



# Delaware Drug and Alcohol Tracking Alliance (DDATA)



## Gap Report 3 for Continuation Year

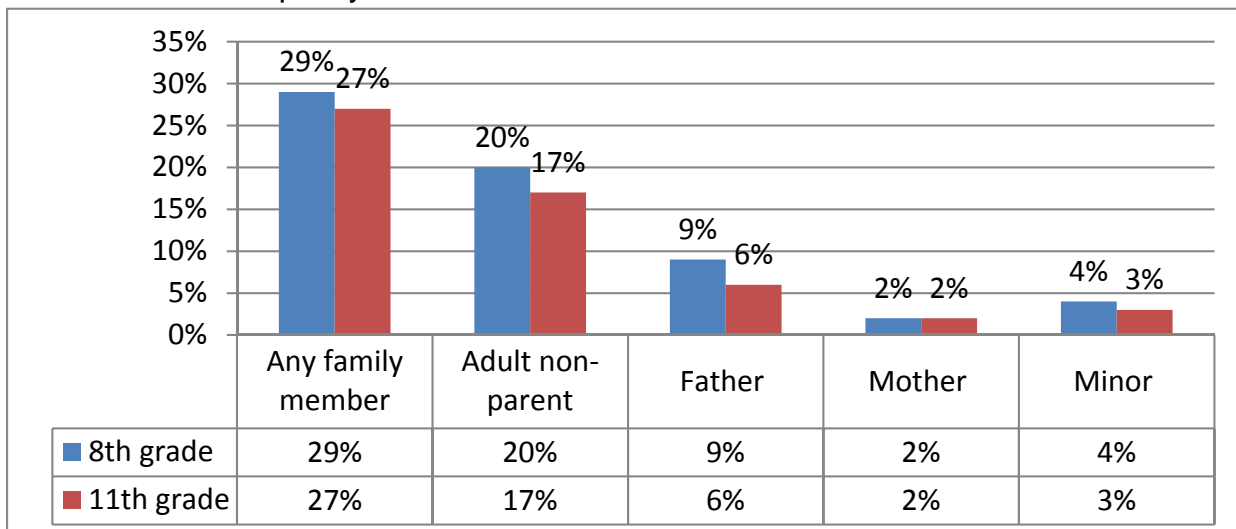
### **Arrested Families: Context and Impact for Youth at Disproportionate Risk due to a Family Member Being Incarcerated**

**March 2015**

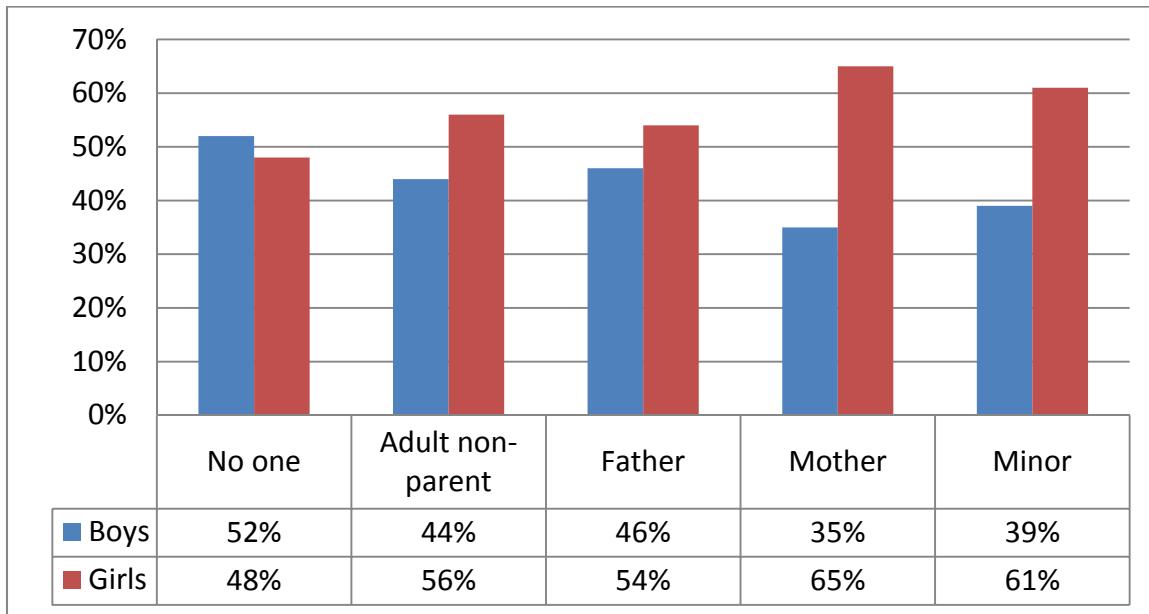
The Delaware Drug and Alcohol Tracking Alliance (DDATA) is charged with providing a quarterly assessment of gaps in services and programs. Previous Gap Report findings discussed relative need among students by race, gender, sub-state planning area, disability type, family situation and sexual orientation. The information presented in this gap report is from analyses of the 2014 Delaware School Survey, an annual school-based survey of Delaware 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders in public schools. The analyses in this report pertain mostly to 8<sup>th</sup> graders, as more students have left school before 11<sup>th</sup> grade, so the 8<sup>th</sup> grade represents a more diverse and representative sample. The analyses follow the 8<sup>th</sup> graders by who in the family has been incarcerated in the past year, as there appears to be a differential impact.

