

Prevalence of Bullying and Related Risks

2011 Florida Youth Risk Behavior Survey Special Report

Background: The Florida Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is a self-administered, school-based anonymous survey that has been conducted in Florida public high schools every two years since 1991. It is part of a national survey effort led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to monitor priority health risk behaviors that contribute markedly to the leading causes of death, disability, and social problems among youth in the United States. In 2011, 6,212 students in 78 public high schools in Florida completed the YRBS. The overall response rate was 75%. Since 2001, the response rate has been high enough for the data to be weighted to represent all Florida public high school students.

Definition: Bullying is when one or more students tease, threaten, spread rumors about, hit, shove, or hurt another student over and over again. It is not bullying when two students of about the same strength or power argue or fight or tease each other in a friendly way.

Introduction: In 2011, approximately 256,600 Florida public high school students (33.0%) experienced some form of bullying, teasing, or name calling. This means that in the past 12 months, these students had ever been

- Bullied on school property,
- Electronically bullied,
- The victim of teasing or name calling because of their weight, size, or physical appearance, and/or
- The victim of teasing or name calling because someone thought they were gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

Figure 1. Percentage of Students Who Experienced Bullying, Teasing, or Name Calling in the Past 12 Months, by Sex, Race/Ethnicity, and Grade Level, 2011 Florida YRBS

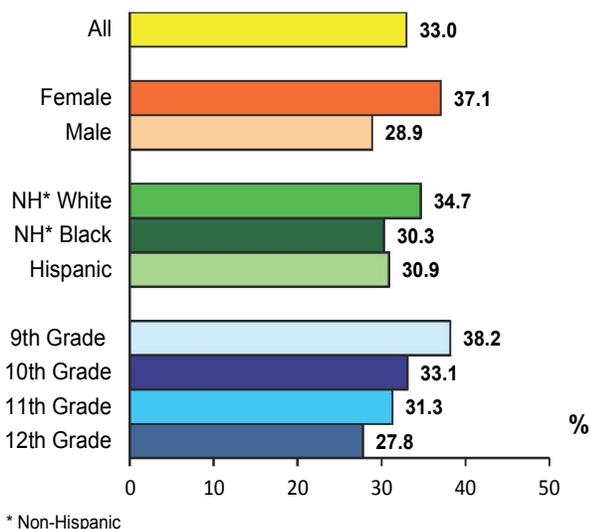
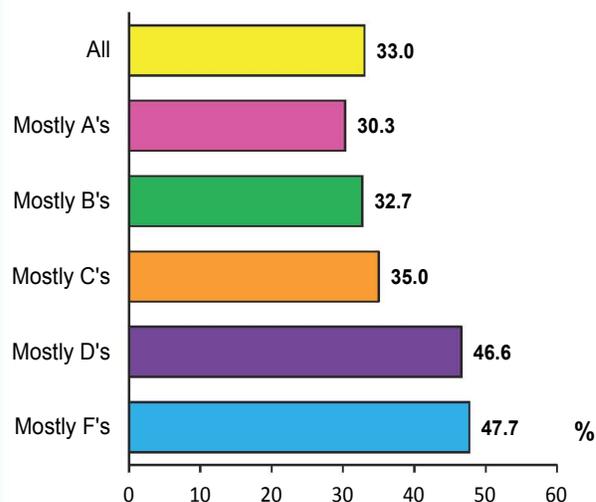


Figure 2. Percentage of Students Who Experienced Bullying, Teasing, or Name Calling in the Past 12 Months, by Self-Reported Grades, 2011 Florida YRBS



Females were significantly more likely than males to have experienced some form of bullying, teasing, or name calling in the past 12 months. Non-Hispanic white students were significantly more likely than either Non-Hispanic black or Hispanic students to have experienced some form of bullying. Ninth grade students had a significantly higher prevalence of this behavior than eleventh and twelfth grade students. Students who described their grades in school during the past 12 months as mostly D's and mostly F's had a significantly higher prevalence of this behavior than students whose grades were mostly A's and B's.

Experienced Any Form of Bullying: Compared to their non-bullied peers, students bullied, teased or called names in the past 12 months were **significantly more likely** to have engaged in or experienced the following behaviors or risk indicators. In 2011, approximately one third of Florida high school students (33.0%) were “bullied,” and approximately two thirds (66.0%) were “non-bullied.”

