

# 2021 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey



## Suicide Report

Health Risk Behaviors of Students  
Who Had Attempted Suicide



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# 2021 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey – Suicide 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.

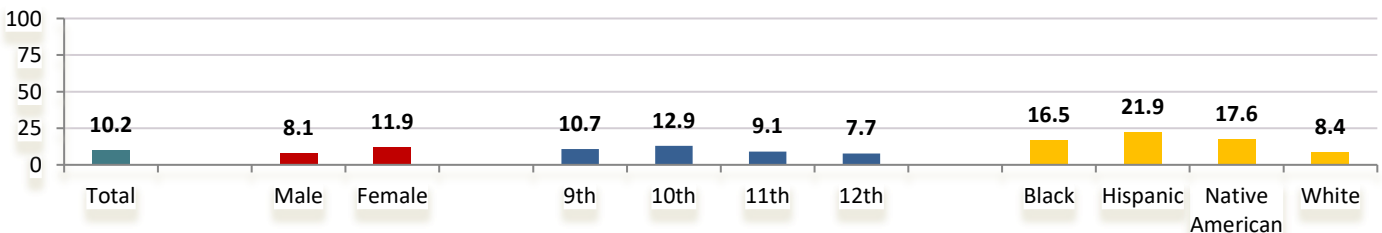
## Survey Validity, Limitations and Results

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. However, users should be careful in using the data since respondents in self-reported surveys may tend to underreport behaviors that are socially undesirable, unhealthy, or illegal (alcohol consumption, drug use, seat belt nonuse, etc.) and overreport behaviors that are socially desirable (amount of exercise, etc.).

For the purpose of this report, youth that are classified as having attempted suicide are those Montana youth that reported attempting suicide one or more times during the 12 months prior to taking the YRBS. Fifty-two separate risk behaviors were queried for association with the attempted suicide question. These findings are presented in bullet, table, and graph forms in the following report.

## MONTANA ATTEMPTED SUICIDE RATES

During the past 12 months, 10.2 percent of students attempted suicide one or more times.



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 – Suicide Report

### Findings

Montana high school students who had attempted suicide are more likely than those students who had not attempted suicide to have:

- Not always worn a seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else (70% of students who attempted suicide compared to 43% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Never or rarely wore a seat belt when driving a vehicle (17% of students who attempted suicide compared to 6% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol during the past 30 days (36% of students who attempted suicide compared to 18% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Drove when drinking alcohol during the past 30 days (15% of students who attempted suicide compared to 7% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property during the past 30 days (17% of students who attempted suicide compared to 8% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Not gone to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school during the past 30 days (18% of students who attempted suicide compared to 5% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property during the past 12 months (17% of students who attempted suicide compared to 4% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Ever been physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to (32% of students who attempted suicide compared to 8% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Experienced sexual dating violence, such as unwanted kissing, touching, or sexual intercourse, by someone they were dating, during the past 12 months (23% of students who attempted suicide compared to 7% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Been bullied on school property on school property during the past 12 months (37% of students who attempted suicide compared to 13% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Been electronically bullied during the past 12 months (42% of students who attempted suicide compared to 14% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Been the victim of teasing or name calling because someone thought they were gay, lesbian, or bisexual during the past 12 months (35% of students who attempted suicide compared to 11% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Felt sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row during the past 12 months (84% of students who attempted suicide compared to 37% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Made a plan about how they would attempt suicide during the past 12 months (74% of students who attempted suicide compared to 12% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Ever tried cigarette smoking (57% of students who attempted suicide compared to 24% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Smoked a cigarette during the past 30 days (22% of students who attempted suicide compared to 5% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Ever used electronic vapor products (73% of students who attempted suicide compared to 45% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Used electronic vapor products during the past 30 days (53% of students who attempted suicide compared to 22% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars during the past 30 days (13% of students who attempted suicide compared to 7% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Had a drink of alcohol during the past 30 days (49% of students who attempted suicide compared to 30% of students who had not attempted suicide).

