



Michigan Youth Taking Fewer Health Risks *State Programs, Initiatives Having an Impact*

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LANSING - A new report from the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows that the number of Michigan teens engaging in risky behaviors and unhealthy habits has dropped over the past four years, particularly in the use of tobacco and alcohol.

The Michigan Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is part of a nationwide surveying effort led by the CDC to monitor students' health risks and behaviors. It was conducted in the spring of 2005. The Michigan YRBS is a collaborative effort between the Michigan Department of Education and the Department of Community Health.

The survey showed that since 2001, the percentage of Michigan high school students who recently had used alcohol dropped from 46 percent in 2001 to 38 percent in 2005.

Also since 2001, the percentage of Michigan teens who ever had tried smoking dropped from 64 percent to 52 percent, and the percentage of Michigan high-schoolers who smoked before the age of 13 went from 23 percent to 16 percent.

This is an important threshold for smoking prevention, as youth who smoke before age 13 are more likely to continue smoking throughout their lifetime.

"Smoking contributes to a variety of chronic health conditions, and the earlier we get this message to our youth, the healthier Michigan will be," Governor Jennifer M. Granholm said. "This shows that when we work hard to give our kids important information about health issues – we can make a difference that will ultimately save lives."

Through the state's health education efforts, 22 designated Intermediate School Districts (ISDs), and three large urban school district sites receive School Health Curriculum Grants to provide teacher trainings, technical assistance, and research-based health education curriculum, such as the *Michigan Model for Comprehensive School Health Education*.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Mike Flanagan pointed out that Michigan is the only state in the country with a state-developed model curriculum in health education for elementary, middle, and high school students that addresses smoking, alcohol use, violence, HIV, nutrition, and physical activity.

The Michigan Model for Comprehensive School Health Education addresses these vital health issues in successive grades, and provides students with essential knowledge and prevention skills to avoid risky behaviors and improve health.

“We know the positive links between health and academic achievement,” said Flanagan. “The survey showed that students having higher grades take fewer health risks. In virtually every indicator on the survey, students with higher grades report lower risky behavior than those students with lower grades.”

More than 90 percent of Michigan school districts use the Michigan Model for Comprehensive Health Education, reaching over one million students and their families.

There are many other statewide programs and initiatives in Michigan that work to prevent risky behavior and promote positive health in youth, including: Regional School Health Coordinators; Safe and Drug Free Schools; Michigan Safe Schools; and school-linked and school-based Health Centers.

Michigan has nearly doubled the number of school-linked and school-based health centers since 2003. In 2003, there were 31 clinical and non-clinical sites. In 2004-2005, there were 57. Although a final tally is not yet in, it is expected that the number of students who accessed the health services, and health information and education at these sites last year far exceeded the 123,500 students in 2003.

“We are extremely pleased to see these positive results over the course of the last four years,” said Janet Olszewski, Director of the Michigan Department of Community Health. “The fact that more and more high school students are making the effort to be healthy, avoid smoking, and risky behaviors is great news for the citizens of Michigan. We will continue to make progress toward engendering healthier lifestyles in all of our children.”

Michigan continues to see positive trends in many key health risk indicators:

- The percent of students who rode in a vehicle with a driver who had been drinking has continued to drop over the series of surveys from 37 percent in 1997 to 30 percent in 2003 to 25 percent in 2005.
- The percentage of students who recently had used marijuana dropped from 28 percent in 1997 to 24 percent in 2001 to 19 percent in 2005.

- The percentage of students who had sexual intercourse during the previous three months dropped from 34 percent in 1997 to 30 percent in 2001 to 29 percent in 2005.

The survey, completed by 3,253 students in 53 public high schools in Michigan during the spring of 2005, included questions that address those behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death, disability, and illness in young people and adults. The high response rates (school 80 percent, student 80 percent), allow results to be generalized to all Michigan students in grades 9-12.

The 2005 Michigan survey included 99 questions covering behaviors grouped by the CDC into six general health risk areas: 1) unintentional injury and violence; 2) tobacco use; 3) alcohol and other drug use; 4) sexual behaviors that contribute to unintended pregnancy or disease; 5) dietary behaviors; and 6) physical activity.

To access the 2005 Michigan Youth Risk Behavior Survey, go online at:
www.michigan.gov/yrbs

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2005 Michigan Youth Risk Behavior Survey

The % of Michigan Students Who...

<p><u>Unintentional Injuries and Violence</u></p> <p>6% Rarely or never used safety belts 25% Rode with a drinking driver* 5% Carried a weapon on school property* 11% Were in a physical fight on school property during the past year 7% Missed school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school</p>	<p><u>Tobacco Use</u></p> <p>52% Ever tried cigarettes 17% Smoked cigarettes recently* 14% Smoked cigarettes regularly* 16% Tried cigarettes before age 13 57% Are current smokers and have tried to quit</p>
<p><u>Alcohol and Other Drug Use</u></p> <p>38% Drank alcohol recently* 23% Tried alcohol before age 13 23% Reported binge drinking recently* 19% Used marijuana recently* 9% Tried marijuana before age 13</p>	<p><u>Dietary Behaviors</u></p> <p>14% At risk for becoming overweight² 12% Overweight³ 45% Were trying to lose weight 17% Ate more than 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day* 17% Drank 3 or more glasses of milk per day* 35% Drank at least one soda per day**</p>
<p><u>Sexual Behaviors</u></p> <p>42% Ever had sexual intercourse 31% Had sexual intercourse for the first time before age 16 29% Had sexual intercourse during the past three months 62% Used a condom during last sexual intercourse¹ 22% Used alcohols or drugs before their last sexual intercourse¹ 9% Were have ever been physically forced to have sexual intercourse</p>	<p><u>Physical Activity/Wellness</u></p> <p>33% Did not participate in the recommended amount of vigorous or moderate physical activity** 11% Did not participate in any physical activity** 62% Were not enrolled in physical education class 36% Watched TV 3 hours or more per day 20% Have been diagnosed with asthma</p>

*during the past month

**during the past week

¹among students who had sexual intercourse during the past 3 months

²Body Mass Index is >85% and <95%

³Body Mass Index is >or= to 95%

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