#### **Demographics**

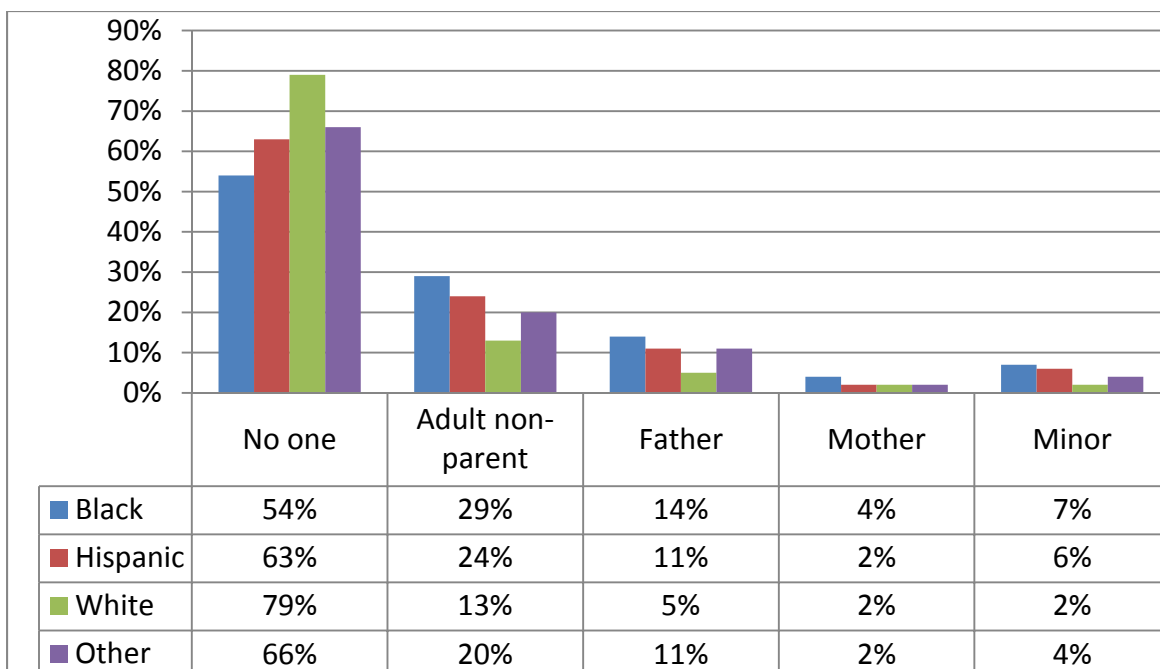
Having a family member incarcerated in the past year is a factor in the lives of many Delaware youth. Almost one in three (29%) of 8<sup>th</sup> graders report that a family member has been incarcerated in the past year; one in five (20%) report that an adult other than a parent was incarcerated and one in ten (10%) report that their father was incarcerated in the past year.



