

SPiRiT

Missouri School-based Substance Abuse Prevention
Intervention and Resource Initiative

Knox County School District Sixth Year Report 2007 –2008

**Missouri Department of Mental Health
Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse**

This report was prepared for the State of Missouri by:
Missouri Institute of Mental Health
Division of Child and Family Mental Health Research Services
University of Missouri - Columbia

Carol J. Evans, Ph.D.
Liz Sale, Ph.D.
Virginia Weil, MSW
Karen M. Breejen, BA



MATT BLUNT
GOVERNOR
KEITH SCHAFER, Ed.D.
DIRECTOR



STATE OF MISSOURI
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

1706 EAST ELM STREET
P.O. BOX 687
JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI 65102
(573) 751-4122
(573) 751-8224 FAX
www.dmh.mo.gov

MARK STRINGER
Director
DIVISION OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE
(573) 751-4942
(573) 751-7814 FAX

JOE PARKS, M.D.
DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF COMPREHENSIVE
PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES
(573) 751-8017
(573) 751-7815 FAX

BERNARD SIMONS
DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
(573) 751-4054
(573) 751-9207 FAX

November 1, 2008

The Missouri Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse is pleased to present this Sixth Year Report of the Missouri School-based Substance Abuse Prevention Intervention Resources Initiative (SPIRIT). The report, prepared by the Missouri Institute of Mental Health (MIMH), was made possible through the Division's partnership with five school districts: Knox County, Hickman Mills (Kansas City), Ritenour (St. Louis), New Madrid County, and Carthage (Jasper County).

SPIRIT objectives are to delay onset and decrease use of substances, improve overall school performance, and reduce incidents of violence. The report shows positive outcomes and suggests future enhancements.

I hope it gives you a deeper understanding of this exciting project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Stringer".

Mark Stringer
Director

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Executive Summary

Introduction

In 2002, the Missouri Department of Mental Health's (DMH) Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse (ADA) launched the School-based Prevention Intervention and Resources Initiative (SPIRIT) in five school districts in the state, including Knox County. FY2008 marks the sixth year of SPIRIT, a project that proposes to delay the onset and decrease the use of substances, improve overall school performance, and reduce incidents of violence.

To achieve these goals, prevention agencies are paired with participating school districts to provide technical assistance in implementing evidence-based substance abuse prevention programming and referral and assessment services as needed. In Knox County, Preferred Family Healthcare is paired with the district. Classroom teachers teach PeaceBuilders in the elementary school, providers teach Life Skills Training in the middle school, and providers teach Project Towards No Drug Abuse to 9th Grade students. An agency provider also teaches Reconnecting Youth to a select group of high school students. This report provides outcomes related to the main goals of the SPIRIT project in its sixth year of implementation.

Methods

The SPIRIT evaluation, conducted by the Missouri Institute of Mental Health's Division of Child and Family Mental Health Services Research, uses a variety of data gathered through questionnaires, interviews, observations, and school records (see Measures box below).

All students (n = 434) in the kindergarten through ninth grades participated in the SPIRIT project, along with other selected students from the high school. Parental consent was obtained for 77.0% of students to be participants in the evaluation. All consented students who were available at the time of survey administration were evaluated.

Comparisons between this District Report and the SPIRIT aggregate report cannot be made. Particular samples, for example specific grade groupings, that will most clearly report the district's characteristics are selected for each district; these may differ from the aggregate.

Measures

- Classroom Teacher Behavioral Observation Checklist (K – 3rd grade only)
- SPIRIT questionnaire (4th – 5th & 6th – 12th grade versions): (student self-report)
- Student Perception of Program Effectiveness Survey (2nd – 3rd & 4th – 12th grade versions (self-report)
- Teacher and Provider Satisfaction Survey
- Program Fidelity Forms: implementer self-report form
- Monthly Reports: provider self-report
- Interviews (Provider, and Principal versions)
- Program Implementation Observations

Summary of Findings

Substance Use

Table 1. Knox, SPIRIT, Missouri and National Drug Use Comparison					
		Knox ¹	SPIRIT ²	Missouri ³	National ⁴
Cigarettes	Lifetime use	12.9	20.2%	23.3%	23.7%
	Past month (30-day)	2.2	6.5%	10.1%	9.8%
	Age of initiation	10.86	11.22	11.31	n/a
Alcohol	Lifetime use	32.3	47.2%	53.6%	39.4%
	Past month (30-day)	8.6	13.7%	22.3%	15.9%
	Age of initiation	10.94	10.78	11.81	n/a
Marijuana	Lifetime use	3.2	10.8%	13.9%	16.2%
	Past month (30-day)	1.1	4.2%	6.1%	6.7%
	Age of initiation	11.00	12.17	12.60	n/a
Inhalants	Lifetime use	2.2	6.8%	10.4%	9.6%
	Past month (30-day)	2.2	3.4%	4.6%	1.2%
	Age of initiation	15.00	11.18	n/a	n/a

¹Knox, Spring 2008, 6th – 9th grade, n = 93 (average age = 13.15)

²SPIRIT, Spring 2008, 6th – 9th grade, n = 805 (average age = 13.00)

³Missouri Student Survey (MSS) 2008, 6th – 9th grade, n = 86,861 (average age = 13.64)

⁴National Statistics on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) 2007, n = 25,241 (12 – 17 years of age)

- There was a lower percentage of lifetime substance use in the Knox Co. School District than in the SPIRIT total sample.
- Knox also had fewer users of cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana than the US sample. The percentage of lifetime alcohol users in Knox, however, was greater than that in the Missouri sample.
- The percentage of 30-day substance users in the Knox Co. School District is either smaller than the SPIRIT, Missouri, and US samples, or very similar. The substance used by the greatest percentage of youth in the past 30 days was alcohol.
- Around 13% of 9th graders reported binge drinking. All those who reported any alcohol use at that grade level reported binge drinking.
- The age of 1st use of cigarettes and marijuana among Knox youth is lower than the SPIRIT and Missouri samples. However, inhalant and prescription drug users begin at a later age.
- The percentage of lifetime cigarette users in the Knox Co. School District nearly doubled from Year 5 to Year 6, whereas there was no difference from year to year in the total SPIRIT sample.
- There were no significant differences in trends over time.

Attitudes toward Substance Use

- Cigarettes and alcohol were perceived to be least harmful and wrong compared to marijuana, ecstasy, methamphetamine, inhalants and prescription drugs.
- Only 34% of youth felt that smoking all or part of a cigarette was a “great risk” compared to 92% who felt that occasional methamphetamine use was a great risk.

Problem Behavior

- Teachers reported that K – 3rd grade children are more likely to act reactively aggressive than proactively aggressive. However, only a few students were identified as aggressive. Out of all the aggressive behaviors measured, children were most likely to get angry easily when teased and blame others in a fight.
- Among 4th – 9th graders, the largest percentage of youth reported being made fun of, making fun of others and having rumors or lies spread about them. Only 15.8% of youth reported being in a physical fight in the past three months, whereas 29.4% admitted to hitting or pushing another kid at school, and 38.0% reported that another student had physically assaulted them (pushed, shoved, slapped, hit or kick).
- As grade level increased a smaller percentage of youth reporting being harassed or bullied, having rumors spread about them, and being made fun of. However, there was an increase in the percentage of youth who reported making fun of others in the past three months.
- There was no change in fighting behaviors between Years 5 and 6.
- The percentage of youth reporting having been pushed, shoved, slapped, hit or kicked by another in the past three months increased from Year 5 to Year 6 among 6th – 9th grade youth.

School Performance

- GPA increased from the Fall to the Spring semester of the 2007-2008 school year.
- The higher the grade level of the evaluated participant, the less likely they were to have a disciplinary incident.
- Almost all youth (96.8%) did not receive in-school or out-of-school suspension over the course of the school year.
- No youth had an ATOD-related disciplinary incident.

School Attitudes

- The majority of youth had very positive attitudes toward school. Youth were most likely to agree that they feel close to people at school and feel safe going to and from school. They were least likely to agree that teachers treat students fairly.

Social Competence

- Most K-3rd grade students were identified as displaying positive pro-social behavior and emotion regulation. Students were most able to display the following behaviors: sharing, being helpful to others, wait in line patiently, and follow the rules. Children were least able to resolve problems on their own, accept things not going their way, and cope well with failure.
- K-3rd grade teachers reported that the majority of children’s social competence improved at least a little over the course of the year. The area in which children improved the most was self-esteem.
- The majority of 4th – 9th grade youth reported that they were empathic, had good decision making skills and had positive attitudes toward school.
- Older youth are more vulnerable than younger youth. Ninth grade youth were less likely to report there was a caring adult at home or at school whom they could go to if something was really bothering them. They were also less likely than their younger counterparts to be happy at school, feel a part of the school, and think that teachers treat students fairly.

