

Lexington High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey

2009 Results

Background on Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey

- Department of Elementary and Secondary Education administers the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) in selected high schools every other year.
- Lexington has worked with researchers from Northeastern University to conduct an analysis of YRBS since 1995.
- Survey focuses on the major risk behaviors that threaten the health and safety of young people
 - tobacco use,
 - alcohol and other drug use,
 - sexual behavior that might lead to unintended pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease,
 - dietary behavior and physical activity, and
 - behaviors associated with intentional and unintentional injury.
- Survey is anonymous

Demographics of 2009 YRBS (N=1,840)

- Grade:** 28% in 9th, 26% in 10th, 23% in 11th,
and 22% in 12th
- Gender:** 46% male, 53% female; 0.4% transgender
- Ethnicity:** 64% White, 4% Black, 18% Asian,
2% Hispanic/Latino, 10% Other
- Residence:** 95% live in Lexington, 4% live in
Boston

Comparison Groups

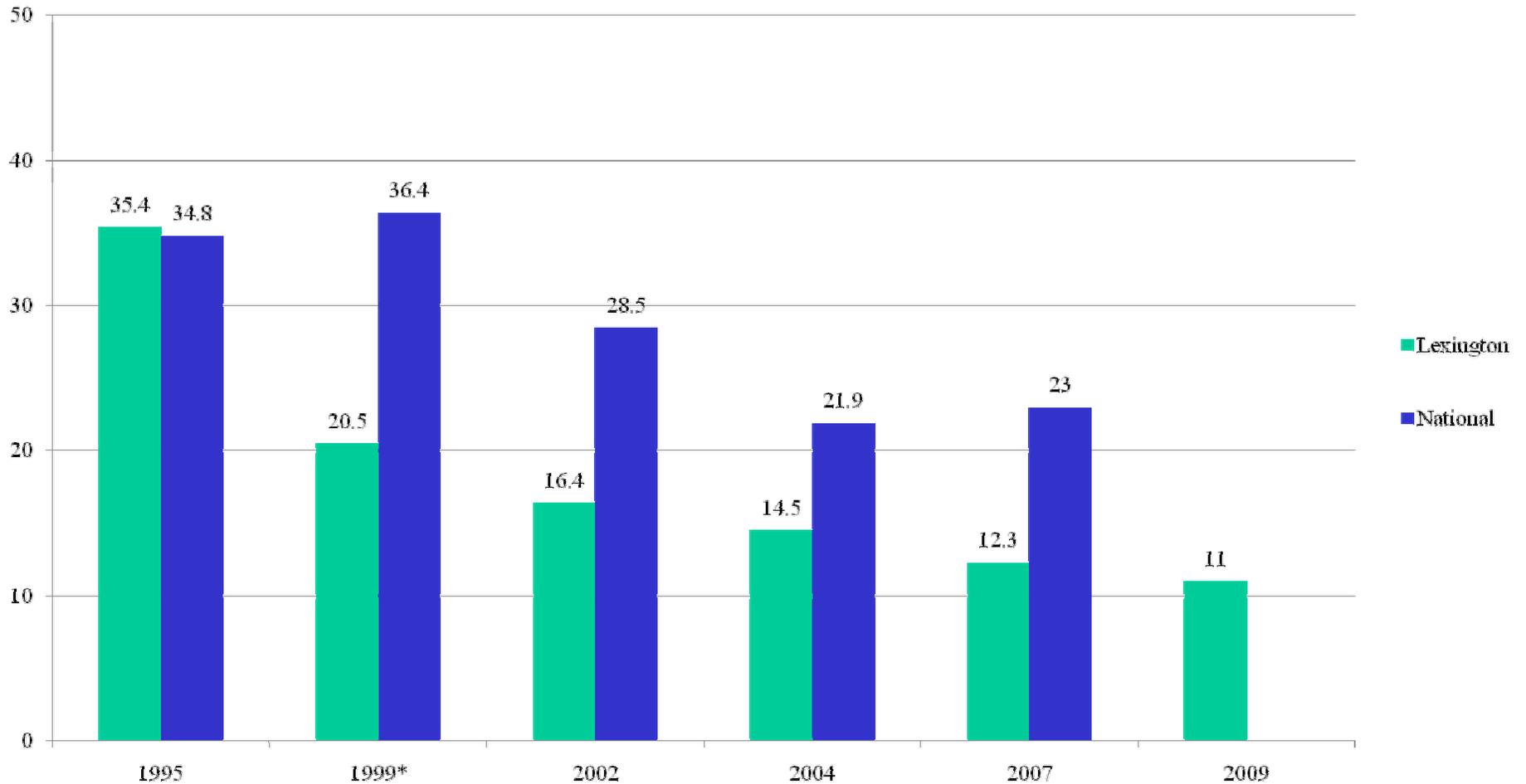
- Lexington High School data compared to:
 - Previous LHS Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) data
 - National YRBS data (through 2007)
 - Massachusetts YRBS data
 - Regional six school study
 - A YRBS administered to students from six school districts (Acton, Acton-Boxborough, Boxborough, Concord, Concord-Carlisle, Groton-Dunstable, Littleton, Maynard, and Westford) in grades 9 through 12 in March of 2008 (Byrne, 2008)

