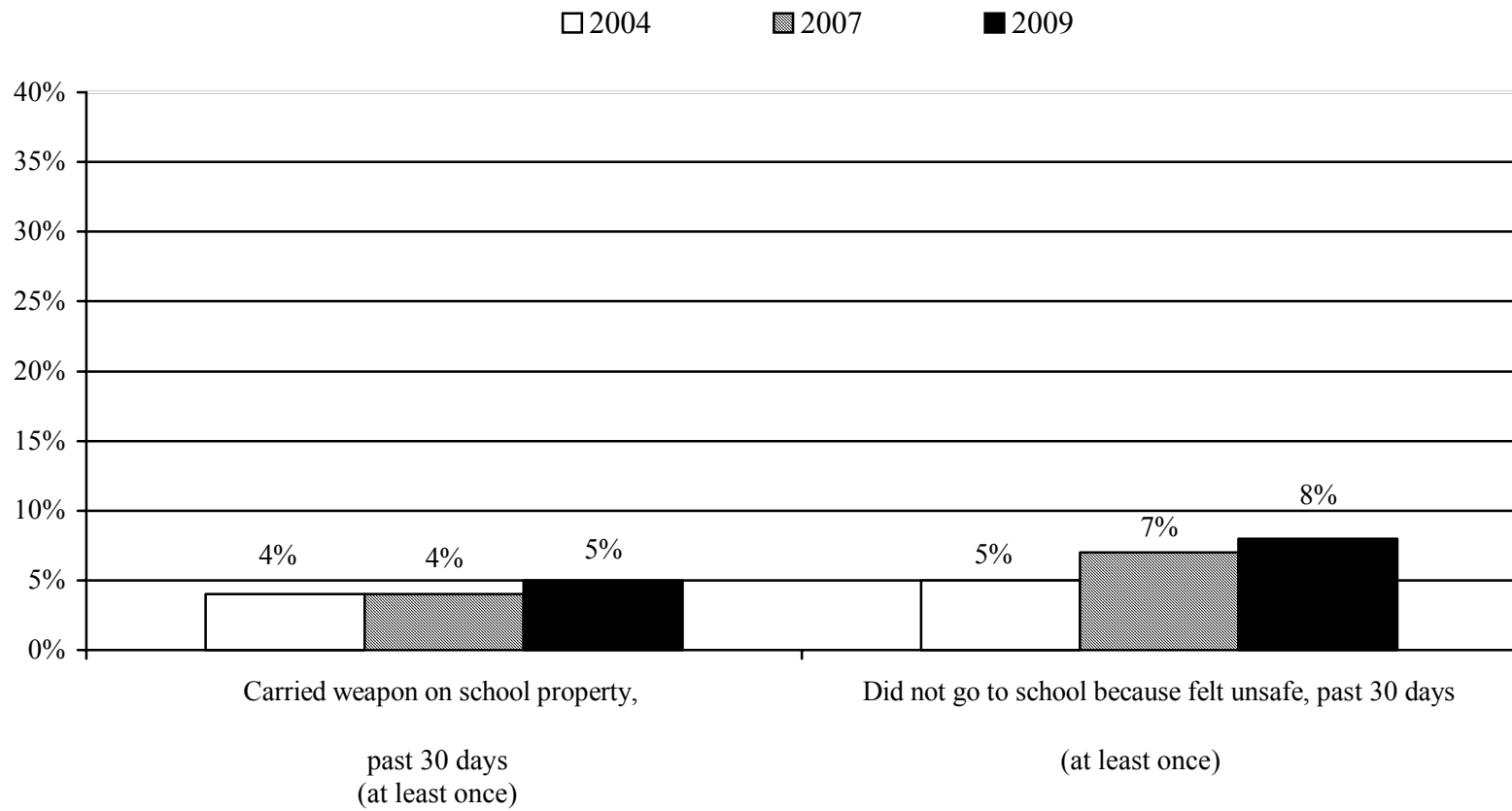
**BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2009 YRBS**