“ . . . SPIRIT teaches you to take responsibility for your actions and the consequences of those actions.”

—Superintendent

Program Satisfaction/Effectiveness

- Overall, the majority of youth (over 50%) in the 4th – 9th grades reported that the program was effective in every area measured.
- Youth reported that the program was most effective in helping them with their resistance skills (saying no to harmful things). The program was reported as by least effective in getting others to be nicer to them.

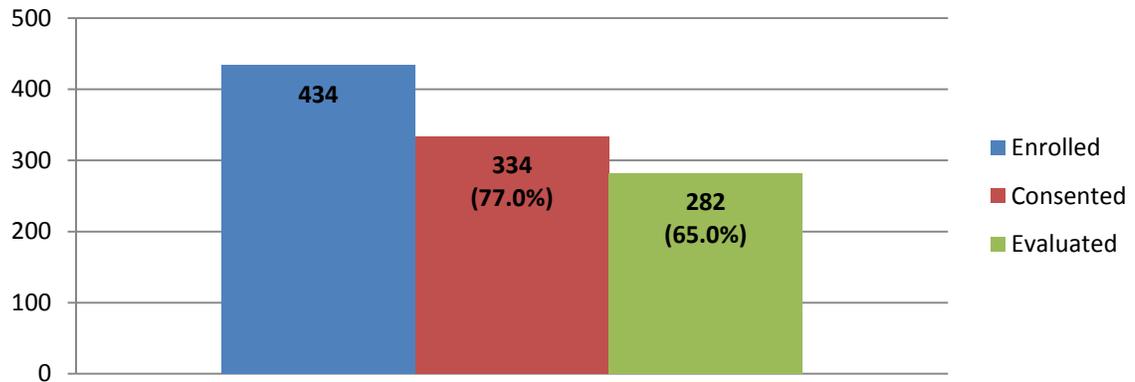
Recommendations

- Although rates of substance use are lower at Knox than the SPIRIT and Missouri samples, the age of first use of cigarettes and marijuana among Knox youth is also lower than these two samples.
- While inhalant use rates are very low, they are similar to use rates for cigarettes and marijuana. Given the lethality of these drugs and use at younger ages, continued attention to the dangers of inhalants is essential.
- Youth perceived cigarettes and alcohol as less harmful and wrong than other drugs. Stressing the negative health and other effects of these substances should continue.
- Both physical and emotional bullying are significant issues and have become worse in the past year. Because these behaviors are most common among junior high school youth, programming might be warranted to supplement Life Skills Training with lessons focusing on bullying.
- Two protective factors were lowest among 9th grade youth, the presence of a caring adult in their lives and attachment to school. Given that much substance use begins at this grade level, it is particularly important for older youth to form attachments to positive adults. Teacher and parent education on the need for these attachments should be stressed.

Chapter 1: Demographics

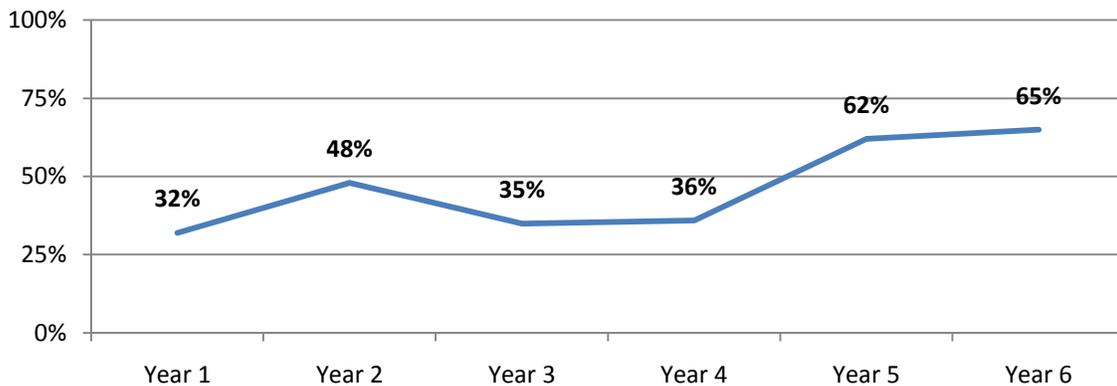
In its sixth year, 434 children and youth participated in SPIRIT from the Knox School District. Over three-quarters (77%, n=334) received parental consent for the evaluation. In Spring of 2008, 65.0% (n=282) of those enrolled were evaluated.

Figure 1. Youth Enrolled, Consented, and Evaluated in Year 6



The rate of parental consent increased by 3.0% from Year 5 (62%) to Year 6 (65%).¹

Figure 2. Consent Rates, 2002-2008



Females represented a slightly greater percentage of evaluated participants (53.2%).

¹ Consent rates were lowest in Year 4 because new contracts were established in late Fall of that year when it is more difficult to collect consent forms than at the beginning of the school year.

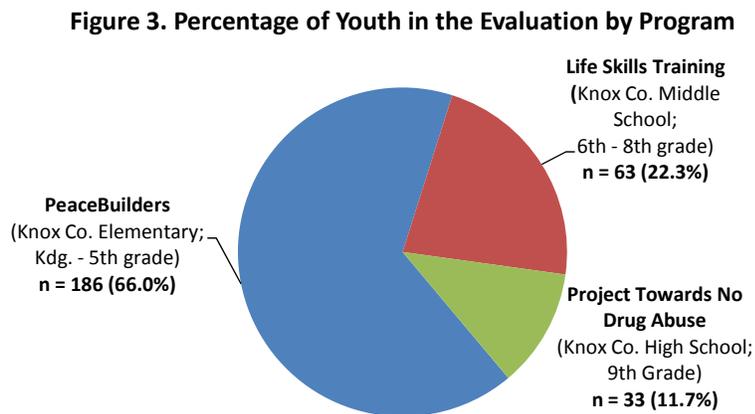
Table 2. Percentage of Evaluated Participants by Sex		
	Knox	SPIRIT Total
Male	53.2%	54.6%
Female	46.8%	48.4%

Most of the evaluated participants were non-Hispanic Whites (91.2%). Whites represent a greater percentage in Knox Co. than that in the total SPIRIT, Missouri, and US samples. The percentage of Hispanics (5.0%) in the sample was lower than the proportion present in the total SPIRIT sample and nationally.

Table 3. Percentage of Evaluated Participants by Race/Ethnicity				
	Knox	SPIRIT Total	MO [†]	US [†]
White/Caucasian (Non-Hispanic/Latino)	90.5%	50.3%	84.0%	73.9%
Black/African-American (Non-Hispanic/Latino)	1.4%	26.4%	11.3%	12.4%
Native American/Alaskan Native (Non-Hispanic/Latino)	0.0%	0.2%	0.4%	0.8%
Asian (Non-Hispanic/Latino)	1.4%	2.8%	1.5%	4.4%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (Non-Hispanic/Latino)	0.0%	0.9%	0.1%	0.1%
Other (not otherwise specified; Non-Hispanic/Latino)	0.7%	0.4%	1.1%	6.3%
Black & White (Non-Hispanic/Latino)	1.4%	4.3%	n/a	n/a
Hispanic/Latino (of any race)	4.8%	14.9%	2.8%	14.8%

[†] U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

The majority of SPIRIT participants (66.0%) took part in the PeaceBuilders program taught in Knox County Elementary School (Kdg. – 5th grade). Life Skills Training was taught to Knox Co. Middle School students (6th – 8th grade) and Project Towards No Drug Abuse was implemented in the 9th grade in the High School.



Chapter 2: The SPIRIT Programs

As part of the SPIRIT evaluation, evaluators conducted two site visits at Knox and reviewed information submitted monthly by prevention specialists. Below are brief summaries of the prevention programs that are offered at the schools in the Knox School District.