## 2019 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey – Suicide Report


















Montana high school students who had attempted suicide are **more likely** than those students who had not attempted suicide to have:

- Had 4 or more drinks, if female, 5 or more drinks, if male, of alcohol within a couple hours during the past 30 days [binge drink] (30% of students who attempted suicide compared to 15% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Ever used marijuana in their lifetime (67% of students who attempted suicide compared to 33% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Used marijuana during the past 30 days (43% of students who attempted suicide compared to 17% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- 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) (32% of students who attempted suicide compared to 10% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Ever used methamphetamines in their lifetime (8% of students who attempted suicide compared to 1% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Ever used ecstasy in their lifetime (15% of students who attempted suicide compared to 3% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Ever had sexual intercourse in their lifetime (69% of students who attempted suicide compared to 37% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Had sexual intercourse with four or more persons during their life (23% of students who attempted suicide compared to 9% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Had sexual intercourse during the past 3 months (52% of students who attempted suicide compared to 27% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Drank alcohol or used drugs before last sexual intercourse (24% of students who attempted suicide compared to 16% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Tried (were trying to) losing weight (55% of students who attempted suicide compared to 40% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Not eaten breakfast during the past 7 days (27% of students who attempted suicide compared to 16% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Not been physically active at least 60 minutes per day on any of the past 7 days (17% of students who attempted suicide compared to 11% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Experienced homelessness - not usually slept in their parent's or guardian's home during the past 30 days (8% of students who attempted suicide compared to 2% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Received help from a resource teacher, speech therapist, or other special education teacher during the past 12 months (25% of students who attempted suicide compared to 13% of students who had not attempted suicide).















Montana high school students who had attempted suicide are **less likely** than those students who had not attempted suicide to have:

- Eaten breakfast on all of the past 7 days (17% of students who attempted suicide compared to 32% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Been physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on 5 or more of the past 7 days (44% of students who attempted suicide compared to 53% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Got 8 or more hours of sleep on an average school night (19% of students who attempted suicide compared to 30% of students who had not attempted suicide).
- Made mostly A's or B's in school during the past 12 months (56% of students who attempted suicide compared to 77% of students who had not attempted suicide).









## 2021 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey – Suicide Report

Health Risk Behavior by percentage of students	Students Who Attempted Suicide	Students Who Did Not Attempt Suicide	Statistical Difference
Did not always wear a seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else	<b>69.6%</b> (65.0-74.2)	<b>42.8%</b> (40.3-45.3)	
Never or rarely wore a seat belt when driving	<b>16.5%</b> (12.0-21.0)	<b>5.6%</b> (4.7-6.4)	
Rode with a driver who had been drinking during the past 30 days	<b>36.3%</b> (31.1-41.6)	<b>18.3%</b> (16.7-19.9)	
Drove when drinking alcohol during the past 30 days	<b>15.1%</b> (10.4-19.8)	<b>6.6%</b> (5.5-7.7)	
Texted or e-mailed while driving a car or other vehicle during the past 30 days	<b>62.8%</b> (56.4-69.3)	<b>57.2%</b> (54.3-60.0)	
Used the Internet or apps on their cell phone while driving during the past 30 days	<b>57.1%</b> (51.4-62.9)	<b>51.1%</b> (48.6-53.5)	
Carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property, past 30 days	<b>17.1%</b> (14.1-20.2)	<b>7.8%</b> (6.5-9.0)	
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>18.3%</b> (14.3-22.3)	<b>4.9%</b> (4.2-5.7)	
Were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property during the past 12 months	<b>17.4%</b> (13.6-21.1)	<b>4.4%</b> (3.5-5.3)	
Ever physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to	<b>31.6%</b> (26-37.3)	<b>8.3%</b> (7.2-9.3)	
Experienced sexual dating violence (unwanted kissing, touching, or sexual intercourse by someone they were dating), past 12 months	<b>22.5%</b> (17.3-27.6)	<b>6.6%</b> (5.8-7.6)	
Were bullied on school property during the past 12 months	<b>37.1%</b> (31.4-42.9)	<b>13.1%</b> (11.6-14.7)	
Were electronically bullied (texting, Instagram, Facebook, or other social media) during the past 12 months	<b>42.2%</b> (37.5-46.9)	<b>13.6%</b> (12.4-14.9)	
Were the victim of teasing or name calling because someone thought they were gay, lesbian, or bisexual during the past 12 months	<b>35.2%</b> (30.6-39.9)	<b>11.0%</b> (9.7-12.4)	
Felt sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row during the past 12 months	<b>83.5%</b> (78.7-88.4)	<b>37.4%</b> (35.2-39.5)	
Made a plan about how they would attempt suicide during the past 12 months	<b>73.5%</b> (69.6-77.4)	<b>11.5%</b> (10.5-12.6)	
Ever tried cigarette smoking	<b>57.4%</b> (52.9-61.9)	<b>23.7%</b> (21.4-25.9)	
Currently smoked cigarettes, past 30 days	<b>21.5%</b> (16.7-26.3)	<b>5.2%</b> (4.0-6.5)	
Ever used an electronic vapor product	<b>72.8%</b> (67.5-78.1)	<b>44.9%</b> (42.6-47.2)	

