

# Chittenden Central Supervisory Union Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2009 Highlights

*A look at health-related behaviors  
that impact our children's futures*

*The middle and high school years are a critical time for developing health-related habits. Behaviors that children start during these years often set the pattern for adulthood. Some behaviors place young people at increased risk for serious health problems, now and in the future.*

*The Youth Risk Behavior Survey measures the prevalence of specific personal behaviors that directly affect the health of our youth. These highlights are based on participation of 1315 students (84% of students enrolled) in grades 8 through 12 at Albert D. Lawton School, Westford Elementary School, and Essex High School.*

## **Tobacco**

Tobacco use has declined and remains low, with only 3% of students reporting daily smoking and 12% reporting having smoked in the past 30 days. Exposure to secondhand smoke rose significantly from 2007 to 2009, though local levels are still below the state average.

## **Alcohol and Other Drugs**

Alcohol use rises as students get older. Alcohol use jumps significantly in 9th grade and again in 12th grade. While use among 8th and 10th graders is at the lowest level since 1997, alcohol use among EHS seniors has continued to rise.

Marijuana use rises steadily as students get older. Marijuana use nearly doubles between 9th and 12th grade. Overall the perception of the risks of using marijuana has dropped significantly.

## **Violence**

Bullying decreases as students get older—with the highest levels of bullying reported in 8th grade. Levels of physical fighting are also high in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, but have declined significantly since 1999. Females are more than twice as likely to be electronically bullied as males.

## **Driving**

Safety belt use remains high. Driving a car while impaired from marijuana or alcohol has risen slightly.

## **Sexual Behavior**

Nearly 60% of high school seniors have had sexual intercourse. Approximately 70% of students who are sexually active reported using a condom during their most recent sexual experience.

## **Nutrition and Physical Activity**

Physical activity decreases as students get older. More than one third of students reported spending three or more hours per school day watching TV, playing video games, or using the computer (not for school-related work).

## **Youth Assets**

Approximately half of CCSU students feel like they matter to people in the community, up significantly from 2007. Nearly 90% of students reported they have an adult in their life they can usually turn to for help and advice.

# CCSU Prevention and Wellness - Overview

## Staff/Faculty

CCSU Prevention and Wellness Coordinator  
Student Assistance Professional (SAP) Counselor  
School Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologists  
School Health Nurses  
Food Services Department  
School Public Safety Committee  
Health and Physical Education Teachers

*CCSU Prevention and Wellness programming and curricula strives to ensure that all our students in pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade receive comprehensive and evidence-based guidance, physical, and health education.*

*Our comprehensive focus on healthy youth and safe, positive learning environments includes a prevention and wellness goal shared among classroom teachers and administrators; health and physical education; health services; food services; school counseling; and of course, family and community involvement.*

## Policies

CCSU Wellness Policy (nutrition, physical education, and physical activity)  
CCSU Policy on Possession and Use of Tobacco Products  
CCSU Policy on Alcohol and Other Drugs

## Comprehensive Health Education

- **Know Your Body (K-5):** evidence-based, age-appropriate health education in the areas of safety; building decision-making skills; making healthy behavior choices; human growth and development; disease prevention; nutrition; physical activity; media awareness; and alcohol, tobacco and other drug use prevention
- **Second Step (K-5):** research-based violence prevention program
- **Steps to Respect (4-5):** research-based bullying prevention program
- **Michigan Model (6-8):** research-based, age-appropriate health education in the areas of social and emotional health; nutrition and physical activity; safety; alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; personal health and wellness; and HIV and reproductive health

## Student Engagement

- **VKAT** (Vermont Kids Against Tobacco) is a peer-led group that works to educate kids in grades 5 through 8 about the real dangers of tobacco use.
- **OVX** (Our Voices Exposed) is a high-school aged, youth-led movement against tobacco to educate, inform and empower teens to reduce smoking among their peers.
- **VTLSP/SADD** (Vermont Teen Leadership and Safety Program/Students Against Destructive Decisions) supports teens making healthy choices around issues such as alcohol/other drug use, traffic safety, and risk-taking behaviors.
- **Peer Helpers** are Essex High School students trained in basic counseling skills who make themselves available to other students who may want or need a peer to listen.
- **AWARE** (Always Working At Respecting Everyone) is an organization that helps create a positive climate for Essex High School. Through activities and training, students provide the entire EHS community with information and thoughtful discussion around topics such as anti-bullying and anti-harassment.