SPIRIT is offered at the elementary, middle and high schools in the Knox County district. PeaceBuilders (PB) is taught by classroom teachers in the elementary school, and providers teach Life Skills Training (LST) in the middle school, Project Towards No Drug Abuse (TND) in the 9th grade of the high school and Reconnecting Youth (RY) to selected high school students. This year, the entire administration of the district changed with three new principals and a new superintendent. All new principals, except one, have been part of the district for several years. Based on their observations, they believe that SPIRIT has made a tremendous difference in the district, especially

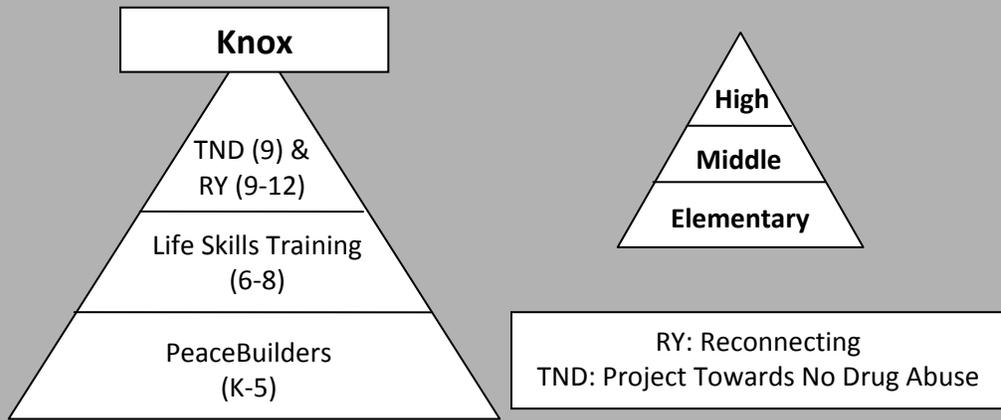
“ . . . SPIRIT teaches you to take responsibility for your actions and the consequences of those actions.”

—Superintendent

over time. One said, “We look at the effects of SPIRIT on a 5 or 6 year plan so we have to look at what the high school was like then and now. I would have to say that it’s [SPIRIT] made a big difference.” The elementary principal has continued many of the activities that were held in previous years, including the principal’s “preferral luncheon.” Although PB continues to provide a common language to the school community and to improve school climate, the principal is eager to have a “refresher” course on the program for teachers since many of them are fairly new to PB. In upper grade levels, a principal and an assistant principal oversee both middle and high school students. One of the principals, who is new to the district, said: “I think SPIRIT is an awesome program. I think all schools need to have SPIRIT.” He has been amazed at the contrast between the Knox County students and the students from his previous school in terms of disciplinary incidents. He said, “I work closely with the assistant principal and there doesn’t seem to be many problems. I think SPIRIT has a lot to do with it. We are educating the students in the elementary, middle, and high schools and they hear it over and over again – they are educated. Something has to have to do with it – probably SPIRIT – all I know is that we have very good kids so something is working right.”

Providers at this site are extremely active in the community; they collaborate with Rotary, Head Start, the Ministerial Alliance, and the Methamphetamine Coalition among other organizations. They also provide special lessons to students upon request from teachers, serve as chaperones for school events, and generally are a part of the school community. To involve parents in the program, they sponsor events such as Donuts for Dads and Muffins for Moms. They produce a monthly newsletter to communicate with families.

Figure 4. Program Implementation, Year 6 (2007-2008)



Chapter 3: Substance Use

The following chapter presents information on youths' reported use of substances at any time in their past (lifetime use) and two substance use indicators from the National Outcome Measures (NOMs): (1) age of first use; and (2) 30-day use. These measures of substance use are compared to the total SPIRIT sample and the most current state and national surveys: the 2008 Missouri Student Survey (MSS) and the 2007 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH).

Comparisons between this District Report and the SPIRIT aggregate report cannot be made. Particular samples, for example specific grade groupings, that will most clearly report the district's characteristics are selected for each district; these may differ from the aggregate.

Lifetime Substance Use

Comparisons with SPIRIT, MO, and US

There was a smaller percentage of lifetime users of substances in the Knox Co. School District than in the SPIRIT total sample, with the exception of methamphetamine. Knox also had fewer users of cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana than the US sample. The percentage of lifetime alcohol users in Knox, however, was greater than that in the Missouri sample.

Table 4. Lifetime Substance Use: Comparison between Knox, SPIRIT, MO, and US data

	Knox ¹	SPIRIT Total ²	MSS ³	US ⁴
Cigarettes	12.9%	20.2%	23.3%	23.7%
Alcohol (more than a sip)	32.3%	47.2%	53.6%	39.4%
Marijuana	3.2%	10.8%	13.9%	16.2%
Ecstasy	0.0%	1.5%	n/a	n/a
Methamphetamine	3.0%	1.1%	n/a	n/a
Inhalants	2.2%	6.8%	10.4%	9.6%
Prescription Drugs without Rx	2.2%	4.7%	n/a	n/a
Alcohol (once or twice a month)	7.5%	11.6%	n/a	n/a

¹Knox, Spring 2008, 6th – 9th grade, n = 93 (average age = 13.15)

²SPIRIT, Spring 2008, 6th – 9th grade, n = 805 (average age = 13.00)

³Missouri Student Survey (MSS) 2008, 6th – 9th grade, n = 86,861 (average age = 13.64)

⁴National Statistics on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) 2007, n = 25,241 (12 – 17 years of age)

Lifetime Substance Use by Grade Level

The percentage of lifetime substance users increases as grade level increases, with the most dramatic increase occurring at the 9th grade. Regardless of grade level, alcohol is the substance used by the greatest percentage of youth.

Table 5. Lifetime Substance Use by Grade Level

	4 th – 5 th	6 th – 8 th	9 th
Cigarettes	4.8	9.5	16.7
Alcohol (more than a sip)	24.2	28.6	43.3
Marijuana	0.0	1.6	6.7
Ecstasy	n/a	0.0	0.0
Methamphetamine	n/a	0.0	0.0
Inhalants	n/a	0.0	3.4
Prescription Drugs without Rx	n/a	0.0	6.9
Alcohol (once or twice a month)	n/a	0.0	10.3

30-day Substance Use

30-day Substance Use: Comparisons with SPIRIT, MO, and US

The percentage of 30-day substance users in the Knox Co. School District is either smaller or very similar to those in the SPIRIT, Missouri, and US samples. The substance used by the greatest percentage of youth in the past 30 days was alcohol.

Table 6. 30-day Substance Use: Comparison between Knox, SPIRIT, MO, and US data

	Knox ¹	SPIRIT Total ²	MSS ³	US ⁴
Cigarettes	2.2	6.5	10.1	9.8
Alcohol	8.6	13.7	22.3	15.9
Marijuana	1.1	4.2	6.1	6.7
Inhalants	2.2	3.4	4.6	1.2
Prescription Drugs without Rx	2.2	3.7	n/a	n/a
Other Illegal Drugs	1.1	3.6	n/a	n/a
Binge Drinking (5 or more drinks on same occasion)	4.2	7.6	9.0	n/a
Ride in a car with someone who was drunk	11.5	13.8	20.7	n/a
Drive a car while drunk	1.1	2.3	4.1	n/a

¹Knox, Spring 2008, 6th – 9th grade, n = 93 (average age = 13.15)

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⁴National Statistics on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) 2007, n = 25,241 (12 – 17 years of age)

30-day Substance Use by Grade Level

Regardless of grade level there were very few youth who had used substances in the past 30-days. As grade level increased, the percentage of alcohol users increased. Every 9th grader who reported drinking alcohol in the past 30 days reported binge drinking in the past 30 days.

Table 7. 30-day Substance Use by Grade Level

	4 th – 5 th	6 th – 8 th	9 th
Cigarettes	1.6	0.0	6.7
Alcohol	1.6	6.3	13.3
Marijuana	0.0	1.6	0.0
Inhalants	n/a	0.0	0.0
Prescription Drugs without Rx	n/a	0.0	0.0
Other Illegal Drugs	n/a	0.0	6.9
Binge Drinking (5 or more drinks on same occasion)	n/a	0.0	13.3
Ride in a car with someone who was drunk	n/a	9.4	24.1
Drive a car while drunk	n/a	9.4	20.7

Age of 1st Use

Age of 1st Use: Comparisons with SPIRIT, Missouri, and US

The age of 1st use of cigarettes, and marijuana among Knox youth is lower than the SPIRIT and Missouri samples. Users of inhalant and prescription drugs, however, began at a later age.

	Knox ¹	SPIRIT Total ²	MSS ³
Cigarettes	10.86	11.22	11.31
Alcohol (more than a sip)	10.94	10.78	11.81
Marijuana	11.00	12.17	12.60
Ecstasy	n/a	12.71	n/a
Methamphetamine	n/a	12.55	n/a
Inhalants	15.00	11.18	n/a
Prescription Drugs without Rx	14.00	12.35	n/a
Alcohol (once or twice a month)	12.57	12.26	n/a

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²SPIRIT, Spring 2008, 6th – 9th grade, n = 805 (average age = 13.00)

³Missouri Student Survey (MSS) 2008, 6th – 9th grade, n = 86,861 (average age = 13.64)

Other Substance Use Indicators

Extent of Use

Sixth – 12th graders were asked how many cigarettes they smoke per day. Of those who admitted to cigarette use, the majority (71.4%) indicated they smoked 5 or fewer cigarettes a day. Over 14% reported smoking 6-15 cigarettes a day (about ½ a pack). The remaining 14.3% reported smoking over 15 cigarettes a day.

