

# NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY in Fairfax County

Self-reported by 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students on the Fairfax County Youth Survey.  
Data from the Sixth Grade Youth Survey is reported separately and not included in totals.

**11%** of students report eating fruits and vegetables five or more times per day.

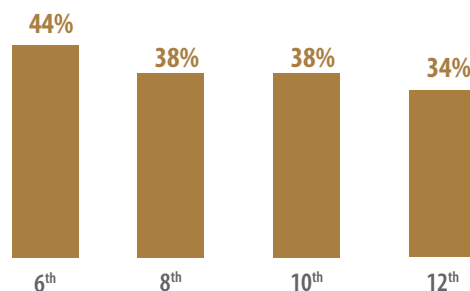
**37%** report being physically active for at least an hour on five or more days a week.

**52%** report playing video games or using a computer for things other than schoolwork for three or more hours on a typical school day.

## 5 Things to Know

- Students report participating in less physical activity as they get older. Forty-four percent of 6<sup>th</sup> graders are physically active five or more days a week, compared to 34 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> graders.
- Fruit and vegetable consumption also decreases as students age; 24 percent of 6<sup>th</sup> graders and 10 percent of 12<sup>th</sup> graders report eating fruits and vegetables five times a day.
- Forty percent of students report drinking no sugar-sweetened beverages in the past week, up six percentage points since 2015.
- Twenty-eight percent report getting at least eight hours of sleep on an average school night.
- Youth who get an hour of physical activity on five or more days a week are less likely to experience depressive symptoms than youth who get less (32% vs 42%).

### 5+ Days of Physical Activity in Past Week



## 5 Things to Do

- Ask your kids what activities they enjoy and explore new physical activities at home, in the neighborhood, and through organized sports and activities.
- Track screen time as a family and set and enforce rules to reasonably limit screen time.
- Limit sugar-sweetened beverages and processed foods.
- Engage kids in menu planning and cooking. Experiment with new and different fruits and vegetable.
- Know what serving sizes are for common foods and teach kids how to measure food servings.

## Who Can Help?

Fairfax County Department of  
Neighborhood and Community  
Services  
[bit.ly/fairfaxNCS](http://bit.ly/fairfaxNCS)

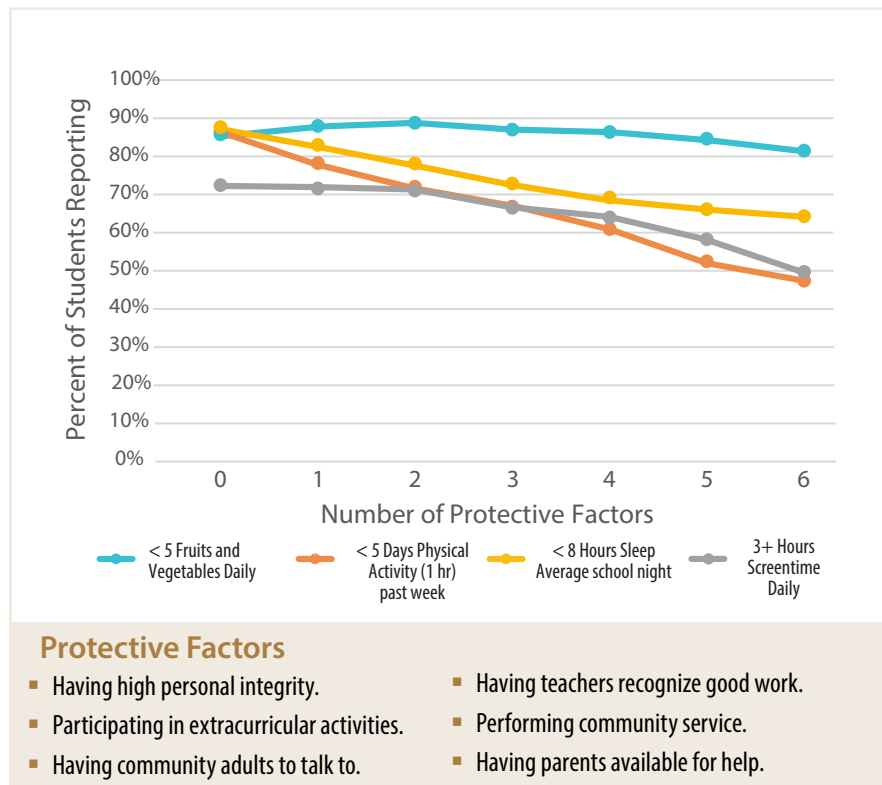
Fairfax County Public Schools  
Food and Nutrition Services  
[bit.ly/FCPSfood](http://bit.ly/FCPSfood)

Fairfax County Health  
Department  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health)

Fairfax County Park Authority  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks)

Data from the Youth Survey reinforces decades of research that shows that when youth have protective factors (also known as assets) in their lives, they do better in lots of different areas. Having just three protective factors dramatically reduces the likelihood that youth will engage in risky behaviors. The Youth Survey shows that every protective factor makes a difference.

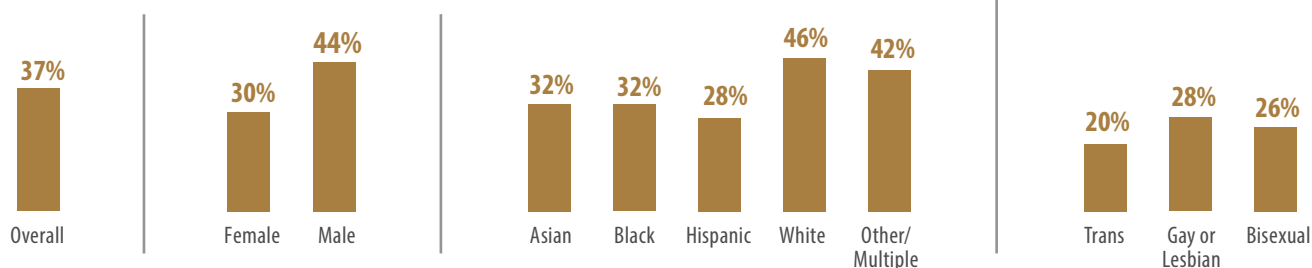
Young people in Fairfax County report positive influences from the people and opportunities in their lives. Take action to be an asset in a young person's life and help to build a stronger, more positive community that benefits ALL children and youth.



## Disparities in Physical Activity

The One Fairfax policy commits us to intentionally consider equity when making policies or delivering programs and services. Girls; LGBTQ students; and Asian, Black, and Hispanic students get much less physical activity than their peers, highlighting the need to understand root causes of the disparity and to target prevention and intervention strategies.

### 5+ Days of Physical Activity, Past Week



### For More Information

Fairfax County Youth Survey  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey)

National Institutes of Health  
 We CAN!  
[www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan)

CDC - Overweight & Obesity  
[www.cdc.gov/obesity](http://www.cdc.gov/obesity)

Partnership for a Healthier America  
[www.ahealthieramerica.org](http://www.ahealthieramerica.org)

The Fairfax County Youth Survey was administered in the fall of 2021. The survey was not administered in 2020.

The methodology for calculating the number of vegetables eaten changed in the 2021 Youth Survey. Comparing data with data from years prior to 2021 is not advised.



Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. For information, call 703-324-4600, TTY 711.



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