Food Insecurity and Substance Use among Delaware 8th Graders

Household food insecurity is a significant problem in the United States, and has been associated with various poor health outcomes such as malnutrition and depression. In 2017, 311 8th graders, (approximately 7% of public school students surveyed) reported experiencing food insecurity\(^1\) in the previous month. As the chart below illustrates, students who report food insecurity are also more likely to report drinking alcohol or smoking cigarettes during the past 30 days. Substance abuse prevention efforts may be strengthened if they also address food insecurity and other poverty indicators.

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1 Food insecurity is measured by a survey question asking students if they went hungry because there was not enough food in the home in the past 30 days.

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