



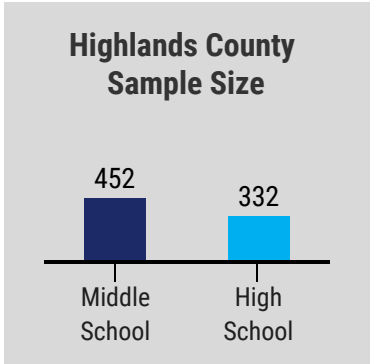
2020 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey

Highlands County Report

Survey Background

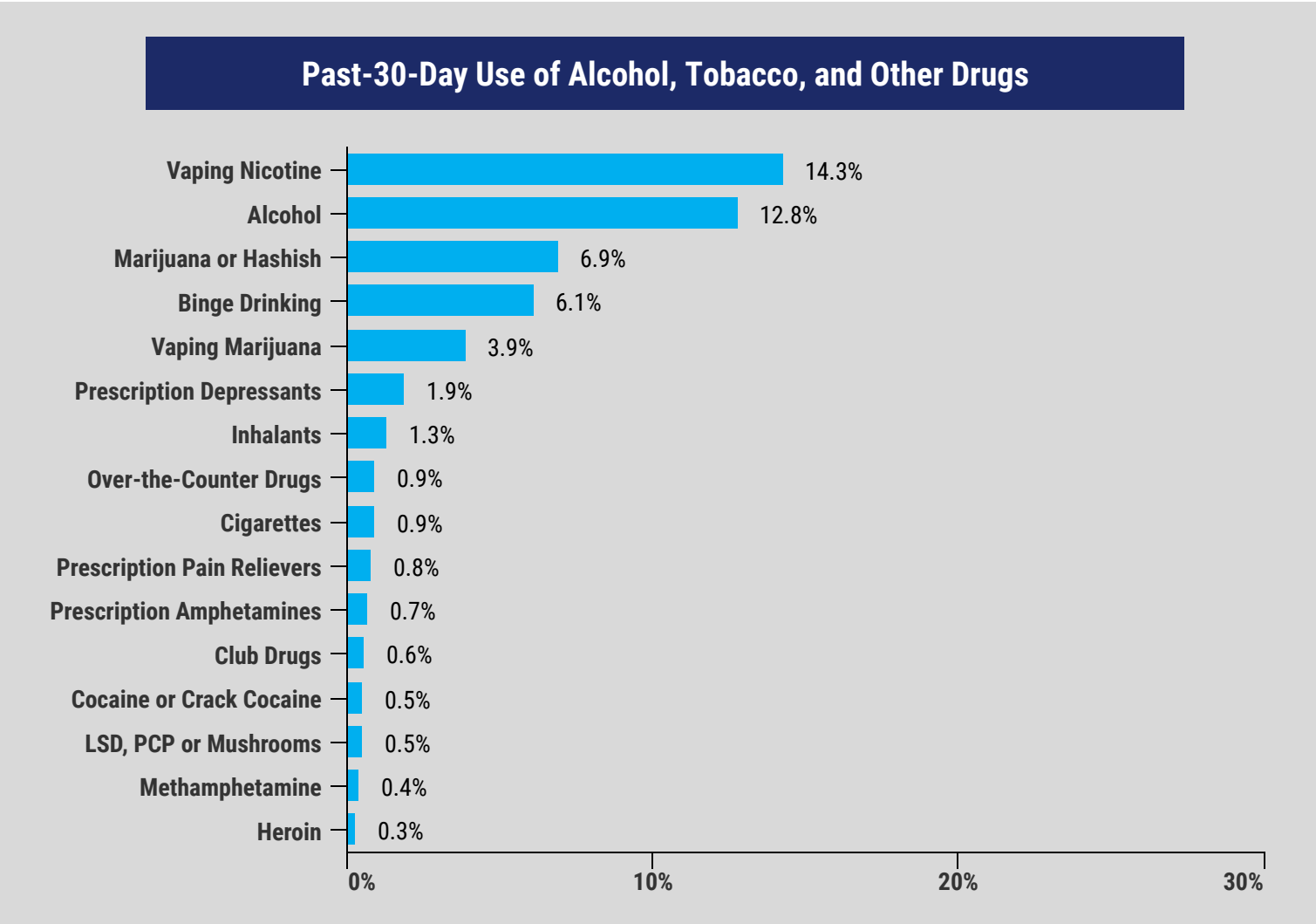
This report presents key findings from the 2020 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey (FYSAS) for Highlands County. Full FYSAS data tables for each county are available at the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) website. Detailed information on the survey's methodology is included in the FYSAS Statewide Report, which is also available at the DCF website.