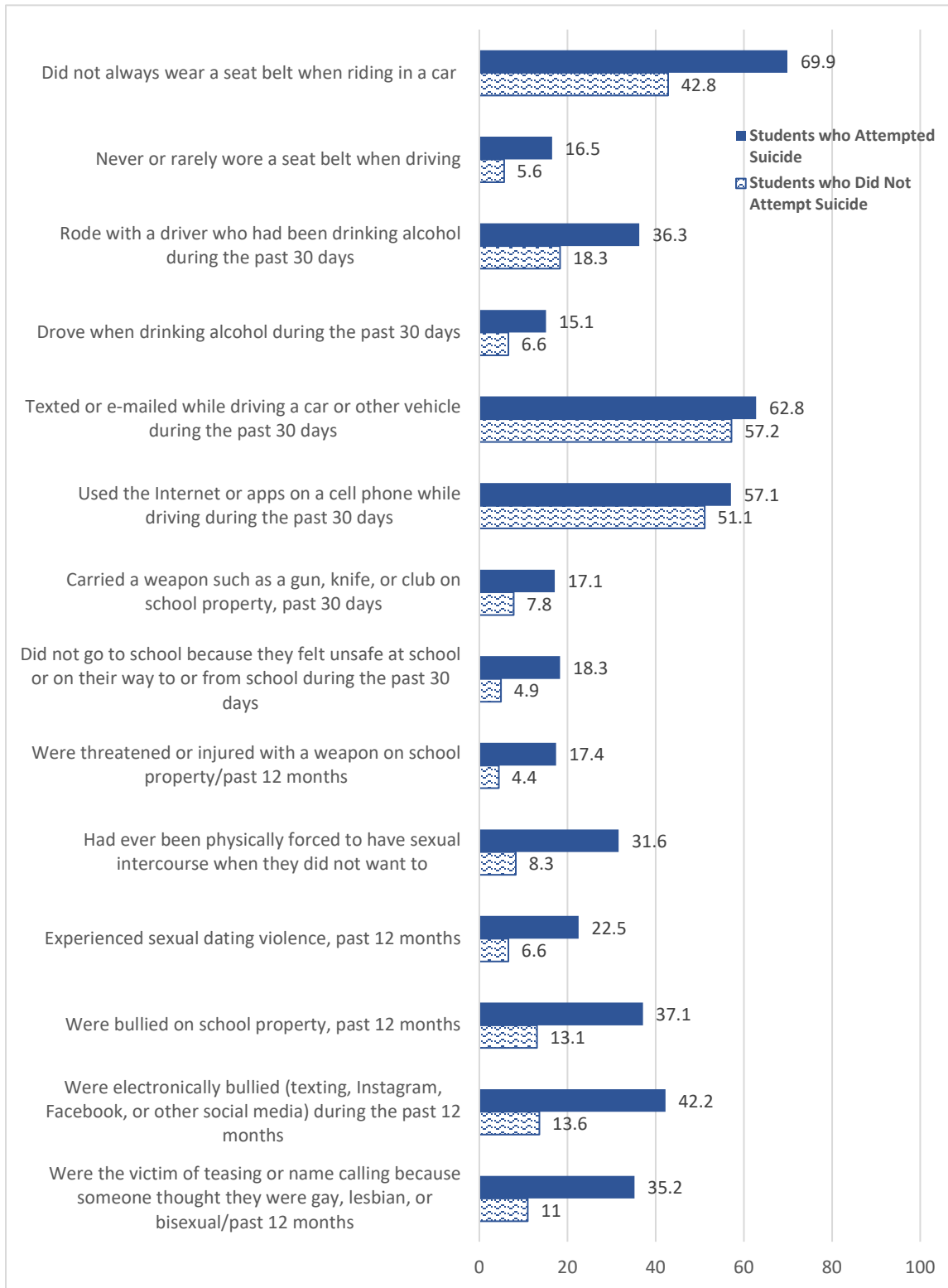
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<b>Health Risk Behavior</b> by percentage of students	<b>Students Who Attempted Suicide</b>	<b>Students Who Did Not Attempt Suicide</b>	<b>Statistical Difference</b>
Currently used an electronic vapor product, past 30 days	<b>52.7%</b> (46.1-59.3)	<b>21.8%</b> (20.0-23.6)	
Currently used smokeless tobacco (chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip), past 30 days	<b>7.6%</b> (4.5-10.7)	<b>4.4%</b> (3.4-5.3)	
Currently smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars, past 30 days	<b>11.3%</b> (8.1-14.6)	<b>3.3%</b> (2.4-4.3)	
Currently drank alcohol, past 30 days	<b>48.8%</b> (43.3-54.3)	<b>29.5%</b> (27.3-31.8)	
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>30.3%</b> (25.4-35.3)	<b>14.7%</b> (13.1-16.2)	
Ever used marijuana in their lifetime	<b>67.2%</b> (62.5-71.9)	<b>33.1%</b> (30.6-35.6)	
Currently used marijuana, past 30 days	<b>42.8%</b> (38.7-46.9)	<b>16.6%</b> (14.9-18.3)	
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>32.3%</b> (28.3-36.3)	<b>9.5%</b> (8.5-10.6)	
Ever used methamphetamines in their lifetime	<b>7.9%</b> (4.8-10.9)	<b>1.0%</b> (0.7-1.3)	
Ever used ecstasy in their lifetime	<b>14.5%</b> (11.0-18.1)	<b>2.8%</b> (2.2-3.4)	
