



Essex County Asset Builder Network
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A Snapshot of Amesbury's Youth

Data Collected from the 2019 Administration of the
Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behavior Survey





A regional approach to helping all youth thrive

The Essex County Asset Builder Network is a partnership of communities (Amesbury, Georgetown, Newbury, Rowley, Salisbury and Newburyport) who are adopting a positive youth development (PYD) approach to provide supports for youth to grow into healthy adults. We utilize the 40 Developmental Asset® framework and promote a PYD approach through trainings, resources, and building connections among community partners.



WWW.ECABNETWORK.ORG

We are here to support youth and families during the pandemic. Visit our website for information on:

- Remote schooling
- Mental health
- Self-care
- Parenting tips
- Support groups and more!



 **WE ARE HERE FOR YOU**

Every two years all youth in grades 6-12 are surveyed to get a sense of the strengths and needs of the young people in the Network. This survey includes a measure of the 40 Developmental Assets (protective factors) as well as questions about risky behaviors such as alcohol or drug use and time spent watching screens. There are also questions about stress, anxiety and mental health. This data gives us a picture of the highest needs of our young people and programming is built to support those needs. This packet includes the results from the 2019 administration of this survey. We feel it is important for everyone in the community to have access to this data and join in the conversation about how we can support the youth and families in Amesbury.

The Partnership of Amesbury Community and Teens (PACT) is Amesbury's Coalition, whose mission is to decrease underage use and abuse of alcohol, marijuana and other drugs by empowering young people and providing real world experiences that help build a healthier Amesbury for all residents. This coalition started in 2018 and has been putting programming together to support youth and caregivers, and to connect them to the community. Some of this programming has included a career fair at the high school open to all youth, volunteer activities, and parent speakers and workshops. To get involved with PACT or to find out more email pact@amesburyma.org.



40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS®: ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

SUPPORT: Young people need to be surrounded by people who love, care for, appreciate, and accept them.

1. Family Support - Family life provides high levels of love and support.	76%
2. Positive Family Communications - Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate.	32%
3. Other Adult Relationships - Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.	51%
4. Caring Neighborhood - Young person experiences caring neighbors.	39%
5. Caring School Climate - School provides a caring, encouraging environment.	35%
6. Parent Involvement in School - Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.	29%

EMPOWERMENT: Young people need to feel valued and valuable. This happens when youth feel safe and respected.

7. Community Values Youth - Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.	23%
8. Youth as Resources - Young people are given useful roles in the community.	32%
9. Service to Others - Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.	47%
10. Safety - Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.	48%

BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS: Young people need clear rules, consistent consequences for breaking rules, and encouragement to do their best.

11. Family Boundaries - Family has clear rules and consequences, and monitors the young person's whereabouts.	53%
12. School Boundaries - School provides clear rules and consequences.	64%
13. Neighborhood Boundaries - Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behaviors.	41%
14. Adult Role Models - Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.	39%
15. Positive Peer Influence - Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.	82%
16. High Expectations - Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.	57%

CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME: Young people need opportunities - outside of school - to learn and develop new skills and interests with other youth and adults.

17. Creative Activities - Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music theater, or other arts.	21%
18. Youth Programs - Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs or organizations at school and/or in community organizations.	68%
19. Religious Community - Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in religious institution.	23%
20. Time at Home - Young person is out "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.	69%

* This data shown below is from the 2019 administration of Search Institute's Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors survey to students in grades 6-12 in the Amesbury school district. The percentages listed indicate the number of young people who report experiencing that asset.

SURVEY RESULTS (2019) AMESBURY DATA

COMMITMENT TO LEARNING: Young people need a sense of the lasting importance of learning and a belief in their own abilities.

21. Achievement Motivation - Young person is motivated to do well in school.	73%
22. School Engagement - Young person is actively engaged in learning.	85%
23. Homework - Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.	48%
24. Bonding to School - Young person cares about his or her school.	64%
25. Reading for Pleasure - Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.	20%

POSITIVE VALUES: Young people need to develop strong guiding values or principles to help them make healthy life choices.

