

# 2011-2012 HEALTHY KIDS COLORADO SURVEY RESULTS

## ALCOHOL, TOBACCO & OTHER DRUGS

### High School Students

In the fall of 2011, a total of **1,523 students in 33 public high 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 high school version of the HKCS consists of questions related to health and risk behaviors in the following domains: physical activity and nutrition; unintentional injury and violence; mental health; alcohol, tobacco and other drug use; school and family; and sexual health. 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 9-12.** Weighted data was also achieved in Colorado in 2009 and 2005. This document provides an overview of the prevalence and trends related to Substance Abuse.



Colorado's Coordinated School Health initiative

#### Alcohol

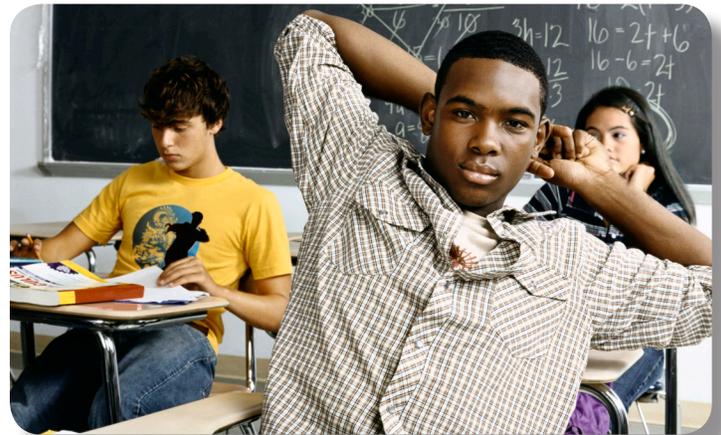
- A total of **65.5%** of Colorado high school students reported having at least one drink of alcohol in their lifetime. This decreased from 2005 (**76%**) and 2009 (**72%**).
- The percentage of high school students who report having tried alcohol before age 13 decreased from **27%** in 2005 to **19%** in 2011.
- Over one-third (**36%**) of students reported having one or more drinks of alcohol in the past 30 days. This has decreased since 2005 (**47%**).
- A total of **22%** of students reported binge drinking in the past 30 days. Binge drinking among Colorado high school youth has also decreased from 2005 (**31%**).

#### Tobacco

- A total of **16%** of high school students reported smoking one or more cigarettes in the past 30 days. There was no difference in the prevalence of cigarette use from 2005 or 2009.
- A total of **7%** of students report use of chewing tobacco, snuff or dip in the past 30 days. This differed between males (**11%**) and females (**2%**), and has decreased from 2009 (**11%**).

#### Marijuana

- **39.5%** of students reported lifetime marijuana use (ever trying), and **22%** of students reported marijuana use in the past 30 days. The prevalence of marijuana use has not changed compared to 2005 or 2009.
- **42%** of students reported that they know someone with a medical marijuana license or card.



#### Other Substances

- **20%** 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.
- **12%** of students reported using ecstasy one or more times in their life; this has increased from 2005 (**7%**).
- **9%** of all students used inhalants one or more times during their lifetime. This has not changed compared to 2005 or 2009.
- **6%** of all students reported using cocaine one or more times in their life; this has not changed compared to 2005 or 2009.
- **4%** of all students reported using heroin one or more times in their life; this has increased from 2005 (**1%**).
- **3%** of high school students reported using methamphetamines one or more times during their life. This has not changed compared to 2005 or 2009.
- **17%** of high school students report having been offered, sold, or given an illegal drug by someone on school property during the past 12 months; this has decreased from 2009 (**23%**).

# APPLICATIONS OF HKCS DATA

A full report will be available in August 2012.

These data are intended to create awareness about priority health-risk behaviors of youth in Colorado, as well as to provide a tool to assess how risk behaviors change over time. Data can be used by key stakeholders including legislators, boards of education, school administrators, students, parents, community members and school staff to better understand risk behaviors, to set program goals, to develop programs and policies, to support health-related policies and to seek funding.

In 2011, numerous schools and communities choose to participate in a local administration of the survey, to be able to compare their results to state data as well as national data to better understand what priorities may exist in their community and to monitor health behavior trends. In 2011, over 220 schools chose to participate in local HKCS administration, representing close to 70,000 additional students.

## CONTACT



**Amy Dillon, M.Ed., CHES**

Colorado Dept. of Education  
Office of Healthy Schools  
Coordinated School Health  
303-866-6903  
dillon\_a@cde.state.co.us

## Middle School Students

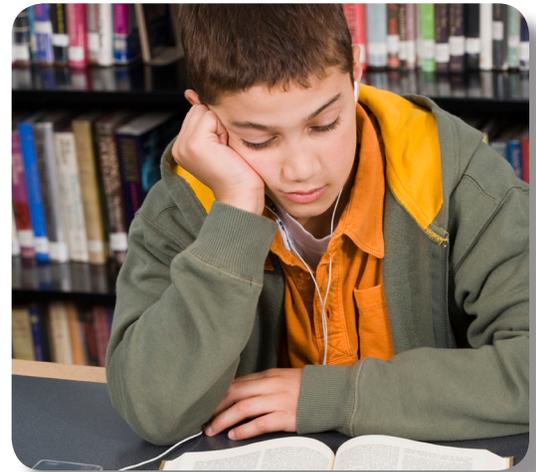
The HKCS was also administered to a middle school sample in the fall of 2011. A total of **1,614 students in 33 public middle schools** throughout Colorado participated in this effort. The middle school HKCS consists of questions related to health and risk behaviors in the following domains: physical activity; unintentional injury and violence; mental health; alcohol, tobacco and other drug use; as well as other health topics such as asthma and HIV education. 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.** It is important to note that while many of the same questions were asked of high school and middle school students, middle school students were more often asked about lifetime behaviors as opposed to behaviors in the past 30 days or past year.

### ▶ Alcohol

- 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%**).

### ▶ Tobacco

- **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.



### ▶ Marijuana

- **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%**).
- **6%** of students reported marijuana use in the past 30 days.

### ▶ Other Substances

- **10%** of Colorado middle school 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.
- **3%** of students reported using cocaine at least once in their lifetime.

*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.*