Patterns of Student Cigarette Use

- In 2009, 11% of all students report smoking cigarettes in past 30 days
 - *Lower than the 21% state average or 36% national average (2007)*
 - *Comparable to 13% from the regional six school report (2008)*
- Of students who reported smoking:
 - 9% active smokers (smoked 15-30 days in past month)
 - No gender differences in onset of smoking (6% of male smokers 5% of female smokers started before age 13)

Cigarette Smoking Trends Over Time

Lexington and National *(smoked in last 30 days)*



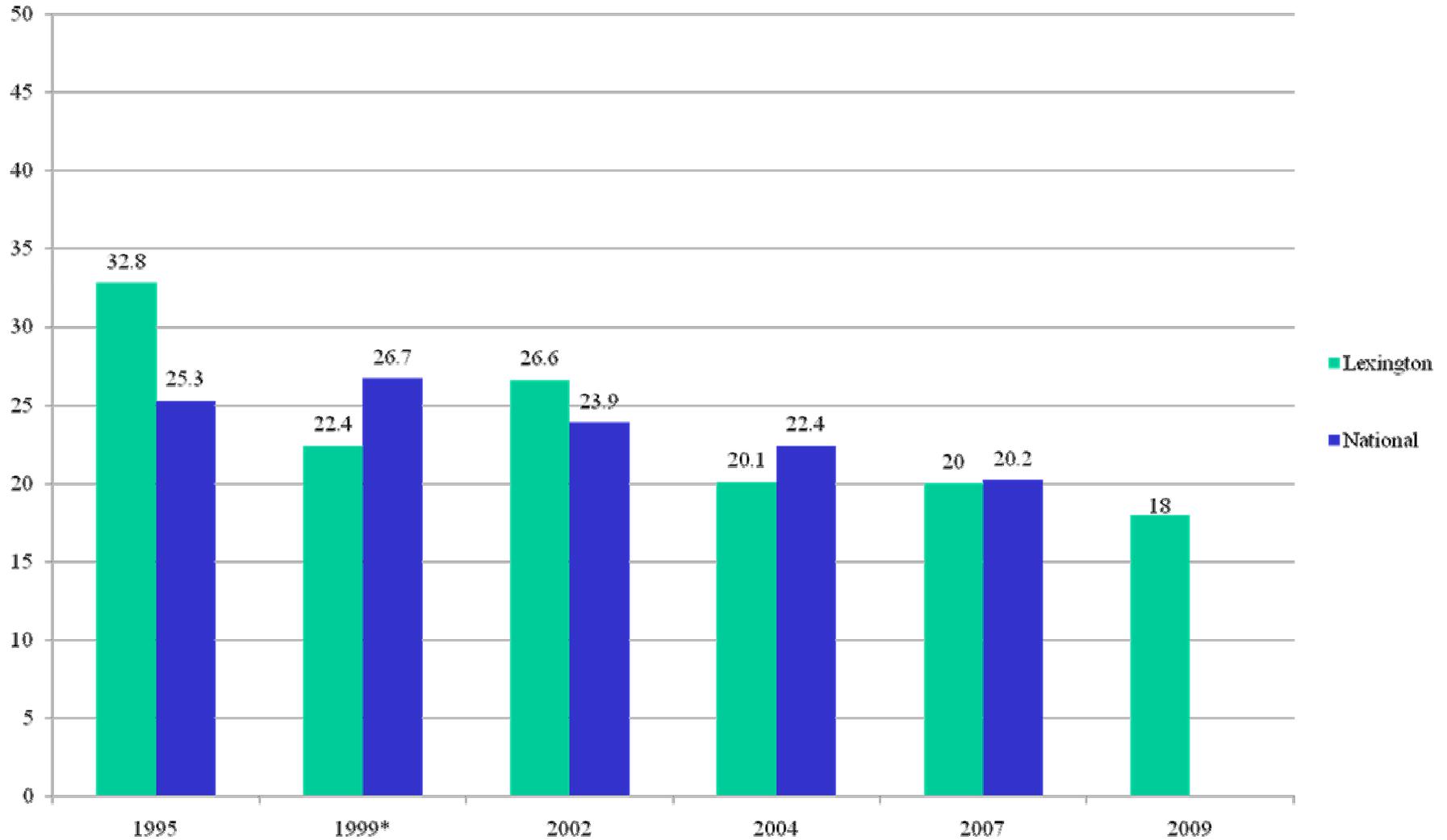
Patterns of Marijuana Use

- 28% of students have tried marijuana in their lifetime
 - Lower than 38% national average, 45% Massachusetts average and 32% regional six schools report average
- 18% reported using marijuana at least once in the past 30 days.
 - *Lower than the 26% state average, 20.2% national average and 21% six combined schools report*
 - Males are more likely to smoke marijuana in past 30 days than females (21% and 14% respectively – *gender gap widening*)
 - Students more likely to have used marijuana than to smoke cigarettes

Marijuana Use Over Time

Lexington and National

(smoked in last 30 days)



Patterns of Other Drug Use

- In 2009, 2.2% reported using cocaine, and 1.6% used speed at least once in the their lifetime.
- Serious drug use has gone down over time
 - In 1995, 20.6% used any drug (LSD, ecstasy, heroin, cocaine) at least once compared to only 6.6% in 2009
 - LHS serious drug use lower than national average (11%)
 - In 1995, 14.3% reported they had sniffed glue/aerosol at least once in their life compared to only 4.7% in 2009.
- In 2009, 3% reported using over the counter medicines to get high and 4% used Rx to get high at least once in their lifetime.