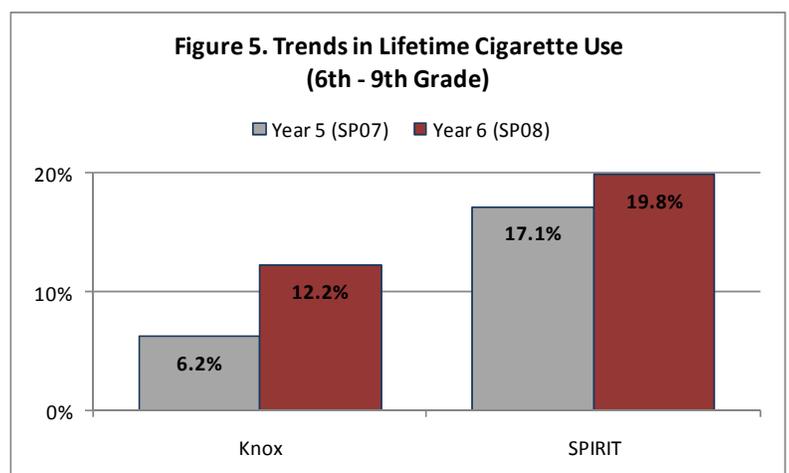
A little over one third (38.5%) of 6th – 12th grade youth who reported drinking alcohol indicated that they had only one drink a day. The same percentage of youth (38.5%) drank 2 to 4 drinks a day. Slightly fewer (23.1%) reported drinking 5 or more drinks a day on the days that they drink.

Trends in Substance Use

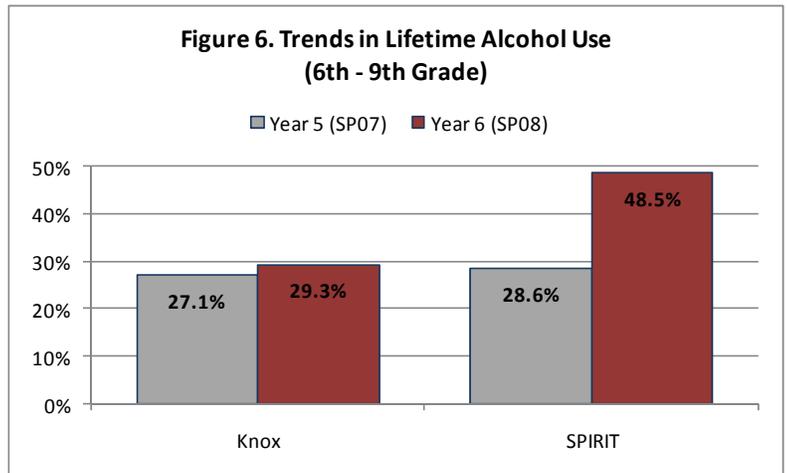
Lifetime Substance Use Trends

In order to examine the effects of the SPIRIT project over time, youth in 6th – 9th grades in Year 5 were compared to youth in the same grades in Year 6 in both the Knox district and the SPIRIT total sample. This is a modified data set and does not represent numbers already presented in the Year 5 or the general section of the Year 6 report. Comparisons between years should be made with caution as it is natural for fluctuations to occur from year to year.

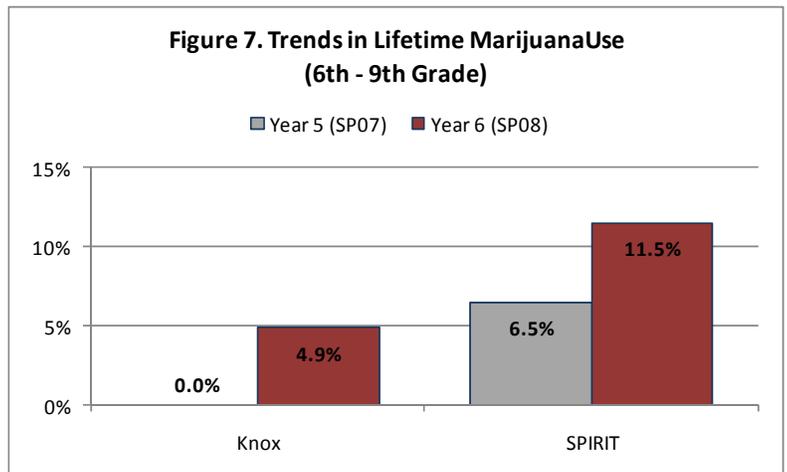
The percentage of lifetime cigarette users in the Knox Co. School District nearly doubled from Year 5 to Year 6, whereas there was no difference from year to year in the total SPIRIT sample.



The percentage of lifetime alcohol users did not differ from Year 5 to Year 6 within the Knox Co. School District; however the total SPIRIT sample showed an increase in the percentage of alcohol users.

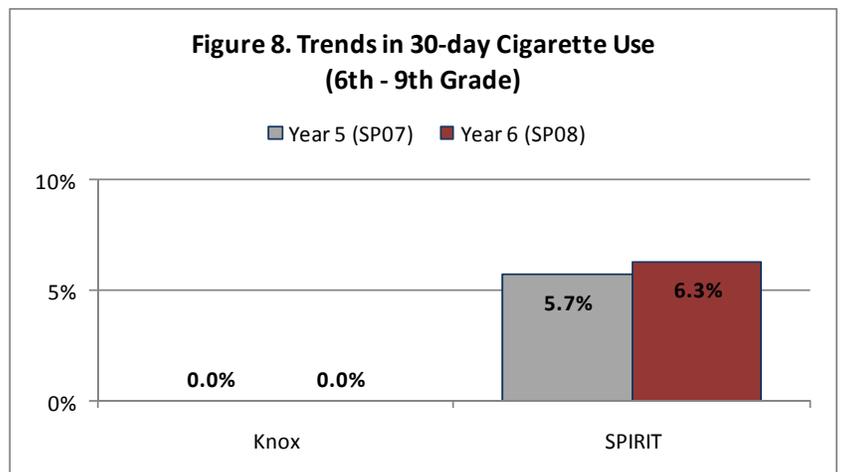


Within both the Knox and SPIRIT samples, the percentage of lifetime marijuana users increased from Year 5 to Year 6.

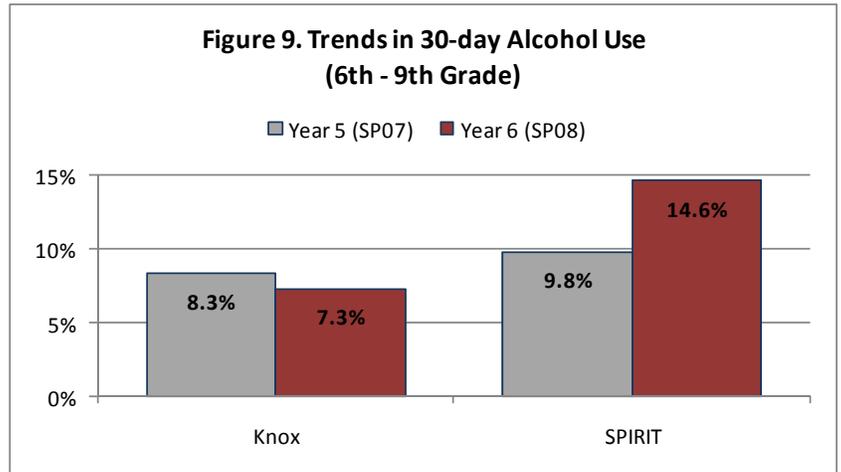


30-day Substance Use Trends

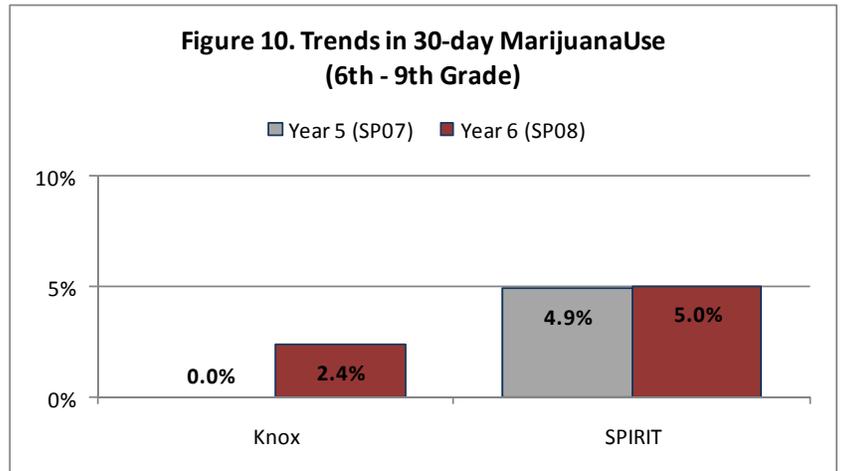
In the Years 5 and 6 samples, there were zero 30-day cigarettes users. The percentage of users within the SPIRIT sample was also low and did not change from year to year.