26. Caring - Young person places high value on helping other people.	64%
27. Equality and Social Justice - Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.	70%
28. Integrity - Young person acts on convictions and stands up for his or her beliefs.	73%
29. Honesty - Young person tells the truth even when it is not easy.	70%
30. Responsibility - Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.	72%
31. Restraint - Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.	47%

SOCIAL COMPETENCIES: Young people need the skills to interact effectively with others, to make difficult decisions, and to cope with new situations.

32. Planning and Decision Making - Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.	36%
33. Interpersonal Competence - Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.	51%
34. Cultural Competence - Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.	53%
35. Resistance Skills - Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.	48%
36. Peace Conflict Resolution - Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.	55%

POSITIVE IDENTITY: Young people need to believe in their own self-worth and to feel that they have control over the things that happen to them.

37. Personal Power - Young person feels he or she has control over “things that happen to me.”	34%
38. Self-Esteem - Young person reports having a high self-esteem.	38%
39. Sense of Purpose - Young person reports that “my life has a purpose.”	48%
40. Positive View of Personal Future - Young person is optimistic about his or her personal future.	67%

To learn more about how you can build Assets® for youth, visit our website and contact us at www.ECABNetwork.org

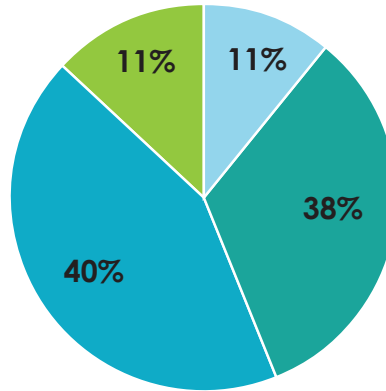


THE ASSET CHALLENGE IN OUR COMMUNITY

(Amesbury specific data)

HOW MANY ASSETS DO YOUTH HAVE?

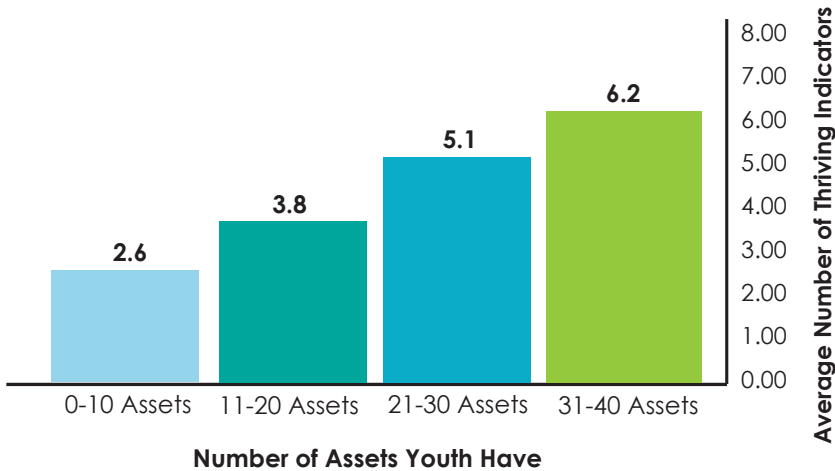
This graph shows the number of youth who fall into each asset category. The average number of assets for young people in the region is 22. While there is no “right number” of assets for young people, there is the greatest decline in risk behaviors for youth who have over 20 assets.



