Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey

2009 Comparison: United States Traditional High School Students and Alaska Traditional High School Students

Alaska Ira	ditional Hig	h School Students								
U.S. Students	Alaska Students	Alaska Students were at*:								
Rarely or never wore a seat belt:										
10%	12%	= Equal risk								
Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol:										
28%	21% ⊖ Less risk									
Carried a weapon on school property on at least 1 day:										
6%	8%	⊕ Greater risk								
In a physical fight during the past year:										
32%	28%	Θ Less risk								
Did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school on at least 1 day:										
5%	6%	= Equal risk								
Seriously con	sidered attempt	ing suicide:								
14%	14%	= Equal risk								
Attempted sui	cide during the	past year:								
6%	9%	= Equal risk								
Current smok	ing:									
20%	16%	Θ Less risk								
Current smok	eless tobacco u	ise:								
9%	14%	⊕ Greater risk								
Current drinki	ng:									
42%	33%	Θ Less risk								
Binge drinking	g:									
24%	22%	= Equal risk								
Current mariju	ıana use:									
21%	23%	= Equal risk								
Ever had sexu	al intercourse:	ı								
46%	44%	= Equal risk								
Currently sexu		ı								
34%	30%	= Equal risk								
		or more people:								
14%	11%	= Equal risk								
Used condom	before last sex	ual intercourse:								
61%	62%	= Equal risk								
		re overweight or obese:								
28%	26%	= Equal risk								
Ate fruits and		more times per day:								
22%	17%	⊕ Greater risk								
Attended phys	ical education da	aily in an average week:								
33%	18%	⊕ Greater risk								

*Statistically significant difference.

Alaska's Youth Risk Behavior Survey

The Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is part of an epidemiological surveillance system that was established in 1990 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to monitor the prevalence of health-risk behaviors among youth. The survey was first implemented in Alaska in 1995. The YRBS is a biennial, anonymous and voluntary survey of students grades 9 - 12 in public traditional high schools (excluding boarding, correspondence, home study, alternative, and correctional schools). The YRBS is a joint project between the Department of Education & Early Development and the Department of Health and Social Services, in cooperation with the CDC.

The YRBS asks students to self-report on their behaviors in six major areas of health that directly lead to morbidity and mortality in youth and adult populations within our country. These six

- behaviors that result in unintentional and intentional injuries;
- tobacco use:
- alcohol and other drug use;
- sexual behaviors that can result in human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection, other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and unintended pregnancies;
- dietary behaviors; and
- physical activity.

In 2009, a statewide survey of alternative high schools in Alaska was implemented for the first time.

Supporters of Alaska's Youth Risk Behavior Survey

- Alaska Action for Healthy Kids
- Alaska Association of School Administrators
- Alaska Association of Secondary School Principals
- Alaska Health Education Consortium
- Alaska Mental Health Board
- Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
- Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
- Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- Alaska Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- Alaska Public Health Association
- Alaska School Nurses Association
- Alaska Tobacco Control Alliance
- All Alaska Pediatric Partnership
- American Cancer Society
- American Heart Association • American Lung Association
- Association of Alaska School Boards
- Governor's Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
- United Way of Anchorage
- United Way of Mat-Su
- United Way of Southeast Alaska
- United Way of the Tanana Valley
- And more...

For more information on the Alaska YRBS go to: http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/school/YRBS.htm

Summary of the 2009 Survey Results

On average, in an Alaskan high school class of 30 students:

- 6 7 rode (in the past month) with a driver who had been drinking alcohol
- 2 3 had carried a weapon to school
- 3 were in a physical fight in the past year
- 2 3 attempted suicide in the past year
- 5 smoked cigarettes and 4 used smokeless tobacco in the past month
- 10 drank alcohol in the past month
- 7 engaged in binge drinking in the past month
- 7 used marijuana in the past month
- 13 had ever had sexual intercourse
- 8 were either overweight or obese
- 17 were physically active for less than the recommended total of at least 60 minutes per day (on 5 or more days of the past 7 days).

Many students started engaging in risk behaviors before the age of 13:

- 13% had smoked a whole cigarette
- 17% had consumed their first drink of alcohol
- 10% had tried marijuana.

We also know that 1 in 5 high school students:

- were bullied at school during the past year
- had ever used prescription medications without a doctor's prescription.

Other Findings:

- Many high school students are still engaging in unhealthy behaviors, increasing their likelihood of being hurt, fatally injured or developing diseases.
- Some of the goals set forth in Healthy Alaskans 2010 have been achieved and health-risk behaviors have been reduced in three major areas: current smoking, binge drinking, and current alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine use.
- Alaska high school students were at greater risk than U.S. students for dating violence, forced sexual intercourse, using smokeless tobacco, having ever used marijuana, carrying a weapon on school property, not eating enough fruits and vegetables, and not participating in physical education.
- Alaska high school students were at less risk than U.S. students for not wearing bicycle helmets, riding with a driver who had been drinking, being in a physical fight, smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol in the past month, drinking soda or pop, and watching television.
- Alternative high school students were at significantly greater risk than students in traditional high schools in Alaska for most health-risk behaviors and more likely to have engaged in risky behavior before the age of 13.
- Alternative high school students were more likely than traditional high school students to feel that their teachers really cared about them and gave them a lot of encouragement, that their school had clear rules and consequences for behavior, and were less likely to be bullied at school.
- Alaska Native students were more likely than white students to consume soda pop and other sugary beverages.