The final Highlands County FYSAS sample included 452 middle school students and 332 high school students, yielding a maximum margin of error of +/- 4.6 percentage points.



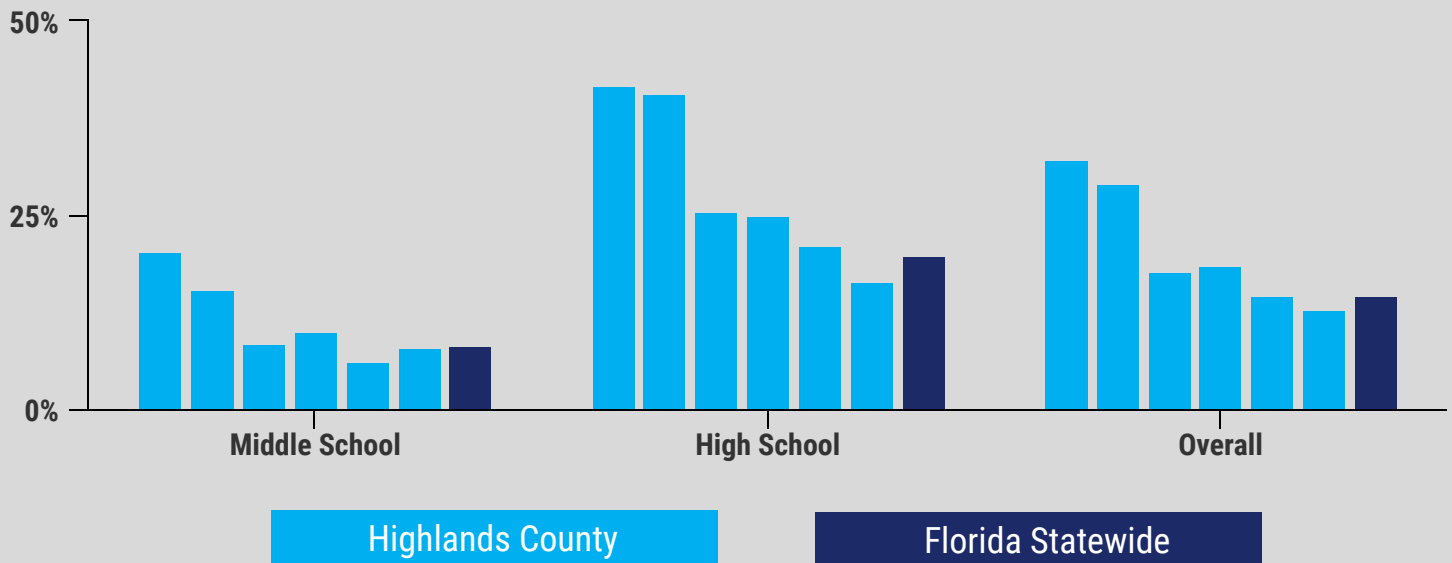
Substance Use Among Highlands County Students

The graph below shows past-30-day substance use prevalence rates for the combined sample of middle school and high school students. Past-30-day prevalence (whether a student has used a drug on one or more occasions within the past month) is the standard indicator of current use.



Highlands County | Alcohol Use

Past-30-Day Alcohol Use, Highlands County 2010-2020 and Florida 2020

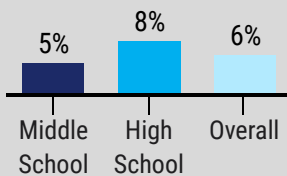


High-Risk Alcohol Use

The FYSAS includes several indicators of drinking behaviors that are particularly dangerous for adolescents. These include binge drinking (five or more drinks in a row within the past two weeks), blacking out from drinking, riding with a drinking driver, and driving after drinking. Please note that the blacking out and driving measures are only included on the high school questionnaire.