The percentage of 30-day alcohol users did not differ from Year 5 to Year 6 among Knox youth. However, the total SPIRIT sample saw an increase from Year 5 to Year 6 in 30-day alcohol use.



The percentage of 30-day marijuana users did not differ from Year 5 to Year 6 in either the Knox or SPIRIT samples.



Summary

- There was a lower percentage of lifetime substance users in the Knox Co. School District than in the SPIRIT total sample, with the exception of methamphetamine.
- Knox also had fewer users of cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana than the US sample. The percentage of lifetime alcohol users in Knox, however, was greater than that in the Missouri sample.
- The percentage of 30-day substance users in the Knox Co. School District is either smaller than the SPIRIT, MO, and US samples or very similar. The substance used by the greatest percentage of youth in the past 30 days was alcohol.
- Around 13% of 9th graders reported binge drinking. All those who reported any alcohol use at that grade level reported binge drinking.
- The age of 1st use of cigarettes, and marijuana among Knox youth is lower than the SPIRIT and Missouri samples. However, inhalant and prescription drug users begin at a later age.
- The percentage of lifetime cigarette users in the Knox Co. School District nearly doubled from Year 5 to Year 6, whereas there was no difference from year to year in the total SPIRIT sample.
- There were no significant differences in use between Years 5 and 6.

Chapter 4: Substance Use Attitudes

The following chapter presents youths' attitudes toward substances and two substance use indicators from the National Outcome Measures (NOMs): (1) perceived risk of harm from substance use; and (2) the perception of disapproving attitudes toward substance use.

Substance Use Attitudes

Youth were more likely to report that they might drink alcohol (19.4%) when they were older than smoke cigarettes (2.5%) or marijuana (2.1%). However, youth were equally as likely to think that most teens and adults used cigarettes as used alcohol.

Table 9. Youth Attitudes toward Alcohol and Other Drugs in Year 6 (4th – 9th Grade)

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I might smoke cigarettes when I get older	86.8	10.7	1.9	0.6
Smoking cigarettes makes you look cool	95.0	3.1	1.9	0.0
Kids who smoke cigarettes are more grown-up	91.1	3.1	5.0	0.0
Most teenagers smoke cigarettes	35.2	23.9	34.0	6.9
Most adults smoke cigarettes	26.6	25.9	31.6	15.8
I might drink alcohol when I get older	64.8	15.7	16.4	3.1
Drinking alcohol lets you have more fun	83.6	10.7	5.0	0.6
Most teenagers drink alcohol	35.8	28.9	29.6	5.7
Most adults drink alcohol	24.2	21.0	37.6	17.2
I might smoke marijuana when I get older	95.8	2.1	2.1	0.0
Most teenagers use marijuana	56.6	22.8	16.6	4.1
Most adults use marijuana.	47.5	24.1	13.3	6.3

Substance Use Attitudes by Grade Level

Substance use attitudes did not fluctuate much between grade levels. However, 9th grade youth were more likely to report that they might drink alcohol when they get older.

Table 10. Youth Attitudes toward Alcohol and Other Drugs by Grade Level (Somewhat & Strongly Agree combined Percentages)

	4 th – 5 th Grade	6 th – 8 th Grade	9 th Grade
I might smoke cigarettes when I get older	1.6	0.0	6.6
Smoking cigarettes makes you look cool	1.6	1.6	3.3
Kids who smoke cigarettes are more grown-up	10.9	0.0	3.3
Most teenagers smoke cigarettes	48.5	30.7	40.0
Most adults smoke cigarettes	54.7	37.1	48.2
I might drink alcohol when I get older	12.5	14.5	43.3
Drinking alcohol lets you have more fun	4.7	4.8	10.0
Most teenagers drink alcohol	26.5	30.6	60.0
Most adults drink alcohol	57.2	48.4	62.1
I might smoke marijuana when I get older	0.0	1.6	6.7
Most teenagers use marijuana	14.3	25.4	16.7
Most adults use marijuana.	15.9	22.6	16.6

Perceived Risk of Harm from Substance Use

Youth perceived alcohol and cigarettes to pose the least risk of harm, with a little over 30% perceiving “great risk” from their use.

	No Risk	Slight Risk	Moderate Risk	Great Risk
Smoke part or all of a cigarette	11.4	22.2	32.3	34.2
Drink any type of alcohol	8.2	27.8	32.9	31.0
Use marijuana	6.1	6.1	19.7	68.0
Use ecstasy occasionally [†]	2.1	2.1	13.5	82.3
Use meth occasionally [†]	1.0	2.1	4.2	92.7
Use inhalants [†]	2.1	3.1	8.3	86.5
Use prescription drugs in ways for which they were not intended [†]	2.1	3.1	10.4	84.4

[†] (6th - 12th only)

Risk of Harm by Grade Level

As grade level increased, youth perception of harm increased, with a large majority of 9th grade youth perceiving moderate or great risk of harm from the use of all drugs. Alcohol, however, remains to be the drug perceived as least risky.

	4 th – 5 th Grade	6 th – 8 th Grade	9 th Grade
Smoke part or all of a cigarette	59.7	66.6	80.0
Drink any type of alcohol	53.2	69.9	70.0
Use marijuana	74.5	93.6	96.7
Use ecstasy occasionally [†]	n/a	93.7	100
Use meth occasionally [†]	n/a	95.3	100
Use inhalants [†]	n/a	92.0	100
Use prescription drugs in ways for which they were not intended [†]	n/a	92.0	100

Perception of Disapproving Attitudes toward Substance Use

A little over 50% of the sample believed alcohol use to be “very wrong.” Cigarette use was considered “very wrong” by 62.2% of youth. The use of any other substance was perceived to be “very wrong” by over 87% of 4th – 9th grade participants.

	Not Wrong at All	A Little Bit Wrong	Wrong	Very Wrong
Smoke part or all of a cigarette	3.2	11.5	23.1	62.2
Drink any type of alcohol	5.1	17.8	26.8	50.3
Use marijuana	2.0	1.3	8.7	87.9
Use ecstasy occasionally [†]	0.0	0.0	10.6	89.4
Use meth occasionally [†]	0.0	0.0	6.3	93.7
Use inhalants [†]	0.0	1.1	9.5	89.5
Use prescription drugs in ways for which they were not intended [†]	0.0	0.0	8.4	91.6

[†] (6th - 12th only)

Disapproving Attitudes by Grade Level

Perceived wrongfulness did not fluctuate much between grade levels for all substances except alcohol. A smaller percentage of 9th grade youth reported the use of alcohol to be wrong or very wrong than 4th – 5th or 6th – 8th grade youth.

	4 th – 5 th Grade	6 th – 8 th Grade	9 th Grade
Smoke part or all of a cigarette	88.7	85.5	82.8
Drink any type of alcohol	79.0	80.6	66.7
Use marijuana	96.3	98.4	96.7
Use ecstasy occasionally [†]	n/a	100	100
Use meth occasionally [†]	n/a	100	100
Use inhalants [†]	n/a	98.4	100
Use prescription drugs in ways for which they were not intended [†]	n/a	100	100

[†] (6th grade only)

Summary

- Cigarettes and alcohol were perceived to be least harmful and wrong compared to marijuana, ecstasy, methamphetamine, inhalants and prescription drugs.
- Only 34% of youth felt that smoking all or part of a cigarette was a “great risk”, compared to 92% who felt that occasional methamphetamine use was a great risk.

Chapter 5: Aggression & Problem Behavior

The following chapter contains teacher observations of Kindergarten through third grade children's displays of aggression. It also contains 4th – 9th grade youths' self-reported participation in problem behavior.

Aggression (K – 3rd grade)

Teachers reported that children are more likely to act reactively aggressive than proactively aggressive. However, only a few students were identified as aggressive. Out of all the aggressive behaviors measured, children were most likely to get angry easily when teased and blame others in a fight.

