



In the fall of 2013, a total of 14,187 students in 110 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 behaviors in the following domains: physical activity; unintentional injuries and violence; mental health; alcohol, tobacco, marijuana 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 2013 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. Weighted data were also achieved in Colorado in 2011. This document provides an overview of the key findings related to each behavior domain.<sup>1</sup>

## Physical Activity

- Overall, **59.1%** of Colorado middle school students were physically active for at least 60 minutes on five or more of the past seven days.
- Males (**64.7%**) were more likely than females (**53.3%**) to have engaged in physical activity for at least 60 minutes on five or more of the past seven days. Similarly, White students (**62.9%**) were more likely than Hispanic/Latino youth (**53.2%**) to have engaged in this level of physical activity.
- Approximately one-quarter (**25.4%**) of students reported watching three or more hours of TV on an average school day.
- Hispanic/Latino (**32.7%**), Other race/ethnicity (**35.1%**), and Black/African American (**37.0%**) students were more likely than White students (**18.8%**) to have reported watching three or more hours of TV on an average school day.
- Overall, **30.1%** of students reported playing video games or using a computer for non-school work activities for three or more hours on an average school day. This differed between Black/African American (**37.2%**) and White (**26.8%**) students.

## Weight

- Overall, **21.9%** of Colorado middle school students described themselves as slightly or very overweight. This differed between females (**24.3%**) and males (**19.6%**) and between Hispanic/Latino (**25.3%**) and White (**20.2%**) students.
- An estimated **38.6%** of students reported trying to lose weight. This differed between females (**45.5%**) and males (**32.0%**) and between Hispanic/Latino (**47.0%**) and White (**33.5%**) middle school students.

## Unintentional Injury & Violence

- Among Colorado middle school students, **38.5%** reported having been in a physical fight at least once in their lifetime. This differed between males (**50.2%**) and females (**25.9%**).
- White students (**33.2%**) were more likely than Asian students (**24.1%**) but less likely than Hispanic/Latino (**43.7%**), Other



race/ethnicity (**49.6%**), American Indian/Alaska Native (**49.8%**), and Black/African American (**54.4%**) students to have been in a physical fight at least once in their lifetime.

- A total of **47.4%** of students reported having ever been bullied on school property. Females (**52.3%**) were more likely than males (**42.7%**) to have been bullied on school property.
- White students (**51.7%**) were more likely than Asian (**35.4%**) and Hispanic/Latino (**40.6%**) youth to report ever having been bullied on school property.
- Overall, **17.8%** of middle school students reported having ever ridden in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol.

## Mental Health

- More than a quarter (**26.0%**) of students reported that they felt sad and hopeless almost every day for at least two weeks within the past 12 months. Middle school females (**34.1%**) were more likely than males (**18.2%**) to report these feelings.
- Hispanic/Latino (**34.1%**) and Other race/ethnicity (**32.8%**) students were more likely than White students (**22.2%**) to report persistent sadness and hopelessness.
- A total of **6.8%** of Colorado middle school students reported having ever tried to kill themselves.

<sup>1</sup>Prevalence data refers to the proportion of students who endorsed a given behavior in the 2013 HKCS administration. Select statistically significant differences by sex (male/female) and race/ethnicity (White (non-Hispanic), Hispanic/Latino, Black/African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, and Other race/ethnicity) are provided. Lack of notation about significant differences does not imply that no differences exist.



# APPLICATIONS OF HKCS DATA

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

In 2013, numerous schools and communities choose to participate in a local administration of the survey to be able to compare their results to state data and national data to better understand what priorities may exist in their community and to monitor health behavior trends. In 2013, over 200 schools participated in a state-administered HKCS, representing over 40,000 students.

*An executive summary is available.*

- Females (9.2%) were more likely than males (4.5%) to have attempted suicide. Hispanic/Latino (9.5%) and Other race/ethnicity (10.5%) students were more likely than White students (5.0%) to have ever tried to kill themselves.
- Hispanic/Latino (13.8%), American Indian/Alaska Native (14.5%), Black/African American (14.7%), and Other race/ethnicity (15.0%) students were more likely than White students (5.1%) to have ever used marijuana.

## Alcohol Use

- A total of 20.0% of Colorado middle school students reported having at least one drink of alcohol in their lifetime.
- Hispanic/Latino (26.6%) and Other race/ethnicity (30.4%) students were more likely than White students (15.2%) to have reported drinking at least one drink of alcohol in their lifetime.
- Overall, 6.2% of students reported having one or more drinks of alcohol in the past 30 days.
- White students (3.8%) were more likely than Asian students (1.3%) but less likely than Other race/ethnicity (9.9%) and Hispanic/Latino (10.5%) students to have had one or more drinks of alcohol in the past 30 days.

## Tobacco Use

- Nearly 1 out of 10 (9.6%) of Colorado middle school students reported that they ever tried smoking cigarettes.
- Hispanic/Latino (13.6%), Other race/ethnicity (14.1%), and American Indian/Alaska Native (15.9%) students were more likely than White students (6.8%) to have tried smoking cigarettes in their lifetime.
- A total of 2.2% of middle school students reported smoking one or more cigarettes in the past 30 days.
- White students (1.5%) were more likely than Asian students (0.1%) to have smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days. Hispanic/Latino (3.4%) and Other race/ethnicity (5.0%) students were more likely than White students (1.5%) to have smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days.

## Other Drug Use

- Overall, 8.8% of Colorado middle school students reported lifetime marijuana use (ever trying).

- Additionally, 5.1% of students reported marijuana use in the past 30 days.
- Black/African American (7.5%), American Indian/Alaska Native (8.5%), Hispanic/Latino (9.0%), and Other race/ethnicity (9.4%) students were more likely than White students (2.5%) to have used marijuana in the past 30 days.
- A total of 7.1% of 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); differences were found between Hispanic/Latino (9.6%) and White (5.7%) students.
- An estimated 3.5% 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.
- Other race/ethnicity students (6.6%) were more likely than White students (2.9%) to report taking a prescription drug without a doctor's prescription in their lifetime.

## Overall Health

- A total of 32.8% of middle school students report having had HIV/AIDS education at school.
- Among Colorado middle school students, 17.7% reported that they had ever been told by a doctor or nurse that they had asthma.
- White students (19.1%) were more likely than Asian students (7.1%) but less likely than Other race/ethnicity (24.2%) and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (40.5%) to have been told by a doctor or nurse that they had asthma.

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