# The Role of Parents and Families

## *Parental Influence*

Parents are an enormous influence on their children and the choices they make. There are many things parents and caregivers can do to help their children make healthy choices. Educate yourself about the other influences on your child, such as the media, social networking, the school and community climate, and current trends among teens in your area. Connect with your kids, and talk with them. Listen a lot. Get to know their friends and their parents. Communicate your values. Help to guide their decisions, not control them.

## *Resources for Parents*

There are many resources in our community (such as Essex CHIPS) and in our schools (such as guidance counselors, the prevention and wellness coordinator, and the School Assistance Professional at EHS).

There is a lot of information on the internet. For guidance or assistance finding reputable sites and sources of information, please contact Gabrielle Smith, CCSU Prevention and Wellness Coordinator at: [gsmith@ccsuvt.org](mailto:gsmith@ccsuvt.org)

## **What can parents do foster resilience and healthy development?**

*Many protective factors have been found to promote healthy development and resilience among young people. Collected here from a number of sources are some evidence-based steps parents can take to help their children develop with resilience and good mental health:*

- Give your children love and attention every day.
- Get to know your child so you can discern unusual behavior.
- Show your children appropriate behaviors by the way you act.
- Listen to and talk with your children—about anything—to develop an open, trusting relationship.
- Reward your child for good behavior or a job well done.
- Establish clear and consistent limits and rules.
- Know where your children are, what they are doing, and with whom. Set reasonable curfews.
- Communicate with teachers and be involved in your children's school.
- Set high expectations for your children.
- Create opportunities and expectations for your children to be contributing members of the family and community.

## Tobacco

Tobacco use has declined and remains low, with only 3% of students reporting daily smoking and 12% reporting having smoked in the past 30 days. Exposure to secondhand smoke rose significantly from 2007 to 2009, though local levels are still below the state average.

|  | ALL | Comments  | 8 <sup>th</sup> | 9 <sup>th</sup> | 10 <sup>th</sup> | 11 <sup>th</sup> | 12 <sup>th</sup> | F   | M   |
|--|-----|---|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----|-----|
| Smoked cigarettes during the past 30 days  | 12% | Lower than the state-wide level of 16%.                           | 5%              | 11%             | 8%               | 15%              | 17%              | 11% | 13% |
| Smoked every day for the past 30 days  | 3%  | Lower than the state-wide level of 5%.                            | 1%              | 2%              | 2%               | 3%               | 6%               | 3%  | 3%  |
| Think <u>their parents</u> think it is wrong or very wrong for them to smoke cigarettes                      | 93% |   | 98%             | 94%             | 96%              | 92%              | 89%              | 95% | 92% |
| Think it is wrong or very wrong for someone their age to smoke cigarettes                                    | 78% | Up from 57% in 1999, and higher than the state-wide level of 73%. | 93%             | 81%             | 81%              | 76%              | 65%              | 80% | 75% |
| Think that there is great risk in people harming themselves from smoking one or more packs of cigarettes/day | 74% | Higher than the state-wide level of 67%.                          | 70%             | 75%             | 78%              | 77%              | 67%              | 78% | 71% |
| Report that it is sort of easy or very easy to get cigarettes  | 64% | Lower than the state-wide level of 67%.                           | 33%             | 55%             | 61%              | 73%              | 86%              | 61% | 67% |
| Were in the same room with someone who was smoking cigarettes  | 38% | Up significantly from 26% in 2007.                                | 26%             | 43%             | 35%              | 39%              | 41%              | 36% | 40% |
| Were in a car with someone who was smoking cigarettes  | 26% | Up significantly from 16% in 2007.                                | 14%             | 29%             | 20%              | 30%              | 33%              | 25% | 27% |

## What CCSU Is Doing About Tobacco Use:

In addition to comprehensive prevention and wellness programming, including guidance, physical, and health education, CCSU takes the following measures to address tobacco use:

- **Partnership with Essex CHIPS:** CCSU works closely with Essex Chips for various tobacco prevention programs and events, including Vermont Kids Against Tobacco (VKAT) and Our Voices Exposed (OVX).
- **N-O-T (Not On Tobacco) Program:** NOT is a researched-based smoking cessation program for teens available to all students who wish to participate.
- **8 out of 10 Campaign:** CCSU participates each year in “common theme campaigns” coordinated by the Vermont Department of Health to send consistent tobacco use prevention messages statewide. One example is the “8 out of 10 Campaign,” which is an effort to change the misperception among youth that “most” teens smoke, when in fact 8 out of 10 Vermont youth don’t smoke. For more information, go to: [www.8outof10.com](http://www.8outof10.com)
- **Tobacco Use Prevention Education Grant:** CCSU receives funds from the Vermont Department of Education for tobacco use prevention programs, including materials and trainings on science-based prevention and intervention strategies and curricula.
- **Impacting Tobacco Prevention with Technology Grant** – In both the 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 school years, CCSU was awarded funds to integrate technology into the tobacco prevention and health curricula. This grant funded professional development training for faculty who teach health, and funded the purchase of new technology for use in health classes.

## Suggestions for Parents and Families:

- If you smoke or chew, try to quit and let your kids know you are trying. Quitting is hard – let them see that. It can take smokers many tries to quit for good, so keep trying. If you do smoke, don’t smoke in enclosed spaces with your kids, including cars. Never supply your kids with cigarettes or other tobacco products, even if they are already using – especially if they are under 18 (the legal age to use tobacco products).

## Alcohol and Other Drugs

Alcohol use rises as students get older. Alcohol use jumps significantly in 9th grade and again in 12th grade. While use among 8th and 10th graders is at the lowest level since 1997, alcohol use among EHS seniors has continued to rise. Marijuana use rises steadily as students get older. Marijuana use nearly doubles between 9th and 12th grade. Overall the perception of the risks of using marijuana has dropped significantly.

|  | ALL | Comments  | 8 <sup>th</sup> | 9 <sup>th</sup> | 10 <sup>th</sup> | 11 <sup>th</sup> | 12 <sup>th</sup> | F   | M   |
|--|-----|---|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----|-----|
| Consumed at least one drink of alcohol during the past 30 days   | 33% | Rates among CCSU 8 <sup>th</sup> graders have been declining from 23% in 2003, but rates among CCSU 12 <sup>th</sup> graders have been increasing from 41% in 2003. | 8%              | 25%             | 31%              | 39%              | 56%              | 32% | 35% |
| Binged on alcohol (had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row within a couple of hours) during the past 30 days       | 21% | On average, one out of five students binge drink.   | 3%              | 14%             | 19%              | 25%              | 38%              | 18% | 23% |
| Think <u>their parents</u> think it is wrong or very wrong for them to drink alcohol                                   | 81% |   | 92%             | 88%             | 82%              | 80%              | 64%              | 83% | 80% |
| Think it is wrong or very wrong for someone their age to drink alcohol   | 57% | Higher than the state-wide level of 49%.  | 88%             | 67%             | 59%              | 48%              | 37%              | 58% | 56% |
| Think that there is great risk in people harming themselves from drinking one or two alcoholic drinks nearly every day | 28% |   | 31%             | 32%             | 26%              | 28%              | 24%              | 33% | 23% |
| Report that it is sort of easy or very easy to get alcohol   | 70% |   | 51%             | 62%             | 69%              | 76%              | 82%              | 71% | 69% |
| Got alcohol from someone who gave it to them   | 45% | Most common source of alcohol; much higher for females than males.  | 69%             | 36%             | 45%              | 49%              | 44%              | 53% | 36% |
| Gave someone money to buy alcohol for them   | 32% | Up significantly from 24% in 2007.  | 0%              | 31%             | 30%              | 30%              | 38%              | 32% | 31% |
| Got or stole alcohol from home   | 14% | Down significantly from 22% in 2007.  | 8%              | 26%             | 19%              | 11%              | 6%               | 12% | 15% |