Table 15. Reactive and Proactive Aggression in Year 6 (Kdg. – 3 rd Grade)					
	Never True	Rarely True	Sometimes True	Usually True	Almost Always True
Reactive Aggression					
When this child has been teased or threatened, he or she gets angry easily and strikes back.	17.2	41.0	27.9	9.8	4.1
This child always claims that other children are to blame in a fight and feels that they started the trouble.	15.7	37.2	33.9	9.9	3.3
When a peer accidentally hurts the child (such as bumping into him or her), this child assumes that the peer meant to do it, and then overreacts with anger/fighting.	26.2	42.6	25.4	4.9	0.8
Proactive Aggression					
This child gets other kids to gang up on a peer that he or she does not like.	47.5	43.4	7.4	0.8	0.8
This child uses physical force (or threatens to use force) in order to dominate other kids.	52.5	38.5	7.4	1.6	0.0
This child threatens or bullies others in order to get his or her own way.	45.9	45.1	7.4	1.6	0.0

Aggression by Sex

Teachers did not report much difference between males' and females' aggressive behavior. However, there is a trend for females to be slightly more reactively aggressive and males to be slightly more proactively aggressive, although the difference was not significant.

Table 16. Reactive and Proactive Aggression by Sex (Kdg. – 3rd grade; Usually & Almost Always True combined Percentages)		
	Male	Female
Reactive Aggression		
When this child has been teased or threatened, he or she gets angry easily and strikes back.	13.3	14.5
This child always claims that other children are to blame in a fight and feels that they started the trouble.	13.6	12.9
When a peer accidentally hurts the child (such as bumping into him or her), this child assumes that the peer meant to do it, and then overreacts with anger/fighting.	5.0	6.5
Proactive Aggression		
This child gets other kids to gang up on a peer that he or she does not like.	1.7	1.6
This child uses physical force (or threatens to use force) in order to dominate other kids.	3.3	0.0
This child threatens or bullies others in order to get his or her own way.	1.7	1.6

Problem Behavior

The behaviors reported by the largest percentage of youth were being made fun of or making fun of others and having rumors or lies spread about them. Only 15.8% of youth reported being in a physical fight in the past three months, whereas 29.4% admitted to hitting or pushing another kid at school, and 38.0% reported that another student had physically assaulted them (pushed, shoved, slapped, hit or kick).

Table 17. Problem Behavior in Year 6 (4th – 9th Grade)								
	Never	1 or 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 9 times	10 to 19 times	20 to 29 times	30 to 39 times	40 or more times
Hit or pushed other kids at school	70.6	20.0	6.9	1.2	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0
Spread mean rumors about other kids	79.9	16.4	2.5	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Made fun of other people	48.8	37.5	7.5	1.2	3.8	0.6	0.6	0.0
Been in a physical fight	84.2	9.5	4.4	0.6	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Been suspended from school	98.8	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Been in in-school suspension or detention	92.5	6.2	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Been harassed or bullied	64.8	21.4	6.3	3.1	2.5	0.6	0.0	1.3
Been afraid of being beaten up	79.9	12.6	3.1	1.9	0.6	0.0	1.3	0.6
Had mean rumors or lies spread about you	48.1	28.5	13.3	3.2	2.5	2.5	0.6	1.3
Been made fun of	39.0	34.0	13.2	2.5	5.0	1.9	0.6	3.8

Been pushed, shoved, slapped, hit or kicked	62.0	25.3	1.9	3.2	0.6	1.9	1.9	3.2
Been drunk or high at school[†]	98.9	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Been threatened or injured with weapons[†]	94.8	4.2	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Used any weapon to threaten or bully someone[†]	98.9	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Seen someone carrying a gun, knife or other weapon[†]	91.7	4.2	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	1.0

[†] (6th – 9th only)

Problem Behavior by Grade Level

As grade level increases, physical aggression, such as being in a physical fight, hitting or pushing other, or being pushed or shoved decreases. There was a decrease in the percentage of youth engaging in relational aggression as well. For example, as grade level increased a smaller percentage of youth reporting being harassed or bullied, having rumors spread about them, and being made fun of. However, there was an increase in the percentage of youth reporting having made fun of others in the past three months.

Table 18. Problem Behavior by Grade Level (1 or more times)

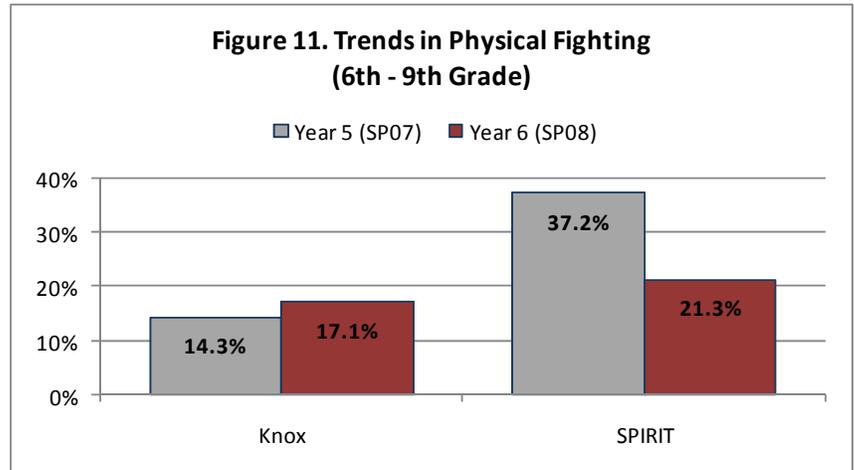
	4th – 5th Grade	6th – 8th Grade	9th Grade
Hit or pushed other kids at school	35.9	29.4	23.3
Spread mean rumors about other kids	20.3	20.1	20.7
Made fun of other people	37.5	51.2	70.0
Been in a physical fight	28.6	15.8	6.9
Been suspended from school	3.1	1.2	0.0
Been in in-school suspension or detention	9.4	7.5	6.7
Been harassed or bullied	53.1	35.2	24.1
Been afraid of being beaten up	40.6	20.1	3.3
Had mean rumors or lies spread about you	63.5	51.9	40.0
Been made fun of	76.2	61.0	40.0
Been pushed, shoved, slapped, hit or kicked	51.6	38.0	17.2
Been drunk or high at school[†]	n/a	1.0	3.3
Been threatened or injured with weapons[†]	n/a	5.2	6.7
Used any weapon to threaten or bully someone[†]	n/a	1.1	0.0
Seen someone carrying a gun, knife or other weapon[†]	n/a	8.3	13.3

[†] (6th – 9th only)

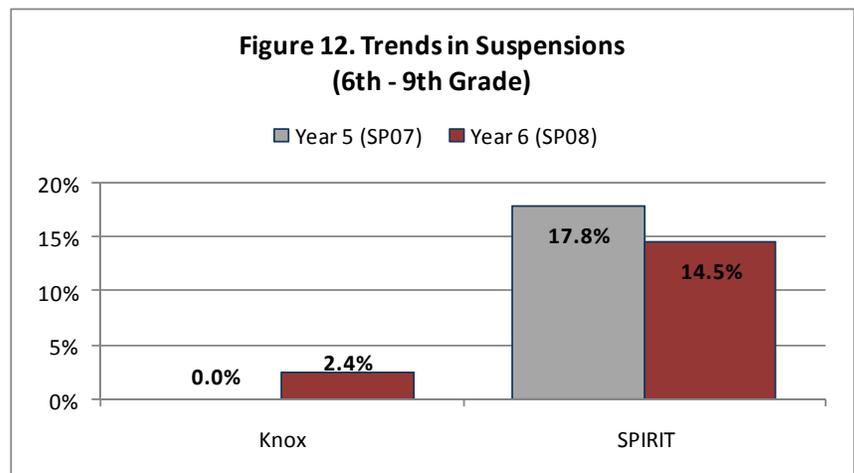
Trends in Problem Behavior

The first goal of the SPIRIT project is to reduce violent/aggressive behaviors. Three of these types of behaviors are physical fighting, being the victim of physical aggression (having been pushed, shoved, slapped, hit or kicked by another), and suspensions (self-report). The following presents a comparison of Year 5 and Year 6 of the SPIRIT project on these three behaviors. This is a modified data set and does not represent numbers already presented in Year 5 or the general section of the Year 6 report. Comparisons between years should be made with caution as it is natural for fluctuations to occur from year to year.