Binge Drinking

Highlands County

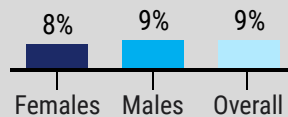


Florida Statewide

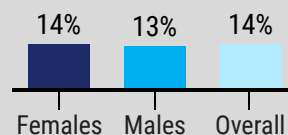


Blacking Out

Highlands County

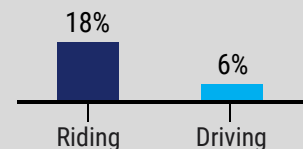


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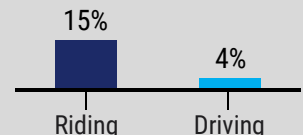


Drinking and Driving

Highlands County

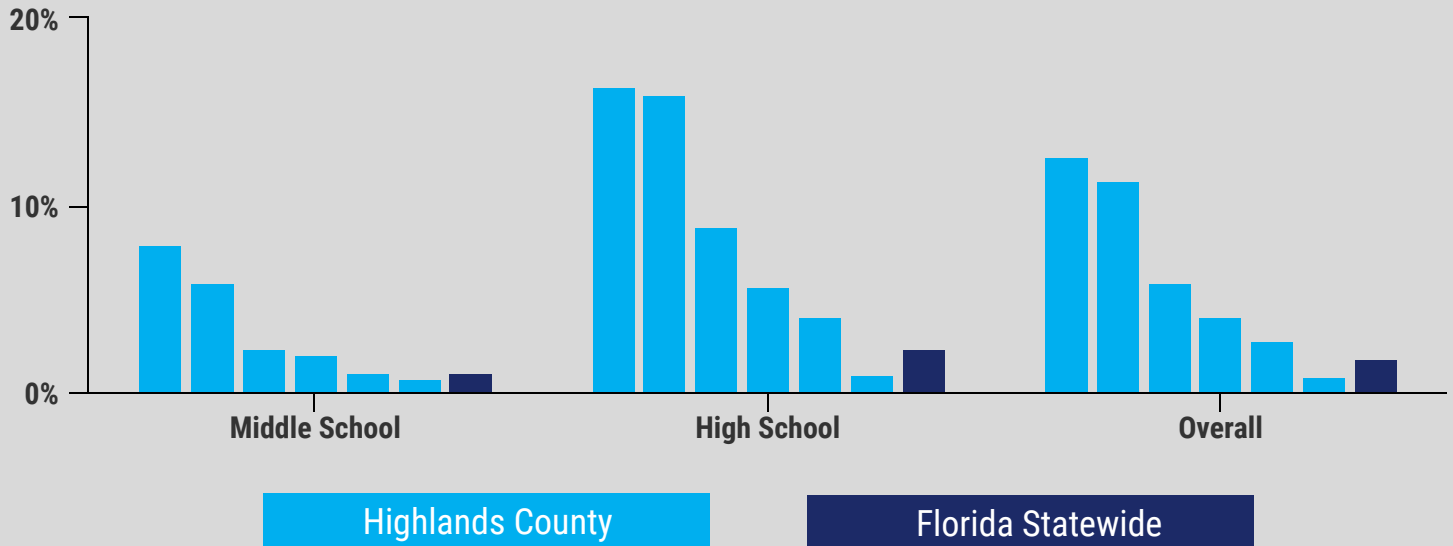


Florida Statewide



Highlands County | Cigarette Use

Past-30-Day Cigarette Use, Highlands County 2010-2020 and Florida 2020

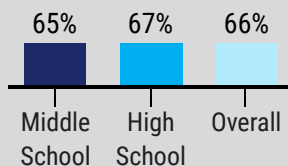


Attitudes Towards Cigarette Use

The remarkable reduction in cigarette use among Florida students is driven, in part, by the norms and values youth hold about smoking. The graph below shows the percentage of students who believe there is a "great" risk associated with daily cigarette use. Prevalence rates for personal disapproval of smoking, as well as perceptions of peer disapproval, are shown in the second and third graphs.