|   |     |   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|---|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Used marijuana one more times during the past 30 days   | 22% | Use among 8 <sup>th</sup> graders has declined; overall levels of marijuana use are relatively unchanged since 2005.                        | 3%  | 17% | 19% | 28% | 33% | 17% | 27% |
| Have ever taken either a prescription stimulant <u>or</u> a prescription pain reliever not prescribed to them | 15% | Prescription drug use is highest in 11th and 12th grades, when 1 in 5 students report use of prescription medication not prescribed to them | 5%  | 12% | 13% | 20% | 20% | 12% | 19% |
| Were offered, sold, or given an illegal drug <i>on school property</i> during the past 12 months              | 25% | Higher than state-wide level of 19%; similar to 2007 and 2005 statistics  | 5%  | 23% | 24% | 30% | 33% | 20% | 30% |
| Think <u>their parents</u> think it is wrong or very wrong for them to use marijuana                          | 89% |   | 97% | 94% | 89% | 88% | 82% | 91% | 88% |
| Think it is wrong or very wrong for someone their age to use marijuana  | 64% | Drops significantly as students get older.  | 91% | 72% | 64% | 55% | 50% | 69% | 59% |
| Think that there is great risk in people harming themselves from using marijuana regularly                    | 46% | Down significantly from 52% in 2007. More students think there is great risk from smoking cigarettes than from using marijuana.             | 69% | 54% | 45% | 39% | 32% | 52% | 39% |
| Report that is sort of easy or very easy to get marijuana   | 56% |   | 13% | 44% | 57% | 69% | 76% | 52% | 59% |

## Alcohol and Other Drugs *(continued)*

### What CCSU Is Doing About Alcohol and Other Drugs:

In addition to comprehensive prevention and wellness programming, including guidance, physical, and health education, CCSU takes the following measures to address other drugs:

- **Project Northland** – The Essex Police Department delivers the “Project Northland” alcohol use prevention curriculum to students at ADL Middle School.
- **Abstinence Pledges** – Essex High School runs pledges and offers prizes during prom and graduation season in collaboration with MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving).
- **Partnership with Essex CHIPS and Local Law Enforcement:** CCSU and EHS administrators, guidance counselors, the Student Assistance Professional (SAP) counselor, and the CCSU Prevention and Wellness Coordinator, work collaboratively with Essex CHIPS and the local law enforcement to address issues of drug use and promote positive youth development.
- **Activities:** The middle and high schools carry out various prevention events including assemblies and in-school and after-school programming.

### Suggestions for Parents and Families:

To help ensure that your child's life is structured in such a way that drugs have no place in it, you should:

- **If possible, arrange to have your children looked after and engaged in the after-school hours if you cannot be with them.** Encourage them to get involved with reputable youth groups, arts, music, sports, community service and academic clubs.
- **Make sure children who are unattended for periods during the day feel your presence.** Give them a schedule and set limits on their behavior. Give them household chores to accomplish. Enforce a strict phone-in-to-you policy. Leave notes for them around the house. Provide easy-to-find snacks.
- **Get to know your child's friends.** Talk to them when taking them to and from after-school activities, games, the library and movies (while being sensitive to their need to feel independent).
- **Get to know the parents of your child's friends. Exchange phone numbers and addresses.** Agree to forbid each others' children from consuming alcohol, tobacco and other drugs in their homes, and pledge that you will inform each other if one of you becomes aware of a child who violates this pact.
- **Call parents whose home is to be used for a party.** Make sure they can assure you that no alcoholic beverages or illegal substances will be dispensed. Don't be afraid to check out the party yourself to see that adult supervision is in place.
- **Make it easy for your child to leave a place where substances are being used.** Discuss with your child in advance how to contact you or another designated adult in order to get a ride home. If another adult provides the transportation, be available to talk to your child about the situation when he or she arrives home.
- **Set curfews and enforce them.** Weekend curfews might range from 9 p.m. for a fifth-grader to 12:30 a.m. for a senior in high school.
- **Encourage open dialogue with your children about their experiences.** Tell your child, "I love you and trust you, but I don't trust the world around you, and I need to know what's going on in your life so I can be a good parent to you."

