

Unintentional Injury and Violence-Related Behaviors and Academic Achievement



Montana Office of Public Instruction • Elsie Arntzen, Superintendent • www.opi.mt.gov

What is the relationship between unintentional injury and violence-related behaviors and academic achievement?

Data presented below from the 2023 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) show a negative association between unintentional injury and violence-related behaviors and academic achievement. This means that students with higher grades are less likely to engage in unintentional injury and violence-related behaviors than their classmates with lower grades, and students who do not engage in unintentional injury and violence-related behaviors receive higher grades than their classmates who do engage in unintentional injury and violence-related behaviors. These associations do not prove causation. Further research is needed to determine whether low grades lead to behaviors related to unintentional injury and violence, behaviors related to unintentional injury and violence lead to low grades, or some other factors lead to both of these problems.

Percentage of high school students who engaged in unintentional injury or violence-related behaviors, by type of grades earned – Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2023.

Unintentional Injury and Violence-Related Behaviors	Percentage of Montana high school students who engaged in each risk behavior, by type of grades mostly earned				Significant Association*
	A's	B's	C's	D's/F's	
<i>Unintentional Injury-Related Behaviors</i>					
Did not <i>always</i> wear a seat belt when riding in a car	43	53	60	72	Yes
Did not <i>always</i> wear a seat belt when driving	26	37	42	58	Yes
Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol, past 30 days	16	21	23	37	Yes
Drove when drinking alcohol, past 30 days	4	9	8	16	Yes
Texted or e-mailed while driving, past 30 days	58	57	57	51	No
Used the Internet or apps on their cell phone while driving, past 30 days	52	56	55	53	No
<i>Violence-Related Behaviors</i>					
Carried a weapon on school property (e.g., a gun, knife, or club during the past 30 days)	8	12	14	13	Yes
Carried a gun during the past 12 months	6	8	10	16	Yes
Did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school during the past 30 days	8	11	15	24	Yes
Were threatened or injured with a weapon on school property during the past 12 months	6	9	14	21	Yes
Were in a physical fight during the past 12 months	12	22	28	37	Yes
Were in a physical fight on school property during the past 12 months	4	8	12	16	Yes
Were forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to	4	8	12	16	Yes
Experienced sexual violence (unwanted kissing, touching, sexual intercourse) during the past 12 months	11	16	14	24	Yes
Experienced sexual dating violence during the past 12 months	8	11	10	12	Yes
Experienced physical dating violence during the past 12 months (hit, slammed into something, or injured with an object or weapon)	6	9	13	16	Yes
Were bullied on school property during the past 12 months	20	28	29	35	Yes
Were electronically bullied during the past 12 months	15	22	21	29	Yes
Treated badly or unfairly in school because of their race or ethnicity	20	25	31	41	Yes
Victim of teasing, name calling, or bullying because someone thought they were gay, lesbian, or bisexual during the past 12 months	14	17	21	30	Yes
Felt sad or hopeless almost every day or 2 weeks or more during the past 12 months	33	46	55	63	Yes
Seriously considered attempting suicide during the past 12 months	19	28	33	42	Yes
Made a suicide plan during the past 12 months	16	23	26	38	Yes
Attempted suicide during the past 12 months	6	12	16	26	Yes
Had a suicide attempt that resulted in medical treatment during the past 12 months	2	4	6	10	Yes
Mental health was not good (stress, anxiety, and depression) past 30 days	26	32	43	54	Yes

*Based on logistic regression analysis controlling for sex, race/ethnicity, and grade in school, p<0.05.

Figure 1. Percentage of high school students, by unintentional injury-related behavior, by grades earned. Montana YRBS, 2023.