Great Risk of Harm

Highlands County

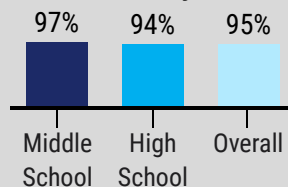


Florida Statewide



Personal Disapproval

Highlands County

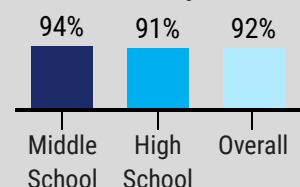


Florida Statewide



Peer Disapproval

Highlands County

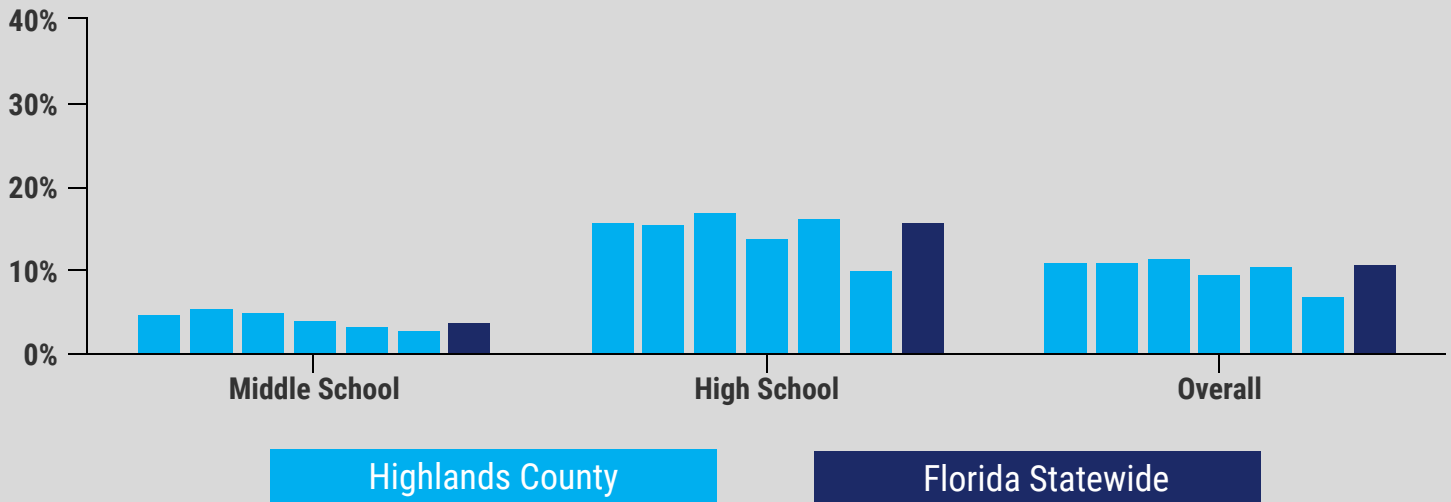


Florida Statewide



Highlands County | Marijuana Use

Past-30-Day Marijuana Use, Highlands County 2010-2020 and Florida 2020



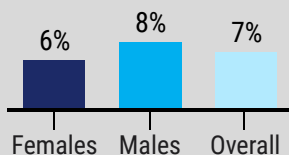
Additional Data on Marijuana Use



The first graph shows the percentage of high school students who started using marijuana at age 14 or younger. Early initiation is one of the strongest predictors of highly problematic substance use. The second graph shows the percentage of students who said that their friends think it would be “wrong” or “very wrong” to smoke marijuana. Peer disapproval is strongly associated with lower rates of substance use. The third graph shows the percentage of high school students who, in the past 30 days, rode with a marijuana-using driver or drove a vehicle after using marijuana.