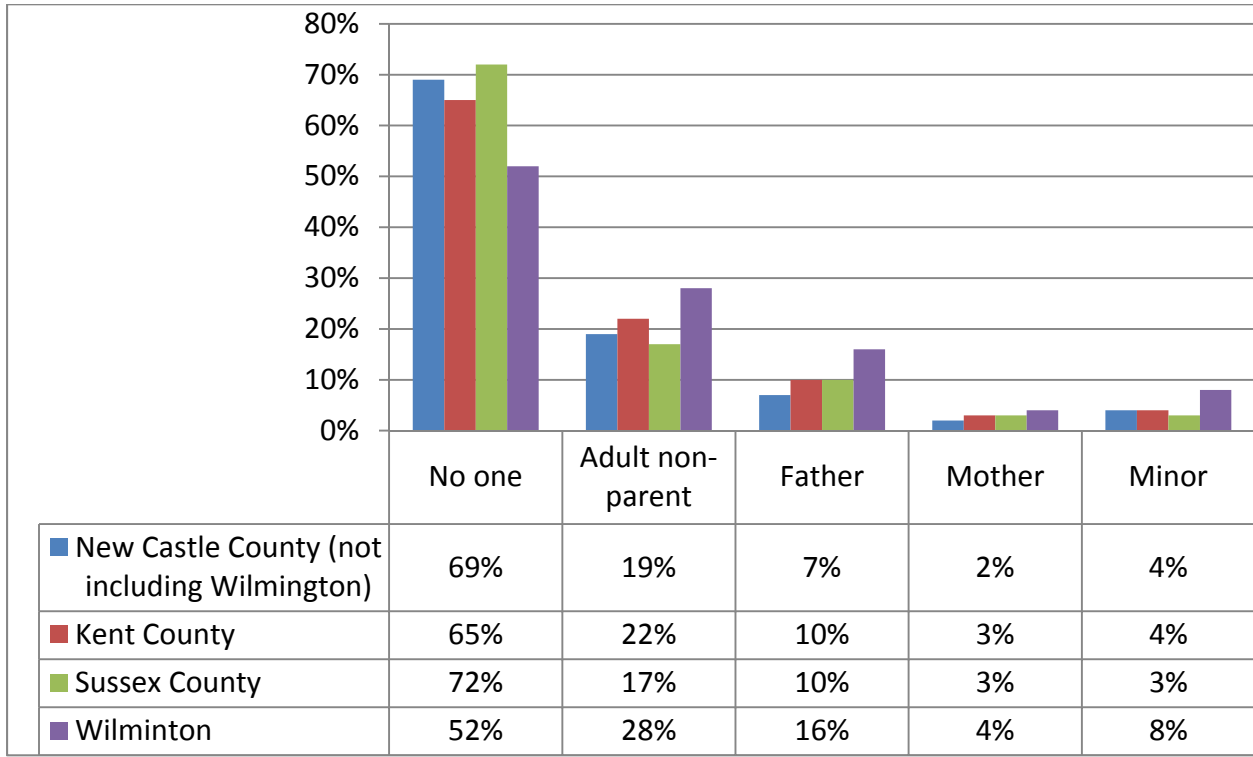
Boys and girls may be affected differently by the incarceration of a family member. The chart below indicates that although boys and girls are equally likely to report not having had a family member incarcerated, girls are more likely than boys to report the temporary loss of a family member due to incarceration. This may indicate that boys in this situation may be less likely to attend school regularly (and thus be present to participate in a school-based survey) than girls.



Although these students are demographically diverse, White students are least likely to report someone in the family was incarcerated in the past year.

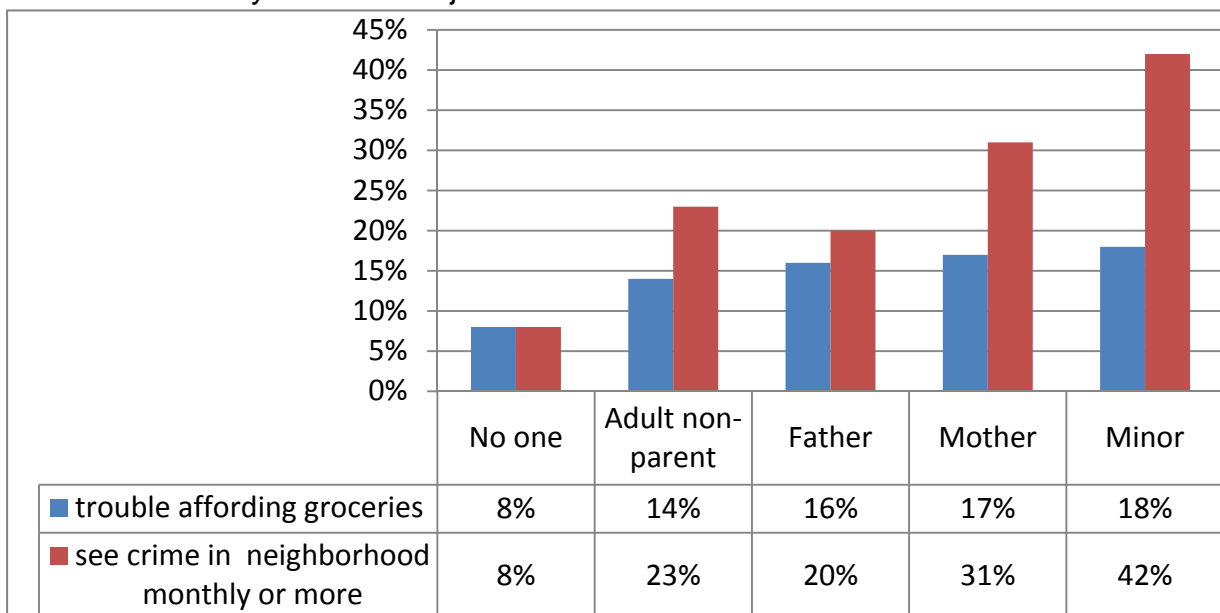


Eighth grade students from Wilmington are most likely to report a family member incarcerated, and those in Sussex County are least likely.