**INTERNET SAFETY
MIDDLE SCHOOL**



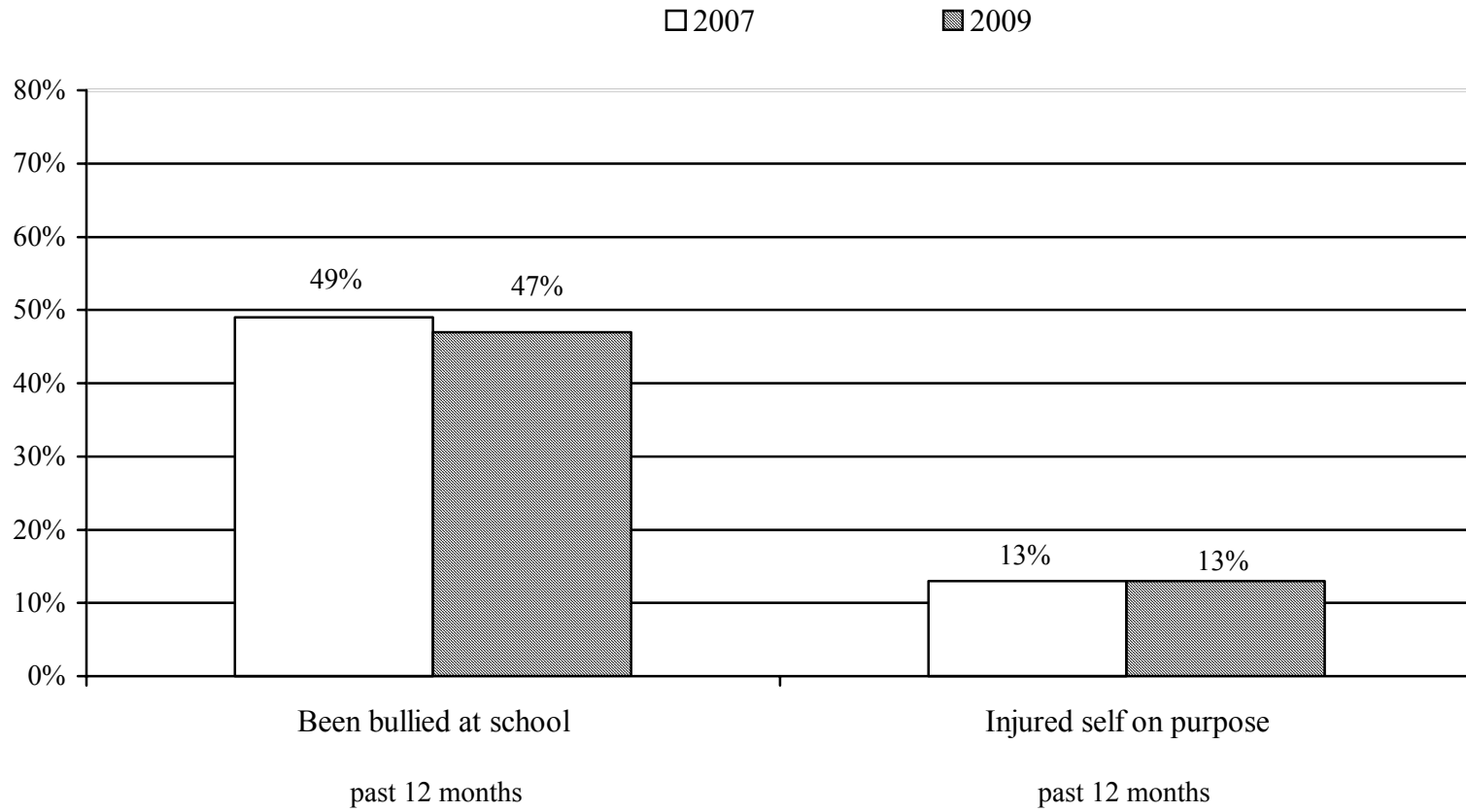
**BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2009 YRBS**

