

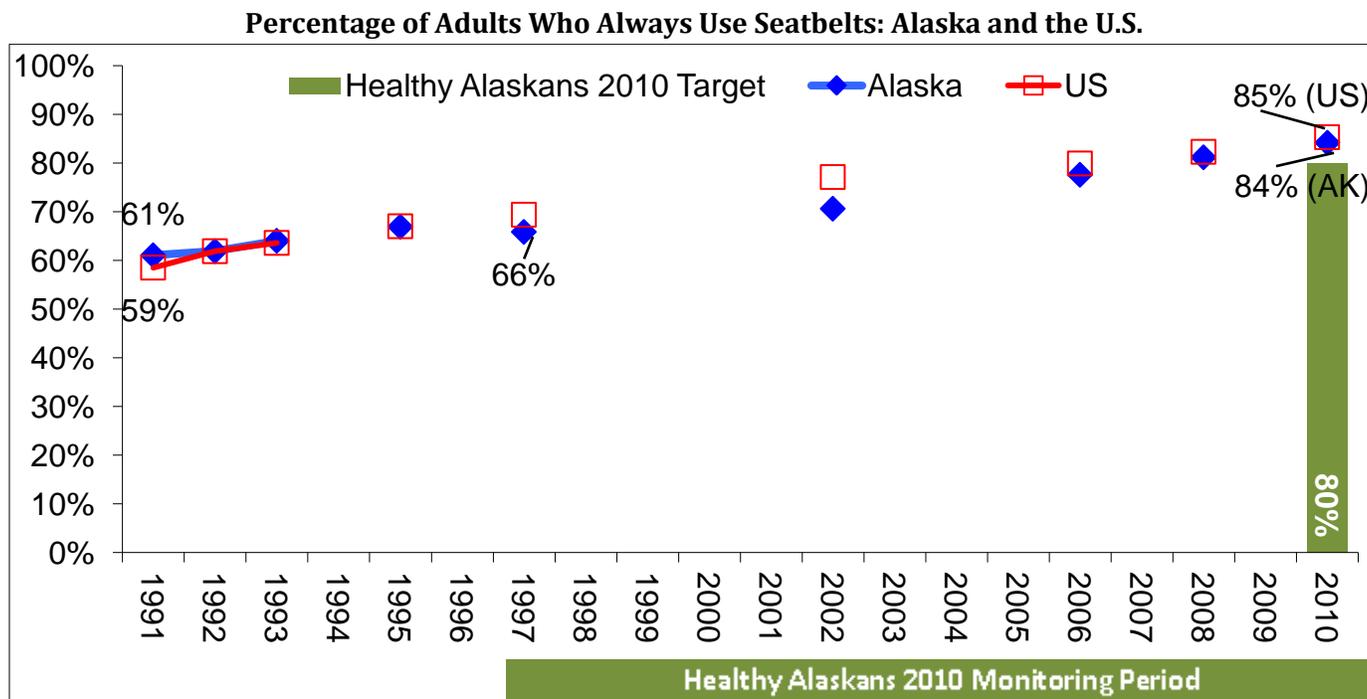
Alaska Health Status Indicators

Indicator: *Adult Seatbelt Use*

Why is this important?

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death in the United States among persons aged 5 to 34 years.¹ Seat belts have been shown to be the most effective method for reducing injuries, and thus saving lives in the event of a crash. NHTSA estimates that safety belts have saved 147,246 lives (ages 5 and over) in the period 1975-2001.² States, such as Alaska, that have primary enforcement laws show the highest rates of seatbelt use.

How are we doing?



The percentage of Alaska adults who always use seatbelts has increased over the past two decades from 61% in 1991 to 84% in 2010.

❖ How is Alaska Doing Relative to the *Healthy Alaskans 2010 Target*?

The *Healthy Alaskans 2010* target for the prevalence of consistent seatbelt use is 80% or higher. The percentage of Alaska adults who always use seatbelts increased from 61% to 84% during the *Healthy Alaskans 2010* monitoring period. **The *Healthy Alaskans 2010* target of 80% has been met.**

❖ How does AK compare with the US?

The prevalence of seatbelt use among adults in Alaska has paralleled that seen in the US.

❖ How are different populations affected?

In 2010, 84% of Alaska adults reported always wearing a seatbelt when they drive or ride in a car. Women and non-Native Alaskans report always wearing a seatbelt more often than do men or Alaska Natives, respectively. The prevalence of always wearing a seatbelt was lower in the Gulf Coast, Southeast, and rural regions of Alaska compared to Anchorage and vicinity. The prevalence of always wearing a seatbelt increased with increasing education, however the difference between groups was not significant.

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What is the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services doing to improve this indicator?

The Department, through the Injury Prevention Program, monitors motor vehicle policy activity for changes in current statutes and regulations. The program has collaborated with the Alaska Injury Prevention Center, car dealership associations and the Alaska Highway Safety Office on motor vehicle safety issues. The department has also endorsed the Alaska Highway Safety Office's "Click it or Ticket" campaign in the past. Future efforts may involve enhanced safety campaigns that target areas of the state that have the lowest rates of seatbelt usage.

Indicator Definition and Notes

Percentage of adults aged 18 years and older who answer "Always" to the following question: *How often do you use seat belts when you drive or ride in a car?*

Data Sources

Alaska: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services; US: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Alaska data were obtained from the Standard AK BRFSS standard survey from 1991 to 1993, and in 1995, 1997, 2002, 2006, 2008, and 2010.

References

1. http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5951a3.htm?s_cid=mm5951a3_w Accessed August 15, 2011.
2. <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pdf/nrd-01/esv/esv18/CD/Files/18ESV-000500.pdf> Accessed August 15, 2011.



Available at: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/>