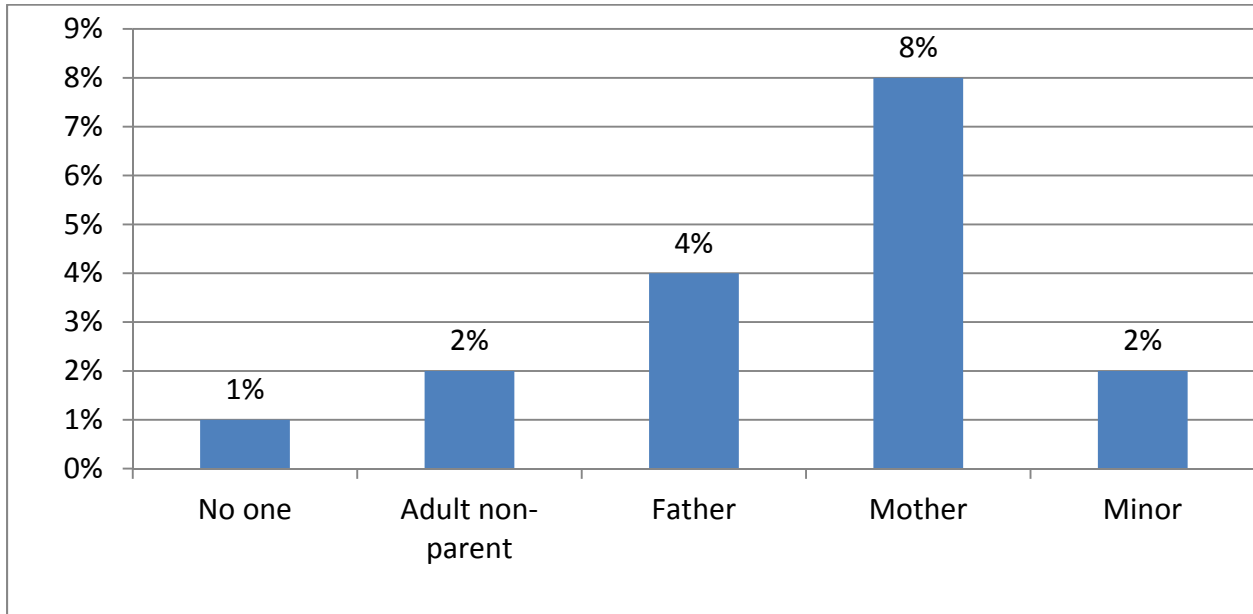


### Impact on Youth

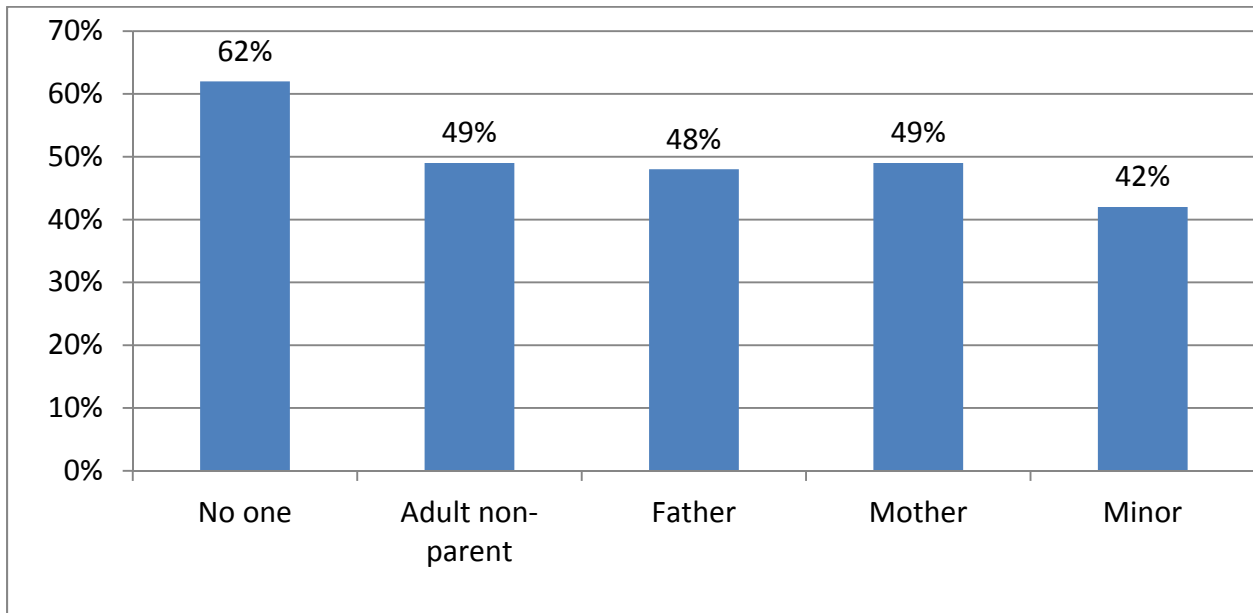
These youth are more likely than other students to report scarcity of food and living in crime-ridden neighborhoods, especially if they are reporting their mother or another minor in the family has been in jail.



