

2026 IHEC Aggregate (2026 Spring Administration) Aggregate Report

Illinois Assessment of College Substance Use Behaviors (IACSUB) Survey

[Executive Summary Report](#)

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IHEC 2026 Aggregate**Spring 2026 Administration****Illinois Assessment of College Substance Use Behaviors (IACSUB) Survey****Executive Summary****General Survey Overview**

This survey is to determine the current incidence and prevalence of alcohol and other drug use on Illinois 2 and 4-year college campuses. Furthermore, students' perception of others' use; perceptions of risk related to use; beliefs regarding use; negative consequences associated with use; experiences of secondhand effects of others' use; experiences of physical and sexual violence; and the relationship of alcohol and other drug use to campus climate issues will also be examined.

Schools from across the state of Illinois were recruited for the survey. There were a mix of 2-year and 4-year participating institutions, both private and public. Out of an initial 744 responses, only 470 were found to be valid with a 98% or above completion rate. The survey was distributed during the spring semester of 2026 during the months of February through May. The participating institutions were required to provide a sample that represented 10% of their student population, along with a three-week distribution period during the provided time frame.

Survey Structure & Methods

In partnership with Missouri Partners and Prevention, this survey is an adaptation of the Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors. This survey was developed to assess substance use prevalence, attitudes and relevant behaviors. Regarding substance use, the survey was split into categories of substances, along with questions assessing belonging, mental health, and general profiling questions relating to major and extracurricular activities.

This survey was conducted by the IHEC staff through the Qualtrics platform, allowing for improved user experience and reminders. The participating schools were able to indicate their preference for reminder emails to students, which would include brief information regarding the survey, main contacts for questions, and deadlines to complete the survey. Once these details were set, the survey was then distributed during the designated timeline, with reminder emails sent to the list approximately once per week. Additionally, the participating institutions were encouraged to promote the survey distribution before and during their indicated timeline.

While giveaways were not promoted at the state level, schools who indicated their intention of giveaways for participants were instructed to set parameters. These instructions were included with emails sent to their random sample list.

In preparation for this report all identifiable information related to participants has been removed.

Key Data Findings

The largest sections of the survey focused on past 30-day and past 12-month rates among college students. Given that this was administered in the spring semester, schools may have had difficulty recruiting responses from students due to survey fatigue, the new methodology of the survey, or low marketing strategies. When the responses were broken down, the most causes for concern were related to high intensity consumption as it relates to cannabis, past 30-day consumption rates among alcohol and cannabis, and the student perceptions and attitudes towards consumption and polysubstance use.

1. Among the top substances used, alcohol continues to be the leading substance of choice. Students are often turning to drinking alcohol to have fun with friends, relax, or like the taste of it. Additionally, students reported that they drink alcohol because they like how it feels, to get drunk, or to feel more confident in a social situation.
2. Cannabis use remains as dominant on general substance use responses. Students are often turning to cannabis use to manage anxiety, help them relax, relieve pain, or help with their sleep. Additionally, students reported that they use cannabis to just have fun with friends, like how it feels, or want to get high. Many reported that it feels safer to use than alcohol/other substances or believe that the consequences of use are minimal.
3. Many respondents indicated mental health and difficulties keeping up with academic expectations as reasons they considered leaving their institution or discontinuing their education. Students reported lack of friends, feeling lonely, homesick, or not having enough money to pay for school as contributing factors.

Key Findings from Student's Drinking Behaviors

- 49** reported as being individuals that have **not consumed alcohol in past 12 months.**
- 239** reported as being individuals that have **consumed alcohol in past 12 months.**
The following percentages come from this total.

Female high intensity drinking was defined as four or more drinks.

Male high intensity drinking was defined as five or more drinks.

