

Alaska Obesity Prevention and Control: Student Weight Status

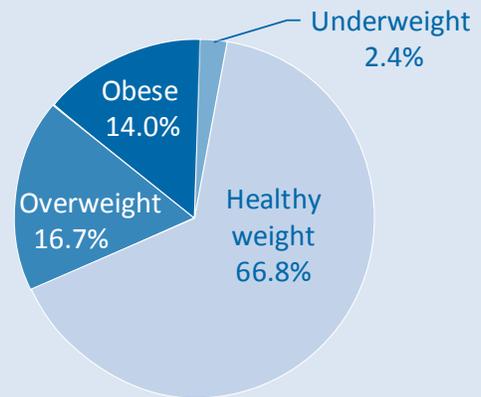
ALASKA TRADITIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS—YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY

Summary

In spring of 2015, 1,418 students in Alaska traditional high schools (excluding private, boarding, correspondence, home study, alternative, and correctional schools) reported their height and weight within the Youth Risk Behavior Survey. The 2015 YRBS survey included classrooms from 41 randomly selected schools in 16 school districts, and achieved an overall participation rate of 62%. With results scaled to represent the total Alaska traditional high school population:

- 16.7% of students were overweight (BMI 85th to <95th percentile)
- 14.0% of students were obese (BMI ≥95th percentile)
- 4.5% of students were severely obese (BMI ≥99th percentile)
- The prevalence of obesity was significantly higher among male students (16.9%) than among female students (10.9%).

Figure 1: Weight Status among Alaska Traditional High School Students, 2015



Weight Status by Grade

The percentage of students who were either overweight or obese did not differ significantly based on grade. At least 13% of students in all grades were obese, placing them at higher risk for weight related diseases such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic diseases.¹

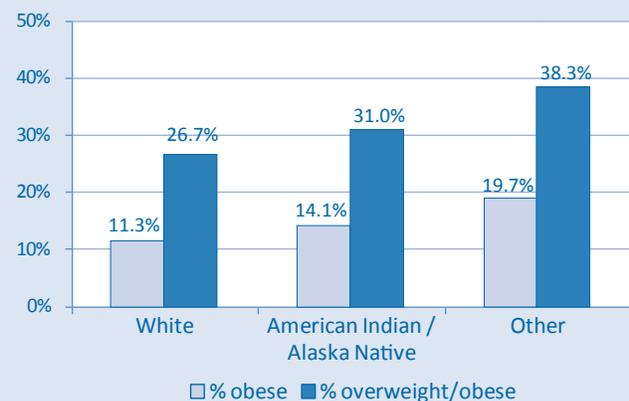
Figure 2: Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity, by Grade, among Alaska Traditional High School Students, 2015



Disparities in Weight Status

Reporting by race allows us to identify racial disparities in order to address and reduce them. An apparent difference in the prevalence of overweight/obesity between American Indian/Alaska Native students (31.0%) and white students (26.7%) was not statistically significant. The prevalence of overweight/obesity was significantly higher among students of other races (38.3%) compared to white students (Table 3).

Figure 3: Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity, by Race/Ethnicity, among Alaska Traditional High School Students, 2015



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PREVALENCE OF OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY (WITH 95% CONFIDENCE INTERVALS) ALASKA TRADITIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY, 2015

Table 1: Weight Status Overall and by Sex, 2015

Sex	% Overweight & Obese	% Overweight	% Obese
Overall*	30.8 (27.8-33.9)	16.7 (14.7-19.0)	14.0 (11.9-16.5)
Male	32.4 (29.3-35.7)	15.5 (13.4-18.0)	16.9 (14.3-19.9)
Female	29.0 (24.3-34.2)	18.1 (14.8-21.8)	10.9 (8.4-14.1)

* Overweight and obesity prevalence for grades 9-12 are used for the [Healthy Alaskans 2020 Statewide Leading Health Indicators](#).

Table 2: Weight Status by Grade, 2015

Grade	% Overweight & Obese	% Overweight	% Obese
9 th	32.5 (27.0-38.5)	19.3 (15.7-23.5)	13.2 (9.6-17.9)
10 th	29.8 (25.0-35.1)	16.9 (13.5-20.9)	13.0 (9.5-17.5)
11 th	27.0 (22.0-32.6)	12.8 (10.0-16.2)	14.2 (9.9-19.9)
12 th	33.7 (28.0-39.9)	17.6 (13.3-23.0)	16.1 (12.1-21.0)

Table 3: Weight Status by Race/Ethnicity, 2015[†]

Race/Ethnicity	% Overweight & Obese	% Overweight	% Obese
White	26.7 (23.2-30.5)	15.4 (12.7-18.6)	11.3 (9.0-14.0)
American Indian / Alaska Native	31.0 (25.0-37.6)	16.9 (12.7-22.1)	14.1 (10.6-18.4)
Other	38.3 (32.9-44.1)	18.4 (14.5-23.1)	19.7 (14.7-25.8)

[†] Reporting by race allows us to identify racial disparities in order to address and reduce them.

Table 4: Weight Status by School Year

Year	% Overweight & Obese	% Overweight	% Obese
2003	25.5 (22.6-28.5)	14.4 (12.4-16.8)	11.0 (8.0-13.6)
2005 [§]	Not available	Not available	Not available
2007	27.3 (23.8-31.1)	16.2 (13.7-19.0)	11.1 (9.1-13.5)
2009	26.2 (23.4-29.3)	14.3 (12.3-16.6)	11.9 (9.9-14.2)
2011	25.8 (23.2-28.6)	14.4 (12.4-16.6)	11.5 (9.6-13.6)
2013	26.1 (23.4-29.1)	13.7 (11.4-16.5)	12.4 (10.5-14.6)
2015	30.8 (27.8-33.9)	16.7 (14.7-19.0)	14.0 (11.9-16.5)

§ The response rate for the 2005 statewide survey did not reach the required 60% response threshold and therefore statewide estimates are not available. For more information about the YRBS visit <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Chronic/Pages/yrbs/yrbs.aspx>.

Percentages may not sum precisely due to rounding.

Reference:

- Institute of Medicine (2005). Committee on Prevention of Obesity in Children and Youth. Preventing childhood obesity: health in balance. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.



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dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Chronic/Pages/Obesity/