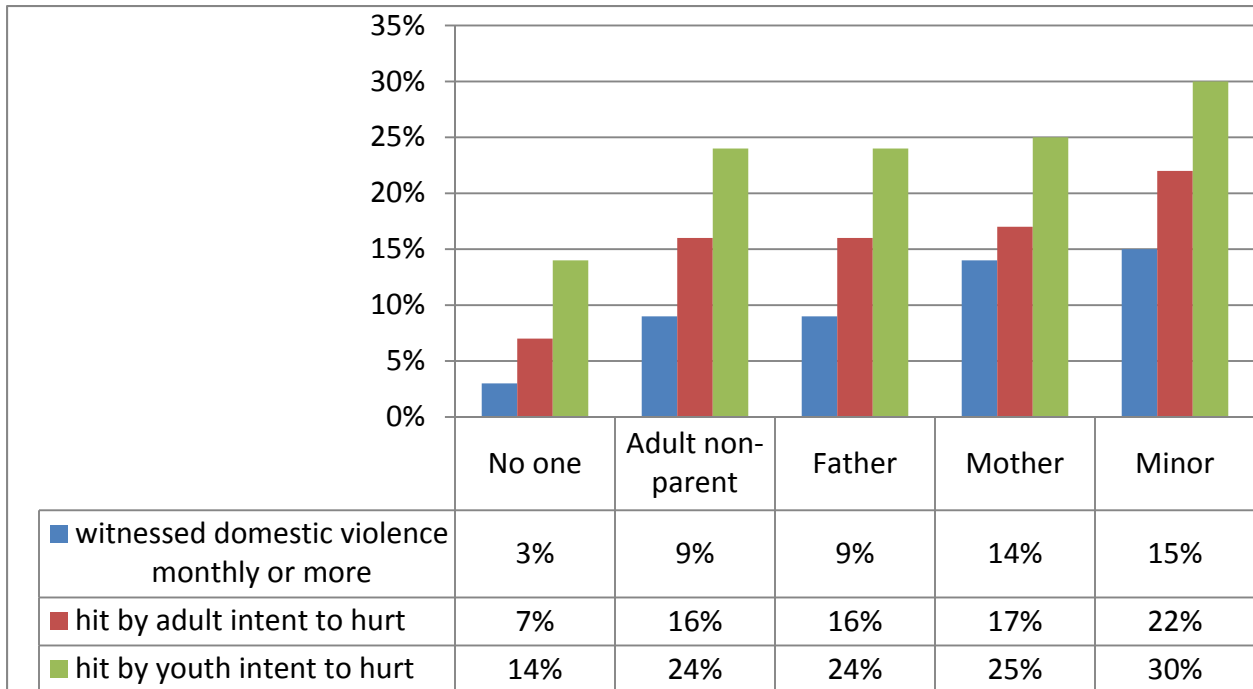
Students from “arrested families” are more likely to report that they are living somewhere other than at home with a parent or guardian, especially if their mother has been arrested.



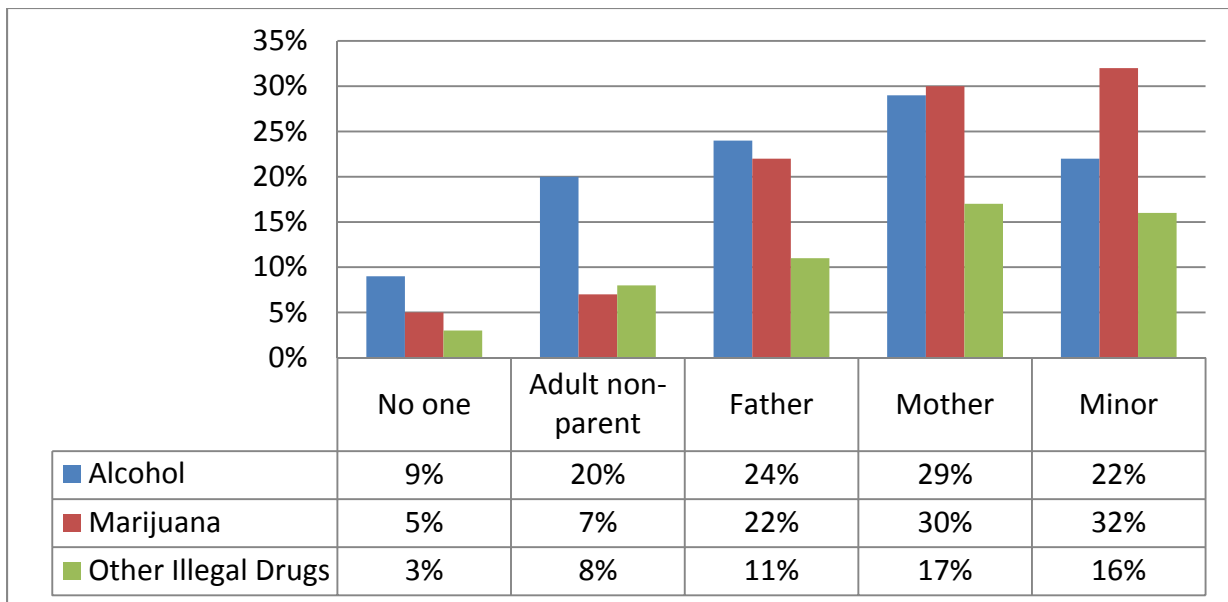
They are less likely to report feeling safe in their neighborhoods most of the time.