Early Initiation

Highlands County

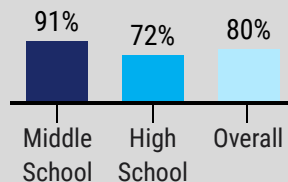


Florida Statewide

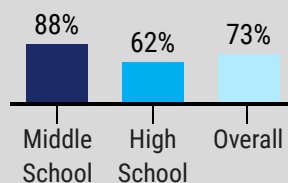


Peer Disapproval

Highlands County

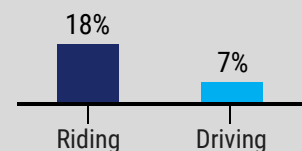


Florida Statewide

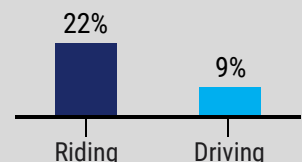


Marijuana and Driving

Highlands County



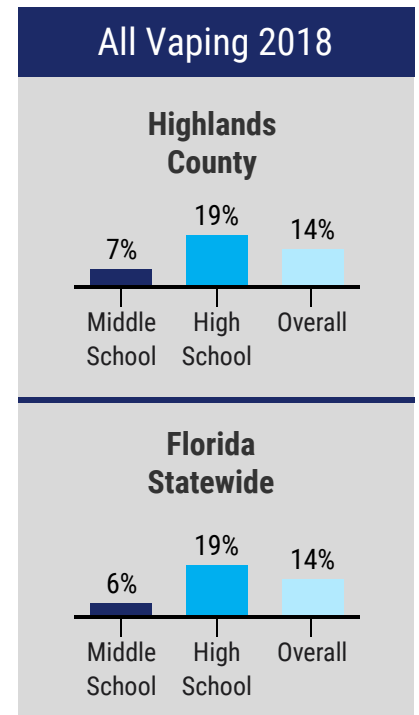
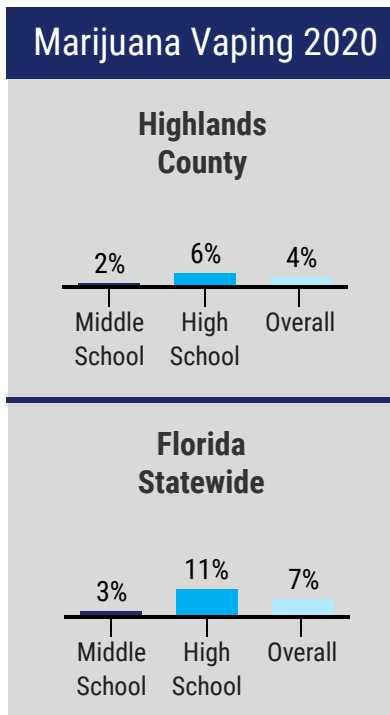
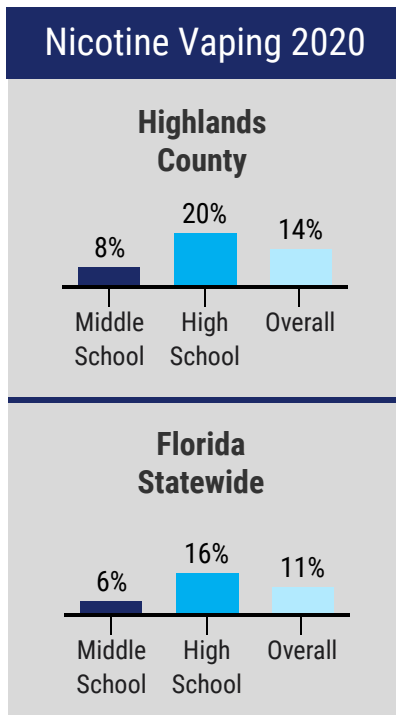
Florida Statewide



Highlands County | Vaping

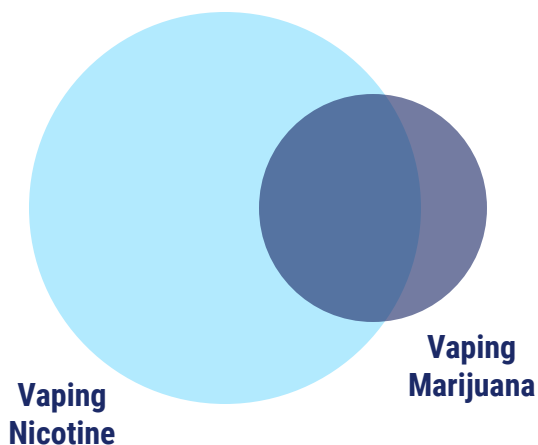
New FYSAS Vaping Data

Vaping has rapidly emerged, both within Florida and across the nation, as one of the most prevalent forms of adolescent substance use. The 2020 FYSAS includes new items that distinguish between nicotine vaping and marijuana vaping. The graphs below show the percentage of students reporting one or more occasions of vaping within the past 30 days. The third set of graphs presents results from the 2018 FYSAS, which did not distinguish between different forms of vaping.



