



**OHYES! Quick Reference Guide
for Understanding Your Report**

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Background

School-based surveys are used to measure trends in youth behaviors and risk and protective factors. States, counties, and communities find these data useful to address community-specific needs, to conduct health assessments, and to meet federal grant reporting requirements. The Ohio Healthy Youth Environments Survey (OHYES!) is a collaborative effort of the Ohio Departments of Education, Health and Mental Health and Addiction Services, Ohio National Guard and representatives from higher education, juvenile courts, foundations, and community service providers to provide such data.

The standard survey instrument includes about 100 survey questions (varies by year) and schools may include an additional form with questions inquiring about sexual behavior and suicide. The survey is conducted as a web-based survey with students in grades 7 through 12. Participation is voluntary and responses are confidential. More information about the survey can be found on the OHYES! website at ohyes.ohio.gov.

Several reports are produced from these data, by survey year, comparing the *entire* OHYES! survey sample to a subset of the OHYES! participants that are the subject of each report. Reports are generated for the Appalachian Region, each county, each board, each school district, and each school. It should be noted that school district reports also include data from the county in which the district resides, in addition to the entire OHYES! survey sample.

Interpreting Your Data

The report follows a general format of reporting, for each survey item, the count of individuals selecting each response category and the total number of individuals responding to the question. Percentages are calculated for each item response by dividing the number of individuals selecting a response option by the total number of individuals responding to a question. The raw count of individuals is likely less interpretable than the percentage of individuals choosing each response option, as the percentage represents the number of individuals choosing the option in the context of the number who responded to the item.

Some survey items consisted of a series of options where participants were asked to check all responses that applied to them. These items present the count of individuals indicating *yes* (or checking the item) and the percentage of individuals selecting *yes* (count of yes responses divided by the number of respondents providing a response to an item) are reported for each item participants could have checked.

The number of individuals who should have responded, but did not, are also listed for survey items. Participation is completely voluntary, and participants may skip any item. In addition, it should be noted that the web-based survey includes skip patterns where some participants skip particular items. For instance, if a participant indicates that they have not used alcohol in their lifetime, they would not be asked about the frequency of their drinking behavior in the past 30 days. Only individuals who responded are included in the reported counts.

There are a few things to keep in mind when looking at the numbers presented in these reports.

- (1) These data were not collected using a probability-based sampling design. This means that percentages calculated from those participants surveyed *may or may not* be generalizable to the larger geography of interest and percentages *may or may not* be comparable across years. Here are some things to consider in making these determinations.
 - a. While this survey is not a probability sample, a census of students was conducted for some geographies. For instance, if all high school students in the county were invited to participate in the survey, this would be a census of high school students in a county. In these cases, generalizability is not an issue, as the survey results represent the population of interest.

- b. Comparability across survey years must be done with caution. Comparisons across survey years are only reasonable, as long the same *units* (e.g., grades, schools, districts) participated in the survey in both survey years.
 - c. What grades were sampled? Survey results primarily should only generalize to the grades that participated in the survey. For instance, if only grades 9 through 10 participated in the survey, the results cannot be generalized to all high school students. Also, if different grades participated in different survey years, then results are likely not comparable across years.
 - d. Were the *units* surveyed (e.g., grades, schools, districts) representative of the group about which you would like to make statements? For instance, if only two of six schools in a district participated, and these two schools primarily represent lower SES students in the district, then these survey results likely cannot be generalized to the entire school district.
- (2) The same students are likely not surveyed every year, as this survey was designed to be cross-sectional. Care must be exercised when comparing percentages across years. Comparing changes across administration years of the OHYES! survey is possible only when the samples each year are similar (e.g., the same schools and grades were surveyed in both years being compared).
- (3) Some survey questions on the OHYES! survey ask about relatively rare events (e.g., past 30-day use of cigarettes among middle school students). For instance, suppose a middle school that has 1,000 students is sampled and 10 students indicate that they have smoked in the past 30 days. When these 10 students are asked about the number of days they smoked, suppose 9 (or $9/10 = 90\%$) indicate that they smoked all 30 days. Whereas 90% may seem large, it is important to remember that only 0.9% (or $9/1000 = .9\%$) of the total number of students sampled used cigarettes all 30 days in the past 30 days.

