

# 2021 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey



## Runaway Youth Report

Health Risk Behaviors of  
Students Who Were Kicked Out,  
Ran Away, or Abandoned from Home



Youth Risk Behavior Survey Program  
Coordinated School Health Unit  
December 2021

# 2021 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey – Runaway Youth Report

## Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey

The Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is administered by the Montana Office of Public Instruction every two years to students in grades 7 through 12. The purpose of the survey is to help monitor the prevalence of behaviors that not only influence youth health, but also put youth at risk for the most significant health and social problems that can occur during adolescence. While all schools in Montana can participate in the survey on a volunteer basis, approximately 50 high schools are randomly selected to be included to provide the Montana statewide data to be used in other national YRBS reports.

The 2021 YRBS was conducted in February-March 2021. Schools administering the survey were provided with detailed written instructions on conducting a random survey in their schools. To encourage accurate responses to sensitive questions, a strict protocol was implemented to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all participating students. The questionnaire was designed without skip patterns to ensure survey completion by students in a similar period of time.

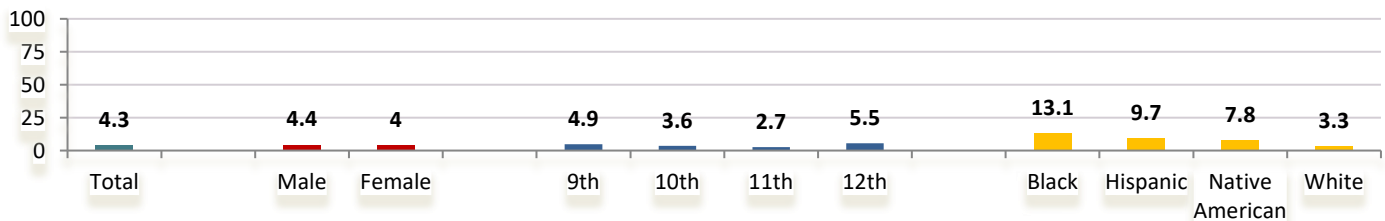
## Survey Validity and Report Analysis

Data used in this report from the 2021 YRBS are based on a random sample survey of Montana high school students. The weighted data results contained in this report can be used to make inferences about the priority health-risk behaviors of all high school students in grades 9 through 12 in all schools in Montana.

For this report, runaway youth are identified as the 4.3 percent of Montana high school students who reported that during the past 30 days, they had slept away from their parents or guardians because they were kicked out, ran away, or were abandoned. Fifty-four separate risk behaviors were queried for association with victimization based upon perceived sexual orientation. These findings are presented in narrative, table, and graph forms in the following report.

## RUNAWAY YOUTH

During the past 30 days, 4.3 percent of students had slept away from their parents or guardians because they were kicked out, ran away, or were abandoned, during the past 30 days.



For more on the Montana YRBS go to [www.opi.mt.gov/yrbs](http://www.opi.mt.gov/yrbs).

## 2021 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey – Runaway Youth Report

### Findings – *More Likely*

Montana high school students who are *runaway youth* are *more likely* than *non-runaway youth* to have:

- Not always worn a seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else (71% of runaway youth compared to 45% of non-runaway youth).
- Never or rarely wore a seat belt when driving a vehicle (26% of runaway youth compared to 6% of non-runaway youth).
- Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol during the past 30 days (47% of runaway youth compared to 19% of non-runaway youth).
- Driven a car or other vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol during the past 30 days (23% of runaway youth compared to 7% of non-runaway youth).
- Used the Internet or apps on their cell phone while driving during the past 30 days (68% of runaway youth compared to 51% of non-runaway youth).
- Carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property during the past 30 days (20% of runaway youth compared to 8% of non-runaway youth).
- Not gone to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school during the past 30 days (21% of runaway youth compared to 6% of non-runaway youth).
- Been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property during the past 12 months (24% of runaway youth compared to 5% of non-runaway youth).
- Ever been physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to (29% of runaway youth compared to 10% of non-runaway youth).
- Been bullied on school property during the past 12 months (29% of runaway youth compared to 15% of non-runaway youth).
- Been electronically bullied (texting, Instagram, Facebook, or other social media) during the past 12 months (31% of runaway youth compared to 16% of non-runaway youth).
- Been the victim of teasing or name calling because someone thought they were gay, lesbian, or bisexual during the past 12 months (27% of runaway youth compared to 13% of non-runaway youth).
- Felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row that they stopped doing usual activities, during the past 12 months (62% of runaway youth compared to 41% of non-runaway youth).
- Made a plan about how they would attempt suicide during the past 12 months (39% of runaway youth compared to 17% of non-runaway youth).
- Attempted suicide during the past 12 months (29% of runaway youth compared to 9% of non-runaway youth).
- Ever tried cigarette smoking (60% of runaway youth compared to 26% of non-runaway youth).
- Smoked a cigarette during the past 30 days (25% of runaway youth compared to 6% of non-runaway youth).
- Ever used electronic vapor products (73% of runaway youth compared to 47% of non-runaway youth).
- Used electronic vapor products during the past 30 days (49% of runaway youth compared to 24% of non-runaway youth).
- Currently used smokeless tobacco during the past 30 days (16% of runaway youth compared to 5% of non-runaway youth).
- Currently smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars during the past 30 days (16% of runaway youth compared to 4% of non-runaway youth).
- Had a drink of alcohol during the past 30 days (55% of runaway youth compared to 30% of non-runaway youth).
- Had 4 or more drinks of alcohol, if female, 5 or more drinks, if male, within a couple hours during the past 30 days (42% of runaway youth compared to 15% of non-runaway youth).

## 2021 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey – Runaway Youth Report

### Findings – *More Likely*

Montana high school *runaway youth* are ***more likely*** than *non-runaway youth* to have:

- Ever used marijuana in their lifetime (62% of runaway youth compared to 36% of non-runaway youth).
- Used marijuana during the past 30 days (42% of runaway youth compared to 19% of non-runaway youth).
- Ever took prescription pain medication without a doctor’s prescription or differently than how a doctor told them to use it (such as codeine, Vicodin, OxyContin, Hydrocodone, and Percocet) (35% of runaway youth compared to 11% of non-runaway youth).
- Ever used methamphetamines in their lifetime (12% of runaway youth compared to 1% of non-runaway youth).
- Ever used ecstasy in their lifetime (22% of runaway youth compared to 3% of non-runaway youth).
- Ever had sexual intercourse in their lifetime (69% of runaway youth compared to 40% of non-runaway youth).
- Had sexual intercourse with four or more persons during their life (33% of runaway youth compared to 10% of non-runaway youth).
- Have had sexual intercourse during the past 3 months (56% of runaway youth compared to 29% of non-runaway youth).
- Drank alcohol or used drugs before last sexual intercourse (35% of runaway youth compared to 16% of non-runaway youth).
- Tried to lose weight (55% of runaway youth compared to 41% of non-runaway youth).
- Not eaten fruit during the past 7 days (26% of runaway youth compared to 10% of non-runaway youth).
- Not eaten vegetables during the past 7 days (12% of runaway youth compared to 5% of non-runaway youth).
- Not been physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on any of the past 7 days (26% of runaway youth compared to 11% of non-runaway youth).
- Experienced homelessness during the past 30 days (22% of runaway youth compared to 2% of non-runaway youth).
- Received help from a resource teacher, speech therapist, or other special education teacher during the past 12 months (38% of runaway youth compared to 13% of non-runaway youth).



















# 2021 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey – Runaway Youth Report

## Findings – *Less Likely*

Montana high school *runaway youth* are *less likely* than *non-runaway youth* to have:
















- Been physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on 5 or more of the past 7 days (37% of runaway youth compared to 53% of non-runaway youth).
- Been physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on all of the past 7 days (37% of runaway youth compared to 53% of non-runaway youth).
- Spent 3 or more hours per day on screen time (TV, computer, smart phone, or other electronic device watching shows or videos, playing games, accessing the Internet, or using social media, *not counting time doing schoolwork*) on an average school day (63% of runaway youth compared to 73% of non-runaway youth).
- Got 8 or more hours of sleep on an average school night (14% of runaway youth compared to 29% of non-runaway youth).
- Made mostly A's or B's in school during the past 12 months (59% of runaway youth compared to 75% of non-runaway youth).

## 2021 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey – Runaway Youth Report

Health Risk Behavior by percentage of students	Runaway Youth	Non-Runaway Youth	Statistical Difference
Did not always wear a seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else	<b>71.2%</b> (64.8-77.6)	<b>44.8%</b> (42.1-47.4)	
Never or rarely wore a seat belt when driving	<b>25.5%</b> (17.5-33.6)	<b>6.0%</b> (5.1-6.8)	
Rode with a driver who had been drinking during the past 30 days	<b>46.7%</b> (39.4-54.0)	<b>19.3%</b> (17.8-20.9)	
Drove when drinking alcohol during the past 30 days	<b>23.4%</b> (15.1-31.7)	<b>6.7%</b> (5.8-7.6)	
Texted or e-mailed while driving a car or other vehicle during the past 30 days	<b>65.1%</b> (56.2-73.9)	<b>56.7%</b> (53.7-59.6)	
Used the Internet or apps on their cell phone while driving during the past 30 days	<b>68.2%</b> (59.7-76.8)	<b>50.7%</b> (48.1-53.3)	
Carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property, past 30 days	<b>20.3%</b> (13.9-26.6)	<b>8.3%</b> (7.2-9.4)	
Did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school during the past 30 days	<b>20.9%</b> (14.4-27.3)	<b>5.7%</b> (4.9-6.5)	
Were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property during the past 12 months	<b>23.5%</b> (17.1-29.9)	<b>5.0%</b> (4.1-5.9)	
Ever physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to	<b>29.0%</b> (22.4-35.6)	<b>10.0%</b> (8.6-11.3)	
Experienced sexual dating violence (unwanted kissing, touching, or sexual intercourse by someone they were dating), past 12 months	<b>15.3%</b> (6.9-23.6)	<b>7.6%</b> (6.5-8.7)	
Were bullied on school property during the past 12 months	<b>28.9%</b> (20.8-37.0)	<b>14.8%</b> (13.1-16.4)	
Were electronically bullied (texting, Instagram, Facebook, or other social media) during the past 12 months	<b>31.4%</b> (23.9-38.9)	<b>15.7%</b> (14.5-16.9)	
Were the victim of teasing or name calling because someone thought they were gay, lesbian, or bisexual, past 12 months	<b>27.2%</b> (20.6-33.9)	<b>12.8%</b> (11.6-14.1)	
Felt sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row during the past 12 months	<b>61.9%</b> (54.0-69.8)	<b>40.5%</b> (38.1-42.9)	
Made a plan about how they would attempt suicide during the past 12 months	<b>39.2%</b> (31.6-46.8)	<b>17.1%</b> (15.6-18.5)	
Attempted suicide during the past 12 months	<b>28.6%</b> (20-37.1)	<b>9.3%</b> (7.9-10.7)	
Ever tried cigarette smoking	<b>60.0%</b> (51.3-68.7)	<b>26.1%</b> (23.7-28.5)	
Currently smoked cigarettes, past 30 days	<b>24.9%</b> (16.9-33.0)	<b>6.2%</b> (4.9-7.5)	
Ever used an electronic vapor product	<b>73.3%</b> (67.0-79.6)	<b>47.0%</b> (44.5-49.5)	










Based on t-test analysis, p<0.05.