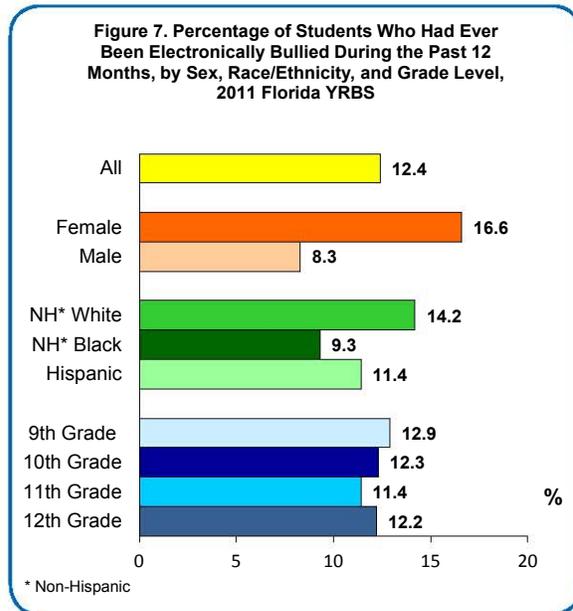
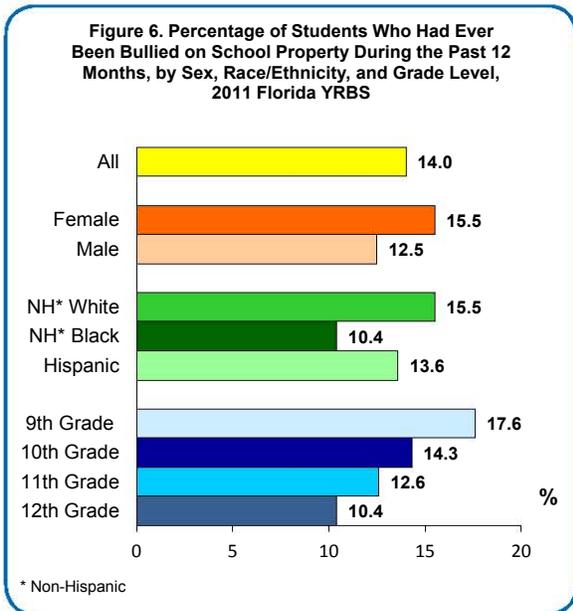
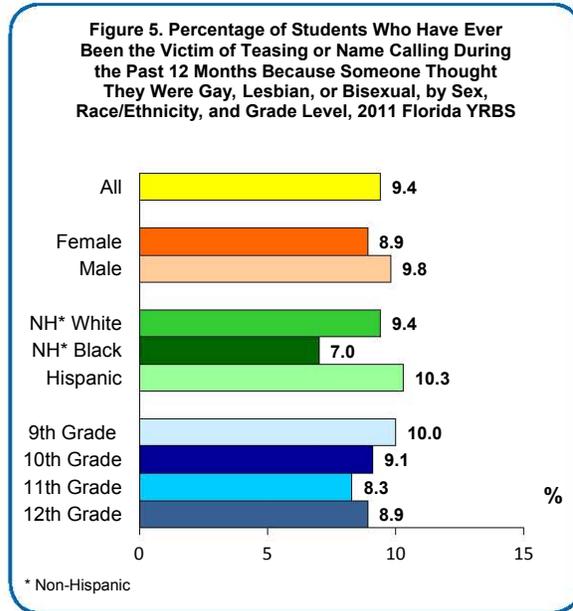
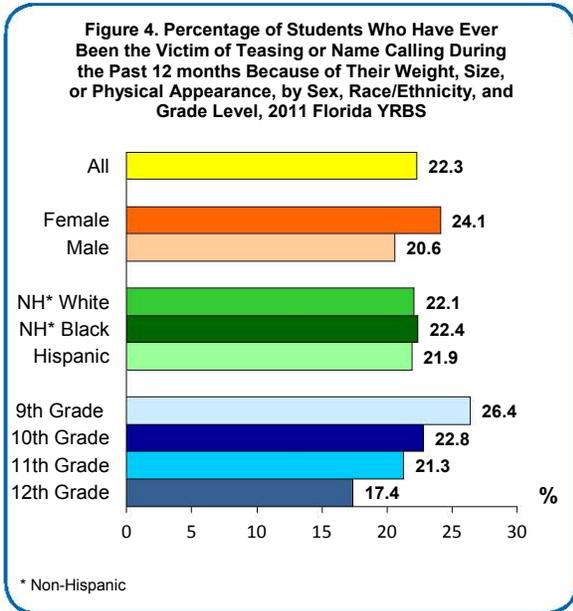
Figure 3. Prevalence of Risk Indicators by Category among Non-Bullied and Bullied Students

