

OVERVIEW OF THE 2011 HEALTHY KIDS COLORADO SURVEY: MIDDLE SCHOOL



Colorado's Coordinated School Health initiative

In the fall of 2011, a total of **1,614 students in 33 public middle schools** throughout Colorado completed the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKCS), which includes components of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). The middle school HKCS consists of questions related to health and risk behaviors in the following domains: physical activity; unintentional injuries and violence; mental health; alcohol, tobacco and other drug use; as well as other health topics such as asthma and HIV education. Results from this survey provide a snapshot of these issues among Colorado's youth. **Colorado achieved sufficient participation in 2011 from selected schools and students that data was able to be weighted and can be considered representative of students in Colorado in grades 6-8. This is the first year for which weighted data on middle school students is available.** This document provides an overview of the key findings related to each behavior domain.¹

Physical Activity

- Overall, **62%** of Colorado middle school students were physically active for at least 60 minutes on five or more of the past seven days.
- Over one-quarter (**26%**) of students reported watching three or more hours of TV on an average school day. This differed between Hispanic/Latino students (**35%**) and non-Hispanic White students (**21%**).
- Over one-fifth (**21%**) of students played video games or used the computer for non-school work activities for three or more hours on an average school day. This differed between males (**26%**) and females (**16%**), as well as between Hispanic/Latino students (**27.5%**) and non-Hispanic White students (**17%**).

Weight

- Overall, **21%** of Colorado middle school students describe themselves as slightly or very overweight. This differed between Hispanic/Latino students (**28%**) and non-Hispanic White students (**17%**).
- Overall, **38.5%** of students reported trying to lose weight. This differed between Hispanic/Latino students (**51%**) and non-Hispanic White students (**33%**).

Unintentional Injury & Violence

- Overall, **44%** of middle school students reported having been in a physical fight at least once in their lifetime; this differed between males (**55%**) and females (**32%**).
- A total of **44%** of students reported having ever been bullied on school property.
- One-fifth (**20%**) of students reported having ever ridden in a car with someone who had been drinking. This differed between Hispanic/Latino students (**26%**) and non-Hispanic White students (**17%**).



Mental Health

- A total of **6%** of Colorado middle school students reported having ever attempted suicide. This differed between Hispanic/Latino students (**11%**) and non-Hispanic White students (**4%**).

Alcohol Use

- A total of **22%** of Colorado middle school students reported having at least one drink of alcohol in their lifetime. This differed between Hispanic/Latino students (**37%**) and non-Hispanic White students (**16%**).
- Overall, **6%** of students reported having one or more drinks of alcohol in the past 30 days. This differed between Hispanic/Latino students (**11%**) and non-Hispanic White students (**4%**).
- A total of **4%** of students reported binge drinking in the past 30 days. This differed between Hispanic/Latino students (**8.5%**) and non-Hispanic White students (**2%**).

¹Statistically significant differences between genders (male/female) as well as between race/ethnicity (non-Hispanic White and Hispanic/Latino) are provided. Data from other racial/ethnic groups is not available due to small sample sizes. Lack of notation about significant differences does not imply that no differences exist.

APPLICATIONS OF HKCS DATA

A full report will be available in August 2012.

This year marks the first time that Colorado achieved weighted HKCS data for middle school students (grades 6-8). This is a significant accomplishment and provides information on a range of health and risk behaviors facing Colorado youth. These data can be used in conjunction with the weighted high school HKCS data to provide a more complete picture of the health related attitudes and behaviors of all adolescents and to better understand the age of onset of several risk behaviors. Data can be used by key stakeholders including legislators, boards of education, school administrators and staff, students, parents and community members to better understand health behaviors, to set program goals, to develop programs and policies, to support health-related legislation and to seek funding. These data may also be used as a baseline to monitor trends in middle school health and risk behavior over time.

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Tobacco Use

- **15%** of Colorado middle school students reported ever trying cigarettes in their lifetime. This differed between Hispanic/Latino students (**22%**) and non-Hispanic White students (**11%**).
- A total of **4%** of middle school students reported smoking one or more cigarettes in the past 30 days.
- A total of **3%** of students report use of chewing tobacco, snuff or dip in the past 30 days.

Illicit Drug Use

- **10%** of Colorado middle school students reported lifetime marijuana use (ever trying). This differed between Hispanic/Latino students (**18%**) and non-Hispanic White students (**6%**). Additionally, **6%** of students reported marijuana use in the past 30 days.
- **10%** of students reported using inhalants at least once in their lifetime (including sniffing glue, breathing the content of spray cans, or inhaling paints or sprays to get high).
- **5%** of students reported that they had taken a prescription drug (such as OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin, codeine, Adderall, Ritalin, or Xanax) without a doctor's prescription in their lifetime.

Overall Health

- **39%** of middle school students report having had HIV/AIDS education at school.
- **19%** of Colorado middle school students reported that they had ever been told that they had asthma, and **10%** of students reported that they still have asthma.



The 2011 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey was supported by Colorado Coalition for Healthy Schools, with the partner agencies including Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Colorado Department of Human Services and OMNI Institute.