Ever had sexual intercourse in their lifetime	<b>69.3%</b> (64.9-73.7)	<b>37.4%</b> (34.7-40.1)	
Had sexual intercourse with four or more persons during their life	<b>22.9%</b> (18.3-27.5)	<b>8.8%</b> (7.7-9.9)	
Currently sexually active (sexual intercourse during the past 3 months)	<b>51.8%</b> (45.9-57.7)	<b>26.7%</b> (24.5-28.8)	
Drank alcohol or used drugs before last sexual intercourse	<b>24.0%</b> (16.9-31.1)	<b>16.2%</b> (13.7-18.7)	
Used a condom during last sexual intercourse	<b>47.3%</b> (39.3-55.2)	<b>52.5%</b> (48.9-56.1)	
Have obesity (at or above the 95 <sup>th</sup> percentile for body mass index)	<b>12.8%</b> (9.7-15.9)	<b>11.6%</b> (10.2-13.0)	
Were overweight (at or above the 85 <sup>th</sup> percentile but below the 95 <sup>th</sup> percentile for body mass index)	<b>16.6%</b> (13.3-20.0)	<b>13.7%</b> (12.4-15.0)	
Were trying to lose weight	<b>54.8%</b> (50.7-58.9)	<b>39.8%</b> (37.8-41.8)	
Did not drink 100% fruit juice during the past 7 days	<b>32.7%</b> (26.7-38.7)	<b>34.5%</b> (32.5-36.4)	
Did not eat fruit during the past 7 days	<b>12.1%</b> (8.3-15.8)	<b>9.9%</b> (8.9-11.0)	
Did not eat vegetables during the past 7 days	<b>6.1%</b> (3.3-8.8)	<b>4.9%</b> (4.0-5.7)	
Drank a can, bottle, or glass of soda or pop daily during the past 7 days	<b>14.5%</b> (11.6-17.4)	<b>11.4%</b> (10.1-12.7)	