From the U.S. Department of Education, available at: <http://www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/involve/drugfree/index.html>

## Violence

Bullying decreases as students get older—with the highest levels of bullying reported in 8th grade. Levels of physical fighting are also high in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, but have declined significantly since 1999. Females are more than twice as likely to be electronically bullied as males.

|   | ALL | Comments   | 8 <sup>th</sup> | 9 <sup>th</sup> | 10 <sup>th</sup> | 11 <sup>th</sup> | 12 <sup>th</sup> | F   | M   |
|---|-----|--|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----|-----|
| Were in a physical fight during the past 12 months  | 25% | 8 <sup>th</sup> graders are significantly more likely to be in a physical fight than 12 <sup>th</sup> graders, but the percent of 8 <sup>th</sup> graders who report being in a physical fight has dropped from a high of 43% in 2003. | 29%             | 31%             | 24%              | 26%              | 17%              | 16% | 34% |
| Were hit, slapped, or physically hurt by boyfriend/girlfriend in the past 12 months                         | 7%  | Same as state-wide level of 7%.  | 6%              | 6%              | 7%               | 6%               | 7%               | 5%  | 9%  |
| Were touched against their wishes or forced to touch someone else   | 13% | 20% of CCSU female students have been touched against their wishes or forced to touch someone else.  | 12%             | 16%             | 13%              | 12%              | 12%              | 20% | 6%  |
| Were bullied during the past 30 days  | 15% | 8 <sup>th</sup> graders are significantly more likely to have been bullied than 12 <sup>th</sup> graders.  | 23%             | 18%             | 14%              | 13%              | 7%               | 16% | 14% |
| Were electronically bullied during the past 12 months   | 13% | Female students are more than twice as likely as males to be electronically bullied.   | 16%             | 16%             | 15%              | 12%              | 8%               | 18% | 8%  |
| Felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for at least 2 weeks that they stopped doing some usual activities | 20% | Female students are more likely than male students to feel so sad or hopeless that they stop doing some usual activities.  | 19%             | 19%             | 18%              | 23%              | 19%              | 26% | 14% |
| Purposefully hurt themselves (e.g. cut or burned) without wanting to die                                    | 14% | Female students are more than twice as likely as male students to purposefully hurt themselves.  | 15%             | 15%             | 14%              | 12%              | 12%              | 19% | 8%  |

## What CCSU Is Doing About Violence:

In addition to comprehensive prevention and wellness programming, including guidance, physical, and health education, CCSU takes the following measures to address violence:

- **Student Groups:** Peer Helpers, VTLSP/SADD, and AWARE group (Always Working At Respecting Everyone) work on conflict resolution and healthy choices
- **School Climate Activities:** Many activities and programs are held throughout the year at CCSU member schools to promote positive school climate and connections between students and faculty, including:

## Suggestions for Parents and Families:

- Learn and model healthy and respectful conflict resolution strategies for the family; learn about and use anger-management techniques, if necessary.
- Know when to intervene to protect your children. Get help if you think you need it.
- Make sure your children do not have access to guns or drugs, including tobacco and alcohol.
- Learn about the school violence prevention curricula (Second Step and Steps to Respect). Talk to the guidance counselor if you have questions.

## Driving

Safety belt use remains high. Driving a car while impaired from marijuana or alcohol has risen slightly.

|   | ALL | Comments   | 8 <sup>th</sup> | 9 <sup>th</sup> | 10 <sup>th</sup> | 11 <sup>th</sup> | 12 <sup>th</sup> | F   | M   |
|---|-----|--|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----|-----|
| Always or almost always wear a safety belt when riding in a car driven by someone else                                | 86% | Safety belt use remains high among CCSU students.  | 86%             | 85%             | 85%              | 91%              | 87%              | 90% | 84% |
| During the past 30 days <u>drove</u> a car or other vehicle when they had been drinking <u>alcohol</u>                | 7%  | Although rates of drinking and driving have been declining among students statewide, rates of drinking and driving have been increasing slightly among CCSU students since 2003. | 1%              | 4%              | 7%               | 8%               | 14%              | 4%  | 11% |
| During the past 30 days <u>drove</u> a car or other vehicle when they had been smoking <u>marijuana</u>               | 12% | Students are more likely to drive under the influence of marijuana than under the influence of alcohol.  | 1%              | 6%              | 8%               | 16%              | 22%              | 7%  | 16% |
| During the past 30 days <u>rode</u> in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking <u>alcohol</u>  | 21% |  | 11%             | 20%             | 21%              | 21%              | 26%              | 19% | 22% |
| During the past 30 days <u>rode</u> in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been smoking <u>marijuana</u> | 26% |  | 4%              | 20%             | 25%              | 33%              | 39%              | 22% | 30% |

## What CCSU Is Doing About Driving Safety:

In addition to comprehensive prevention and wellness programming, including guidance, physical, and health education, CCSU takes the following measures to address driving safety:

- **Safety Belt Checks:** Vermont Teen Leadership Safety Program (VTLSP) does safety belt checks each fall and spring.
- **Special Events:** At ADL, a crashed car was brought in for kids to see the impact of and talk about Driving While Impaired (DWI)
- **Tie One On For Safety** – Essex High School hosts a “Tie One On For Safety” campaign before the holidays to remind people to use their safety belts and not to drink and drive.