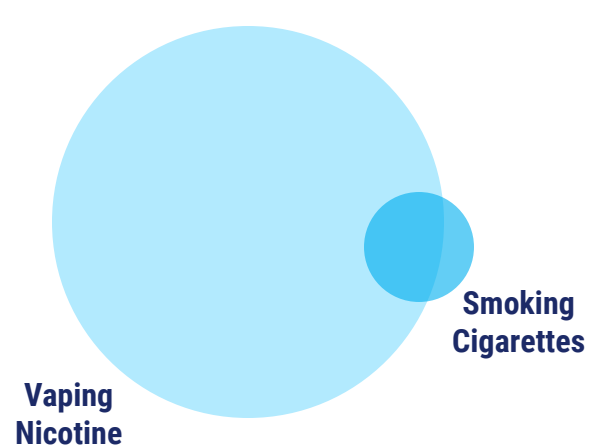
Types of Vaping

Vaping isn't just a nicotine delivery system. **21%** of Highlands County students who vape nicotine also vape marijuana, and **76%** of students who vape marijuana also vape nicotine.



Vaping and Smoking

The majority of students who vape nicotine did not transition from smoking cigarettes. Their vaping is independent of cigarette use. Only **5%** of Highlands County students who vape nicotine also smoke cigarettes.



Highlands County | ACEs

Trauma and Youth Development

Adverse childhood experiences, commonly known as **ACEs**, are traumatic events experienced during childhood that have been linked to a broad range of negative health and behavior outcomes, including impaired cognitive development, high-risk behavior such as substance use, difficulty forming positive social relationships, high rates of chronic disease, and employment and financial difficulties.

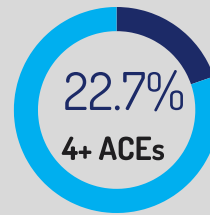
FYSAS and ACEs

While trauma-related measures are often included on student health behavior surveys, the 2020 FYSAS is one of the first large-scale youth data collection efforts to include a comprehensive set of ACE questions. The high school version of the survey measures 10 areas of childhood trauma with known links to health and behavior.



