2022 Delaware School Survey
Fifth Grade Mental Health and Social Support

What is the Delaware School Survey (DSS)? The DSS is a survey given to fifth, eighth, and eleventh grade students across the state of Delaware. This survey is used to collect data each year on a variety of topics, including physical and mental health, exposure to violence, substance use, and social support.

How can the DSS be helpful to me? DSS data are available to participating schools at the district, county, or state level and can be requested in a variety of formats, including infographics and reports. With the information the DSS provides, schools can take advantage of another tool to make informed decisions about what their students need. For more information, contact Rochelle Brittingham at rbrittin@udel.edu.

How are data collected? In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools have continued to have the option to participate in the DSS via the traditional paper and pencil format or a new online version of the survey. There are minor differences in responses between the two types of surveys.

Social Support

Most fifth graders receive support and encouragement from their parents and friends, and a little over half receive support from their teachers.

- Parents: 77%
- Friends: 61%
- Teachers: 53%
- No one: 7%

95% of fifth graders get along well with their parents or guardians most of the time.

Mental Health

40% of fifth graders say they get the kind of help they need most of the time or always when they're feeling sad, empty, hopeless, angry, or anxious. An additional 29% get help sometimes.

Translating Data into Prevention: Delaware’s School Based Surveys

Each year, state agencies, community organizations, and nonprofits throughout Delaware rely on data to design and strengthen prevention efforts. Much of this information comes from surveys conducted among Delaware students and educators, and is used to:
- Identify needs for health and wellness policies and programs
- Support grant applications
- Develop strategic plans
- Measure the impact of prevention efforts and programs that promote healthy living

Nonprofits and organizations depend on the data. For example:
- KIDS COUNT in Delaware
- Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Boys and Girls Club
- United Way of Delaware/Pride Council
- Learn more: https://www.cdhs.udel.edu/seow/school-surveys

Data from the 2022 Delaware Fifth School Survey, and all frequencies are rounded to the nearest whole percent. Funding for this project has been provided by the Department for Health and Social Services, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
Almost three quarters (74%) of 5th graders own a cell phone.

Fifth Graders and Cell Phones

The American Academy of Pediatrics* recommends limiting non-school screen time for adolescents. More fifth graders who own a cell phone have more than two hours of screen time daily than those without a cell phone.

Fifth graders who don't own a cell phone spend more time reading for fun outside of school.

However, cell phone ownership has no impact is on whether fifth graders spend at least one hour playing, exercising, or playing sports daily.


**Screen time: time online using a computer, phone or tablet, watching TV, or playing video games.
Each year, state agencies, community organizations, and nonprofits throughout Delaware rely on data to design and strengthen prevention efforts. Much of this information comes from surveys conducted among Delaware students and educators, and is used to:

- Identify needs for health and wellness policies and programs
- Support grant applications
- Develop strategic plans
- Measure the impact of prevention efforts and programs that promote healthy living

Nonprofits and organizations depend on the data. For example:
- KIDS COUNT in Delaware
- Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Boys and Girls Club
- United Way of Delaware/Pride Council

Learn more: [https://www.cdhs.udel.edu/seow/school-surveys](https://www.cdhs.udel.edu/seow/school-surveys)

### Social Support
Most 8th graders receive social support and encouragement from their parents and friends, and over a third feel supported by their teachers.

- Parents: 80%
- Friends: 70%
- Teachers: 39%

78% of eighth graders get along well with their parents most of the time or often.

### Mental Health
About half of eighth graders (44%) reported being bothered by feeling down, depressed, or hopeless in the past two weeks.
Most eighth graders reported that they had not been bullied in school or cyberbullied in the past year. 6% of students were both bullied and cyberbullied in the past year.

About one in three eighth graders (34%) say that they do not feel safe in school or that they only feel safe some of the time.

Half of eighth graders feel student violence is a problem in their school at least some of the time. However, 49% think student violence is rarely, if ever, a concern.

Most eighth graders reported that they had not been bullied in school or cyberbullied in the past year. 6% of students were both bullied and cyberbullied in the past year.

What do students think schools can do to make them feel safer?
- 37% of students ask for more mental health support
- 32% Think more school resource officers would make a difference
- 20% Want metal detectors installed
- 19% of students ask for school based social workers

Fear of gun violence in school
One in three eighth graders (31%) worry about gun violence in their school at least some of the time.

In the write-in option, some eighth graders express wanting more support for LGBTQ+ students and students of color, such as support groups. Other suggest more robust mental health support, including safe spaces and confidential counseling.