Risk Indicators	Prevalence among Non-Bullied Students (%)	Prevalence among Bullied Students (%)	Percent Increased Risk (%)
Personal Safety and Violence			
Rode one or more times during the past 30 days in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol	20.8	30.2	31%
Drove a car or other vehicle one or more times during the past 30 days when they had been drinking alcohol	7.5	12.0	37%
Had their property, such as their car, clothing, or books stolen or deliberately damaged on school property one or more times during the past 12 months	15.9	37.0	57%
Carried a weapon such as a gun, knife or club on one or more of the past 30 days	13.6	19.6	31%
Did not go to school on one or more of the past 30 days because they felt they would be unsafe at school or on their way to or from school	3.3	12.8	74%
Were threatened or injured with a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property one or more times during the past 12 months	3.1	15.5	80%
Were in a physical fight one or more times during the past 12 months	24.5	35.0	30%
Were ever hit, slapped or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend during the past 12 months	6.2	15.5	60%
Had ever been physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to	3.7	14.3	74%
Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Use			
Smoked cigarettes on one or more of the past 30 days	12.2	18.6	34%
Had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more of the past 30 days	33.5	44.0	24%
Had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours, on one or more of the past 30 days	16.6	24.1	31%
Used marijuana one or more times during the past 30 days	20.3	26.7	24%
Have taken a prescription drug (such as OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin, codeine, Adderall, Ritalin, or Xanax) without a doctor's prescription one or more times during their life	11.6	22.1	48%
Sexual Behavior			
Had sexual intercourse with four or more people during their life	14.5	19.0	24%
Ever had oral sex	40.6	49.2	18%
Drank alcohol or used drugs before their last sexual intercourse	20.5	28.6	28%
Did not use a condom during last sexual intercourse	30.7	45.5	33%

Risk Indicators	Prevalence among Non-Bullied Students (%)	Prevalence among Bullied Students (%)	Percent Increased Risk (%)
Self-Harm and Suicide Ideation			
Felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities during the past 12 months	17.0	43.4	61%
Seriously considered attempting suicide during the past 12 months	6.4	23.6	73%
Made a plan about how they would attempt suicide during the past 12 months	4.8	19.0	75%
Actually attempted suicide one or more times during the past 12 months	3.3	13.9	77%
Made a suicide attempt during the past 12 months that resulted in an injury, poisoning, or overdose that had to be treated by a doctor or nurse	0.9	4.9	82%
Did something to purposely hurt themselves without wanting to die, such as cutting or burning themselves on purpose, one or more times during the past 12 months	6.9	25.1	73%
Have ever been choked by someone or tried to choke themselves on purpose, such as with a belt, towel, or rope, for the feeling or experience it caused	4.7	16.0	71%
Weight Management and Dietary Behaviors			
Were overweight or obese	22.8	30.1	24%
Described themselves as slightly or very overweight	22.1	35.9	39%
Stated they were trying to lose weight	40.0	51.0	22%
Engaged in healthy weight loss activities: exercised to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight during the past 30 days and/or ate less food, fewer calories, or foods low in fat to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight during the past 30 days	60.3	68.0	11%
Engaged in unhealthy weight loss activities: went without eating for 24 hours or more to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight during the past 30 days, took any diet pills, powders, or liquids without a doctor's advice to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight during the past 30 days and/or vomited or took laxatives to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight during the past 30 days	9.5	21.6	56%
Physical Activity			
Were <i>not</i> physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes per day on five or more of the past seven days	54.0	61.0	11%
Played video or computer games or used a computer for something that was not school work three or more hours per day on an average school day	32.7	40.9	20%
Did <i>not</i> get eight or more hours of sleep on average school night	72.7	76.7	5%
Positive Interactions with Adults			
Responded that, if they or one of their friends were being physically or sexually abused, they do <i>not</i> know who they should report it to	21.0	26.3	20%
Talked to a teacher or other adult in their school about a personal problem they had during the past 12 months	22.3	35.8	38%