2009 Comparison: Alaska **Traditional High School and Alternative High School Students**

Traditional High Schools	Alternative High Schools	Alternative Students were at*:						
Rarely or never wore a seat belt:								
12%	12% 14% = Equal risk							
Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol:								
21%	30%	⊕ Greater risk						
Carried a weap	on on school pro	perty on at least 1 day:						
8%	11%	⊕ Greater risk						
In a physical f	ight during the	past year:						
28%	46%	⊕ Greater risk						
Did not go to s or on their way	chool because to to or from scho	hey felt unsafe at school ool on at least 1 day:						
6%	7%	= Equal risk						
Seriously con	sidered attempt	ing suicide:						
14%	18%	⊕ Greater risk						
Attempted sui	cide during the	e past year:						
9%	11%	= Equal risk						
Current smoki	ing:							
16%	58%	⊕ Greater risk						
Current smoke	eless tobacco u	se:						
14%	18%	⊕ Greater risk						
Current drinki	ng:							
33%	57%	⊕ Greater risk						
Binge drinking	g:							
22%	43%	⊕ Greater risk						
Current mariju	ıana use:							
23%	51%	⊕ Greater risk						
Ever had sexu	al intercourse:							
44%	82%	⊕ Greater risk						
Currently sexu	ually active:							
30%	66%	⊕ Greater risk						
Had sexual int	tercourse with 4	or more people:						
11%	43%	⊕ Greater risk						
Used condom	before last sex	ual intercourse:						
62%	46%	⊕ Greater risk						
Percentage of	students who w	ere overweight or obese:						
26%	37%	⊕ Greater risk						
Ate fruits and	vegetables 5 or	more times per day:						
17%	20%	⊖ Less risk						
Attended physical education daily in an average week:								
18%	13%	⊕ Greater risk						
	*5	Statistically significant difference						

Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey Trends 1995-2009

Prevalence of Selected Risk Behaviors for Students in Traditional High Schools (grades 9-12)

Prev	alence of S	selected Ris	sk Behavi	ors for Stud	dents in Tr	aditional H	ligh Schoo	ls (grades 9-12)
1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	Change from 1995-2009+*
Rarely or r	never wore a	seat belt:						
19.5%				15.1%		7.0%	12.1%	⊕ Decreased
Rode with	a driver who	o had been d	drinking ald	cohol one or	more time	s:		
31.9%				25.0%		23.5%	21.3%	⊕ Decreased
Carried a v	veapon on s	chool prope	erty on at le	east one day	:			
12.3%				7.1%		8.4%	7.8%	⊕ Decreased
In a physic	al fight duri	ng the past	year:					
35.8%				27.1%		29.2%	27.8%	○ Decreased
Did not go	to school b	ecause they	felt unsafe	e at school o	or on their v	vay to or fro	m school o	n at least 1 day:
3.6%				4.1%		5.5%	6.0%	Increased
Seriously of	considered a	attempting s	uicide:					
23.9%				16.7%		16.5%	13.9%	⊕ Decreased
Attempted	suicide one	or more time	nes during	the past yea	nr:			
9.4%				8.1%		10.7%	8.5%	No change
Current sn	noking:							
36.5%				19.2%		17.8%	15.7%	○ Decreased
Current sn	nokeless tob	pacco use:						
15.6%				11.2%		10.4%	13.6%	○ Decreased
Current dr	inking:							
47.5%				38.7%		39.7%	33.2%	⊖ Decreased
Binge drin	king:							
31.3%				26.5%		25.8%	21.7%	⊖ Decreased
Current ma	arijuana use	:						
28.7%				23.9%		20.5%	22.7%	○ Decreased
Ever had s	exual interc	ourse:						
47.2%				39.6%		45.1%	43.5%	No change
Currently s	sexually acti	ive:						
30.5%				27.6%		30.9%	30.4%	No change
Had sexua	I intercourse	e with 4 or n	nore people	e:				
17.1%				12.1%		13.4%	11.4%	Θ Decreased
Used a cor	ndom before	last sexual	intercourse	e (among stu	idents who	were sexual	ly active):	
53.7%				62.3%		60.8%	62.2%	⊕ Increased
Percentage	e of student	s who were	overweigh	t or obese: (Question a	added in 20	003)	
				25.4%		27.3%	26.2%	No change
Ate fruits a	and vegetab	les 5 or mor	e times pe	r day: (Ques	stion adde	d in 2003)		
				16.1%		15.7%	17.2%	No change
Attended p	hysical edu	cation daily	in an aver	age week:				
26.4%				18.2%		17.7%	17.7%	○ Decreased
*Data only pi	resented in yea	ars when statew	vide represen	tative data wer	e obtained; *S	Statistically sign	nificant change.	

^{*}Data only presented in years when statewide representative data were obtained; *Statistically significant change.

The Alaska YRBS 2009 Highlights was funded in part by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development and was produced by the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. The pdf version of this publication was printed at a cost of .00¢ per copy in Juneau, Alaska. This cost block is required by AS 44.99.210.

www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/school/YRBS.htm



Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey