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Health Risk Behavior by percentage of students	Runaway Youth	Non-Runaway Youth	Statistical Difference
Currently used an electronic vapor product, past 30 days	<b>49.2%</b> (41.3-57.1)	<b>24.3%</b> (22.4-26.2)	
Currently used smokeless tobacco (chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip), past 30 days	<b>16.2%</b> (10.2-22.3)	<b>4.5%</b> (3.6-5.5)	
Currently smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars, past 30 days	<b>16.1%</b> (9.4-22.9)	<b>3.9%</b> (3.0-4.7)	
Currently drank alcohol, past 30 days	<b>54.5%</b> (48.3-60.8)	<b>30.3%</b> (28.1-32.5)	
Had 4 or more drinks, if female, 5 or more drinks, if male, of alcohol within a couple hours during the past 30 days	<b>41.5%</b> (35.1-47.9)	<b>15.4%</b> (13.7-17.0)	
Drank vodka or some other type of liquor (rum, scotch, bourbon, whiskey, or tequila) as the type of alcohol most often drank, past 30 days	<b>37.9%</b> (28.8-47.1)	<b>29.8%</b> (27.3-32.3)	
Ever used marijuana in their lifetime	<b>61.9%</b> (54.3-69.5)	<b>35.8%</b> (33.1-38.4)	
Currently used marijuana, past 30 days	<b>42.0%</b> (33.8-50.1)	<b>18.5%</b> (16.7-20.3)	
Ever took prescription pain medicine without a doctor's prescription or differently than how a doctor told them to use it (codeine, Vicodin, OxyContin, Hydrocodone and Percocet)	<b>34.6%</b> (27.8-41.3)	<b>10.7%</b> (9.6-11.9)	
Ever used methamphetamines in their lifetime	<b>12.4%</b> (6.5-18.4)	<b>1.3%</b> (1.0-1.7)	
Ever used ecstasy in their lifetime	<b>21.5%</b> (14.2-28.8)	<b>3.2%</b> (2.6-3.8)	
Ever had sexual intercourse in their lifetime	<b>69.4%</b> (61.6-77.2)	<b>40.3%</b> (37.6-42.9)	
Had sexual intercourse with four or more persons during their life	<b>33.3%</b> (25.8-40.9)	<b>9.5%</b> (8.4-10.7)	
Currently sexually active (sexual intercourse during the past 3 months)	<b>56.3%</b> (47.3-65.4)	<b>28.9%</b> (26.6-31.1)	
Drank alcohol or used drugs before last sexual intercourse	<b>34.5%</b> (23.8-45.2)	<b>16.2%</b> (13.6-18.9)	
Used a condom during last sexual intercourse	<b>44.0%</b> (31.8-56.2)	<b>52.1%</b> (48.9-55.4)	
Have obesity (at or above the 95 <sup>th</sup> percentile for body mass index)	<b>17.0%</b> (10.7-23.4)	<b>11.5%</b> (10.1-13.0)	
Were overweight (at or above the 85 <sup>th</sup> percentile but below the 95 <sup>th</sup> percentile for body mass index)	<b>15.5%</b> (9.4-21.5)	<b>14.0%</b> (12.8-15.1)	
Were trying to lose weight	<b>54.7%</b> (46.9-62.4)	<b>40.6%</b> (38.6-42.6)	
Did not drink 100% fruit juice during the past 7 days	<b>38.2%</b> (31.0-45.4)	<b>34.4%</b> (32.6-36.2)	

Based on t-test analysis, p<0.05.