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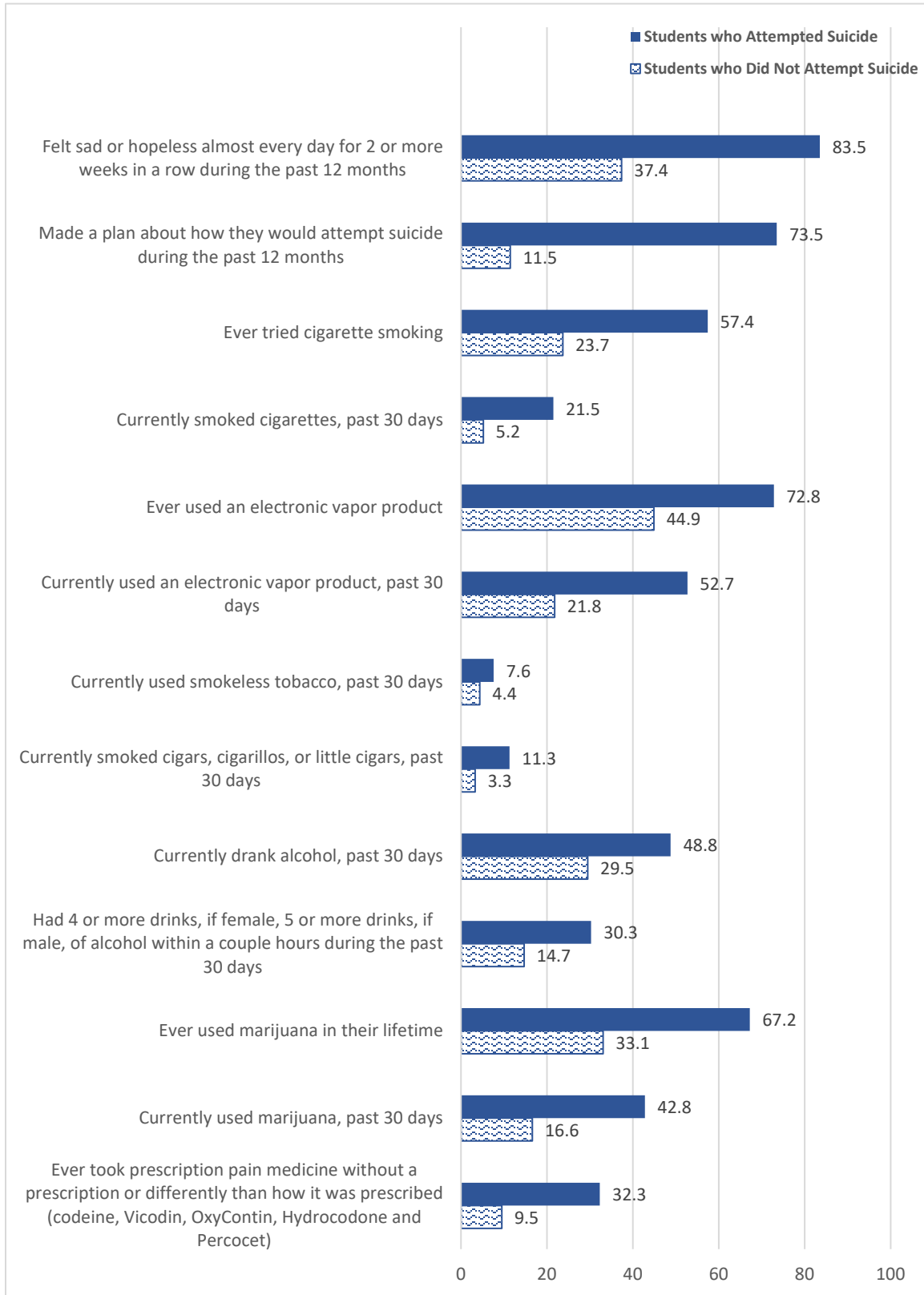
Health Risk Behavior by percentage of students	Students Who Attempted Suicide	Students Who Did Not Attempt Suicide	Statistical Difference
Did not drink milk during the past 7 days	30.0% (24.9-35.2)	26.8% (25.0-28.6)	
Did not eat breakfast during the past 7 days	27.2% (22.9-31.5)	16.1% (14.7-17.6)	
Ate breakfast on all of the past 7 days	16.6% (13.3-20.0)	31.8% (29.8-33.8)	
Were physically active at least 60 minutes per day on 5 or more of the past 7 days	44.3% (38.7-49.8)	52.6% (50.3-55.0)	
Were not physically active at least 60 minutes per day on any of the past 7 days	16.8% (13.4-20.2)	10.6% (9.3-11.8)	
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	71.5% (66.4-76.7)	72.7% (71.2-74.2)	
Played on at least one sports team during the past 12 months	55.7% (50.8-60.6)	59.2% (57.3-61.2)	
Got 8 or more hours of sleep on an average school night	19.0% (15.3-22.7)	29.9% (27.9-31.9)	
Experienced homelessness (not usually sleeping in their parent's or guardian's home) during the past 30 days	8.2% (4.9-11.5)	2.1% (1.5-2.6)	
Made mostly A's or B's in school during the past 12 months	56.0% (50.3-61.6)	76.7% (74.0-79.4)	
Received help from a resource teacher, speech therapist, or other special education teacher during the past 12 months	25.2% (20.6-29.8)	12.8% (11.3-14.2)	