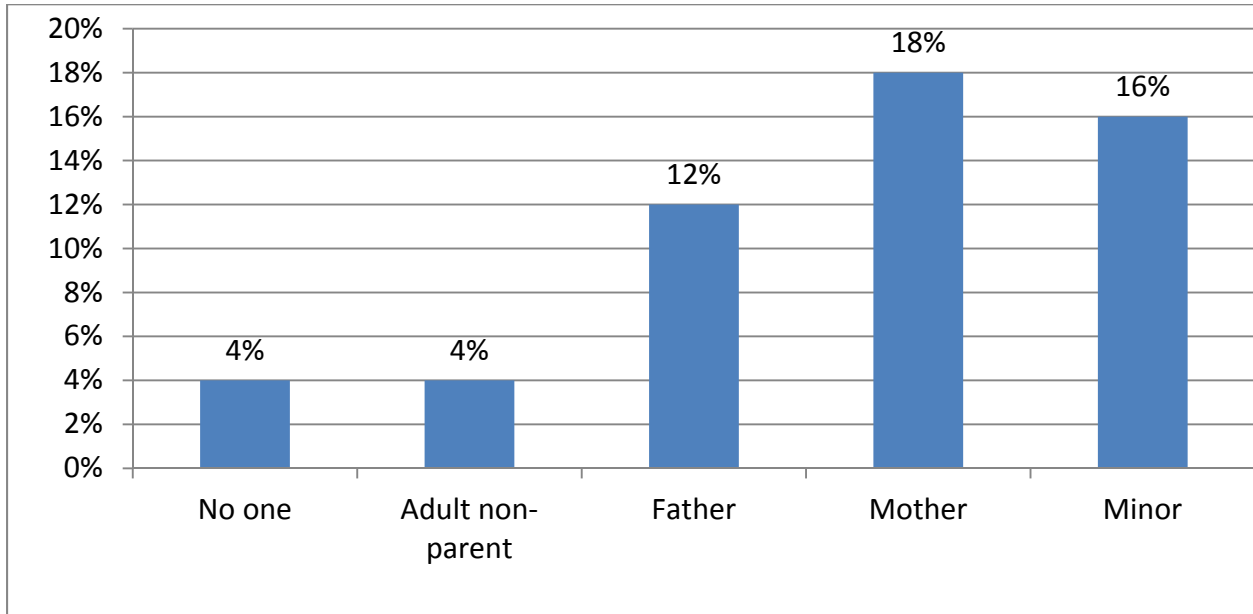
They are also more likely to have been exposed to violence, sometimes in their homes.



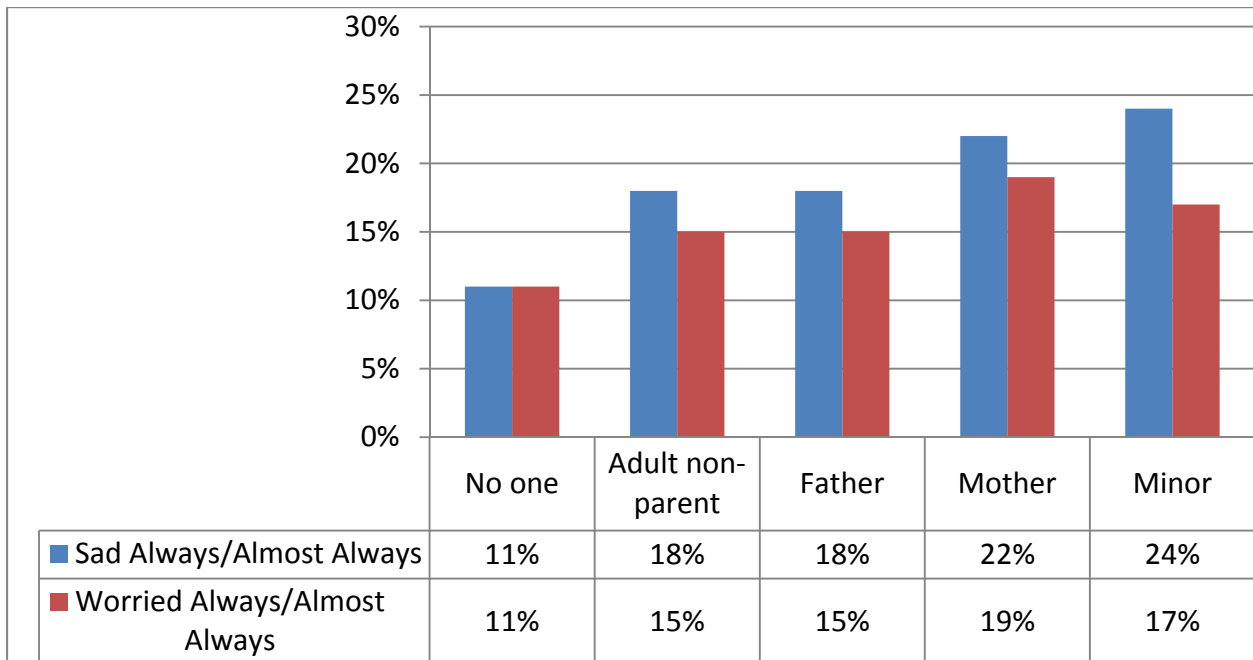
Having a family member incarcerated appears to have an impact on student behavior—substance use and perpetration of violence. Delaware 8<sup>th</sup> graders who have had a family member incarcerated in the past year are more likely to report current (past month) substance use than other students—alcohol, marijuana and other illegal drugs.