## Suggestions for Parents and Families:

- Model safe, responsible driving – use a seatbelt, follow all of the rules of the road, and drive sober and focused (no texting, use hands-free device if talking on the phone)
- Consider signing a contract with your teen to outline rules and mutually agree to follow them, parent and child. For a sample contract: [http://www.aaaexchange.com/assets/files/2007214956500.parent\\_teencontract.pdf](http://www.aaaexchange.com/assets/files/2007214956500.parent_teencontract.pdf)

## Sexual Behavior

Nearly 60% of high school seniors have had sexual intercourse. Approximately 70% of students who are sexually active reported using a condom during their most recent sexual experience.

|  | ALL | Comments   | 8 <sup>th</sup> | 9 <sup>th</sup> | 10 <sup>th</sup> | 11 <sup>th</sup> | 12 <sup>th</sup> | M   | F   |
|--|-----|--|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----|-----|
| Have ever had sexual intercourse                                 | 34% | Up from 2007 (30%); lower than state-wide level of 40%.    | 9%              | 22%             | 28%              | 41%              | 59%              | 32% | 36% |
| Used drugs or alcohol before their most recent sexual experience | 24% | Down from 2007 (29%); higher than state-wide level of 20%. | 29%             |                 | 21%              |                  |                  | 17% | 30% |
| Used a condom during their most recent sexual experience         | 71% | Up from 2007 (66%)   | 69%             |                 | 73%              |                  |                  | 69% | 73% |

## What CCSU Is Doing About Sexual Behavior:

In addition to comprehensive prevention and wellness programming, including guidance, physical, and health education, CCSU takes the following measures to address sexual behavior:

- **Health Education:**
  - At EHS, health education includes a Human Sexuality unit that includes reproductive anatomy and physiology, sexual decision-making, and contraceptive and sexually transmitted disease information including HIV/AIDS education.
  - At ADL, EHS and Westford Schools, students receive age-appropriate health education that includes sexual behavior and making healthy choices.
  - At Fleming, guidance staff talk to students about puberty to prepare them for the changes they are or will soon be going through.
  - At CCSU elementary schools, both “Second Step” and “Know Your Body” teach students about decision-making and refusal skills, which build a foundation for decisions about sexual activity.

## Suggestions for Parents and Families:

- Make your values and expectations for your children’s behavior clear.
- Give your children opportunities to talk with you about puberty, dating, and issues about sexual behavior and choices they are considering.

## Nutrition and Physical Activity

Physical activity decreases as students get older. More than one third of students reported spending three or more hours per school day watching TV, playing video games, or using the computer (not for school-related work).

|   | ALL | Comments  | 8 <sup>th</sup> | 9 <sup>th</sup> | 10 <sup>th</sup> | 11 <sup>th</sup> | 12 <sup>th</sup> | F   | M   |
|---|-----|---|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----|-----|
| Eat breakfast 3 days a week or more   | 80% |   | 84%             | 85%             | 81%              | 75%              | 77%              | 80% | 79% |
| Drink 1 or more glasses of soda per day   | 18% |   | 12%             | 18%             | 18%              | 19%              | 22%              | 11% | 26% |
| Eat 5 for more servings of fruits and vegetables per day                                  | 27% |   | 27%             | 29%             | 26%              | 28%              | 24%              | 26% | 27% |
| Participated in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day during the past 7 days | 20% |   | 33%             | 22%             | 20%              | 16%              | 15%              | 15% | 26% |
| Spend 3 or more hours per school day watching TV or playing on the computer               | 37% | This number is down slightly from 2007 (40%).                       | 36%             | 38%             | 38%              | 39%              | 37%              | 32% | 43% |
| Spend 5 or more hours per school day watching TV or playing on the computer               | 9%  | Males are twice as likely as females to have this much screen time. | 9%              | 9%              | 10%              | 10%              | 9%               | 6%  | 12% |