Of the students who reported to consume alcohol

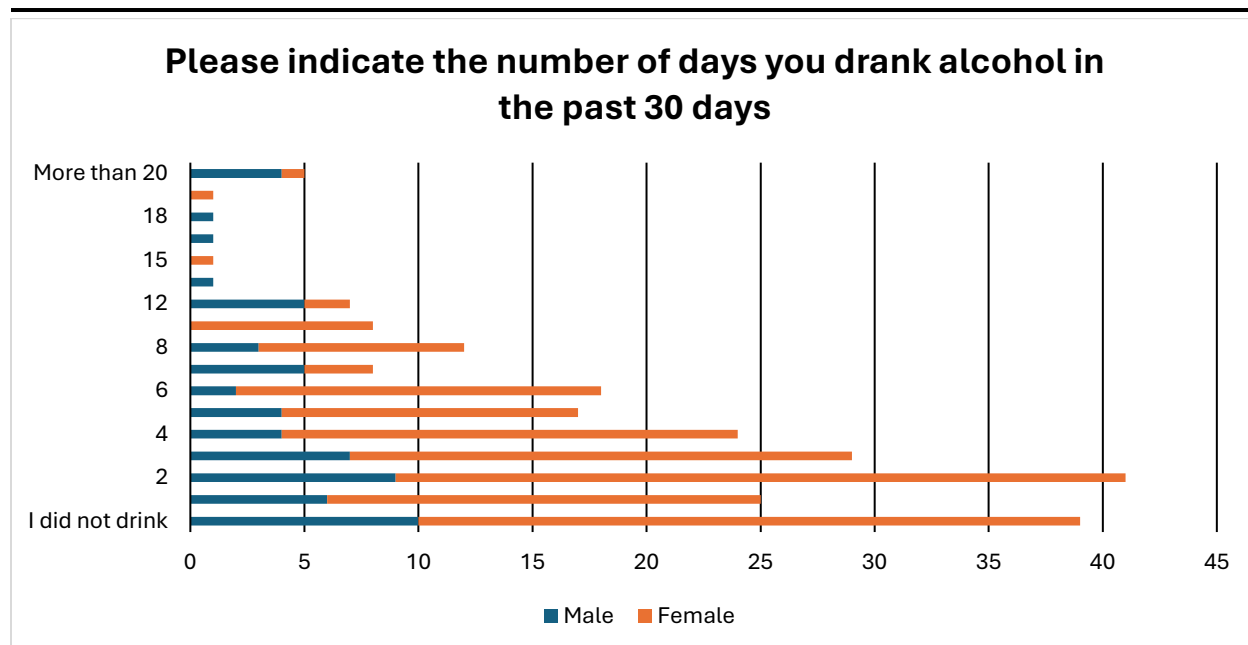
- 177 identified as Female.
59 identified as Male.
3 preferred not to respond

Frequency in the past two weeks

- 29% of Male participants stated they had not drunk alcohol ($n=17$).
33% of Female participants stated they had not drunk alcohol ($n=59$).
54% of Male participants indicated drinking alcohol on four or less days ($n=32$).
62% of Female participants indicated drinking alcohol on four or less days ($n=110$).

Frequency in the past 30 days

- 76% of female participants drank alcohol eight or less days ($n=133$).
68% of male participants answered they drank alcohol eight days or less ($n=40$).



Key Findings from Student's Cannabis Use Behaviors

43 reported as being individuals that have **not used cannabis in past 12 months**.

126 reported as being individuals that have **used cannabis in past 12 months**. The following percentages come from this total.

Frequency in the past 30 days

26% of participants said that they had not used cannabis in the past 30 days ($n=33$).