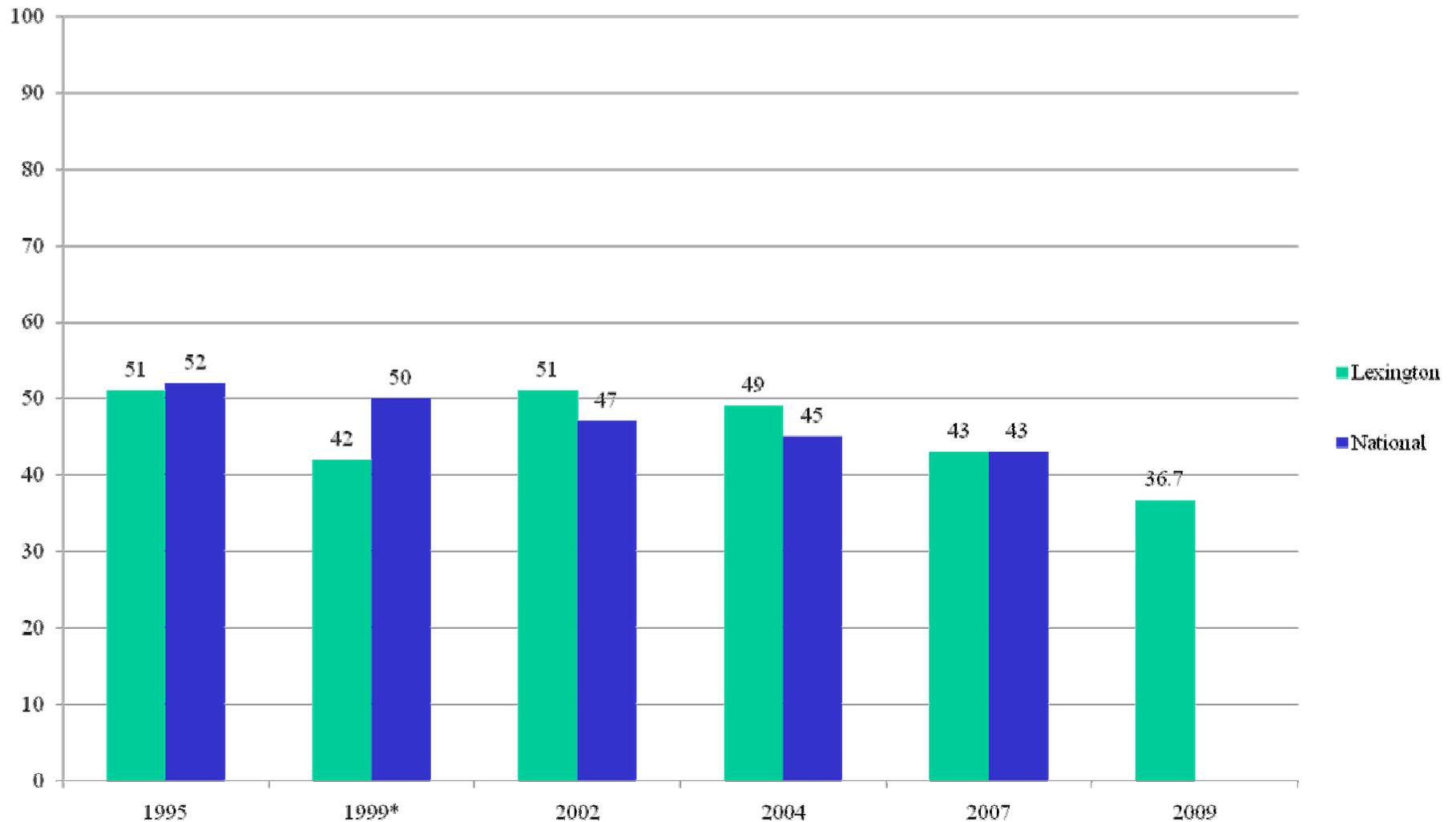
Patterns of Student Drinking

- In 2009, 37% of students reported having at least one drink on one or more days in the past month
 - *Lower than 43% national average, 48% Massachusetts average*
 - *Comparable to the regional six schools report average (38%)*
- No significant gender difference in drinking
- Significant variation by grade (18% of 9th graders, 39% of 10th, 39% of 11th graders, 51% 12th graders)
- 21% of students reported binge drinking (more than 5 drinks in a row) in the past 30 days
 - *Compared to 26% national average, 27% Massachusetts average and 25% combined six schools report average*
 - Males more likely to binge drink than females
 - 23% compared to 17% binge drank at least once in 30 days
 - 8% of males binge drank on 4 or more days compared to 4% of females