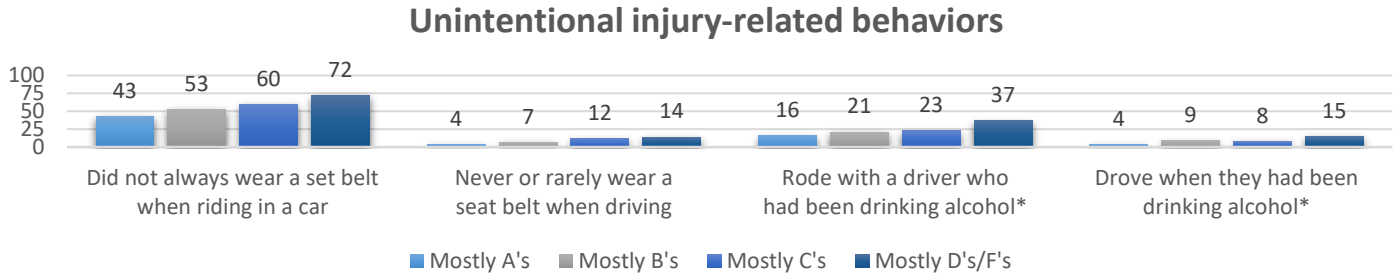


Figure 2. Percentage of high school students, by violence-related behavior, by grades earned. Montana YRBS, 2023.

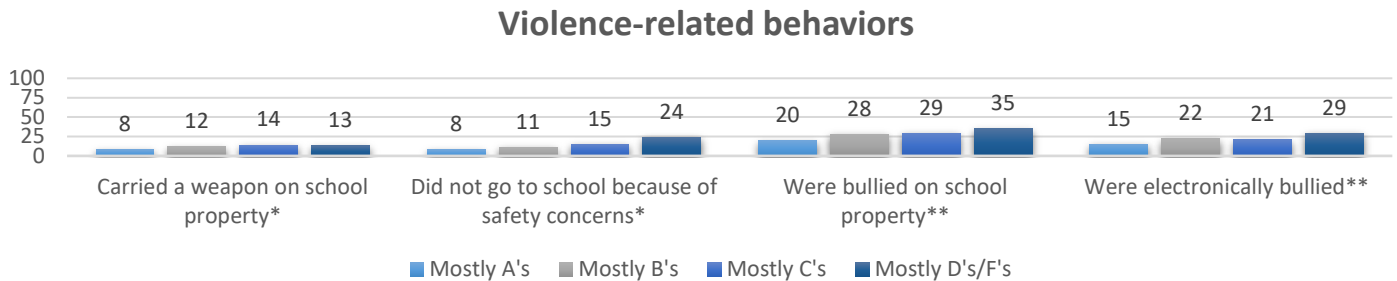
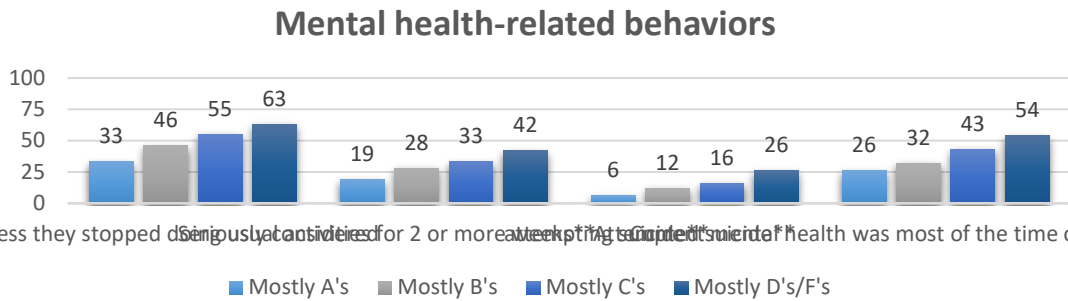


Figure 3. Percentage of high school students, by mental health-related behavior, by grades earned. Montana YRBS, 2023.



* During the past 30 days.

** During the past 12 months.

The Montana YRBS monitors priority health-risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death, disability, and social problems among youth and adults in the United States. It is conducted every 2 years during late winter and provides data representative of high school students in Montana. In 2023, students completing the YRBS were asked, “During the past 12 months, how would you describe your grades in school?” and given seven response options (Mostly A’s, Mostly B’s, Mostly C’s, Mostly D’s, Mostly F’s, None of these grades, and Not sure). In 2023, 46% of students received mostly A’s, 27% received mostly B’s, 15% received mostly C’s, 7% received mostly D’s or F’s, and 5% reported receiving none of these grades or not sure. The YRBS has been administered by the Office of Public Instruction in collaboration with Montana schools since 1991. More information is located at www.opi.mt.gov/yrbs.

Montana High School Students Grades Earned