Data from the 2022 Delaware Secondary School Survey, and all frequencies are rounded to the nearest whole percent.
Funding for this project has been provided by the Department for Health and Social Services, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
Each year, state agencies, community organizations, and nonprofits throughout Delaware rely on data to design and strengthen prevention efforts. Much of this information comes from surveys conducted among Delaware students and educators, and is used to:

- Identify needs for health and wellness policies and programs
- Support grant applications
- Develop strategic plans
- Measure the impact of prevention efforts and programs that promote healthy living

Nonprofits and organizations depend on the data. For example:

- KIDS COUNT in Delaware
- Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Boys and Girls Club
- United Way of Delaware/Pride Council
- Learn more: https://www.cdhs.udel.edu/seow/school-surveys
Most eleventh graders reported that they had not been bullied in school or cyberbullied in the past year. More students report being cyberbullied than bullied in school.

One in three eleventh graders (33%) say that they do not feel safe in school or that they only feel safe some of the time.

Around one in three eleventh graders (35%) worry about gun violence in their school at least some of the time.

More students report being cyberbullied than bullied in school.

A little under half of eleventh graders feel student violence is a problem in their school at least some of the time. However, 59% think student violence is rarely, if ever, a concern.

What do students think schools can do to make them feel safer?

- 46% of students ask for more mental health support
- 26% of students think more school resource officers would make a difference
- 18% of students want metal detectors installed
- 23% of students ask for school based social workers

While 33% of eleventh graders think more active shooter drills would make them feel safer, some students wrote-in that they think these drills should be done differently. They wrote that the drills make what they do in an emergency too predictable.
Substance Use
Findings from the 2022 Delaware School Survey of Eighth Grade Students

What are Students Consuming in Vaping Devices? (among students who report vaping)

- **E-Liquid**
  - 38%

- **Marijuana**
  - 26%

- **Nicotine**
  - 37%

Note: This is a mark-all-that-apply question, so students may report using more than one of these substances.

*E-liquids, also known as e-juice or vape juice, is a fluid used in vaporizers or electronic cigarettes that contain artificial flavoring and sometimes nicotine.

Substance Use During Past 30 Days

- Alcohol: 7%
- Marijuana: 5%
- Cigarettes: 1%
- Vaping*: 5%
- Other**: 1%

*Vaping includes vaping and electronic cigarettes. **Other includes ecstasy, hallucinogens, street uppers, inhalants, cocaine, crack, heroin and synthetic marijuana used to get high.

Perception of Great Harm

- Smoke a Pack of Cigs. a Day: 38%
- Use Vaping Device: 25%
- Binge Drink: 34%
- Smoke marijuana regularly: 31%
- Use Rx Drugs without prescription: 41%

Note: Students were asked how much people risk harming themselves when engaging in any of these activities.

What is the Delaware School Survey (DSS)?
The DSS is a survey given to fifth, eighth, and eleventh grade students across the state of Delaware. This survey is used to collect data each year on a variety of topics, including physical and mental health, exposure to violence, substance use, and social support.

How are data collected?
In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools have continued to have the option to participate in the DSS via the traditional paper and pencil format or a new online version of the survey. There are minor differences in responses between the two types of surveys.

How can the DSS be helpful to me? DSS data are available to participating schools at the district, county, or state level and can be requested in a variety of formats, including infographics and reports. With the information the DSS provides, schools can take advantage of another tool to make informed decisions about what their students need. For more information, contact Rochelle Brittingham at rbrittin@udel.edu.

Data from the 2022 Delaware Secondary School Survey, and all frequencies are rounded to the nearest whole percent.

Funding for this project has been provided by the Department for Health and Social Services, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
What are Students Consuming in Vaping Devices? (among students who report vaping)

- E-Liquid*: 34%
- Marijuana: 39%
- Nicotine: 48%

Note: This is a mark-all-that-apply question, so students may report using more than one of these substances. *E-liquids, also known as e-juice or vape juice, is a fluid used in vaporizers or electronic cigarettes that contain artificial flavoring and sometimes nicotine.

Substance Use During Past 30 Days

- Alcohol: 16%
- Marijuana: 14%
- Cigarettes: 1%
- Vaping*: 10%
- Other**: 3%

Note: This is a mark-all-that-apply question, so students may report using more than one of these substances.

*Vaping includes vaping and electronic cigarettes. **Other includes ecstasy, hallucinogens, street uppers, inhalants, cocaine, crack, heroin and synthetic marijuana used to get high.

What is the Delaware School Survey (DSS)?
The DSS is a survey given to fifth, eighth, and eleventh grade students across the state of Delaware. This survey is used to collect data each year on a variety of topics, including physical and mental health, exposure to violence, substance use, and social support.

How are data collected? In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools have continued to have the option to participate in the DSS via the traditional paper and pencil format or a new online version of the survey. There are minor differences in responses between the two types of surveys.

How can the DSS be helpful to me? DSS data are available to participating schools at the district, county, or state level and can be requested in a variety of formats, including infographics and reports. With the information the DSS provides, schools can take advantage of another tool to make informed decisions about what their students need. For more information, contact Rochelle Brittingham at rbrittin@udel.edu.