

Youth Substance Use & Gambling

Risks and Prevention

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Department of
Health and Human Services
Behavioral Health Division

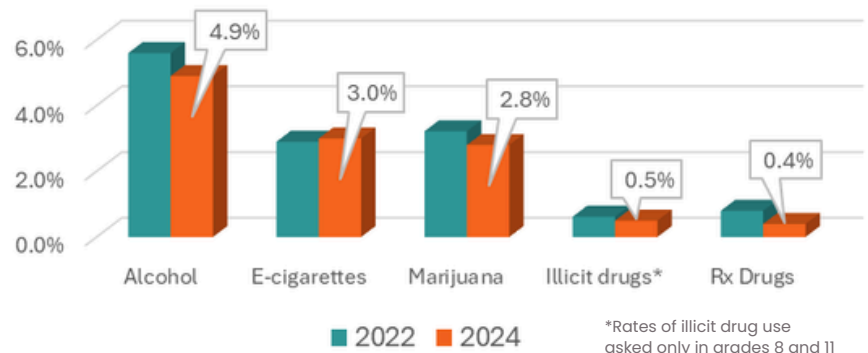
Rates of youth substance use are declining.

Washington County youth substance use rates were lower overall in 2024 than 2022, following national trends. Substance use is still a significant health risk for youth.

Youth Substance Use Decreased From 2022-2024

Washington County Past 30 Day Use

Oregon Student Health Survey combined data for grades 6, 8, 11



- Opioids include prescription pain medications and illegal drugs like heroin.
- Opioid use can lead to addiction or accidental overdose and death.
- Fentanyl is the cause of most opioid overdose deaths.
- Fentanyl is 50–100 times stronger than heroin.
- Fentanyl is often hidden in pills or powder and is sold online and in person.

Opioid overdoses are decreasing, yet 47 Oregon youth and young adults (ages 10–24) died of opioid overdose in 2024.

Oregon Health Authority, Public Health Division, Injury and Violence Prevention Program. Oregon Overdose Prevention Dashboard. 12/31/2025

Talk with youth about opioids and overdose risk.

- Talk openly and honestly about substance use.
- Explain what fentanyl is and why it's dangerous.
- Tell youth never to take pills not prescribed to them by a doctor.
- Emphasize that pills bought through social media are not safe.
- Help youth make an exit plan for situations where they may feel pressured to use drugs.

Notice and ask
about changes.



Trust your
instincts.

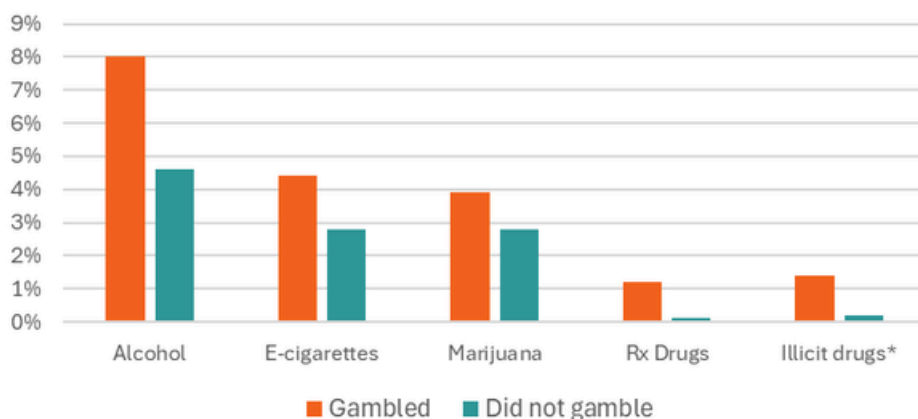
Listen without
judgment.



Gambling is a risky behavior that is on the rise.

Youth are gambling at increasing rates, and youth who gamble report higher rates of substance use, depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts.

Rates of Substance Use Higher Among Youth who Gamble
Past 30-Day Use
2024 Oregon Student Health Survey, Washington County



*Rates of illicit drug use asked only in grades 8 and 11

Signs that youth may be struggling:

- Changes in mood, behavior and/or appearance
- Losing interest in activities they once enjoyed
- Hanging out with different friends than usual or withdrawing from friends
- Secretive screen use
- Poor school performance, missing school
- Changes in eating, sleeping, or personal hygiene habits
- More problems with family or friends, getting in trouble
- Unexplained spending, missing money

In 2024, Washington County youth (grades 6, 8 and 11) reported:

25%	Depression
30%	Frequent stress and worry
10%	Suicidal thoughts

Oregon Student Health Survey, 2024.

Many youth turn to **substances** when they are struggling with mental and emotional health.

Protective Factors & Resources

What can you do?

- Build trust and listen without judgment.
- Communicate honestly and often.
- Show support and set clear expectations.
- Know your youth's friends and whereabouts.
- Lock up medications and substances.
- Carry naloxone.
- Model healthy habits and coping skills.
- Encourage school involvement and activities.
- Spend quality time together.
- Celebrate achievements and effort.
- Help develop problem-solving skills and confidence.

Increasing these protective factors can help improve behavioral health outcomes among youth.

Where to find help and support:

Hawthorn Walk-in Center: 5250 NE Elam Young Pkwy, Hillsboro, Suite 100

Washington County Crisis Line: 503-291-9111 (available 24/7)

YouthLine: Text teen2teen to 839863 or call 877-968-8491

Alcohol & Drug Help Line: 1-800-923-4357

Al-Anon/Ala-teen: oregonal-anon.org or 1-800-344-2666

**Learn more,
stay informed,
and find help
if needed.**

Washington County Addiction Services

Find local information on opioids and overdose prevention, substance use disorder treatment options, and problem gambling.

**wcor.us/addictions
503-846-4528**