Student Drinking Over Time

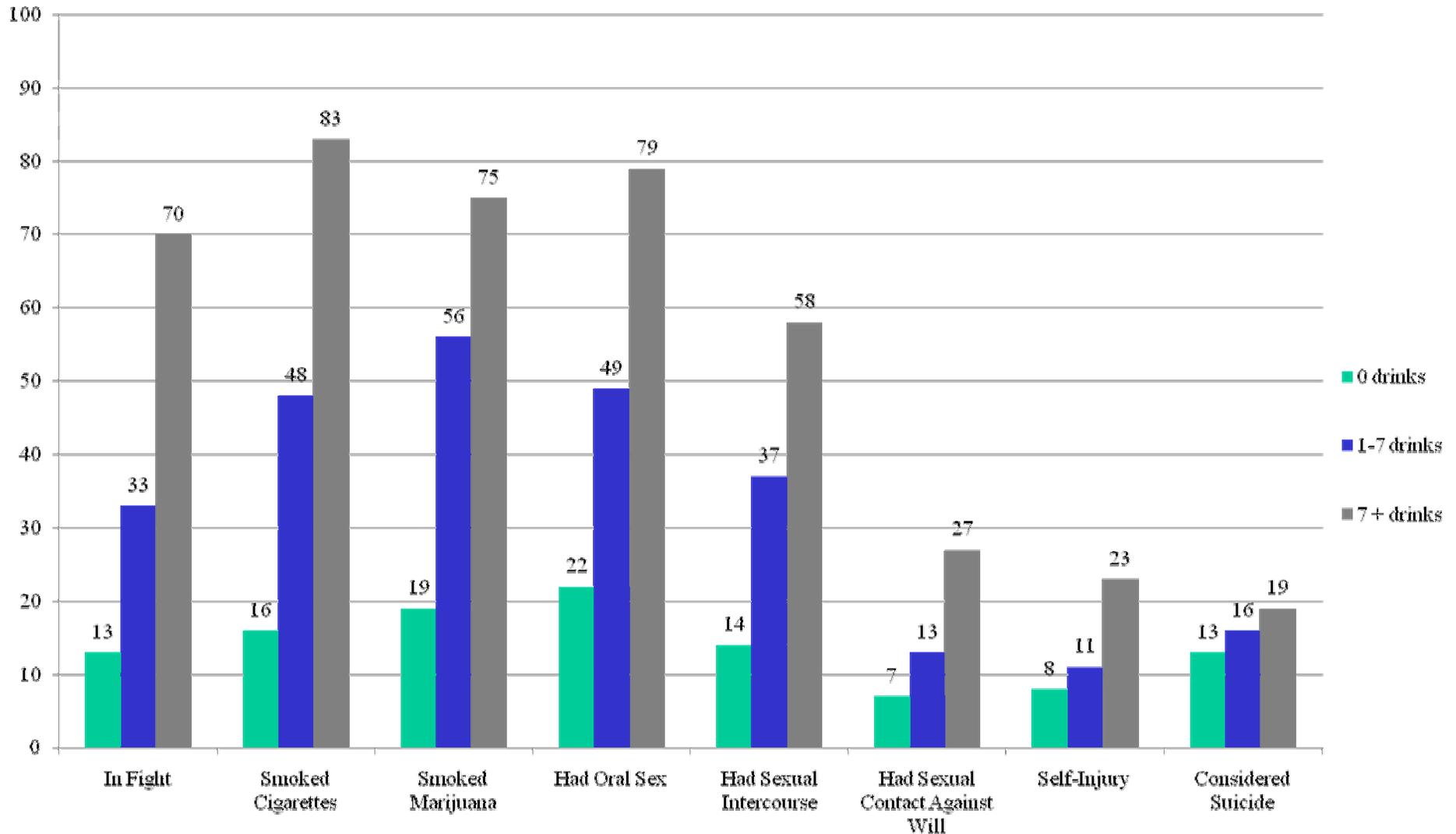
Lexington and National

(drank in last 30 days)



Students who have more than 1
drink in the last 30 days are more
likely to engage in other risky
behavior

Drinking and Risky Behavior



Sexual Activity

- 20% of students report having sexual intercourse
 - *48% national average, 44% Massachusetts average, 27% regional six schools study.*
- Older students more likely to engage in sexual intercourse
 - 6% of 9th graders
 - 13% of 10th graders
 - 25% of 11th graders
 - 38% of 12th graders
- Proportion of students who report using a condom if sexually active has increased from 66% to 71% since 1995.

