

Pennsylvania Youth Survey

Since 1989, the Commonwealth has conducted a survey of school students in the 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grades to learn about their behavior, attitudes and knowledge concerning alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and violence. The ‘Pennsylvania Youth Survey,’ or PAYS, is sponsored and conducted every two years by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. As of 2013 PAYS is offered at no cost to all public, private, and charter schools throughout the Commonwealth.

The data gathered in PAYS serve two primary needs. First, the results provide school administrators, state agency directors, legislators and others with critical information concerning the changes in patterns of the use and abuse of these harmful substances and behaviors. Second, the survey assesses risk factors that are related to these behaviors and the protective factors that help guard against them. This information allows community leaders to direct prevention resources to areas where they are likely to have the greatest impact.

[http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Juvenile-Justice/Pages/Pennsylvania-Youth-Survey-\(PAYS\).aspx](http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Juvenile-Justice/Pages/Pennsylvania-Youth-Survey-(PAYS).aspx)

<http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Juvenile-Justice/Pages/PAYS-County-Reports.aspx> Use the web address directly above to find the PAYS Data for your PA County. The most recent data was collected in 2017.

EXAMPLE: Protective Factors – Sample of Moral/Religiosity Questions on PAYS

Belief in the Moral Order

Young people who have a belief in what is “right” or “wrong” are less likely to use drugs.

C13

I think it is okay to take something without asking as long as you get away with it.

C14

It is all right to beat up people if they start the fight.

C15

I think sometimes it’s okay to cheat at school.

C16

It is important to be honest with your parents, even if they become upset or you get punished.

Religiosity

Young people who regularly attend religious services are less likely to engage in problem behaviors.

C8

How often do you attend religious services or activities?