

Alcohol and Other Drug Use



The misuse of alcohol and other drugs are important risk factors for chronic disease, death and disability in the United States. About 75,000 deaths annually in the U.S. can be attributed to excessive alcohol use. Alcohol and illicit drug use are associated with unintentional injuries, violence, risky sexual behavior, and illegal behavior, and can lead to liver disease, cancer, heart disease, and neurological and psychiatric problems. Children exposed to alcohol or other drugs during pregnancy can suffer lifelong physical and mental disabilities. Use of alcohol or illicit drugs can lead to dependence in some people, which increases the risk of harmful consequences.

Key facts about alcohol and other drug use

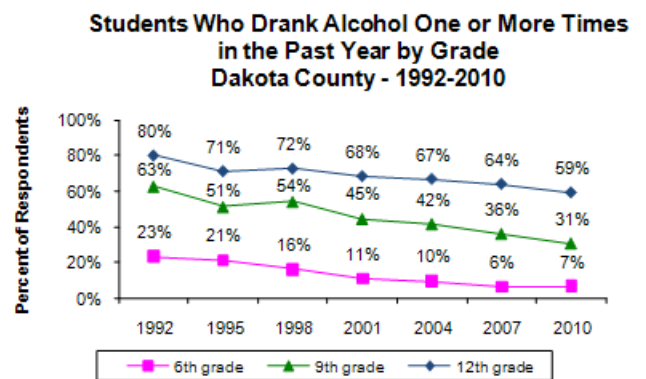
Underage drinking in Dakota County has decreased since 1992; however, more than 30 percent of 9th graders and nearly 60 percent of 12th graders used alcohol at least once in the previous year. One-quarter of high school seniors reported drinking five drinks or more on one occasion in the past two weeks. The rate of motor vehicle injuries and deaths that are alcohol-related declined from 2000 to 2009, but drinking and driving continues to be a concern. Marijuana use decreased or remained stable in 6th and 9th graders, but increased slightly in 12th graders.

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Alcohol use by Dakota County youth

- For Dakota County students, the percent who reported drinking alcohol one or more times in the previous year generally decreased



Source: Minnesota Student Survey Interagency Team, Minnesota Student Survey

- from 1992 to 2010. However, in 2010 more than 30 percent of Dakota County 9th graders and nearly 60 percent of 12th graders reported using alcohol at least once in the previous year.
- There was also a decrease in 9th and 12th graders who reported frequent drinking (drinking 20 or more times in the past year) from 2004 to 2010. In 2010, Dakota County was similar to the state for both grades.
- In 2010, nine percent of Dakota County 9th graders and 25 percent of Dakota County 12th graders reported binge drinking (drinking 5 or more drinks on one occasion) in the previous 2 weeks, rates that are similar to the Minnesota rate for 9th graders and slightly above the Minnesota rate for 12th graders.
- Males are more likely to report binge drinking than females (2010: 31 percent of 12th grade males and 18.5 percent of 12th grade females).
- Binge drinking increases by age, peaking between the ages of 21 and 24 for Minnesota college students. Nearly 36 percent of Minnesota college students reported binge drinking in 2010.

Youth access to alcohol in Dakota County

- The majority of Dakota County students who used alcohol in the previous 30 days reported getting it from friends (2010: 54.5 of 9th graders and 66 percent of 12th graders).
- Nearly nine percent of compliance checks conducted in licensed establishments in Dakota County from 2006 to 2010 resulted in an illegal alcohol sale to an underage person.

Alcohol use by adults

- In 2010, nearly 60 percent of Minnesota adults had at least one drink of alcohol in the previous 30 days. Minnesota has a higher percentage of alcohol drinkers than the U.S. (54 percent).
- In 2010, five percent of Minnesota adults were considered heavy drinkers (males who drink more than two drinks per day, and females who drink more than one drink per day).
- Seventeen percent of Minnesota adults are binge drinkers (2010), compared to 15 percent in the U.S.

Alcohol and motor vehicle crashes

- In 2009, seven percent of motor vehicle injuries (140 people) and 38.5 percent of motor vehicle fatalities (five people) that occurred in Dakota County were alcohol-related. The rates of deaths and injuries generally decreased from 2000 to 2009.

Marijuana use

- In 2007, an estimated seven percent of Minnesota adults reported marijuana use in the previous month.
- The rate of Dakota County students who reported using marijuana during the previous 12 months dropped for 9th graders from 1998 to 2010, the rate for 6th graders remained relatively steady, and the rate for 12th graders increased slightly (2010: one percent of 6th graders, 14.5 percent of 9th graders, and 35 percent of 12th graders).
- In 2008, 19 percent of Dakota County residents who were admitted to chemical dependency treatment reported marijuana as their primary substance of abuse.
- Eighty-one percent of arrests for sale or possession of narcotics in Dakota County in 2009 were for marijuana.
- In first quarter 2011, 49 exposures to synthetic marijuana were reported to the Hennepin County Regional Poison Control Center. There were 89 exposures reported in 2010. A 2011 Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) action temporarily controls five chemicals used to make synthetic marijuana.

Use of other drugs

- For Dakota County 9th graders, the use of drugs other than marijuana and prescription drugs declined or remained stable from 2007 to 2010 (2010: less than four percent of 9th graders).
- For Dakota County 12th graders, the use of drugs other than marijuana and prescription drugs declined or remained stable between 2007 and 2010 (2010: less than six percent of 12th graders).
- In 2010, five percent of Dakota County 9th graders and nine percent of 12th graders reported using prescription drugs, such as Oxycontin, Percocet or Vicodin, to get high.
- In 2007, three percent of Minnesota adults reported use of illicit drugs, excluding marijuana, in the previous month. The highest rate is for 18-25 year olds (nearly eight percent for all drugs, excluding marijuana).
- Methamphetamine was reported as the primary substance of abuse in seven percent of chemical dependency treatment admissions for Dakota County residents in 2008, a decrease from 13 percent in 2005.
- Seizures of meth labs in the county dropped from a high of 28 in 2004 to none in 2009 and 2010 following the 2005 law restricting sales of products containing pseudoephedrine.
- In the first quarter 2011, 38 exposures to "bath salts" and other synthetic drugs were reported to the Hennepin County Regional Poison Center, a substantial increase over 2010. A 2011 Minnesota law makes it illegal for people to use synthetic drugs that are "substantially similar" in chemical structure and pharmacological effects to illegal drugs.

About this Community Health Profile

For more information about the Dakota County Community Health Assessment and Action Planning (CHAAP) process, contact: Melanie Countryman, Epidemiologist (melanie.countryman@co.dakota.mn.us or 651-554-6131).

For more information:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov
- Minnesota Department of Health www.health.state.mn.us/
- MN Department of Public Safety www.dps.state.mn.us/ots
- National Institute on Drug Abuse www.nida.nih.gov/
- Minnesota Department of Human Services, Drug Abuse Trends in Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota www.dhs.state.mn.us

www.DakotaCounty.us/PublicHealth

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