Any interpretations from the OHYES! data must keep these explanations and limitations in mind.

Understanding Your Data: Some Examples

EXAMPLE 1: % Choosing Each Response Option

How old were you when you had your first drink of alcohol other than a few sips?

Table 59: Age when first drank more than few sips of alcohol

Response	OHYES!		Appalachia	
	n	%	n	%
I have never had a drink of alcohol other than a few sips	26426	70.01	5607	64.46
8 years old or younger	1402	3.71	410	4.71
9 or 10 years old	957	2.54	273	3.14
11 or 12 years old	1794	4.75	557	6.40
13 or 14 years old	3141	8.32	922	10.60
15 or 16 years old	3542	9.38	818	9.40
17 years old or older	485	1.28	112	1.29
Total	37747	100.00	8699	100.00

Note that there were missing values of age first drank alcohol for 2286 cases among OHYES! participants and 585 cases among Appalachian participants.

- This table was generated for the Appalachia region and represents the first item from the series of items asking about alcohol use.

- For each of the two geographies presented (all OHYES! survey participants and all Appalachian region participants), there are two columns listed: the count of individuals selecting that response and the percentage of individuals choosing that response. The percentage is simply the count of individuals choosing that response divided by the total number responding.
- As an example, we can see that 26,426 of 37,747 (or 70.01% of) OHYES! participants have not initiated alcohol use and fewer Appalachian participants (5,607 of 8,699 or 64.46%) have not initiated alcohol use. In contrast, 29.99% (or 100.00%-70.01%) of OHYES! participants and 35.54% (or 100.00%-64.46%) of Appalachian participants have initiated alcohol use.
- Among OHYES! participants, 37,747 participants responded to the item and 2,286 participants did not respond to this item. That is, there were a total of 40,033 (or 37,747 + 2,286) participants who could have responded to this item, where 94% (or 37,747 / 40,033) did respond to the item.

EXAMPLE 2: % Checking All Options That Apply

When you are stressed out, how do you manage it? Note: Respondents could select all that apply.

Table 57: When you are stressed out, how do you manage it?

	OHYES!		Appalachia	
	Yes	%	Yes	%
I do not have any stress	5169	13.27	1279	14.14
Manage stress through physical activity	19885	51.06	4312	47.68
Manage stress through meditation, prayer, or relaxation	7658	19.66	1504	16.63
Manage stress by participating in hobbies or community service	9448	24.26	1953	21.60
Manage stress through creative expression	11795	30.29	2577	28.50
Manage stress with support from others	10433	26.79	2296	25.39
Manage stress by avoiding people who create drama	16720	42.93	4140	45.78
Manage stress by limiting social media	5569	14.30	1429	15.80

Note that there were missing values of how stress is managed for 1088 cases among OHYES! participants and 241 cases among Appalachian participants. Denominators for percentages are based on 38945 available cases among OHYES! participants and 9043 available cases among Appalachian participants.

- This table was also generated for the Appalachia region and asked participants to select all of the options that apply to how they deal with stress.
- There are two columns listing the count of individuals selecting that response and the percentage of individuals selecting that response of all who responded to the item for each of the two geographies presented.
- As example, we can see that slightly more than a quarter of Appalachian participants (25.39% = 2,296 / 9,043) and OHYES! participants (26.79% = 10,433 / 38,945) managed stress with support from others.
- Among Appalachian participants, 9,043 participants responded to the item and 241 participants did not respond to this question. That is, there were a total of 9,284 (or 9,043 + 241) participants who could have responded to this item, where 98% (or 9,043 / 9,284) did respond to the item.