**VIOLENCE RELATED BEHAVIORS
MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6, 7, & 8 COMBINED)**



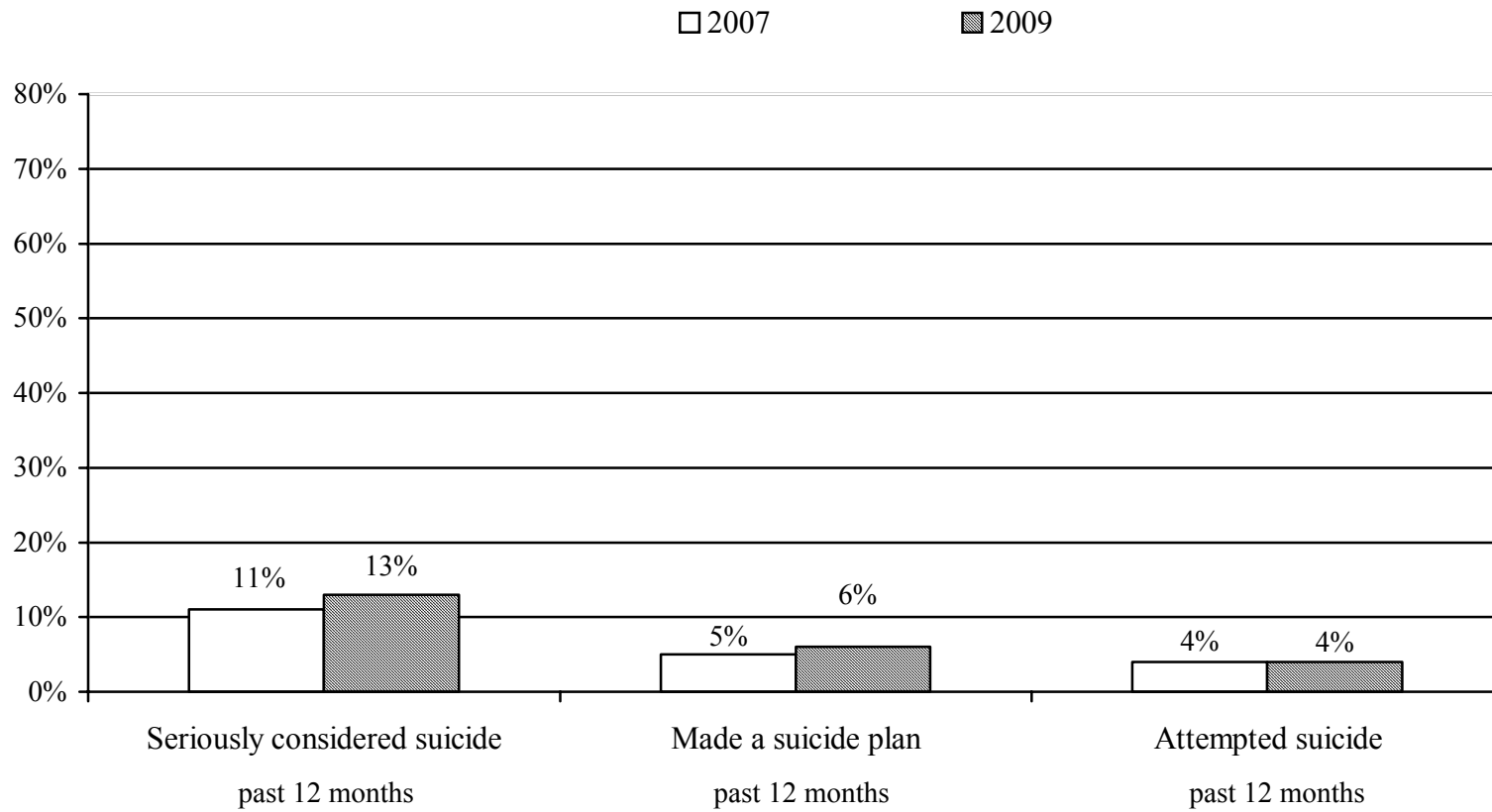
**BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2009 YRBS**