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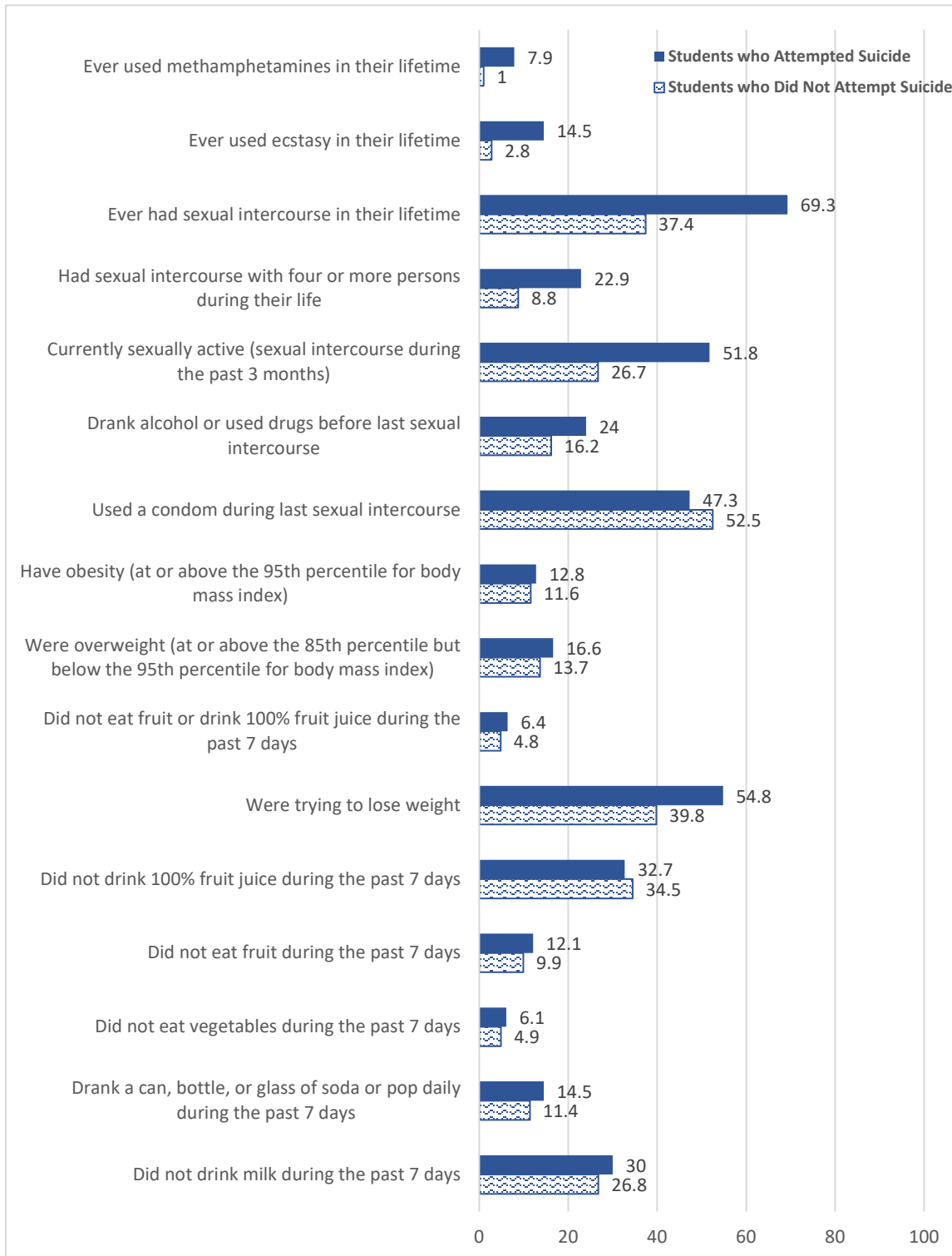




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