

2021 YOUTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY REPORT

The YOUTH (Youth Opportunities Unlimited Throughout Hillsdale) of the Hillsdale County Community Foundation have conducted their tri-annual needs assessment survey to assess critical issues in Hillsdale County for the youth. This report will show the issues that teenagers in our community have specified as being the biggest concern in their daily lives. The YOUTH look at these results when reviewing grant applications, so they can provide funding to programming that effectively addresses these key areas of concern.

The following schools participated in the 2021 Needs Assessment Survey:

- Camden-Frontier Schools - 1
- Hillsdale Academy - 24
- Hillsdale Community Schools - 173
- Jonesville Community Schools - 61
- Litchfield Community Schools - 11
- North Adams-Jerome Schools - 3
- Reading Community Schools - 196
- Waldron Area Schools - 32
- Will Carleton Academy - 33

Surveys were distributed to students in the eighth through twelfth grades in every school. Responses included 39 seventh graders, 63 eighth graders, 79 ninth graders, 129 tenth graders, 120 eleventh graders and 105 twelfth graders. Responders also indicated that 283 were female, 236 were male and 16 self-identified as other. Students were able to remain anonymous for the completion of the survey in order to encourage complete honesty and openness in responses.

Important Issues

Students were asked to choose what they see and the issues having the most impact on them based on their personal experiences. The biggest issues were identified by the students in the following order:

1. Depression/Anxiety (44%)
2. Smoking/Vaping (37%)
3. Pressure to achieve/succeed (29%)
4. Low self-esteem (24%)
5. Drug use (21%)
6. Bullying/Cyberbullying (20%)
7. Body image/Eating disorders (18%)

Students were then asked to rate the top three issues facing youth today.

1. Depression/Anxiety (84) and Smoking/Vaping (99)
2. Drug Use (40) and Bullying/Cyberbullying (29)
3. Pressure to achieve/succeed (33)

Mental Health Rating

Students were asked to rate their mental health.

Excellent	98
Somewhat good	118
Average	135
Somewhat poor	95
Poor	68
Not sure	21

Students were then asked if they were aware of the mental health resources in the community:

No	236
Yes	299

When asked which resources students wished were available, the following were suggested:

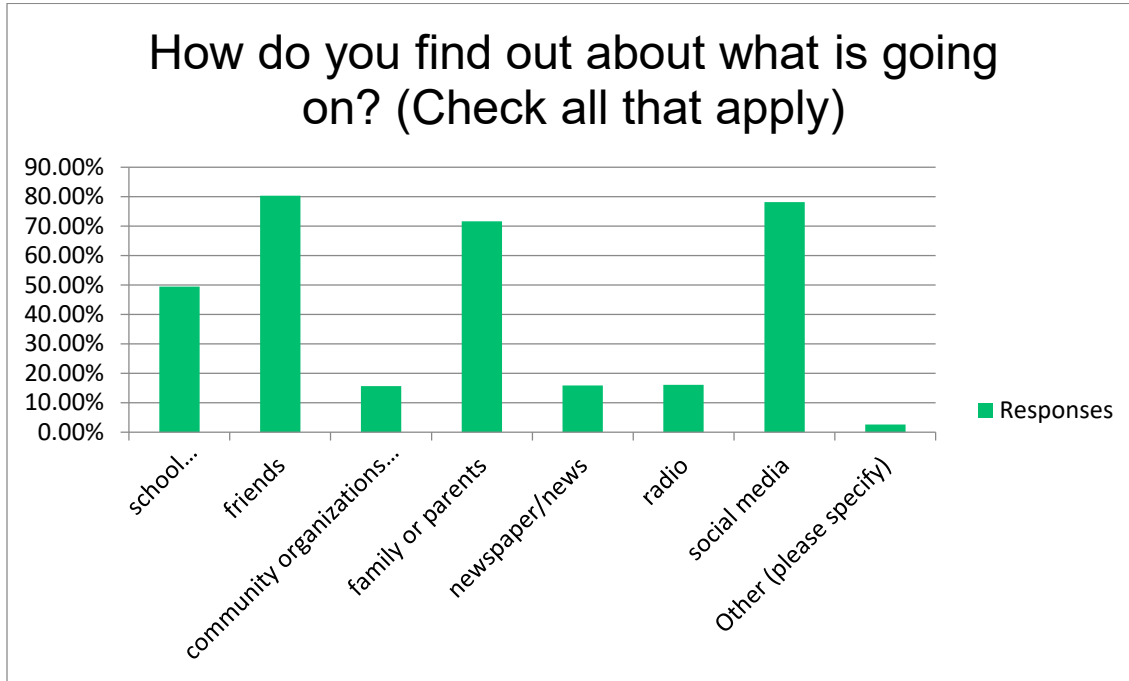
Rehab services	Home Ec classes	Sexual education
Female school counselors	Mental health days	Student talk groups
Affordable therapy/healthcare	Mental health check-ins	Suicide prevention groups
Anonymous counseling	More resources for teachers	Support groups
School counselors	Peer to peer listening groups	Therapy
Mental health education	Resources for teen drug use	
Drug and alcohol education	School therapist	

Students were also asked what their plans were after high school:

Community College	9.70%	52
Four-year College and university	49.63%	266
Military service	3.92%	21
Technical/trade school	7.28%	39
Workforce	5.97%	32
Undecided	19.22%	103
Other	4.29%	23

Total responses		536
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Finally, students were asked how they find out about things going on:



In summary, the youth of Hillsdale County are most concerned about depression/anxiety, smoking/vaping, pressure to achieve/succeed, and low self-esteem. Drug use, bullying/cyberbullying and body images are still prevalent as well. Youth rated their mental health at an average of 3/5. Students are split with their awareness of mental health resources.

Please be advised that the results of our survey are not scientific. The purpose of this project is to get a general idea of the concerns of area young people. The YOUTH use these results when considering grant applications and community service activities. It is the goal of the YOUTH to fund programs and projects that will address concerns and issues identified in this survey.