Number of assets

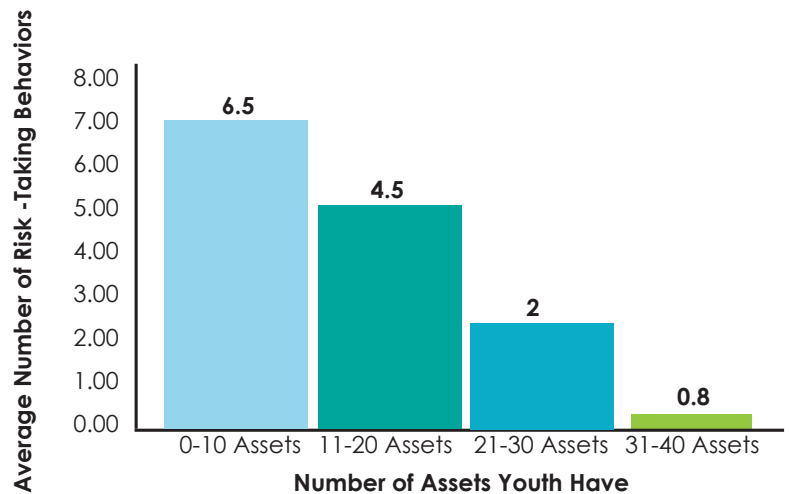
- 0 - 10 Assets
- 11 - 20 Assets
- 21 - 30 Assets
- 31 - 40 Assets

POWER OF DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS TO PROMOTE THRIVING INDICATORS



We know that the more assets youth have, the more likely they are to thrive (Left). The opposite is also true. The more assets youth have, the less likely they are to participate in risk behaviors (Below).

POWER OF DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS TO PROTECT AGAINST RISK-TAKING BEHAVIORS



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REPORT ON RISK BEHAVIORS

(Regional data)

Overall the number of risk behaviors youth participate in increases as youth get older.

This is developmentally appropriate. The table below shows the percent of use among all youth (6th - 12th grade) and the use among high school seniors.

Risk Behavior		% All Youth	% 12th Grade Youth
Alcohol	Used alcohol in last 30 days	18%	49%
	Got drunk once or more in last 2 weeks	9%	28%
Tobacco	Smoked cigarettes in the last 30 days	2%	6%
	Used smokeless tobacco in last year	2%	6%
Marijuana	Used marijuana in the last 30 days	12%	36%
Other Drugs	Used heroin or narcotics in last year	1%	3%
Driving While Intoxicated	Drove after drinking once or more in last 12 months	2%	7%
	Rode with a driver who had been drinking in past year	19%	17%

The perception that that substance use is harmful goes down as youth get older.

Perception of harm is lowest for marijuana, where only 64% of youth think smoking once or twice a week is a moderate or great risk.

Perception of Harm	Moderate or Great Risk	% Overall Who Agree
Alcohol	5 or more drinks once or twice a week	81%
Tobacco	One or more packs of cigarettes a day	92%
Marijuana	Smoking once or twice a week	64%
Prescription drugs	Taking pills not prescribed to you	94%

Most youth believe their parents would disapprove of any type of substance use.

When asked if they believe their peers would disapprove of each substance, the marijuana data can be concerning. Overall, only 72% of young people think their peers would disapprove of smoking marijuana.

Looking by grade, it is concerning that a majority of freshman think their peers would disapprove of smoking marijuana but only 31% of seniors believe their peers would disapprove. This belief that marijuana use is acceptable among peers can lead to increase use among youth.

Disapproval		% of youth who say their parents would disapprove of this behavior	% of youth who say their peers would disapprove of this behavior
Alcohol	Drinking regularly	96%	85%
Tobacco	Smoking cigarettes	98%	90%
Marijuana	Smoking marijuana	90%	72%
Prescription drugs	Taking pills not prescribed to you	98%	94%

A REGIONAL PICTURE OF VAPING AND MENTAL HEALTH

VAPING

The use of electronic cigarettes has become an increasing concern for our youth over the last few years. In our region 20% of youth reported ever using an electronic vaping product. Of those youth, half had used in the past 30 days.

- The most popular substances used with electronic vaping products were flavored nicotine liquid (38%) and liquid THC or cannabis oil (25% of users).
- Youth reported obtaining e-cigarettes by borrowing it from someone who was under 21 years old (16%) or someone under 21 gave it to them (11%).
- When asked about why they were using vape products youth said it was to help them feel relaxed (25%), a family or friend was using them (25%) or to fit in with friends (12%).
- Most youth see vaping as harmful. 80% of youth think there is a moderate or great risk to using electronic vaping products every day.
- 75% of youth think their friends would disapprove of them using vape products every day, and 93% of youth think their parents would disapprove of this behavior.
- Current state regulations ban the sale of all flavored tobacco products and electronic vaping devices to anyone under the age of 21.

