Shared Risk Factors – Substance Use, Sexual Risk, and Mental Health
2017 Delaware High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Reported At Least One Risk Behavior | 64%
Reported Use of One or More Substances, Past Month | 41%
Reported At Least One Mental Health Concern, Past Year | 32%
Reported At Least One Sexual Risk Behavior, Lifetime | 37%
Reported At Least Two Types of Risk Factors | 35%
Reported All Three Types of Risk Factors | 12%

This Venn diagram uses 2017 DE High School YRBS data to illustrate shared risk factors among students in Delaware. Each circle has been scaled relative to the number of people who reported that risk factor, and the areas where circles overlap are accurate to the proportion of students who reported at least one of each type of risk factor.

Nearly two out of three Delaware high school students reported at least one risk factor, meaning that 36% of high school students reported no risk factors. Substance use is the most common type of risk factor, followed by sexual risk factors, then mental health concerns. More than one in three students reported two or more of these types of risk factors. Of note, more than one in 10 (12%) students reported all three types of risk factors.

- “Substance Use” is defined as the student reporting that they used at least one of the following in the past month: alcohol, marijuana, cigarettes, or e-cigarettes.
- “Mental Health Concern” is defined as the student reporting at least one of the following in the past year: that they have felt sad or hopeless most days for two or more weeks, or experienced suicidal ideation.
- “Sexual Risk Behavior” is defined as the student reporting at least one of the following: having had sex under the age of 16, having had three or more sexual partners, or not having used a birth control method the last time they had intercourse.

Note: The implication of shared risk supports prevention and skill development programming that addresses multiple risk factors (e.g., depression and alcohol).

Data Source: “2017 Delaware High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey,” Center for Drug and Health Studies, University of Delaware