

# Making the Connection: Behaviors that Contribute to Unintentional Injury and Academic Grades

Data from the 2015 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) show students with higher academic grades are less likely than their peers with lower grades to participate in behaviors that contribute to unintentional injury. It is important to remember that these associations do not prove causation. School health professionals, school officials, and other decision makers can use this information to better understand the associations between grades and risk behaviors that contribute to unintentional injury, as well as to develop and reinforce policies, practices, and programs that educate students about risk behaviors and their consequences.

## Key findings

Compared to students with lower grades, **students with higher grades are**

### more likely to:

- Wear a seatbelt.

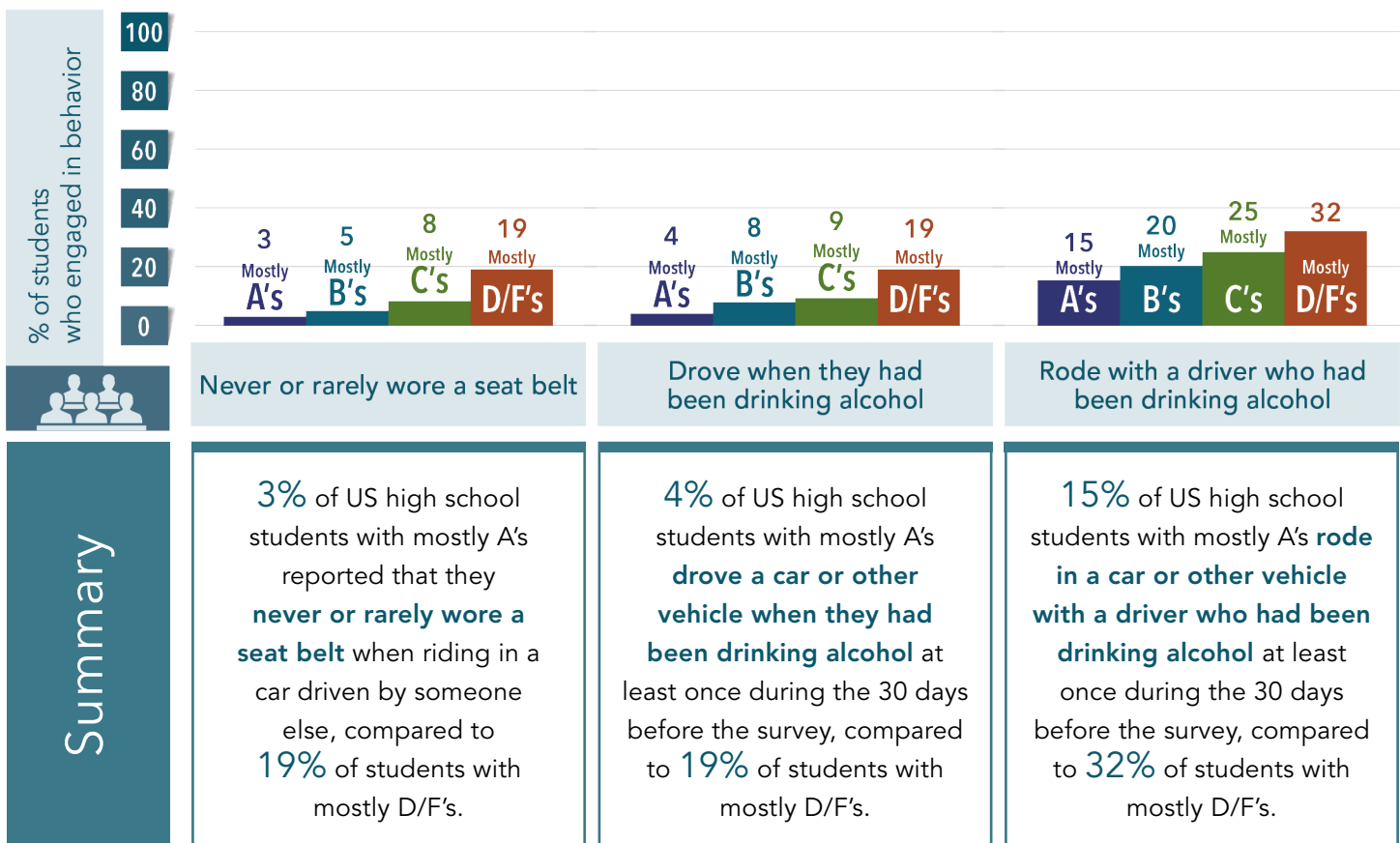
### less likely to:

- Drive when they have been drinking alcohol.
- Ride with a driver who has been drinking alcohol

FIGURE 1

## Behaviors That Contribute to Unintentional Injury, by type of academic grades earned

- United States, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2015



\*Figure 1 illustrates the percentage of students who engaged in each risk behavior, by type of grades mostly earned in school (mostly A's, B's, C's, D's/F's) (row proportions). The percentage of students who did not engage in each risk behavior are not shown. However, the percentages of students who did and did not engage in each risk behavior, by type of grades mostly earned in school, sum to 100%. Logistic regression analyses (not shown) controlling for sex, race/ethnicity, and grade in school confirmed a significant association between behaviors that contribute to unintentional injury and academic grades. You can also view data from other [2015 YRBS unintentional injury variables](#).

## Conclusions

These results from the YRBS provide evidence of a significant association between academic grades and behaviors that contribute to unintentional injury. Further research is warranted to determine whether higher grades in school lead to less participation in these risk behaviors, if less of these risk behaviors leads to higher grades, or some other factors lead to these risk behaviors.

There is a close relationship between health and education. By working together, education and health agencies, parents, and communities can ensure that students are healthy and ready to learn in school. For more information on student and motor vehicle safety, visit CDC's [Teen Drivers](#) resource site.

## About the Data

The National YRBS monitors priority health-risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death, disability, and social problems among youth and adults in the United States. It is conducted every 2 years during the spring and provides data representative of 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in public and private schools throughout the nation. In 2015, students completing the YRBS were asked, "During the past 12 months, how would you describe your grades in school?" and given seven response options (Mostly A's, Mostly B's, Mostly C's, Mostly D's, Mostly F's, None of these grades, Not sure). In 2015, 32% of students received mostly A's, 38% received mostly B's, 20% received mostly C's, 6% received mostly D's or F's, and 4% reported receiving none of these grades or not sure.

For more information, visit the [CDC's Healthy Schools website](#), or call 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).



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