YOUTH SURVEY FAIRFAX COUNTY

MILITARY-CONNECTED YOUTH in Fairfax County
Self-reported on the Fairfax County Youth Survey by 8th, 10th and 12th grade students with a family member currently serving in the military

10% of all 8th, 10th and 12th graders have a family member serving in the military
58% have changed homes at least 3 times since kindergarten
16% have used alcohol in the past 30 days
23% have had sexual intercourse
13% have been the victim of bullying
21% report emotional abuse by a dating partner

What You Need to Know

Approximately one in nine Fairfax County 8th, 10th and 12th graders report having a family member who is currently in the military. From deployments to new schools, military children are faced with unique challenges that other youth their age never experience. More than half have moved at least three times since kindergarten, and 15% have moved at least 7 times. Despite the high mobility rate, though, military youth tend to be more similar to than different from their peers.

Military youth report a high level of involvement in their communities. Seventy-three percent report serving as a leader in a group or organization, compared to 68% of their peers. Forty percent volunteer for community service at least monthly. And 68% report participating in after-school activities twice a month or more. Community service and after-school participation rates are similar for military youth and their peers.

They also have a lot of support from adults. When faced with personal problems, 82% report being able to ask a parent for help. Forty percent report there are lots of adults in their neighborhood they could talk to about something important.

Twenty-nine percent of military youth report using alcohol, tobacco or drugs in the past month. Alcohol use is most common; 16% used it in the past 30 days, compared to 15% of non-military youth.

What Can You Do?

UNDERSTAND, ENCOURAGE, LEARN, AND ACT

► Familiarize yourself with your neighborhood school, administrative leadership and your child’s teacher(s). Establish good communication with the school staff. Let the teacher know of any special circumstances (deployment, reintegration, and homecoming) that may influence academic or behavioral performance.

► Understand that for some children and youth, relocation does not necessarily get easier with each move and that your child may need assistance in making connections. Encourage and support participation in school clubs, community activities and other activities that connect your child to their new community.

► Set clear, consistent boundaries and rules, talk about expectations, and explain the consequences of breaking the rules. Children and youth who believe their parents disapprove of risky behaviors are less likely to choose those behaviors.

► Watch for changes in behavior and engagement in usual activities, and talk with your child about observed changes. Be available to talk with your child.

► Teach life skills by modeling problem solving and healthy choices. Involve your child in family decisions and compliment their good choices.

Who Can Help?

Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB)
Entry & Referral 703-383-8500, TTY 711
24-Hour Emergency Services 703-573-5679, TTY 711

Fairfax County Public Schools
Intervention and Prevention Services 571-423-4020
Student Safety and Wellness Office 571-423-4270
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.

### What Parents Think Matters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS</th>
<th>NON-MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALCOHOL</strong></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CIGARETTES</strong></td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NICOTINE VAPE</strong></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MARIJUANA</strong></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em><em>PAINKILLERS</em>”</em>*</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em><em>OTHER RX MDS</em>”</em>*</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Reported use is for non-medical use of these drugs

### 30-Day Drug Use

- **ALCOHOL**
- **CIGARETTES**
- **NICOTINE VAPE**
- **MARIJUANA**
- **PAINKILLERS**
- **OTHER RX MDS**

### Mental Health and Suicide

- **HIGH STRESS**
- **DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS**
- **SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED SUICIDE**
- **ATTEMPTED SUICIDE**

### Protective Factors

- Accepting responsibility for one’s actions
- Having community adults to talk to
- Performing community service
- Participating in extracurricular activities
- Having teachers recognize good work
- Having parents available for help

### WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Fairfax County Youth Survey: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey)
- NIDA for Teens: [www.teens.drugabuse.gov](http://www.teens.drugabuse.gov)
- Stop Bullying: [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)

The Fairfax County Youth Survey was administered in the fall of 2019.