

# Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey



**2013 Highlights**

# Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey

## 2013 Comparison: United States Traditional High School Students and Alaska Traditional High School Students

| U.S. Students   | Alaska Students | Alaska Students were at*: |
|---|-----------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Rarely or never wore a seat belt:</b>  |                 |                           |
| 7.6%  | 10.1%           | = Equal risk              |
| <b>Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol:</b>  |                 |                           |
| 21.9%   | 13.1%           | ⊖ Less risk               |
| <b>Carried a weapon on school property on at least 1 day:</b>   |                 |                           |
| 5.2%  | 6.1%            | = Equal risk              |
| <b>In a physical fight during the past year:</b>  |                 |                           |
| 24.7%   | 22.7%           | = Equal risk              |
| <b>Did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school, or on their way to or from school, on at least 1 day:</b> |                 |                           |
| 7.1%  | 6.2%            | = Equal risk              |
| <b>Were bullied on school property in past year:</b>  |                 |                           |
| 19.6%   | 20.7%           | = Equal risk              |
| <b>Stopped usual activities because they felt so sad/hopeless, daily for at least 2 weeks in a row:</b>               |                 |                           |
| 29.9%   | 27.2%           | = Equal risk              |
| <b>Attempted suicide:</b>   |                 |                           |
| 8.0%  | 8.4%            | = Equal risk              |
| <b>Current cigarette smoker:</b>  |                 |                           |
| 15.7%   | 10.6%           | ⊖ Less risk               |
| <b>Current smokeless tobacco user:</b>  |                 |                           |
| 8.8%  | 9.1%            | = Equal risk              |
| <b>Current alcohol drinker:</b>   |                 |                           |
| 34.9%   | 22.5%           | ⊖ Less risk               |
| <b>Current binge alcohol drinker:</b>   |                 |                           |
| 20.8%   | 12.8%           | ⊖ Less risk               |
| <b>Current marijuana user:</b>  |                 |                           |
| 23.4%   | 19.7%           | ⊖ Less risk               |
| <b>Ever had sexual intercourse:</b>   |                 |                           |
| 46.8%   | 38.6%           | ⊖ Less risk               |
| <b>If sexually active, did not use a condom last time:</b>  |                 |                           |
| 40.9%   | 39.6%           | = Equal risk              |
| <b>Overweight:</b>  |                 |                           |
| 16.6%   | 13.7%           | ⊖ Less risk               |
| <b>Obese:</b>   |                 |                           |
| 13.7%   | 12.4%           | = Equal risk              |
| <b>Drank at least 1 soda daily in past week (not including diet soda):</b>  |                 |                           |
| 27.0%   | 15.8%           | ⊖ Less risk               |
| <b>Did not attend PE daily in an average week:</b>  |                 |                           |
| 70.6%   | 84.0%           | ⊕ Greater risk            |

\*Statistically significant difference.

## Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey

The Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is part of an epidemiological surveillance system that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) established in 1990 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 Alaska 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 areas are:

- 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 teen pregnancies;
- dietary behaviors; and
- physical activity.

The Alaska YRBS also asks students about other factors that influence their health, such as:

- school activities, volunteerism, and parent and community support; and
- how they perceive risk and approval of tobacco, alcohol or marijuana use.

Starting in 2009, a statewide survey of Alaska alternative high schools (identified by the Department of Education & Early Development as serving students who are not successful in traditional schools) also has been conducted.

## Supporters of the Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey

- Alaska Association of Secondary School Principals
- Alaska Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- Alaska Council of School Administrators
- Alaska Division of Behavioral Health
- Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice
- Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
- Alaska Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- All Alaska Pediatric Partnership
- United Way of Anchorage
- United Way of Mat-Su
- United Way of Southeast Alaska
- United Way of the Tanana Valley
- and many more

## Summary of the 2013 Survey Results

Some risks were significantly lower in 2013 than in 2007 among traditional high school students, including:

- ⊖ Percentage who never/rarely wore a bicycle helmet (76% in 2007; 64% in 2013)
- ⊖ Percentages on all alcohol use measures (e.g., binge drinking, meaning ≥5 drinks in 2 hours in past month: 26% in 2007; 13% in 2013)
- ⊖ Percentage riding with a driver who had been drinking alcohol in the past month (24% in 2007; 13% in 2013)
- ⊖ Percentages on tobacco use measures (e.g., any tobacco use in the past year: 24% in 2007; 17% in 2013)
- ⊖ Percentages on drug use measures (e.g., ever used marijuana: 45% in 2007; 39% in 2013; ever used inhalants: 14% in 2007; 7% in 2013)
- ⊖ Percentages on sexual activity measures (e.g., ever had sexual intercourse: 45% in 2007; 39% in 2013; currently sexually active: 31% in 2007; 25% in 2013)
- ⊖ Percentages on violence measures (e.g., in a physical fight in the past year: 29% in 2007; 23% in 2013; carried a weapon on school property: 8% in 2007; 6% in 2013)