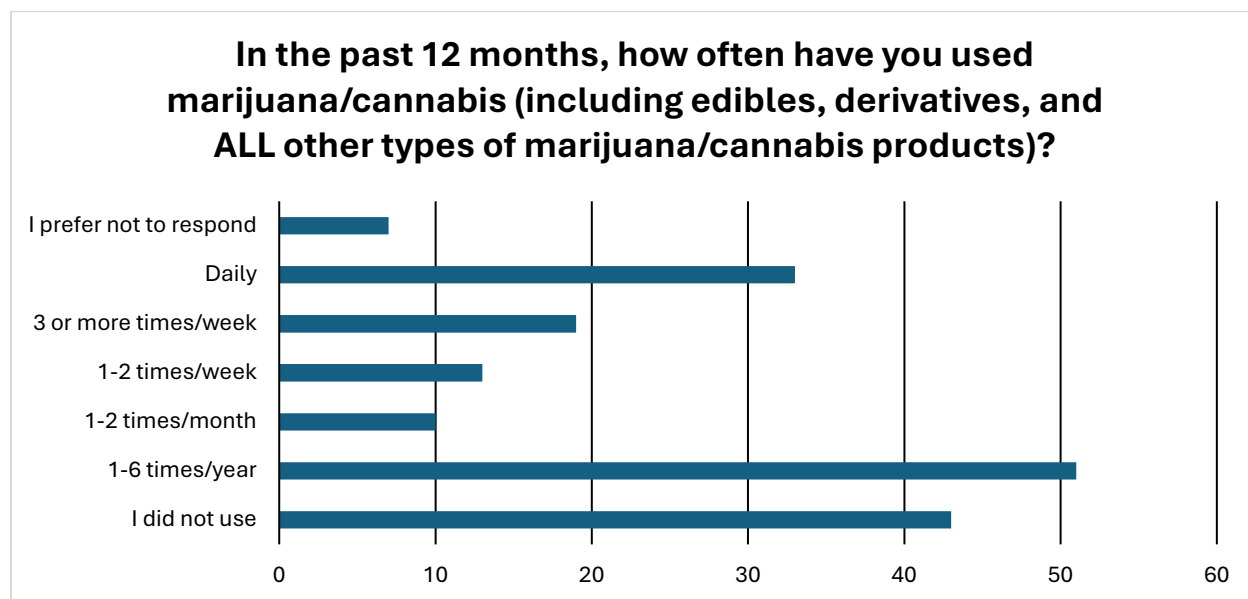
28% of participants said that they had used cannabis more than 20 days out of the past 30 days ($n=35$).

Frequency in the past 12 months

40% of participants said that they used cannabis between 1-6 times in the past 12 months ($n=51$).

15% of participants said that they used cannabis between 3 or more times a week ($n=19$).

26% of participants answered that were daily cannabis users in the past 12 months ($n=33$).



Key Findings from Student's Tobacco/Nicotine Use Behaviors

297 reported as being individuals that have **never used tobacco/nicotine products in their life.**

135 reported as being individuals that have **used tobacco/nicotine in their life.**

The following percentages come from the data of students who reported to have used tobacco/nicotine in their life.

