

2011-2012 HEALTHY KIDS COLORADO SURVEY RESULTS

MENTAL HEALTH

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 Mental Health.

- Over one-fifth (**22%**) of Colorado high school students reported that they felt sad or hopeless every day for at least 2 weeks within the past 12 months. This differed between females (**27%**) and males (**17%**).
- Overall, **15%** of students reported that they had considered attempting suicide in the past 12 months.
- A total of **6%** of students reported attempting suicide in the past 12 months.

Middle School Students

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. 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.

- Overall, **17%** of middle school students reported having ever seriously thought about killing themselves. This differed between Hispanic/Latino students (**24%**) and non-Hispanic White students (**14%**).
- A total of **10%** of students reported having ever made a plan to kill themselves.
- A total of **6%** of Colorado middle school students reported having ever attempted to kill themselves. This differed between Hispanic/Latino students (**11%**) and non-Hispanic White students (**4%**).

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.



**COLORADO
COALITION**
for
Healthy Schools

Colorado's Coordinated
School Health initiative



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