

## ***What are BHS Teens Really Up To?*** ***Information from 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey and National Studies***

### **Alcohol**

- \*18% of freshman admitted to alcohol use; doubled in sophomore year, 54% by senior year.
- \* Binge drinking went from 5% in freshman year to 35% in senior year.
- \* 15% of students reported drinking during the school day.

### **Marijuana**

- \* 7% of freshman girls and 12% of boys admitted to having used marijuana; 44% by senior year.
- \* Legalization of marijuana (21+) leads students to consider marijuana “no big deal.”
- \* Legalization may lead to greater access (including edibles and vaping oils).

### **Vaping**

- \* The FDA declared teen vaping an epidemic. (Vapes -- e-cigarettes, JUULs, etc.-- are devices that heat up a flavored liquid or marijuana oil in a cartridge or pod to release an aerosol “vapor” when inhaled.) Vaping in school is a problem for administrators and students across the country.
- \* One cartridge/pod contains as much nicotine as a pack of cigarettes, leading teens back to nicotine addiction -- currently roughly 15% of all BHS students vape.

### **Mental Health and Stress**

- \*84% of all BHS students reported feeling overwhelming stress over the past 12 months. (more females than males), and there is a big jump in sophomore year.
- \* Primary cause of reported stress is school work.
- \*BHS students identifying as LGBTQ were more likely to report symptoms of depression than heterosexual students -- lesbian and gay 56%, bisexual 63%, and questioning 31%, as compared to 25% among heterosexuals.
- \*29% of students reported symptoms of depression; 24% felt suicidal in the past 12 months.
- \*Stress and depression correlate to increased alcohol and marijuana use.
- \* Students also are selling and using ADHD meds that are not their own, some for self-medication, some for study aids, energy boost, etc.

### **Social Media/Digital Lives**

- \* Nationally, 95% of teens report they have a smartphone or access to one.
- \*45% say they are online on a near-constant basis.
- \* At BHS, 51% use handheld devices for non-school related work for three or more hours a day.

### **Teen Sexuality**

- \*18% of BHS students had sexual intercourse, but only 66% used a condom.
- \*Students were more likely to engage in sexual activity after drinking; rates increase dramatically by grade -- from 3% of freshman girls to 15% of senior girls, from 1% of freshman boys to 10% of senior boys.
- \* 18% of freshman females said they have been sexually harassed at school.
- \* 8% of freshman girls have had sexual contact against their will, which increases to 21% by senior year.
- \*1% of freshman males had sexual contact against their will, increasing to 8% as seniors.
- \* 4% of all students reported forced sexual contact with someone they were dating.
- \*Nationally, 1 in 3 adolescents is a victim of physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse from a dating partner.

## Parenting

\*Parent influence matters.

\*Students who believe their parents disapprove of alcohol and marijuana, use notably less of those substances. For example, nationally, 3 out of 4 teens say their parents are the leading influence on their decisions about drinking.

## BHS RESOURCES

For questions or concerns, please first contact your child's assigned guidance counselor, listed in the parent portal - <https://www.brookline.k12.ma.us/parentportal>

### Class of 2023 Deans' Team

Lisa Redding, Dean  
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### B-SAPP Prevention/Intervention Team

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### Communications & Resources

Sign up for PTO communications, including the BLAST and B-PEN *Parent Updates* on the PTO website [www.bhs-pt.org](http://www.bhs-pt.org) (click on the *News and Events* page).

**www.B-PEN.org**  
*informed \* involved \* connected*

***B-PEN's website has a wealth of info and parenting tips. "Like" B-PEN on Facebook for timely articles about social, emotional and developmental challenges affecting today's adolescents.***