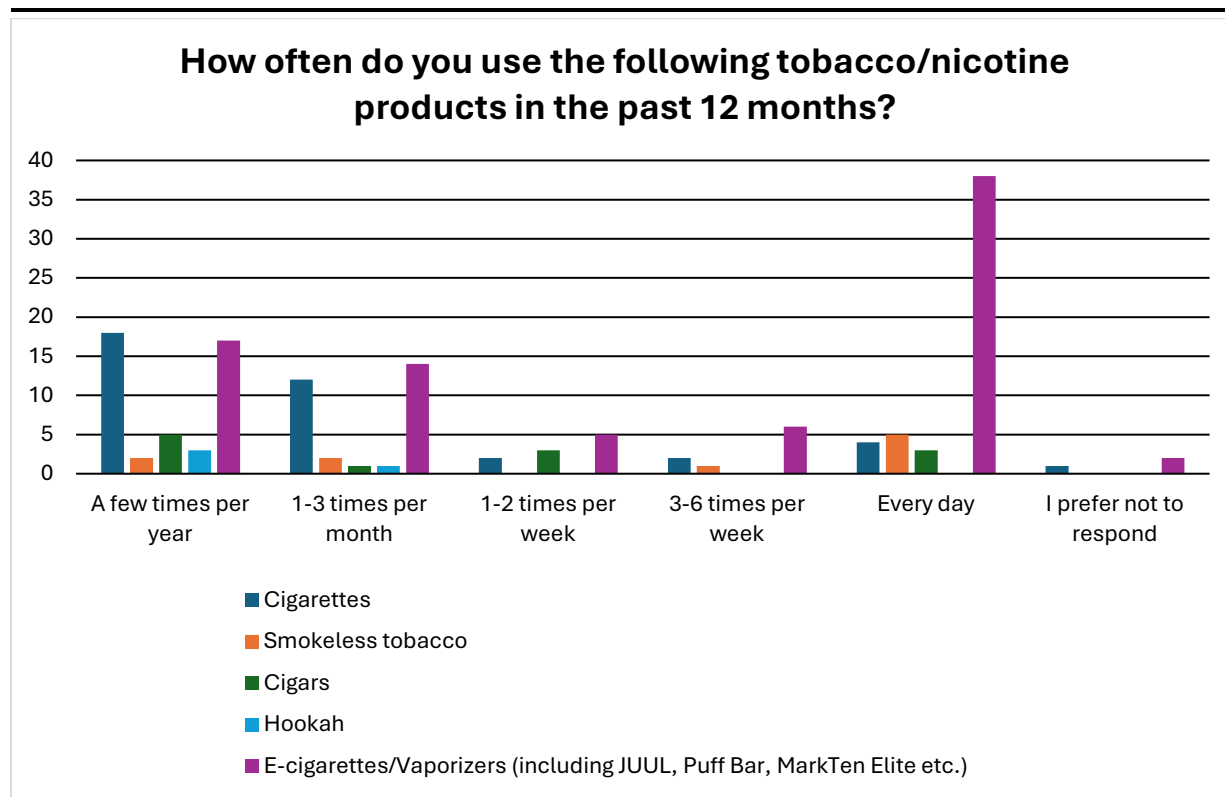
Type of product used in the past 12 months

61% of participants said that they used E-cigarettes/vaporizers in the past 12 months ($n=82$).

29% of participants said that they used cigarettes in the past 12 months ($n=39$).

Frequency in the past 12 months

28% of participants said that they used E-cigarettes/vaporizers every day in the past 12 months ($n=38$).