No progress was made or risks increased in other areas, including:

- ↔ Percentages on suicide measures (e.g., seriously considered it in last year: 17% in 2007; 16% in 2013; actual attempt in last year: 11% in 2007; 8% in 2013)
- ↔ Percentage that, because they felt unsafe, did not go to school on ≥1 of past 30 days (6% in 2007 and in 2013)
- ↔ Percentage bullied on school property in past year (21% in 2009 and in 2013)
- ↔ Percentages overweight (16% in 2007; 14% in 2013) and obese (11% in 2009; 12% in 2013)
- ↔ Percentage physically active ≥ 60 minutes daily in past week (19% in 2007; 21% in 2013)
- ↔ Percentages on youth connectedness measures (e.g., have at least 3 adults, besides their parents, from whom they feel comfortable seeking help: 45% in 2009; 43% in 2013)
- ⊕ Percentage playing electronic games and/or using a computer for non-school work ≥3 hours daily (23% in 2007; 34% in 2013)
- ⊕ Percentages on youth mental health measures (e.g., strongly agree/agree that they feel alone: 16% in 2007; 22% in 2013)

## Healthy Alaskans 2020

Of the 25 Healthy Alaskans 2020 leading health indicators, eight have YRBS measures. More information and current Healthy Alaskans 2020 reports are posted at:

[hss.state.ak.us/ha2020/25LHI.htm](http://hss.state.ak.us/ha2020/25LHI.htm).

## 2013 Comparison: Alaska Traditional High School and Alternative High School Students

| Traditional High Schools  | Alternative High Schools | Alternative students were at*: |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Rarely or never wore a seat belt:</b>  |                          |                                |
| 10.1%   | 13.6%                    | = Equal risk                   |
| <b>Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol:</b>  |                          |                                |
| 13.1%   | 21.4%                    | ⊕ Greater risk                 |
| <b>Carried a weapon on school property on at least 1 day:</b>   |                          |                                |
| 6.1%  | 9.4%                     | = Equal risk                   |
| <b>In a physical fight during the past year:</b>  |                          |                                |
| 22.7%   | 35.1%                    | ⊕ Greater risk                 |
| <b>Did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school, or on their way to or from school, on at least 1 day:</b> |                          |                                |
| 6.2%  | 8.3%                     | = Equal risk                   |
| <b>Were bullied on school property in past year:</b>  |                          |                                |
| 20.7%   | 16.6%                    | = Equal risk                   |
| <b>Stopped usual activities because they felt so sad/hopeless, daily for at least 2 weeks in a row:</b>               |                          |                                |
| 27.2%   | 40.2%                    | ⊕ Greater risk                 |
| <b>Attempted suicide:</b>   |                          |                                |
| 8.4%  | 14.8%                    | ⊕ Greater risk                 |
| <b>Current cigarette smoker:</b>  |                          |                                |
| 10.6%   | 47.8%                    | ⊕ Greater risk                 |
| <b>Current smokeless tobacco user:</b>  |                          |                                |
| 9.1%  | 17.4%                    | ⊕ Greater risk                 |
| <b>Current alcohol drinker:</b>   |                          |                                |
| 22.5%   | 45.7%                    | ⊕ Greater risk                 |
| <b>Current binge alcohol drinker:</b>   |                          |                                |
| 12.8%   | 32.8%                    | ⊕ Greater risk                 |
| <b>Current marijuana user:</b>  |                          |                                |
| 19.7%   | 47.8%                    | ⊕ Greater risk                 |
| <b>Ever had sexual intercourse:</b>   |                          |                                |
| 38.6%   | 77.5%                    | ⊕ Greater risk                 |
| <b>If sexually active, did not use a condom last time:</b>  |                          |                                |
| 39.6%   | 59.5%                    | ⊕ Greater risk                 |
| <b>Overweight:</b>  |                          |                                |
| 13.7%   | 14.9%                    | = Equal risk                   |
| <b>Obese:</b>   |                          |                                |
| 12.4%   | 22.2%                    | ⊕ Greater risk                 |
| <b>Drank at least 1 soda daily in past week (not including diet soda):</b>  |                          |                                |
| 15.8%   | 27.2%                    | ⊕ Greater risk                 |
| <b>Did not attend PE daily in an average week:</b>  |                          |                                |
| 84.0%   | 83.9%                    | = Equal risk                   |

\*Statistically significant difference.

# Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey Trends 2003-2013

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

| 2003  | 2005 <sup>‡</sup> | 2007  | 2009  | 2011  | 2013  | Trends*                            |
|---|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Rarely or never wore a seat belt:</b>  |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 15.1%   |                   | 7.0%  | 12.1% | 8.7%  | 10.1% | ⊖ Decreased 2003-2013 <sup>†</sup> |
| <b>Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol one or more times during the past 30 days:</b>                                      |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 25.0%   |                   | 23.5% | 21.3% | 18.6% | 13.1% | ⊖ Decreased 2003-2013**            |
| <b>Carried a weapon on school property on at least one of the past 30 days:</b>   |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 7.1%  |                   | 8.4%  | 7.8%  | 5.7%  | 6.1%  | ⊖ Decreased 2007-2013 <sup>§</sup> |
| <b>In a physical fight during the past year:</b>  |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 27.1%   |                   | 29.2% | 27.8% | 23.7% | 22.7% | ⊖ Decreased 2003-2013              |
| <b>Did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school, or on their way to or from school, on at least one of the past 30 days:</b> |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 4.1%  |                   | 5.5%  | 6.0%  | 4.7%  | 6.2%  | No change                          |
| <b>Were bullied on school property during the past year: (Question added in 2009)</b>   |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
|   |                   |       | 20.7% | 23.0% | 20.7% | No change                          |
| <b>Felt so sad/hopeless, daily for at least 2 weeks in a row, that they stopped doing some usual activities during the past year:</b>   |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 25.2%   |                   | 26.9% | 25.2% | 25.9% | 27.2% | No change                          |
| <b>Attempted suicide one or more times during the past year:</b>  |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 8.1%  |                   | 10.7% | 8.5%  | 8.7%  | 8.4%  | No change                          |
| <b>Smoked cigarettes on at least one of the past 30 days (current cigarette smoker):</b>  |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 19.2%   |                   | 17.8% | 15.7% | 14.1% | 10.6% | ⊖ Decreased 2003-2013              |
| <b>Used chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip on one or more of the past 30 days (current smokeless tobacco user):</b>                         |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 11.2%   |                   | 10.4% | 13.6% | 8.4%  | 9.1%  | No change                          |
| <b>Had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more of the past 30 days (current alcohol drinker):</b>                                  |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 38.7%   |                   | 39.7% | 33.2% | 28.6% | 22.5% | ⊖ Decreased 2003-2013**            |
| <b>Had five or more drinks of alcohol within a couple of hours on one or more of the past 30 days (current binge alcohol drinker):</b>  |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 26.5%   |                   | 25.8% | 21.7% | 16.7% | 12.8% | ⊖ Decreased 2003-2013**            |
| <b>Used marijuana one or more times during the past 30 days (current marijuana user):</b>   |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 23.9%   |                   | 20.5% | 22.7% | 21.2% | 19.7% | ⊖ Decreased 2003-2013 <sup>†</sup> |
| <b>Ever had sexual intercourse:</b>   |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 39.6%   |                   | 45.1% | 43.5% | 38.3% | 38.6% | ⊖ Decreased 2007-2013 <sup>§</sup> |
| <b>Used a condom before last sexual intercourse (among students who were sexually active):</b>  |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 62.3%   |                   | 60.8% | 62.2% | 59.6% | 60.4% | No change                          |
| <b>Students who were overweight:</b>  |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 14.4%   |                   | 16.1% | 14.4% | 14.4% | 13.7% | No change                          |
| <b>Students who were obese:</b>   |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 11.0%   |                   | 11.0% | 11.9% | 11.5% | 12.4% | No change                          |
| <b>Drank one or more sodas every day in the past week: (Question added in 2007)</b>   |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
|   |                   | 21.8% | 20.1% | 17.6% | 15.8% | ⊖ Decreased 2007-2013 <sup>§</sup> |
| <b>Attended physical education daily in an average week:</b>  |                   |       |       |       |       |                                    |
| 18.2%   |                   | 17.7% | 17.7% | 17.4% | 16.0% | No change                          |

<sup>‡</sup> Data not presented because statewide representative results were not obtained in 2005.

\* Statistically significant trends 2003-2013 and 2007-2013 unless otherwise noted.

<sup>†</sup> Statistically significant trend 2003-2013 but not 2007-2013.

<sup>§</sup> Statistically significant trend 2007-2013 but not 2003-2013.

\*\* Statistically significant decrease from 2011 to 2013.