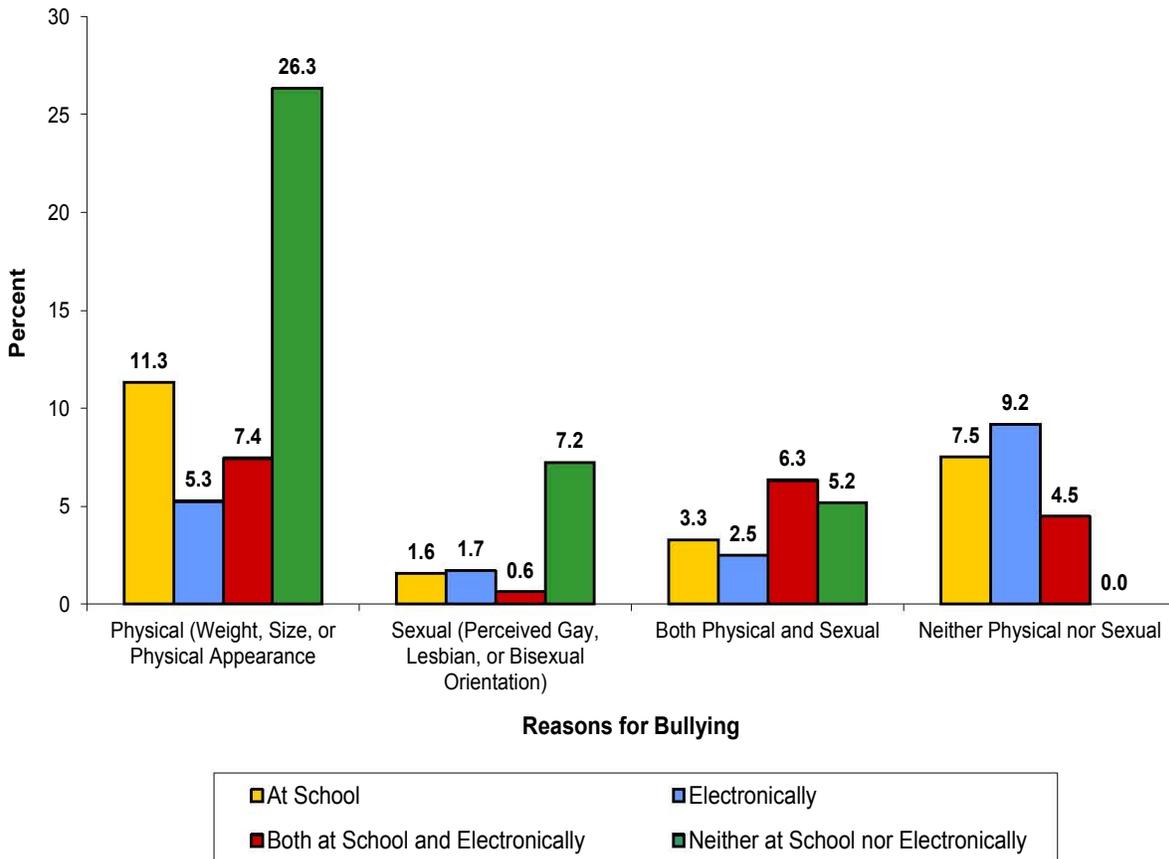
Forms of Bullying: Four independent questions about bullying were asked on the 2011 Florida YRBS. Among all Florida public high school students:

- Teasing or name calling because of weight, size, or physical appearance, i.e., bullying for physical reasons, (22.3%) was significantly more prevalent than other forms of bullying (Figure 4).
- Teasing or name calling because of perceived gay, lesbian, or bisexual orientation, i.e., bullying for sexual reasons, (9.4%) was significantly less prevalent than other forms of bullying (Figure 5).
- Females had a significantly higher prevalence of being bullied for physical reasons (Figure 4), at school (Figure 6), and electronically (Figure 7) than males.
- Non-Hispanic white students had a significantly higher prevalence of being bullied at school (Figure 6) and electronically (Figure 7) than non-Hispanic black students. Additionally, Hispanic students had a significantly higher prevalence of being bullied for sexual reasons (Figure 5) and at school (Figure 6) than non-Hispanic black students.
- Ninth grade students had a significantly higher prevalence of being bullied for physical reasons (Figure 4) and at school (Figure 6) compared to students in grades 10 through 12.



Overlapping Nature of Bullying: These four measures can be grouped by location (at school and electronically) and by reason (physical appearance and perceived sexual orientation).

Figure 8. Among Students Who Experienced Bullying, Teasing, or Name Calling in the Past 12 Months, Reasons for Bullying by Location, 2011 Florida YRBS



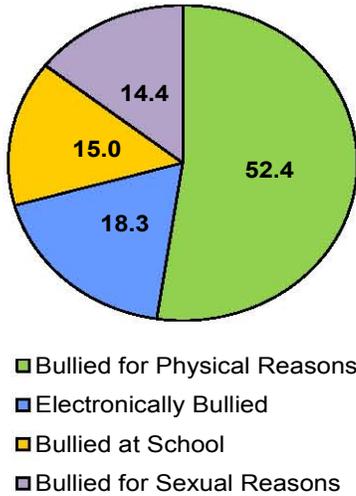
Among students who experienced bullying, teasing, or name calling in the past 12 months:

- Approximately one quarter (26.3%) only experienced bullying for physical reasons and did not report a location (at school or electronically) where the bullying occurred.
- Approximately half (49.7%) experienced two or more forms of bullying.
- Approximately one in fifteen (6.3%) reported all four forms of bullying.

Data Limitations:

- Reasons for bullying not captured might include, but are not limited to, academic achievement, athletic skill, social acumen, religion, and family composition.
- Locations for bullying not captured might include, but are not limited to, work, places of worship, off campus sports facilities, home or commercial locations.
- Analysis implies that some students counted as “non-bullied” have experienced bullying for a reason and at a location not captured by the questions on the YRBS.

Figure 9. Among Students Who Experienced Bullying, Teasing, or Name Calling in the Past 12 Months, Forms of Bullying, 2011 Florida YRBS