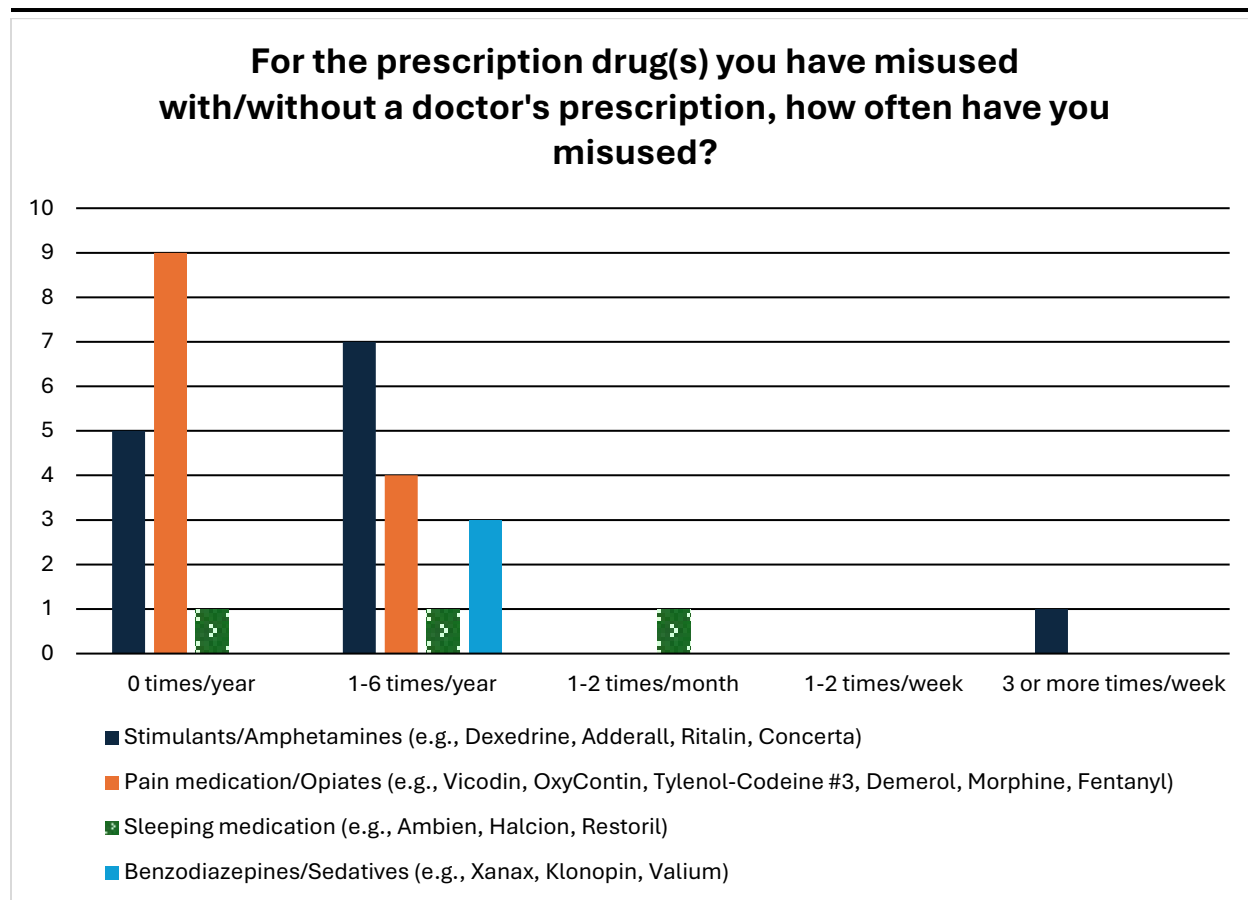
Key Findings from Student's Prescription Drug Use Behaviors

415 reported as being individuals that have **not used prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription in the past 12 months.**

The following data is shown as the raw data collected without use of percentages due to the small sample of students that used prescription drugs in the past 12 months.

Frequency of student misuse of prescription drugs with or without a doctor's prescription

- 7 of the participants said that they misused Stimulants/Amphetamines 1-6 times a year.
- 4 of the participants said that they misused Pain medications/Opiates 1-6 times a year.