Sexual Activity – Oral Sex

- **29% of students report having oral sex**
 - Compared to 35% in regional six school study
 - National poll 13-16 year olds (2004) 13% reported having oral sex; study of 15-19 year olds suggest averages closer to 40% (Mosher, 2005)

- **Oral sex varies by grade and gender**

Grade		Gender	
9th	15%	Male	31%
10 th	22%	Female	26%
11 th	34%		
12 th	44%		

- **Of those who have had oral sex, 22% report having four or more partners (*20% in 2007*)**
- **Strong relationship between alcohol use and oral sex:**
 - Of students who report:
 - no alcohol in last 30 days 22% have had oral sex
 - drinking on 1-5 days 49% had oral sex
 - drinking more than 7 days in last 30 days 79% had oral sex

Stress

- Students continue to express stress associated with academics
 - 95% of students report classes cause some stress
 - 13% report classes cause “extreme stress”
 - 49% report classes cause “a lot of stress”
 - 89% report their stress has increased since starting high school
 - 77% report atmosphere at LHS encourages academic competition; 74% report the atmosphere in the town of Lexington encourages academic competition
 - 59% feel they are in academic competition with their friends (down from 64% in 2007)
- Academic stress highly correlated with other problems and risky behavior
 - 29% of extremely stressed students report considering suicide (down from 38% in 2007)
 - Extremely stressed students much more likely to engage in self-injury and more likely to be in risky sexual activity