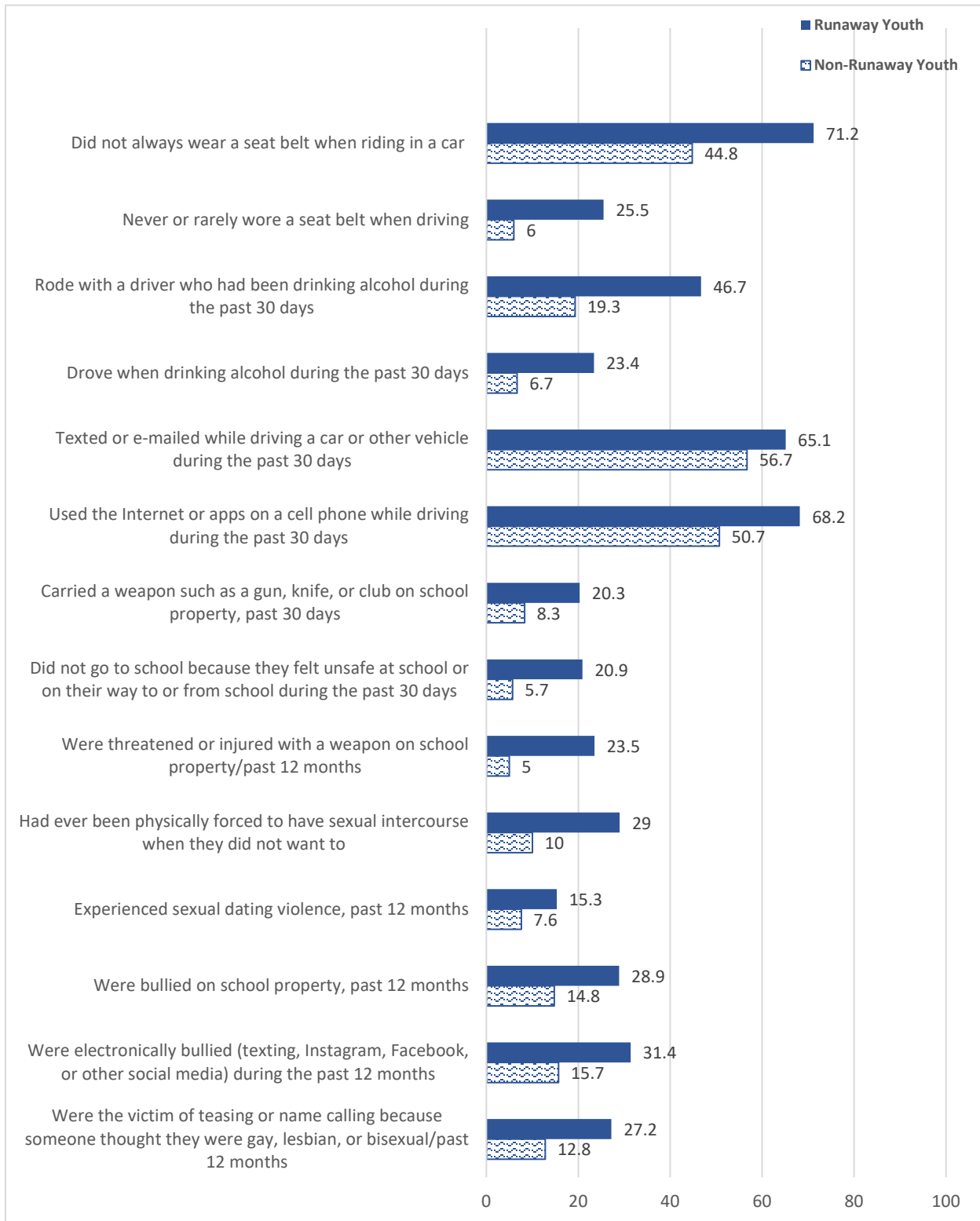
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Did not eat fruit during the past 7 days	<b>25.6%</b> (20.3-31.0)	<b>9.7%</b> (8.7-10.6)	
Did not eat vegetables during the past 7 days	<b>12.4%</b> (7.9-16.8)	<b>4.9%</b> (4.1-5.6)	
Drank a can, bottle, or glass of soda or pop daily during the past 7 days	<b>17.4%</b> (11.6-23.1)	<b>11.7%</b> (10.6-12.7)	
Did not drink milk during the past 7 days	<b>34.1%</b> (27.2-41.0)	<b>26.1%</b> (24.3-27.8)	
Were not physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on any of the past 7 days	<b>25.8%</b> (18.9-32.6)	<b>10.6%</b> (9.5-11.7)	
Were physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on 5 or more of the past 7 days	<b>37.2%</b> (29.1-45.2)	<b>52.5%</b> (50.2-54.7)	
Were physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on all of the past 7 days	<b>23.2%</b> (16.8-29.5)	<b>26.0%</b> (24.5-27.5)	
Spent 3 or more hours per day on screen time (TV, computer, smart phone, or other electronic device watching shows or videos, playing games, accessing the Internet, or using social media, <i>not counting time doing schoolwork</i> ) on an average school day	<b>63.1%</b> (56.7-69.5)	<b>72.6%</b> (71.0-74.2)	
Played on at least one sports team during the past 12 months	<b>48.9%</b> (40.4-57.4)	<b>59.2%</b> (57.4-61.0)	
Got 8 or more hours of sleep on an average school night	<b>14.1%</b> (8.9-19.3)	<b>29.3%</b> (27.3-31.2)	
Experienced homelessness during the past 30 days	<b>22.4%</b> (15.3-29.5)	<b>1.7%</b> (1.3-2.2)	
Made mostly A's or B's in school during the past 12 months	<b>58.8%</b> (51.3-66.3)	<b>74.5%</b> (71.6-77.3)	
Received help from a resource teacher, speech therapist, or other special education teacher during the past 12 months	<b>37.8%</b> (31.7-44.0)	<b>13.4%</b> (12.1-14.7)	

