

Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project

Agency of Human Services, Department of Health, Department of Mental Health
108 Cherry Street, Burlington, Vermont 05401

TO: Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project
Advisory Group and Interested Parties

FROM: John Pandiani and Jason Roberts

DATE: August 10, 2007

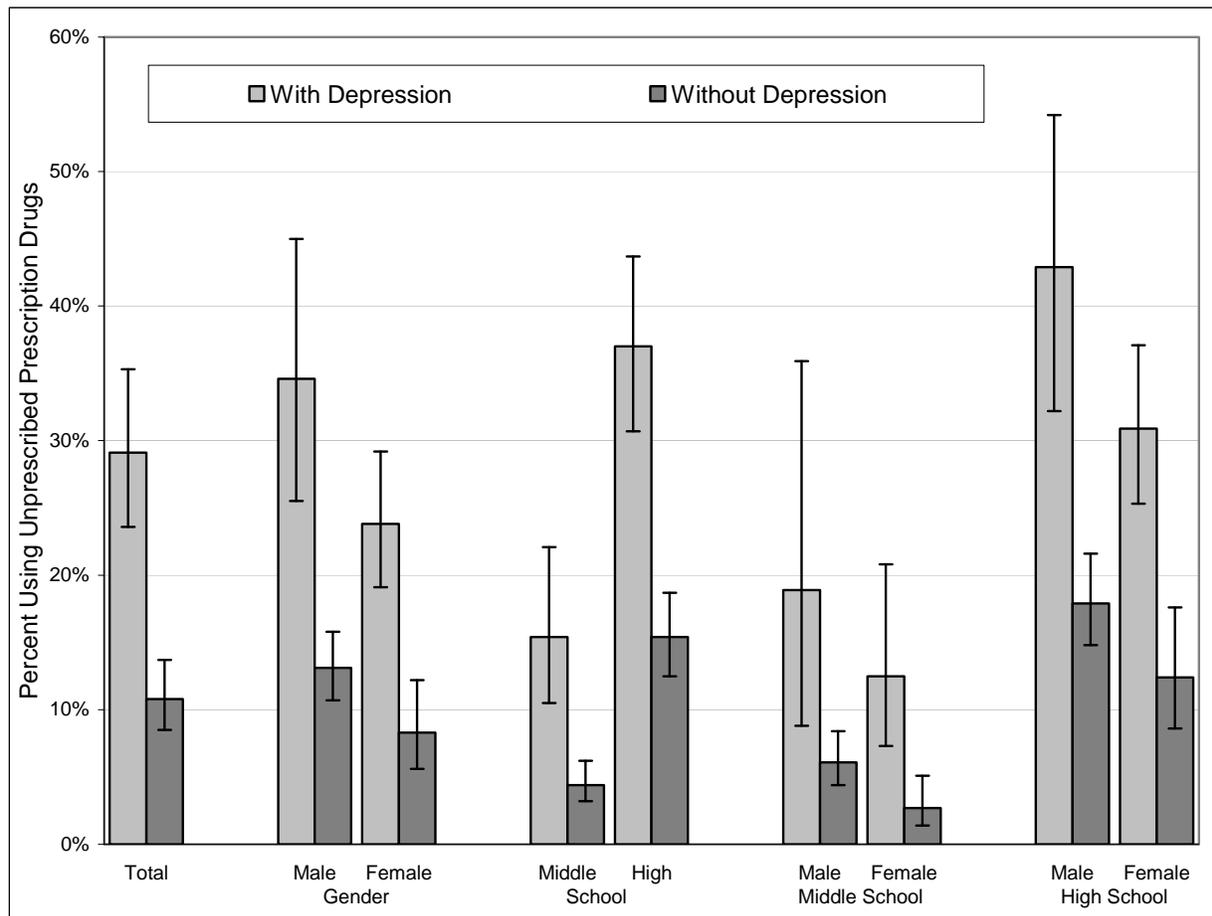
RE: Youth Depression and Unprescribed Prescription Drug Use

This report examines the rate of unprescribed prescription drug use among two groups of Vermont youth: those who experienced symptoms of depression and those who did not experience symptoms of depression. This analysis was completed in response to a request from Mary Pickner (ADAP HRD Coordinator) and Barbara Cimaglio (Deputy Commissioner of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs) following the distribution of our July 13, 2007 report on Prevalence of Depression among Vermont Youth: 2006 (<http://healthvermont.gov/mh/docs/pips/2007/documents/Pip071307.pdf>). Both reports rely on examination of the Vermont Department of Health and Department of Education 2006 Vermont Youth Health Survey (YHS). This survey included two questions related to depression: "In the past 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by little interest or pleasure in doing things?" and "In the past 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by feeling down, depressed or hopeless?" This survey also included one question on drug abuse: "During your life, how many times have you taken a prescription drug such as Ritalin, OxyContin or Vicodin without a doctor's prescription?" For purposes of this analysis, the rate of reported use of unprescribed prescription drugs by young people with depression was compared to the rate of reported use of unprescribed prescription drugs by young people without depression.

As you will see, youth with depression were much more likely than those without depression to indicate prescription drug use without a prescription (29% vs. 11%). This elevated use of prescription drugs without a prescription was evident among both male students (35% vs. 13%) and female students (24% vs. 8%). The elevated use of prescription drugs without a prescription was also evident in both high school (37% vs. 15%) and middle school (15% vs. 4%). The highest rate of prescription drug use without a prescription was among male high school students with depression (43%). The lowest rate of prescription drug use without a prescription was among female middle school students with no depression (3%).

We look forward to your interpretation of these findings and your suggestions for further analysis of these data. Please forward your comments and suggestions to pip@vdh.state.vt.us or 802.863.7249.

Depression and Use of Unprescribed Prescription Drugs, Vermont Youth: 2006



Percent of Students with and without Depression Using Unprescribed Prescription Drugs

	With Depression		Without Depression	
	Percent	(95% CI)	Percent	(95% CI)
Total	29%	(24-35%)	11%	(9-14%)
Gender				
Male	35%	(26-45%)	13%	(11-16%)
Female	24%	(19-29%)	8%	(6-12%)
School				
Middle	15%	(11-22%)	4%	(3-6%)
High	37%	(31-44%)	15%	(13-19%)
Middle School				
Male	19%	(9-36%)	6%	(4-8%)
Female	13%	(7-21%)	3%	(1-5%)
High School				
Male	43%	(32-54%)	18%	(15-22%)
Female	31%	(25-37%)	12%	(9-18%)

This report is based on the 2006 VT Youth Health Survey (YHS) of randomly selected middle and high schools. Depression is indicated by student reports that they were "bothered by little interest or pleasure in doing things" or "feeling down depressed or hopeless" during at least half of the days of the previous two weeks. The use of unprescribed prescription drugs is indicated by student reports that at least once in their life they have "taken a prescription drug such as Ritalin, OxyContin or Vicodin without a doctor's prescription."