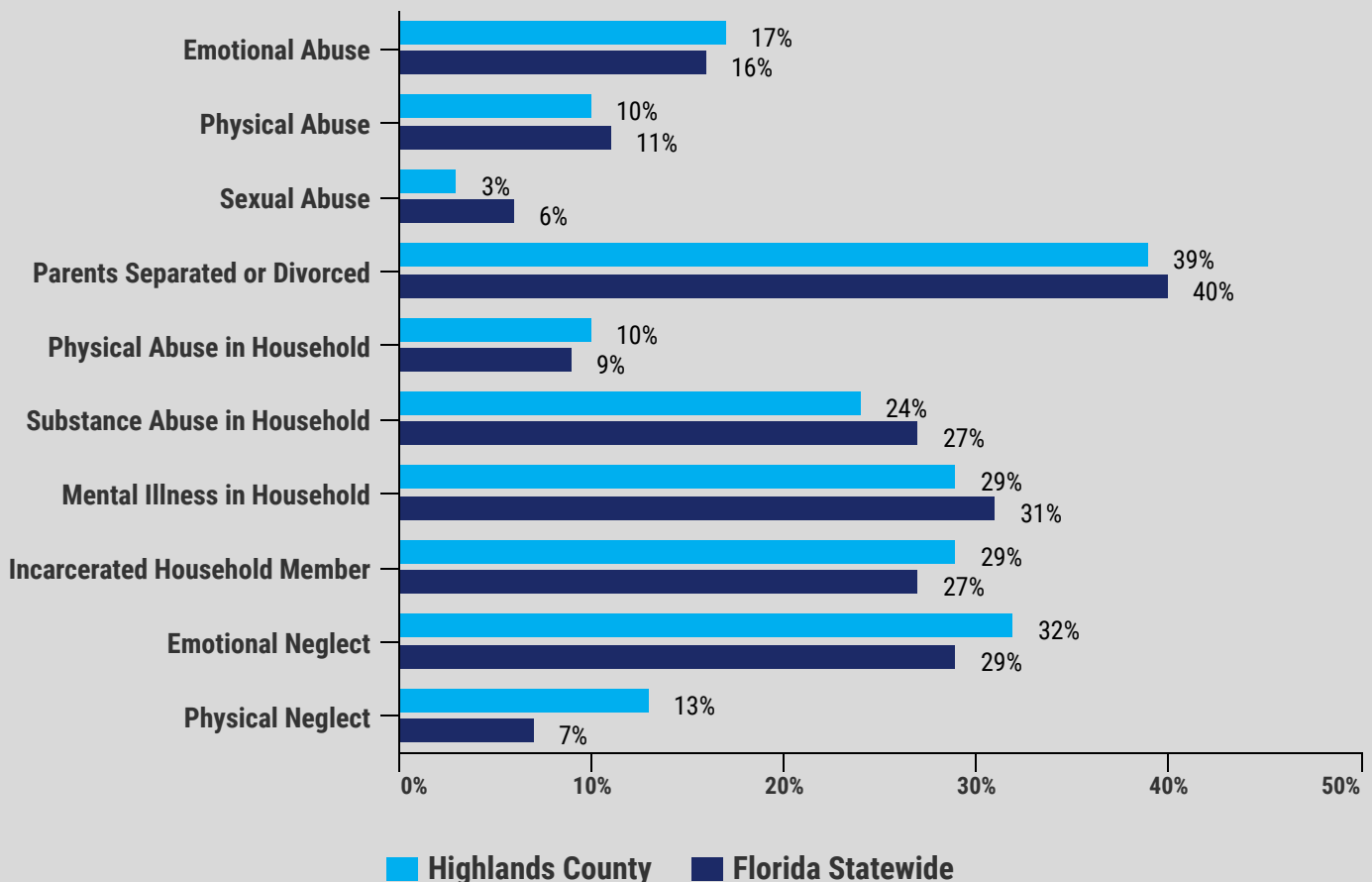
**Average ACE
Score = 2.0**

The average number of ACEs reported by Highlands County high school students is **2.0**.



Exposure to **four or more ACEs** is considered a high level of trauma. **22.7%** of Highlands County high school students have been exposed to at least four ACEs.

How prevalent is childhood trauma among Highlands County and Florida youth?



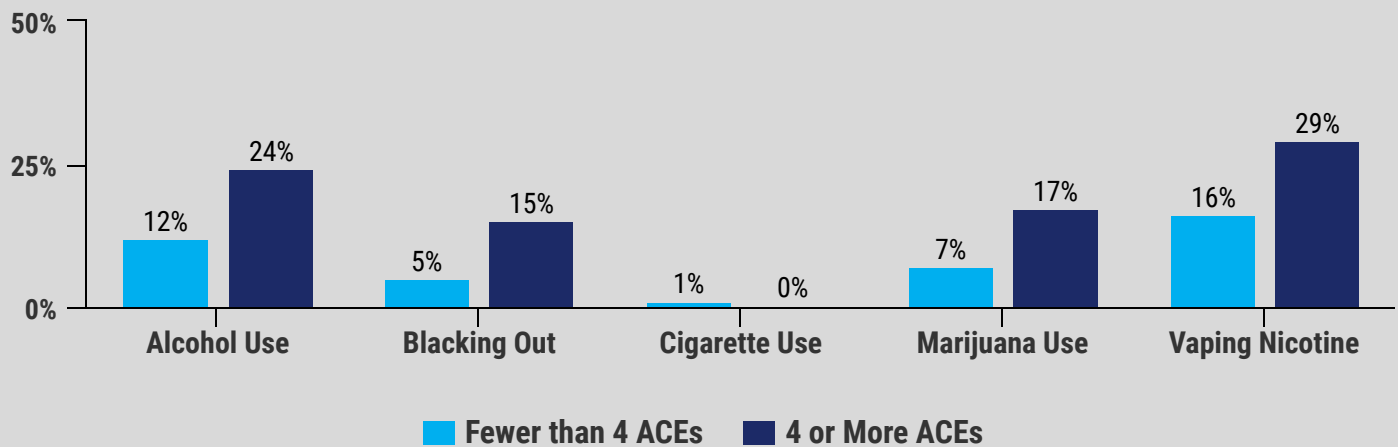
Highlands County | ACEs



ACE Research

Most ACE data, which are collected from adults, show a connection between trauma experienced during childhood and negative health and behavior outcomes in adulthood. FYSAS data build upon this body of research by allowing policy makers and prevention planners to see how the negative consequences of trauma begin to take root during adolescence.

Highlands County students with four or more ACEs report substance use rates that are substantially higher than students with fewer than four ACEs.



ACEs and Emotional Health

The research literature has identified a strong relationship between traumatic experiences in childhood and depression and suicidal ideation in adulthood. FYSAS data show that this connection between ACEs and emotional health is already established in adolescence.

Highlands County students with four or more ACEs are about twice as likely to report symptoms of depression as students with fewer than four ACEs.