## What CCSU Is Doing About Nutrition and Physical Activity:

In addition to comprehensive prevention and wellness programming, including guidance, physical, and health education, CCSU takes the following measures to address nutrition and physical activity:

- **Menu Offerings:** Changes have been made to the CCSU menus to increase the nutritional value of the food served, including the use of whole grains and low-fat dairy products in all food preparations; fresh fruits and vegetables offered at all meals and snacks; switching to 100% fruit juices; and using lean meats.
- **Recess/Physical Education:** Students at all CCSU elementary and middle schools have recess or physical education every day. Recess is now held just before lunch, an evidence-based decision that has improved students' appetites and ability to be calm and focused at lunchtime. Students at ADL have physical education class every day.
- **Special events,** such as cooking classes, after school sports and physical movement activities, and in-school programs such as assemblies and programs like the "Fuel Up to Play" grant at ADL Intermediate School, promote healthy eating and physical activity.

## Suggestions for Parents and Families:

- Eat together as a family (without the TV or computer on) at least 2 – 3 times a week.
- Avoid fast food and processed foods. Try cooking with your children – it's fun, time together, and kids are more likely to eat what they help to make.
- Decide as a family on some fun outings that involve exercise – hiking, skiing, sledding, walks, swimming, rollerblading – there are lots of possibilities!

## Youth Assets

Approximately half of CCSU students feel like they matter to people in the community, up significantly from 2007. Nearly 90% of students reported they have an adult in their life they can usually turn to for help and advice.

|   | ALL | Comments            | 8 <sup>th</sup> | 9 <sup>th</sup> | 10 <sup>th</sup> | 11 <sup>th</sup> | 12 <sup>th</sup> | F   | M   |
|---|-----|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----|-----|
| Spend 1 or more hours per week in clubs or organizations outside of school (not including sports)     | 30% |                     | 20%             | 29%             | 29%              | 31%              | 37%              | 33% | 26% |
| Spend 1 or more hours per week volunteering their time to make their community a better place to live | 43% |                     | 34%             | 40%             | 45%              | 46%              | 44%              | 45% | 40% |
| Feel like they matter to people in their community  | 51% | Up from 46% in 2007 | 61%             | 51%             | 48%              | 46%              | 51%              | 52% | 49% |
| Have an adult in their life they can usually turn to for help and advice                              | 89% |                     | 90%             | 87%             | 89%              | 89%              | 89%              | 88% | 89% |

## What CCSU Is Doing About Youth Assets:

In addition to comprehensive prevention and wellness programming, including guidance, physical, and health education, CCSU takes the following measures to address youth assets:

- **Partnership with Essex CHIPS:** CCSU partners with Essex CHIPS to address building youth assets in our communities' youth. An annual community forum is held that engages youth and adults together in the planning and implementation, and the topic often focuses on building assets, healthy decision-making or healthy lifestyles.
- **Communications:** Through the PTOs, school newsletters, and the monthly Linking Health to Learning column in the Essex Reporter, CCSU shares information about individual assets with parents, youth and the community-at-large to increase awareness of the developmental assets and how to support youth to increase their assets. Past topics have touched on such assets as: caring neighborhood, caring school climate, positive family communication, community values youth, youth as resources, caring, and responsibility.

## What Parents and Families Can Do About Youth Assets:

- The Developmental Assets are 40 commonsense, positive experiences and qualities that help influence choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible adults. The asset-building framework reminds parents of the "bottom line" in their child-rearing. Asset-building focuses parents on their role of raising caring, competent, and responsible young people. It affirms them that what they do makes a big difference. Furthermore, it motivates them to stay actively involved in their children's lives throughout childhood and adolescence, rather than assuming that teenagers no longer need their parents when they are becoming independent. By emphasizing the positive things all young people need, asset building can break down the barriers and reduce the stigma of seeking support and guidance. For more information on the assets and parenting, go to: <http://www.search-institute.org/families> or locally, contact Essex CHIPS at [www.essexchips.org](http://www.essexchips.org)