Stress, Continued

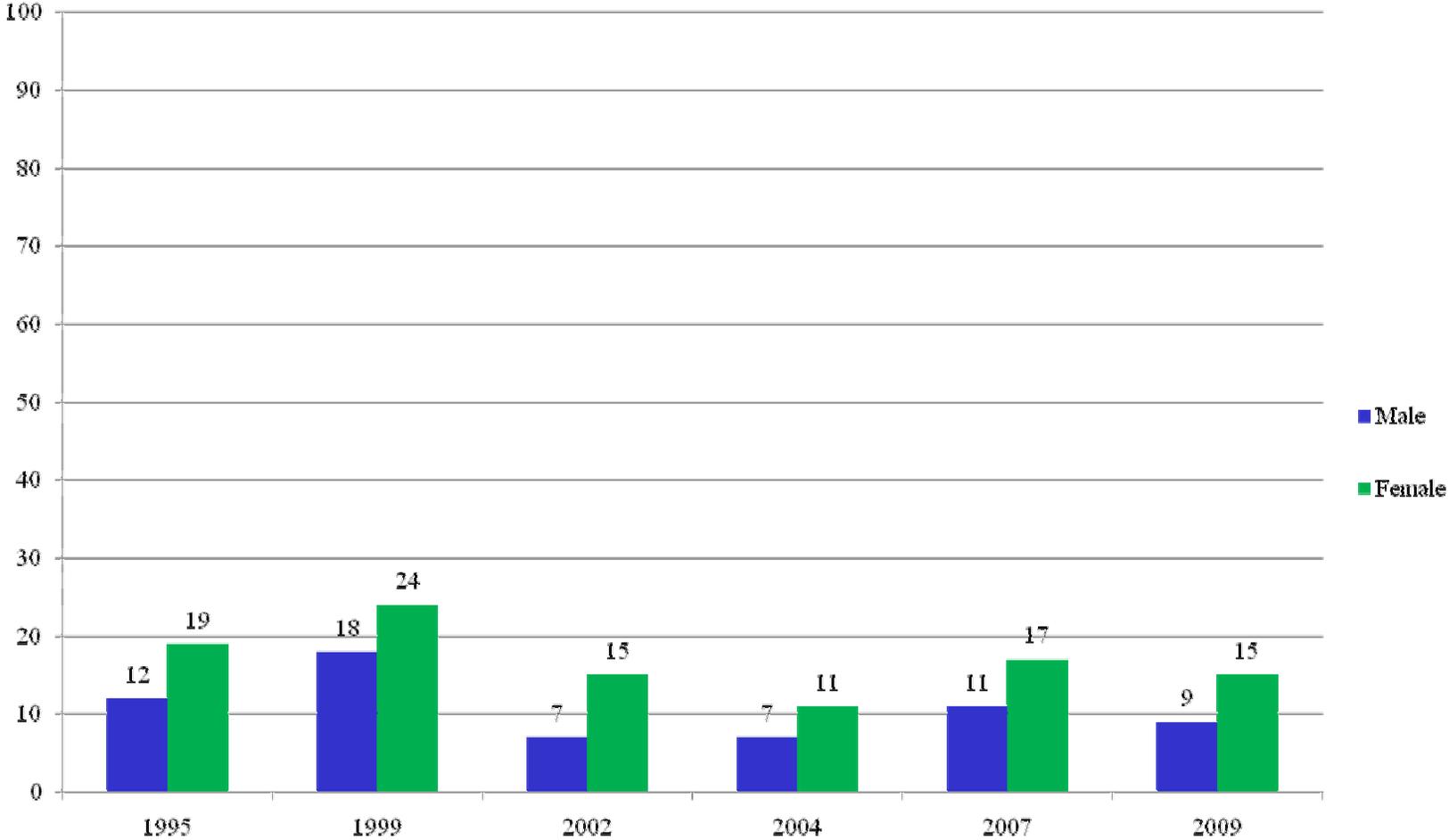
- Gender impact of academic stress
 - Doing poorly on a test bothers young women more than young men (44% of women “bothered a lot” compared to 33% men)
- New questions were added in 2008 to assess the level of stress caused by changes in family finances
 - 14% of students reported that a parent lost a job during this last year
 - 40% bothered a lot.
 - 20% of students reported a significant change in family finances during the last year
 - 32% were bothered a lot.
 - Students who experience financial stress/parental job loss were more likely to engage in self-harming behavior (18% compared to 9% respectively); more likely to indicate depression (41% compared to 27% respectively)

Progress Made Toward Coping with Stress

- Students developing healthy support networks
 - 85% of students indicate that they can depend on their family and friends to support them if they encounter problems.
 - When confronted with problems, 74% of students indicate they can usually find several solutions.
- Programming at LHS designed to help reduce stress may be having a positive impact
 - Proportion of students who report classes cause them extreme stress continues to decrease from 2004 to 2009
 - Students report a number of healthy responses for dealing with stress:
 - Nearly 70% indicated they listen to music when they experience stress
 - 53% reporting they exercise when they are feeling stress.
 - Only 11% of students indicated that they dealt with stress by drinking alcohol

Suicide

Seriously Considered Attempting Suicide
(Number of students reporting)



Conclusions

- Progress continues in reduction of cigarette smoking and drug use
 - Some progress toward reducing drinking
 - Students who drink continue to be much more likely to report engaging in other risky behaviors
- Stress continues to be a problem for students of LHS
 - Stress of LHS may contribute to risky behavior
 - This atmosphere makes health programming particularly important
 - Programs to reduce stress may be having an impact

Conclusions, continued

- Health education continues to have a positive impact on student decision making
 - Students report they receive the most accurate information about sex from:
 - Health teachers (40%)
 - Friends (11%)
 - Parents (8%)
 - Parents and friends still most important in decisions about sex and other risky behavior
 - 85% depend on their family and friends to support them if they have problems