MENTAL HEALTH

There has been an increase in reports of anxiety and depression among teens, in some cases even starting before middle school.

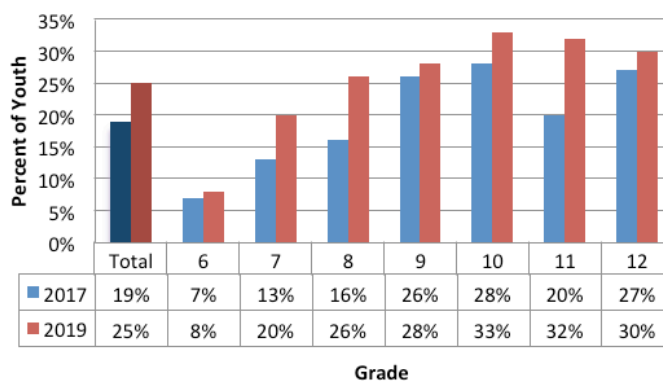
STRESS AND ANXIETY

Youth reported higher levels of stress as they get older, with 40% of high school youth reporting they feel stressed fairly or very often. Among all young people surveyed, 19% reported feeling nervous, anxious or on edge fairly often, and 16% reported feeling this way very often.

DEPRESSION

Among Amesbury youth rates of reported depression increase as youth get older. There was also an increase in the number of youth reporting depression between 2017-2019. Consistently, there are higher rates of depression among youth with less Assets (48%) compared to youth with youth with over 20 Assets (5%). These trends are mirrored in rates of attempted suicide, with rates increasing slightly as youth get older, and overall increases from 13% -16% from 2017 to 2019. Indicating almost half of all youth who report depression have also attempted suicide.

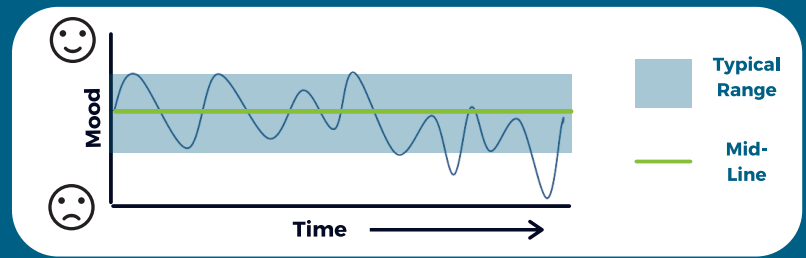
Youth Depression Rates 2017-2019*



*Data in this table is Amesbury specific.

SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY IN YOUTH

Fluctuations in mood are normal, but if a person's mood begins to consistently fall outside the typical range, it may be a sign of the bigger issue. If your child experiences this or multiple symptoms from the list below, we encourage you to reach out to your doctor to discuss things further.



Biological

- Changes in energy level
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Increased reporting of stomachaches/headaches/illness



Social/Emotional

- Decreased interest in activities
- Avoiding friends (even virtually)
- Frequent crying, seeking parent proximity or reassurance
- Emotional outbursts
- Feeling worthless, overly self-critical, low self-esteem



Cognitive

- Constant worry/negative thoughts
- Trouble concentrating/making decisions
- Difficulty completing schoolwork
- Decline in grades



Behavioral

- Decrease in proper hygiene
- Increased conflict with family/peers
- Self-injury or self-destructive behavior
- Isolating in bedroom

CRISIS HELPLINES

If you need help, a great first step is to talk with your **Primary Care Physician**

National Suicide Prevention

Call 800.273.8255 or text TALK to 741741

Web chat available:

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Psychology Today - find a therapist

psychologytoday.com/us

Online Counseling

betterhelp.com

24/7 LGBTQ+ Support

trevorproject.org

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU

We are here to support youth and families during the pandemic. Visit our website for information on:

- Remote Schooling
- Mental Health
- Self-Care
- Parenting Tips
- Support Groups & More

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