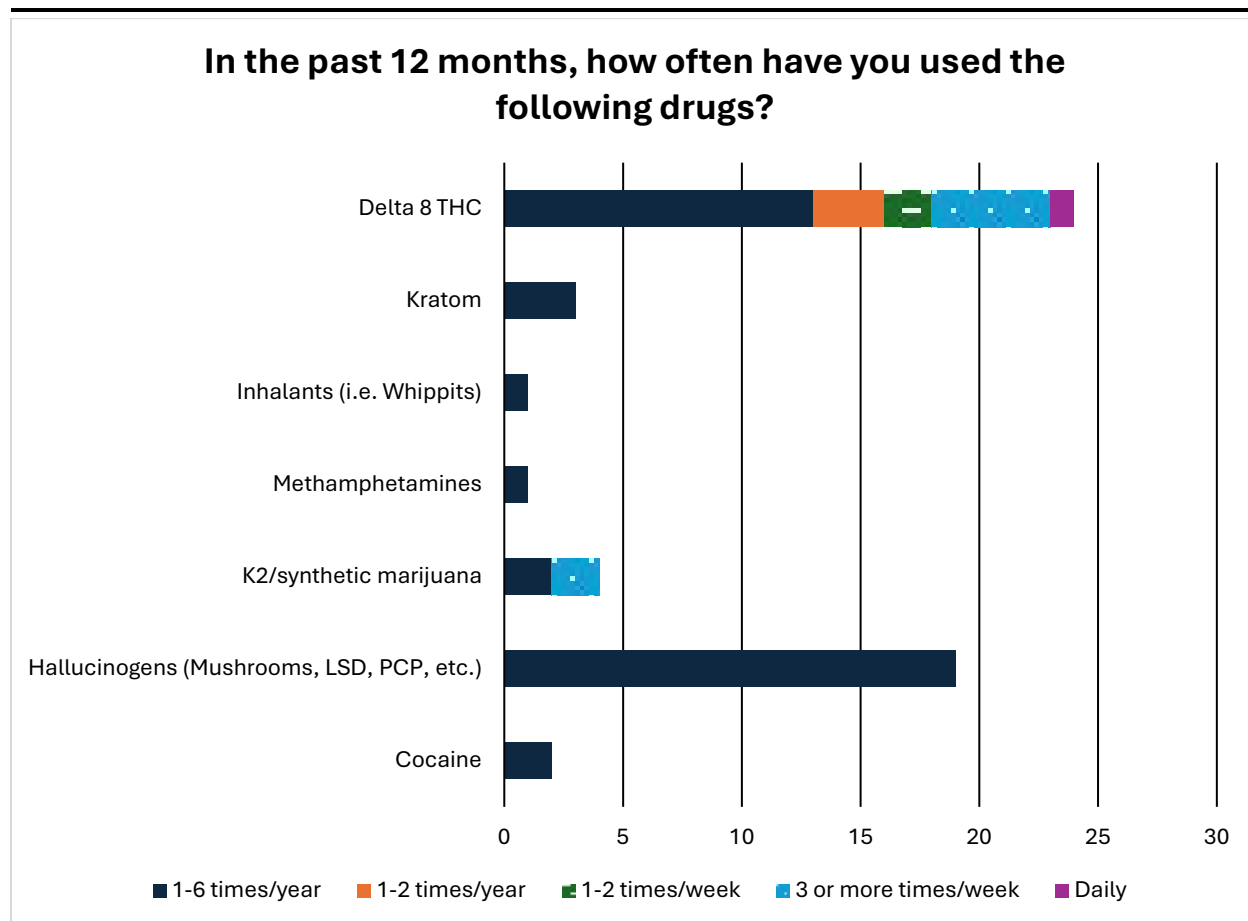
Key Findings from Student's Polysubstance and Other Drug Use Behaviors

Students' Polysubstance Use

- 80 participants said that they have used cannabis while drinking alcohol in the past 12 months.
- 59 participants said that they used tobacco/nicotine products while drinking alcohol in the past 12 months.
- 47 participants said that they used prescription drugs (prescribed to them) while drinking alcohol in the past 12 months