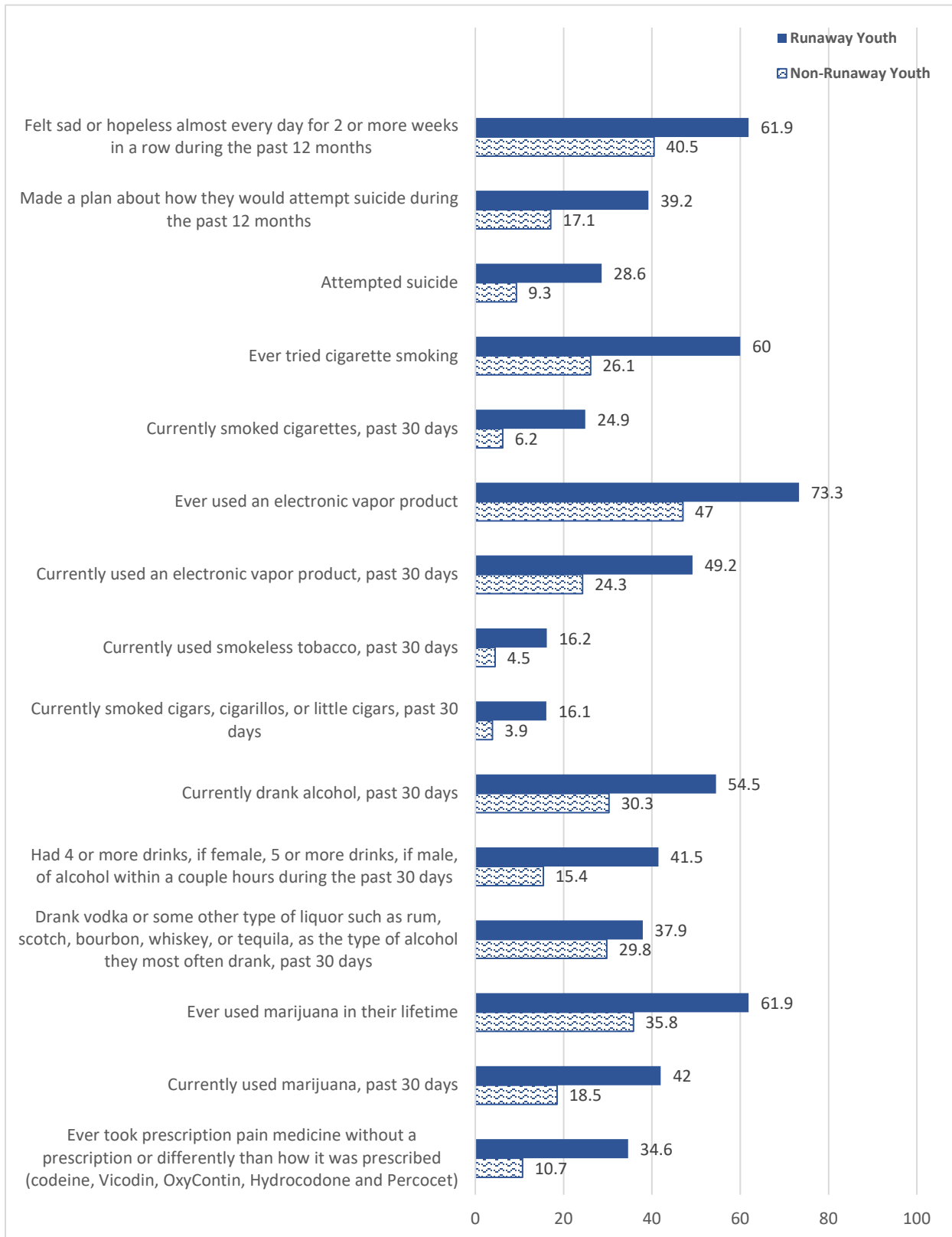
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