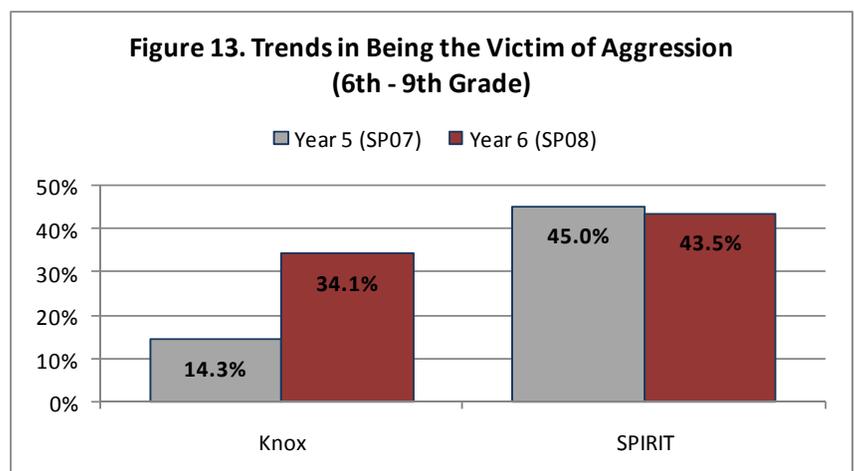
Knox Co. School District did *not* see a change in the percentage of fighters from Year 5 to Year 6, whereas the SPIRIT sample had a smaller percentage of fighters in Year 6 than in Year 5.



The percentage of youth who reported receiving a suspension in the past three months did not change from Year 5 to Year 6 either in Knox or the total SPIRIT sample.



The percentage of youth who reported being pushed, shoved, slapped, hit or kicked by another in the past three months increased from Year 5 to Year 6 among 6th – 9th grade youth in the Knox Co. School District. There was no change in the percentage of youth who reported being the victim of aggressive behavior in the total SPIRIT sample.



Summary

- Teachers reported that K – 3rd grade children are more likely to display reactive aggression than proactive aggression. Only a few students, however, were identified as being aggressive. Of all the aggressive behaviors measured, children were most likely to get angry easily when teased and blame others in a fight.
- Among 4th – 9th graders, the largest percentage of youth reported being made fun of, making fun of others and having rumors or lies spread about them. Only 15.8% of youth reported being in a physical fight in the past three months, whereas 29.4% admitted to hitting or pushing another kid at school, and 38.0% reported that another student had physically assaulted them (pushed, shoved, slapped, hit or kick).
- As grade level increased a smaller percentage of youth reporting being harassed or bullied, having rumors spread about them, and being made fun of. However, there was an increase in the percentage of youth reporting having made fun of others in the past three months.
- There was no change in fighting behaviors between Years 5 and 6.
- The percentage of youth reporting having been pushed, shoved, slapped, hit or kicked by another in the past three months increased from Year 5 to Year 6 among 6th – 9th grade youth.

Chapter 6: School Performance

Each participating school district was asked to provide school performance data for all consented youth. The following chapter presents information on absences, disciplinary incidents, suspension, and grade point average (GPA) for those youth who were chosen for the evaluation of the SPIRIT project.

Grade Point Average

Because Knox Co. School District uses an 11 point grading scale, comparisons should not be made to other SPIRIT sites. The evaluated youth from the Knox Co. School District (4th – 9th grade; n = 160) had an average GPA of 9.04 at the end of the Fall 2007 semester. At the end of the Spring 2008 semester, those same youth had an average GPA of 9.10. The cumulative GPA for the entire 2007-2008 school year ranged from 2.94 to 11.00. The average cumulative GPA was 9.07. Females had higher GPAs than males.

	Male	Female
Fall 2007	8.85	9.19
Spring 2008	8.95	9.21
Cumulative GPA	8.89	9.22

Absences

The district was asked to provide the number of unexcused absences each consented student had accumulated over the course of the 2007-2008 school year. Most participants (75.4%) had less than one unexcused absence. And only 4.3% had five or more absences.

Sex	
Male	21.2
Female	27.5
Grade Level	
4 th – 5 th	27.0
6 th – 8 th	23.8
9 th	30.0

Disciplinary Incidents

Disciplinary Incidents were recorded in two forms: any disciplinary incident and disciplinary incidents related to alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs. The majority of children and youth (80.5%) did not receive any disciplinary incidents over the course of the school year. No youth, of those evaluated were involved in an ATOD related disciplinary incident.

	Table 21. Percentage of Children and Youth with a Disciplinary Incident (Kdg. – 9th Grade; % 1 or more)	
	Disciplinary Incident	ATOD related Disciplinary Incident
Sex		
Male	31.1	0.0
Female	9.3	0.0
Grade Level		
4 th – 5 th	21.9	0.0
6 th – 8 th	17.5	0.0
9 th	13.3	0.0

Suspensions

Both in-school and out-of-school suspensions were recorded. Almost all youth (96.8%) did not receive either type of suspension over the course of the school year. Only 3.2% received an in-school suspension and 0.4% received an out-of-school suspension.

	Table 22. Percentage of Children and Youth with a Suspension (Kdg. – 12th Grade; % 1 or more)	
	In-School Suspension	Out-of-School Suspension
Sex		
Male	6.1	0.8
Female	0.7	0.0
Grade Level		
4 th – 5 th	4.7	1.6
6 th – 8 th	6.3	1.6
9 th – 12 th	0.0	3.3

Summary

- GPA increased from the Fall to the Spring semester of the 2007-2008 school year.
- The higher the grade level of the evaluated participant the less likely they were to have a disciplinary incident.
- Almost all youth (96.8%) did not receive in-school or out-of-school either type of suspension over the course of the school year.
- No youth had an ATOD related disciplinary incident.

Chapter 7: Program Effectiveness

Children and youth in the 2nd through 9th grades were asked to report their perception of their particular prevention program’s effectiveness. Students, on the whole, were satisfied and felt the programs were effective.

Overall, the majority of youth (over 50%) in the 4th – 9th grades reported that the program was effective in every area measured. Youth reported that the program was most effective in helping them with their resistance skills (saying no to harmful things). The program was reported as the least effective in getting others to be nicer to them.

Table 23. Effectiveness of and Satisfaction with SPIRIT in Year 6 (4th – 9th Grade)

	No, not at all	No, not much	Yes, a little	Yes, a lot
Did you like the program?	5.8	9.7	56.5	27.9
Did the program teach you what to do when you are angry?	7.2	7.9	45.4	39.5
Do you act better because of the program?	8.3	20.5	44.2	26.9
Did the program help you feel better about yourself?	9.7	17.4	46.5	26.5
Does the program help you to say no to harmful things other kids might want you to do?	7.7	9.0	28.8	54.5
Has the program helped you to get along better with other people?	9.6	15.4	44.9	30.1
Are other kids nicer to you because of the program?	14.6	30.6	35.7	19.1
Was the time spent on the program helpful?	8.9	7.0	52.9	31.2

Program Effectiveness by Grade Level

Children in the 2nd – 3rd grades were the most satisfied with programming and thought it was very effective. 4th – 5th and 6th – 8th grade youth were equally as satisfied with SPIRIT in all areas but one: A greater percentage of 4th -5th grade youth thought the program helped them get along better with others. Students in 9th grade were the least satisfied of all grade levels, still 83.3% thought the program was helpful and helped with their resistance skills.

Table 24. Effectiveness of and Satisfaction with SPIRIT in Year 6 by Grade Level (Yes, a lot & Yes, a little combined Percentages)

	2 nd – 3 rd	4 th – 5 th	6 th – 8 th	9 th
Did you like the program?	98.6	93.2	84.4	76.7
Did the program teach you what to do when you are angry?	94.3	88.4	84.9	70.0
Do you act better because of the program?	94.3	79.0	71.1	48.2
Did the program help you feel better about yourself?	90.0	75.8	73.0	62.1
Does the program help you to say no to harmful things other kids might want you to do?	95.7	83.7	83.3	83.3
Has the program helped you to get along better with other people?	91.4	82.0	75.0	56.6
Are other kids nicer to you because of the program?	84.1	56.5	54.8	46.7
Was the time spent on the program helpful?	94.3	85.5	84.1	83.3

Chapter 8: Protective Factors

The following chapter presents information on other factors that influence the presentation of aggression and ATOD use in youth. Information presented on Kdg-3rd grade children were provided through a teacher observation checklist.

Social Competence: Change over the course of Year 6

Teachers reported that the majority of children's social competence improved at least a little over the course of the year. The area in which the children improved the most was self-esteem.