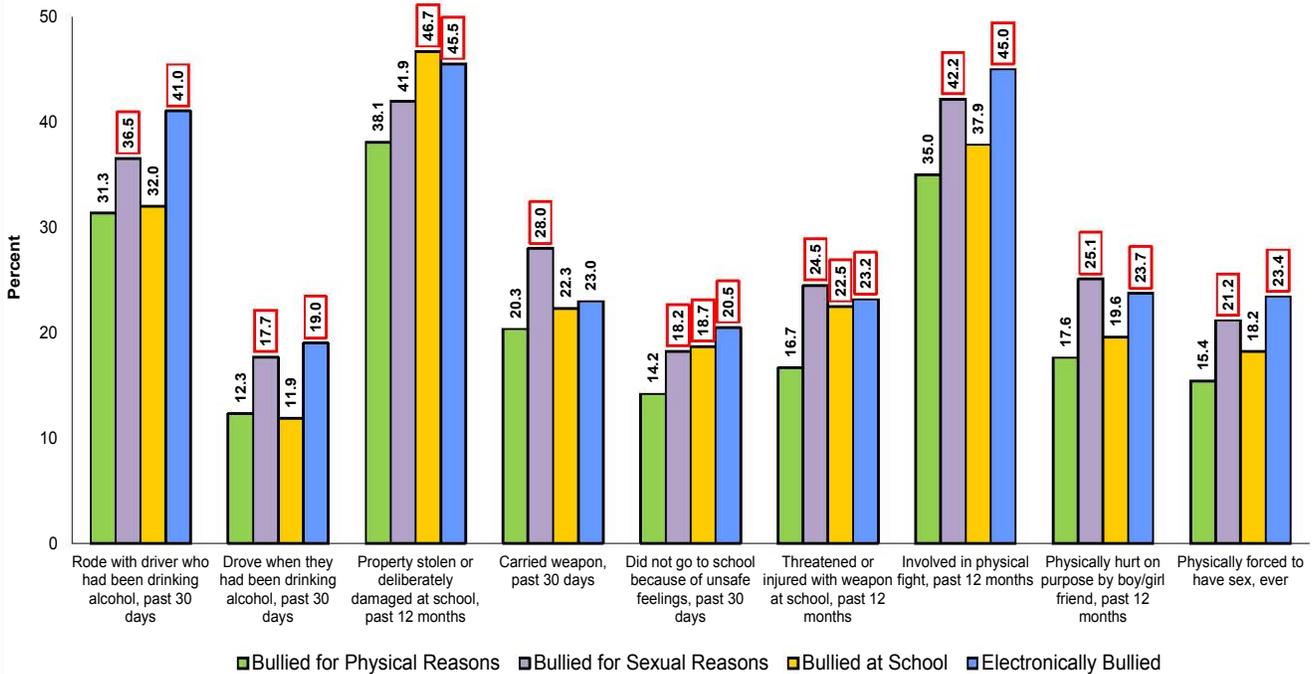


Increased Risks with Less Common Bullying: Among bullied students, over half (52.4%) were the victims of teasing or name calling because of their weight, size, or physical appearance. This form of bullying is significantly more common than the other forms measured on the Florida YRBS. In some cases, the prevalence of this form masks the true prevalence of risks associated with other types of bullying.

While experiencing any form of bullying is significantly correlated with increased risk for many indicators, among bullied students, e-bullying, bullying at school and bullying because of perceived sexual orientation were associated with additional increased risk in several categories: personal safety and violence; tobacco, drug, and alcohol use; sexual behavior; and self-harm and suicide ideation.

Among bullied students, students experiencing less common forms of bullying have a significantly increased prevalence of some risk indicators compared to students bullied for physical reasons.

Figure 10. Among Students Who Experienced Bullying, Teasing, or Name Calling in the Past 12 Months, Increased Prevalence of Personal Safety and Violence Indicators Compared to Bullying for Physical Reasons, 2011 Florida YRBS



Red box around prevalence indicates that there is a significantly increased prevalence of the risk indicator associated with form of bullying, compared to bullying for physical reasons, among bullied students.

Figure 11. Among Students Who Experienced Bullying, Teasing, or Name Calling in the Past 12 Months, Increased Prevalence of Tobacco, Drug, and Alcohol and Sexual Behavior Indicators Compared to Bullying for Physical Reasons, 2011 Florida YRBS