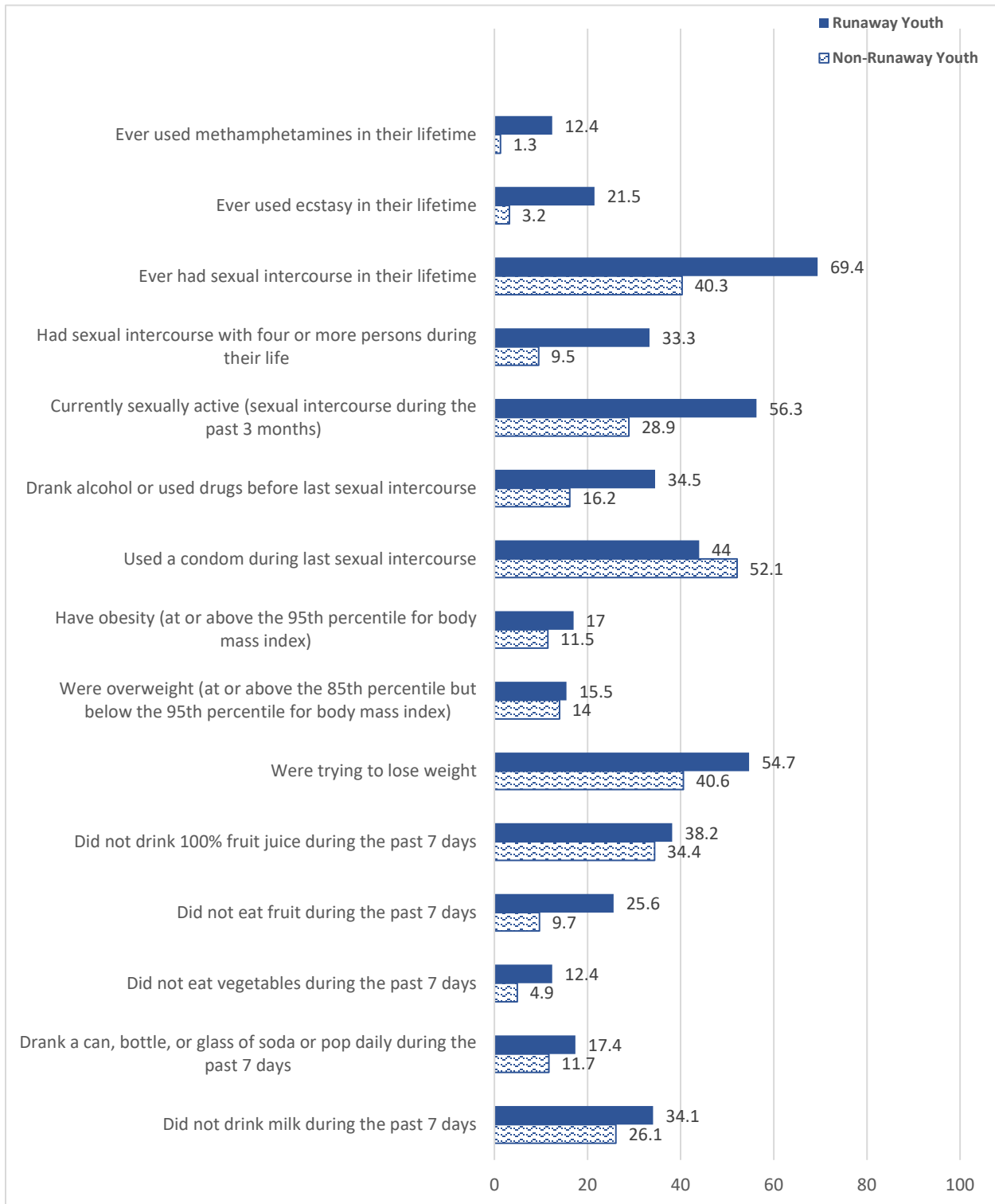
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