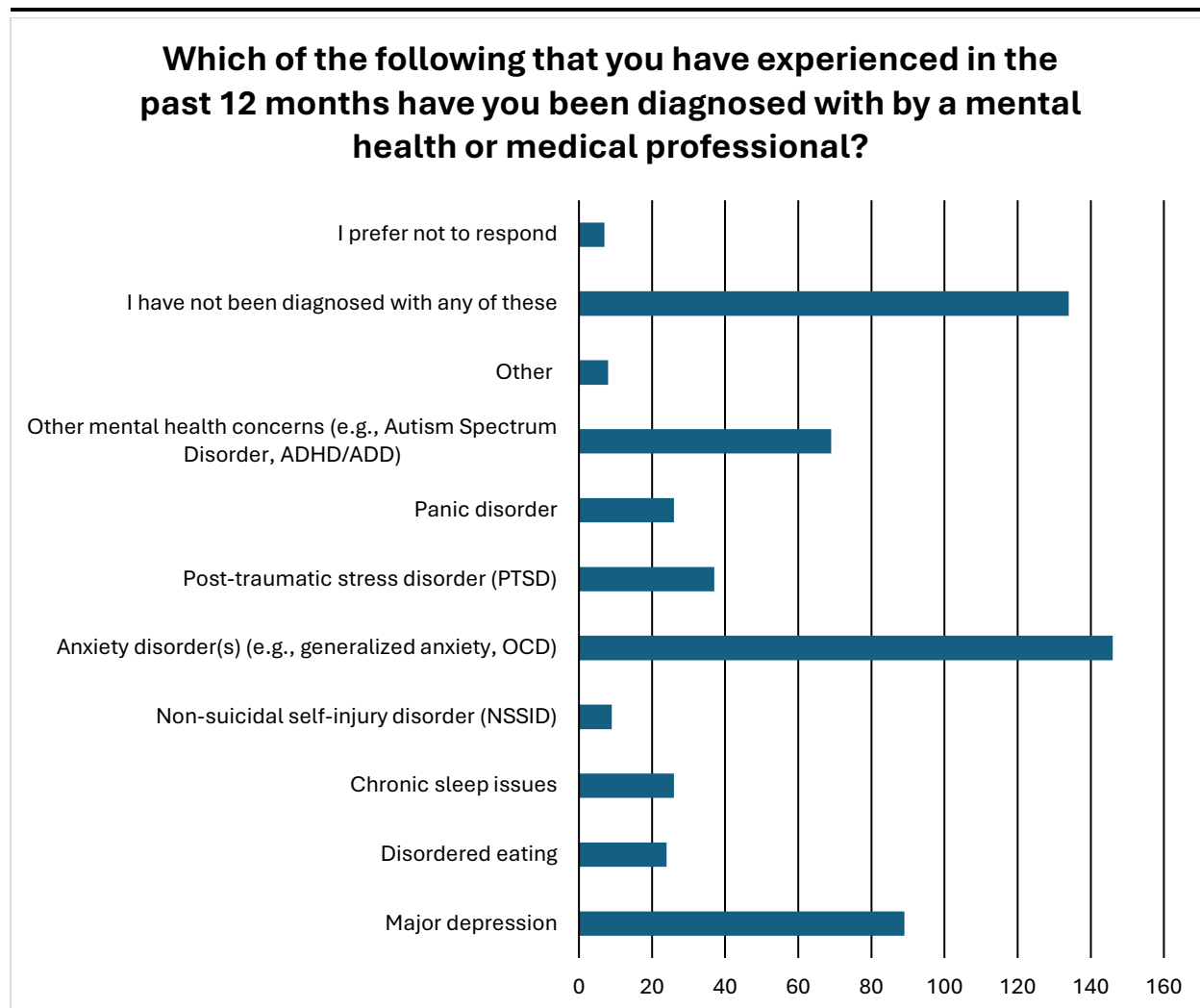
Other drug use by students

- 19 reported as being individuals that have used Hallucinogens 1-6 times in the past 12 months.
- 13 reported as being individuals that have used Delta 8 THC 1-6 times in the past 12 months.



Key Findings from Student's Mental Health Behaviors

- 110** reported as being individuals that have **thought about transferring from their current college/university in past 12 months.**
- 63** reported as being individuals that have **thought of discontinuing their college/university education in past 12 months.**
- 84** reported as being individuals that have **used off-campus mental health provider services as their initial source to seek assistance with their mental health.**
- 146** reported as being individuals that were **diagnosed with anxiety disorder by a mental health or medical professional.**



Key Findings from Student's Mental Health Behaviors (Continued)

- 202** reported as being individuals that have **had suicidal thoughts in their lifetime.**
- 77** reported as being individuals that have **had suicidal thoughts in past 12 months.**
- 5** reported as being individuals that **have attempted suicide in the past 12 months.**
- 39** reported as being individuals that **had sought assistance for their suicidal attempt/thoughts in the past 12 months.**
- 24** reported as being **individuals that do not think they need any assistance.**