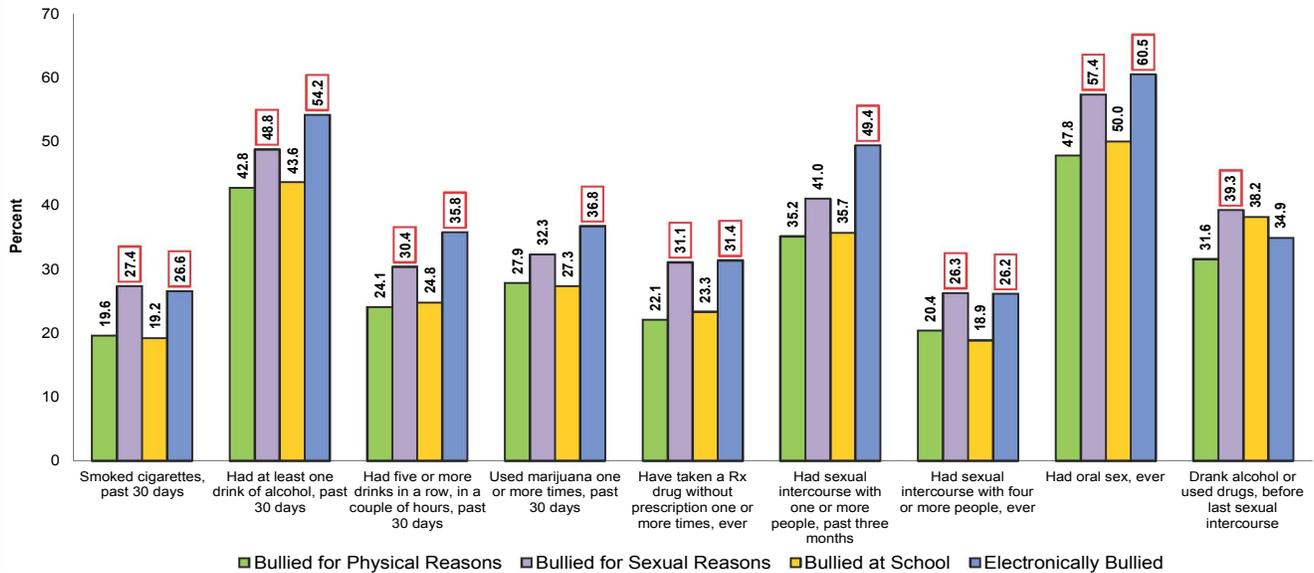
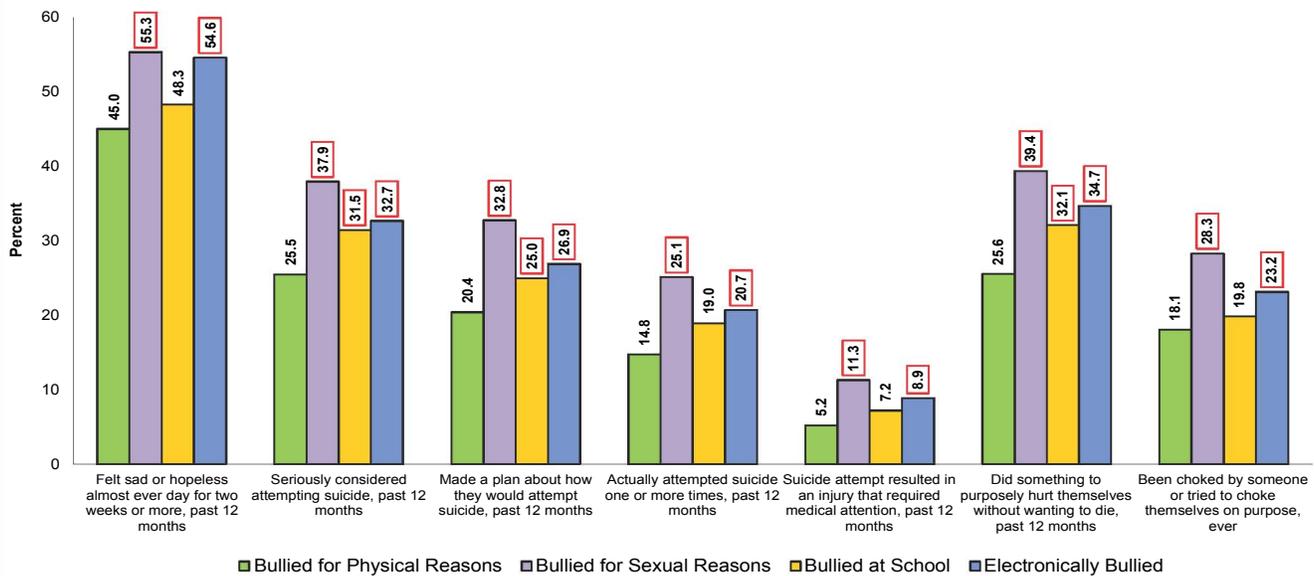


Figure 12. Among Students Who Experienced Bullying, Teasing, or Name Calling in the Past 12 Months, Increased Prevalence of Self-Harm and Suicide Ideation Indicators Compared to Bullying for Physical Reasons, 2011 Florida YRBS



For more information about the YRBS, please contact the Chronic Disease Epidemiology Surveillance and Evaluation Section at (850) 245-4401, by e-mail at ChronicDisease@doh.state.fl.us, or visit our website at: <http://www.FloridaChronicDisease.org/YRBS/Intro.htm>. For an interactive database of YRBS data, visit the CDC's YRBS web site at: www.cdc.gov/yrbs. This document was developed by the Bureau of Epidemiology for the Florida Department of Education's Office of Healthy Schools in Cooperation with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Adolescent and School Health Project Number U87/CCU001239-02.