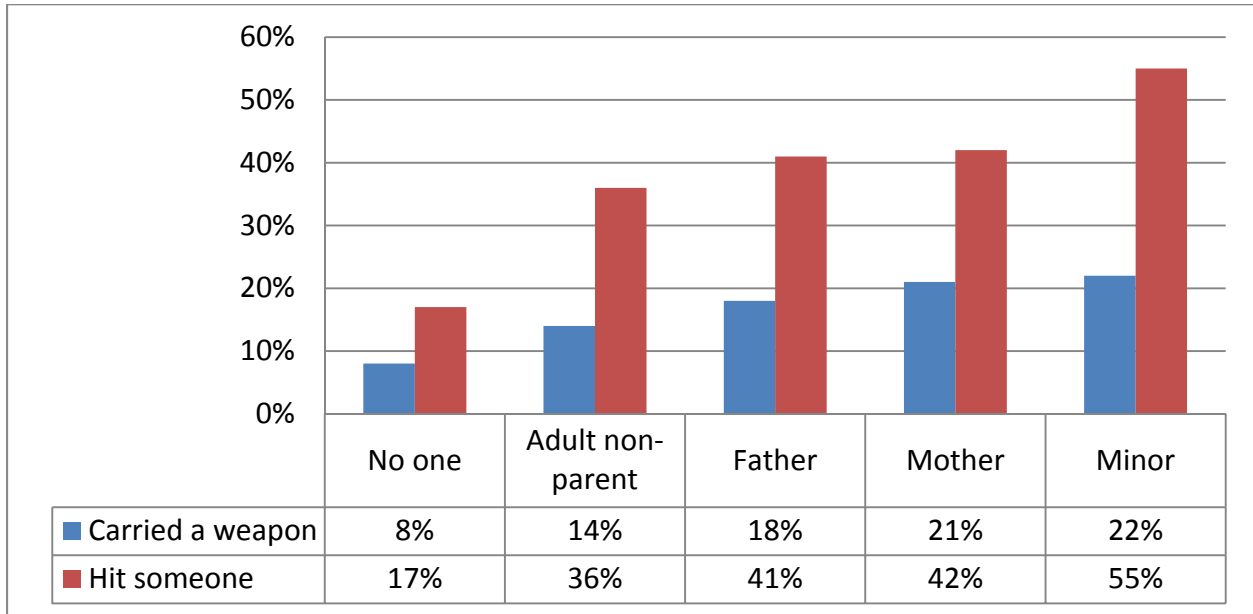
Not only are they more likely to report drinking alcohol, but they are more likely to report binge drinking three or more drinks at a time.



