



Community Health Profile

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. An estimated 88,000 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

Underage drinking in Dakota County has decreased since 1992; however, in 2016, 18 percent of 9th graders and 40 percent of 11th graders used alcohol at least once in the previous year. Twelve percent of 11th graders reported drinking five drinks or more on one occasion in the past month.

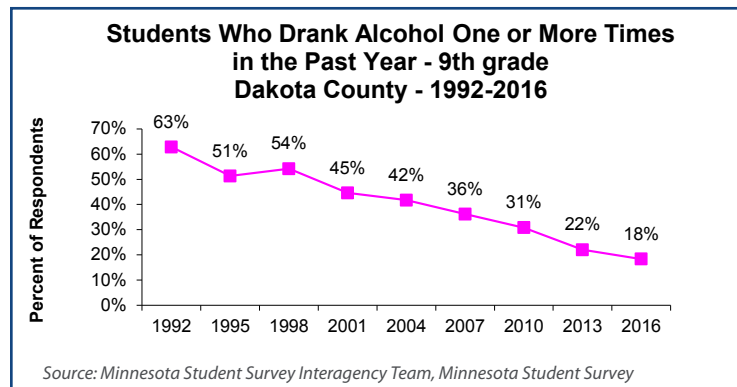
The rate of motor vehicle injuries and deaths that are alcohol-related was stable from 2008 to 2017, but drinking and driving continues to be a concern.

Marijuana use decreased in 9th graders from 1998 to 2016.

The number of drug overdose deaths increased from 2013 to 2015. Although it slightly decreased after 2015, it remains higher than 2005.

Alcohol use by Dakota County youth

- The percent of Dakota County students who reported drinking alcohol one or more times in the previous year generally decreased for 9th graders from 1992 to 2016. In 2016, 18 percent of Dakota County 9th graders and 40 percent of 11th graders reported using alcohol at least once in the previous year, below the state for both grades.



- There was also a decrease in 9th graders who reported frequent drinking (drinking 20 or more times in the past year) from 2004 to 2016. In 2016, Dakota County 9th graders were similar to the state and 11th graders were slightly below the state.
- In 2016, three percent of Dakota County 9th graders and 12 percent of Dakota County 11th graders reported binge drinking (drinking five or more drinks on one occasion) in the past 30 days, rates that are slightly below the Minnesota rate for both grades.
- Binge drinking increases by age, peaking between the ages of 21 and 25 for young adults. In 2018, 24 percent of Minnesota college students reported binge drinking in the past two weeks.



Youth access to alcohol in Dakota County

- Five percent of compliance checks conducted in licensed establishments in Dakota County from 2014 to 2018 resulted in an illegal alcohol sale to an underage person.

Alcohol use by adults

- In 2014, 76 percent of Dakota County adults (25 and older) drank alcohol on at least one day in the previous 30 days.
- In 2017, seven percent of Minnesota adults were considered heavy drinkers, similar to the U.S. (Heavy drinking is defined as: males who drink more than 14 drinks per week, and females who drink more than seven drinks per week.)
- 26 percent of Dakota County adult males (25 and older) and 17 percent of adult females (25 and older) reported binge drinking in the past 30 days (2014). (Binge drinking is defined as: males who drink five or more drinks on one occasion and females who drink four or more drinks on one occasion).

Alcohol and motor vehicle crashes

- In 2017, alcohol contributed to injuries to 134 people (6.5 percent of all motor vehicle injuries) and two deaths (18 percent of all motor vehicle deaths). The rates of deaths and injuries for alcohol-related crashes that occurred in Dakota County were stable from 2008 to 2017.

Marijuana use

- In 2016-17, an estimated eight percent of persons 12 and older reported marijuana use in the previous month. The highest rate was among 18-25 year olds (19 percent).
- The rate of Dakota County students who reported using marijuana during the previous 12 months generally dropped for 9th graders from 1998 to 2016. In 2016, four percent of 8th graders, nine percent of 9th graders, and 24 percent of 11th graders used marijuana during the previous 12 months, slightly below the state for 8th and 9th graders and slightly above the state for 11th graders.
- In 2016, 17 percent of Dakota County residents who were admitted to chemical dependency treatment reported marijuana as their primary substance of abuse.
- In 2016, a total of 83 exposures to synthetic marijuana were reported to Hennepin County Regional Poison Control Center, a drop from 223 in 2015. Since July 1, 2011, the possession and sale of synthetic marijuana is illegal in Minnesota.

Use of other drugs

- For Dakota County 9th and 11th graders, the use of drugs other than marijuana and prescription drugs declined or remained stable from 2013 to 2016, with the exception of over-the-counter drugs. (2016: 9th graders-three percent or less and 11th graders-less than five percent, for each of eight other drugs, including psychedelics, MDMA, heroin, and methamphetamine).
- In 2016, three percent of Dakota County 8th graders, five percent of 9th graders and 10 percent of 11th graders reported using prescription drugs not prescribed to them in the past 12 months.
- Opioids were reported as the primary substance of abuse in 19 percent and methamphetamine in 17 percent of chemical dependency treatment admissions for Dakota County residents in 2016. Both have increased since 2012.
- In 2017, there were a total of 39 deaths due to drug overdose in Dakota County residents. The number of drug overdose deaths increased from 2013 to 2015 and slightly decreased from 2016 to 2017. Seventy-two percent of drug overdose deaths involve heroin or other opiates.
- In 2016, seven exposures to “bath salts” were reported to the Hennepin County Regional Poison Center, a decrease from 2015 (20 exposures). 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.

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For more information:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov
- MN Department of Public Safety <https://dps.mn.gov>
- National Institute on Drug Abuse www.drugabuse.gov
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration www.samhsa.gov
- Drug Abuse Dialogues, Drug Abuse Trends in Minneapolis/ St. Paul, Minnesota www.drugabusedialogues.com

The Dakota County Public Health Department is accredited by the national Public Health Accreditation Board.

For more information about the Dakota County community health assessment, email public.health@co.dakota.mn.us or call 651.554.6100.