**VIOLENCE RELATED BEHAVIORS
MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6, 7, & 8 COMBINED)**



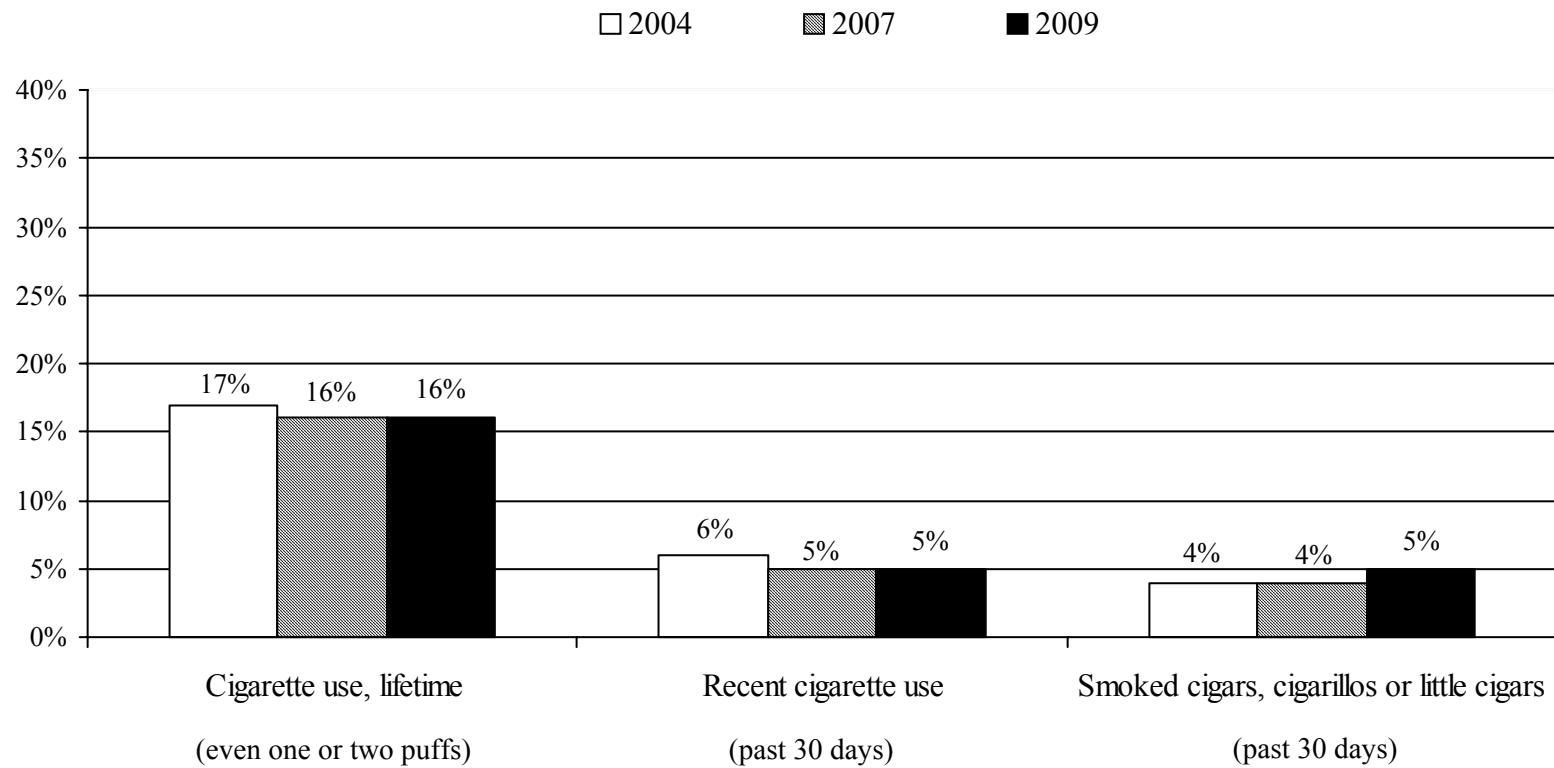
**BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2009 YRBS**

**SUICIDE
MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6, 7, & 8 COMBINED)**



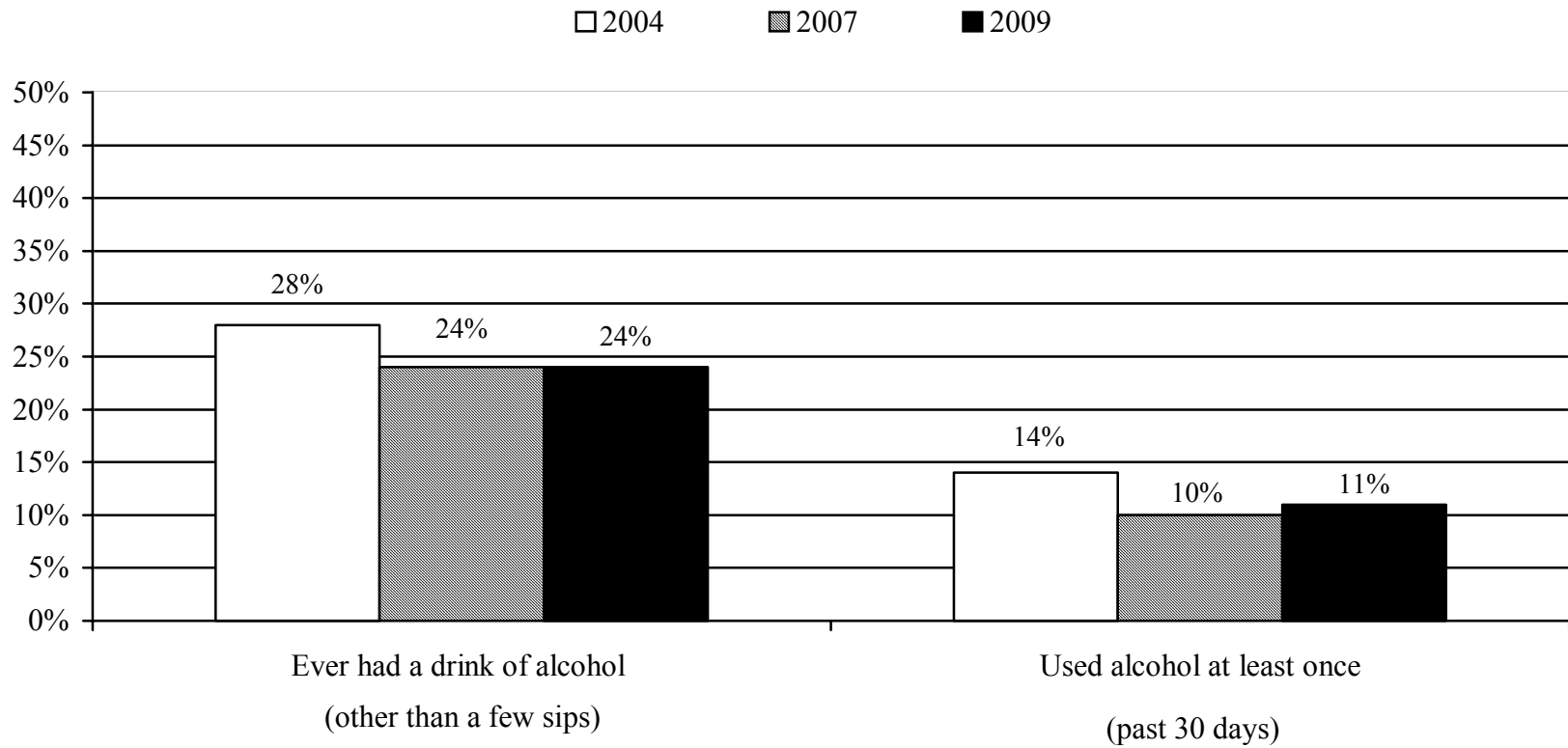
**BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2009 YRBS**

**TOBACCO USE
MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6, 7, & 8 COMBINED)**



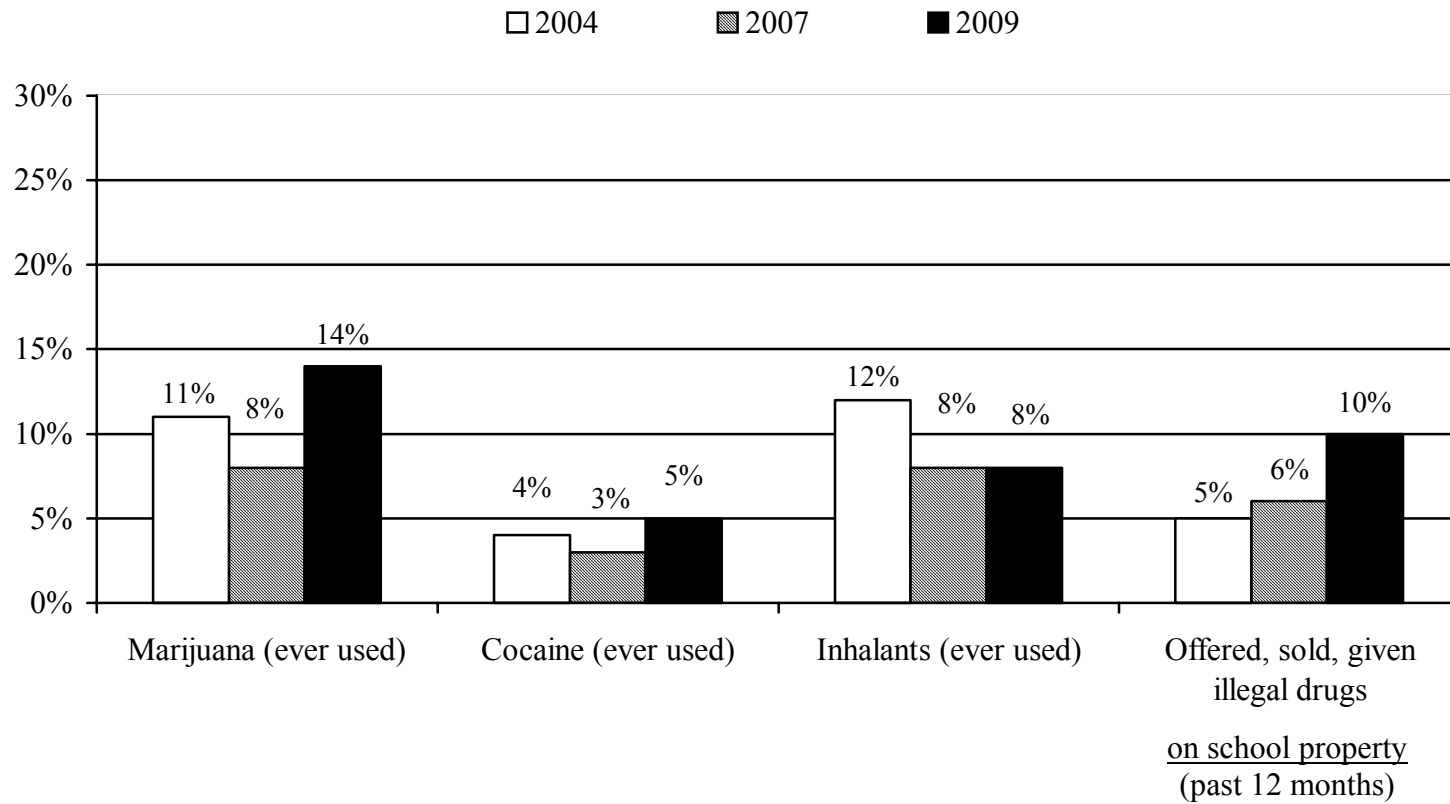
**BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2009 YRBS**

**ALCOHOL USE
MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6, 7, & 8 COMBINED)**



**BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2009 YRBS**

**ILLEGAL DRUG USE
MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6, 7, & 8 COMBINED)**



**BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2009 YRBS**

**SEXUAL BEHAVIOR
MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6, 7, & 8 COMBINED)**

Ever had sexual intercourse