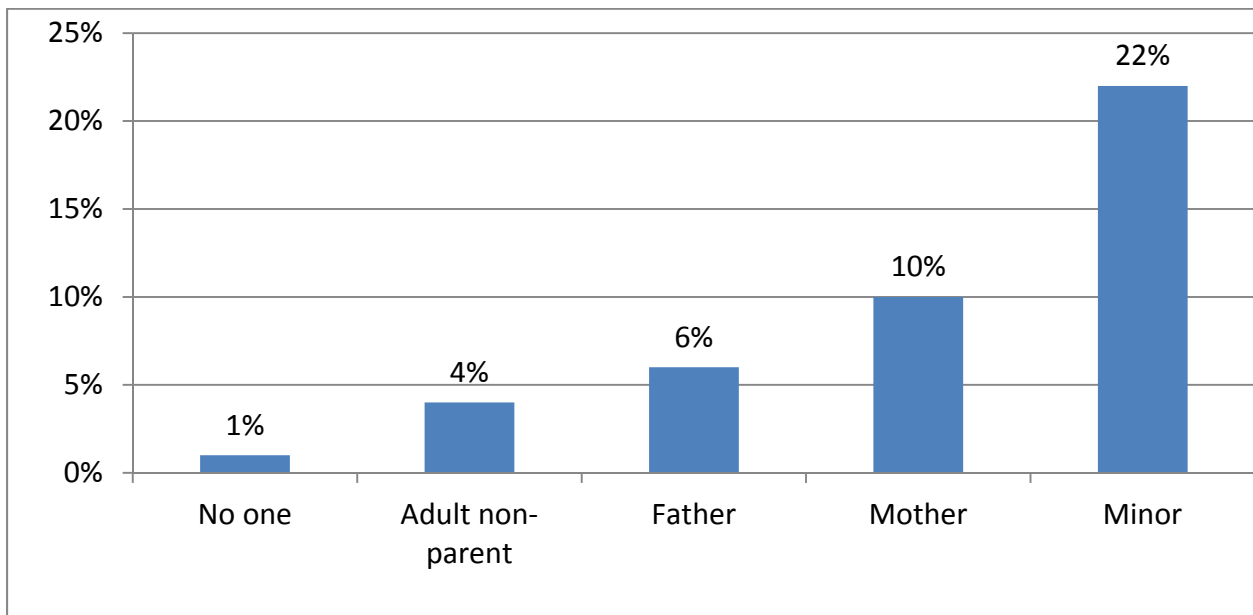
Students from “arrested families” are more likely to report being sad or worried almost all of the time. They are less likely to have adequate sleep and less likely to report eating breakfast 7 days per week.



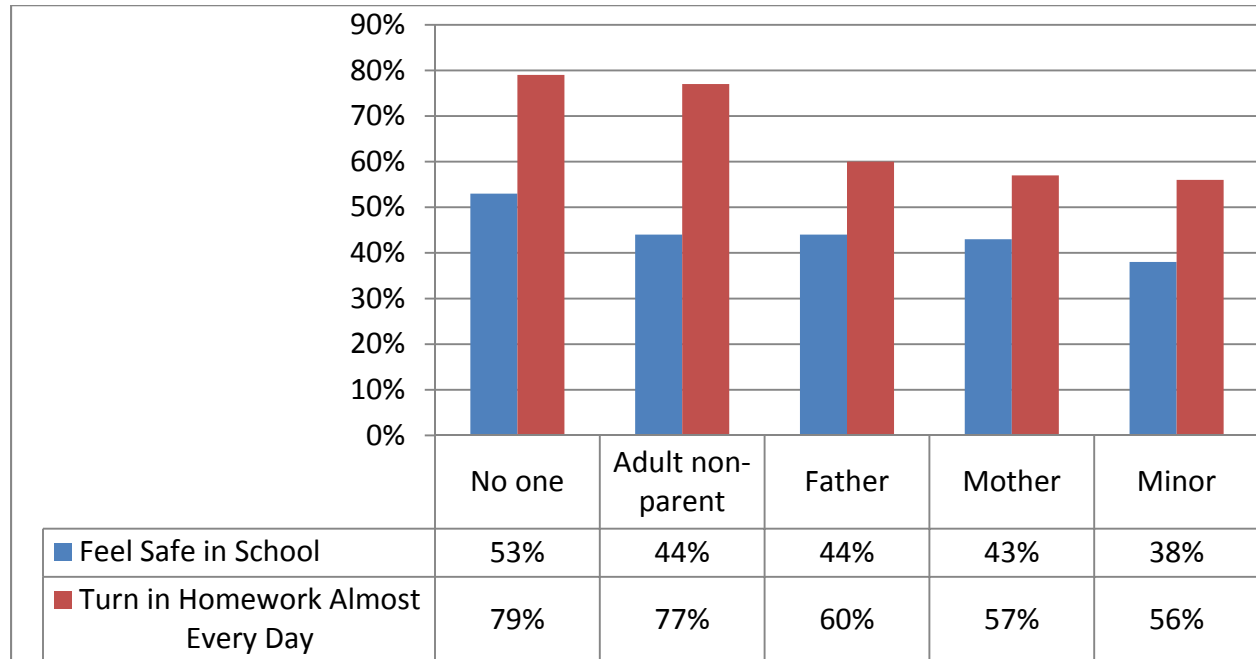
They are more likely to report they have hit someone with the intention of hurting them or have carried a weapon (not in school or at a school event).



Students who have had a family member incarcerated also are more likely to report being arrested. This is particularly true if another minor in the family has been arrested.



School becomes another source of problems for these youth, another place where they are less likely to feel safe and are less likely to be able to comply with requirements.



While these students have a difficult time in school and are more likely to have been suspended than other students, they still expect to finish high school, which may represent an opportunity for outreach and a meaningful milestone for them to work towards, with support.