Table 25. Social Competence Change from the beginning to the end of Year 6 (Kdg. – 3rd Grade)

	Much worse	Somewhat worse	A little worse	Not at all	A little improved	Somewhat improved	Much improved
Ability to stop and calm down when excited or upset.	0.0	0.0	0.8	3.3	50.8	31.1	13.9
Ability to verbally label emotions or self and others.	0.0	0.0	0.8	5.7	49.2	31.1	13.1
Ability to show empathy and compassion for others' feelings.	0.0	0.8	1.6	1.6	47.5	39.3	9.0
Ability to handle disagreements with others in a positive way.	0.0	0.0	2.5	5.7	50.0	31.1	10.7
Ability to initiate interactions and join in play with others in an appropriate manner.	0.0	0.8	1.6	3.3	50.0	36.1	8.2
Ability to provide help, share materials, and act cooperatively with others.	0.0	0.0	1.6	2.5	52.5	33.6	9.8
Ability to take turns, play fair, and follow the rules of the game.	0.0	0.0	0.8	4.9	50.8	36.1	7.4
Self-esteem.	0.0	0.8	2.5	2.5	43.4	36.9	13.9

Social Competence: Prosocial Behavior & Emotion Regulation

Most children were identified as displaying positive prosocial behavior and emotion regulation. Teachers reported that their students were most able to display the following behaviors: sharing, being helpful to others, wait in line patiently, and follow the rules. Children were least able to resolve problems on their own, accept things not going their way, and cope well with failure.

Table 26. Social Competence in Year 6 (Kdg. – 3 rd Grade)					
	Not at all	A little	Moderately well	Well	Very well
Prosocial Behavior					
Expressed needs and feelings appropriately.	1.6	8.2	25.4	41.0	23.8
Resolves peer problems on his/her own.	2.5	15.6	35.2	31.1	15.6
Is very good at understanding other people's feelings.	0.8	9.0	23.0	41.0	26.2
Is aware of the effect of his/her behavior on others.	0.8	9.8	30.3	35.2	23.8
Works well in a group.	2.5	8.2	25.4	43.4	20.5
Shares materials with others.	0.0	3.3	9.9	40.5	46.3
Cooperates with peers without prompting.	0.8	5.8	19.0	37.2	37.2
Is helpful to others.	0.8	7.4	10.7	38.5	42.6
Listens to others' points of view.	1.6	9.8	22.1	37.7	28.7
Can give suggestions and opinions without being bossy.	1.6	13.1	23.8	38.5	23.0
Acts friendly towards others.	0.0	5.7	16.4	38.5	39.3
Emotion Regulation					
Can accept things not going his/her way.	2.5	13.1	26.2	42.6	15.6
Copes well with failure.	1.6	12.3	23.8	45.9	16.4
Accepts legitimately imposed limits.	0.8	9.8	18.0	43.4	27.9
Thinks before acting.	1.6	14.8	32.0	32.8	18.9
Can calm down when excited or all wound up.	0.0	9.8	24.6	41.8	23.8
Can wait in line patiently when necessary.	0.0	2.5	20.5	45.9	31.1
Plays by the rules of the game.	0.0	9.0	15.6	44.3	31.1
Controls temper when there is a disagreement.	0.8	9.8	18.9	43.4	27.0

Empathy

The majority of youth reported that they agreed or strongly agreed they were sad when someone was left out, felt bad when someone gets their feeling hurt and upset when an animal is hurt.

Table 27. Youth Capacity for Empathy in Year 6 (4 th – 9 th Grade)				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
It makes me sad if I see someone who is left out.	1.2	4.4	53.1	41.2
I get upset when I see an animal being hurt.	1.9	3.1	33.8	61.2
I feel bad when someone else gets their feelings hurt.	1.2	3.1	51.2	44.4

Empathy by Grade Level

Youth's capacity for empathy did not differ by grade level.

Table 28. Youth Capacity for Empathy by Grade Level (Agree & Strongly Agree combined Percentages)			
	4 th – 5 th Grade	6 th – 8 th Grade	9 th Grade
It makes me sad if I see someone who is left out.	93.8	94.3	90.0
I get upset when I see an animal being hurt.	90.6	95.0	96.7
I feel bad when someone else gets their feelings hurt.	95.3	95.6	93.3

Decision Making

The majority of youth reported that they had good decision making skills. More youth felt that they thought about the consequences of their actions all the time (22.5%) than other decision-making factors.

Table 29. Youth Decision Making Skills in Year 6 (4 th – 9 th Grade)				
	Never	Sometimes but not Often	Often	All the Time
How often do you stop to think about your choices before you make a decision?	1.2	23.8	66.9	8.1
How often do you stop to think about how your decisions may affect others' feelings?	2.5	24.4	56.2	16.9
How often do you stop to think about all of the things that may happen as a result of your decisions?	2.5	25.0	50.0	22.5
How often do you make good decisions?	0.6	10.0	76.2	13.1

Decision Making by Grade Level

Youth in 9th grade were more likely than other grade levels to say that they make good decisions often or all of the time and least likely to report that they think about all of the things that may happen as a result of their decision.

Table 30. Youth Decision Making Skills by Grade Level (Often & All the Time combined Percentages)			
	4 th – 5 th Grade	6 th – 8 th Grade	9 th Grade
How often do you stop to think about your choices before you make a decision?	71.8	75.0	73.3
How often do you stop to think about how your decisions may affect others' feelings?	76.5	73.1	70.0
How often do you stop to think about all of the things that may happen as a result of your decisions?	76.5	72.5	56.6
How often do you make good decisions?	84.3	89.3	96.7

Caring Adults

The majority of youth reported that they had caring adults both at home and at school. Youth were more likely to “strongly agree” that they had a caring adult at home than at school.

Table 31. Youth Perception of Caring Adults in Year 6 (4 th – 9 th Grade)				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
At school, there is a teacher or another adult who I can go to if something is really bothering me.	3.1	3.1	40.0	53.8
At school, there is a teacher or another adult who listens to me when I have something to say.	1.9	3.1	38.8	56.2
At home, there is a parent or another adult who I can go to if something is really bothering me.	1.2	4.4	23.8	70.6
At home, there is a parent or another adult who listens to me when I have something to say.	1.9	3.8	32.5	61.9

Caring Adults by Grade Level

Ninth grade youth were less likely to report that there was a caring adult at home or at school whom they could go to if something was really bothering them.

Table 32. Youth Perception of Caring Adults by Grade Level (Agree & Strongly Agree combined Percentages)			
	4 th – 5 th Grade	6 th – 8 th Grade	9 th Grade
At school, there is a teacher or another adult who I can go to if something is really bothering me.	98.4	93.8	83.4
At school, there is a teacher or another adult who listens to me when I have something to say.	95.3	95.0	93.4
At home, there is a parent or another adult who I can go to if something is really bothering me.	95.3	94.4	86.7
At home, there is a parent or another adult who listens to me when I have something to say.	95.3	94.4	90.0

School Attitudes

The majority of youth had very positive attitudes toward school. Youth were most likely to agree they feel close to people at school and feel safe going to and from school. They were least likely to agree that teachers treat students fairly.

Table 33. Youth Attitudes toward School in Year 6 (4 th – 9 th Grade)				
	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel close to people at this school.	2.5	5.0	53.8	38.8
I am happy to be at this school.	2.5	8.2	43.0	46.2
I feel like I am a part of this school.	5.0	6.3	45.3	43.4
The teachers at this school treat students fairly.	1.3	15.2	40.5	43.0
I feel safe at this school.	3.1	7.5	35.2	54.1
I feel safe going to and from school.	0.6	4.4	35.8	59.1

School Attitudes by Grade Level

School attitudes did not differ much between grade levels. However, 9th grade youth were less likely than their younger counterparts to be happy at school, feel a part of the school, and think that teachers treat students fairly. Regardless of grade level, youth reported feeling safer going to and from school than in school.

**Table 34. Youth Attitudes toward School by Grade Level
(Somewhat Agree & Strongly Agree combined Percentages)**

	4 th – 5 th Grade	6 th – 8 th Grade	9 th Grade
I feel close to people at this school.	92.2	92.6	90.0
I am happy to be at this school.	92.0	89.2	83.4
I feel like I am a part of this school.	88.9	88.7	80.0
The teachers at this school treat students fairly.	81.0	83.5	76.6
I feel safe at this school.	85.7	89.3	83.3
I feel safe going to and from school.	92.2	94.9	93.3

Summary

- Most K-3rd grade students were identified as displaying positive pro-social behavior and emotion regulation at least moderately well. Students were most able to display the following behaviors: sharing, being helpful to others, wait in line patiently, and follow the rules. Children were least able to resolve problems on their own, accept things not going their way, and cope well with failure.
- K- 3rd grade teachers reported that the majority of children’s social competence improved at least a little over the course of the year. The area in which the children improved the most was self-esteem.
- The majority of 4th – 9th grade youth reported that they were empathic, had good decision making skills and had positive attitudes toward school.
- Older youth are more vulnerable than younger youth. Ninth grade youth were less likely to report that there was a caring adult at home or at school whom they could go to if something was really bothering them. They were also less likely than their younger counterparts to be happy at school, feel a part of the school, and think that teachers treat students fairly.

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