



RICHFIELD YOUTH HEALTH UPDATE 2007 - 2008

ALCOHOL · MARIJUANA · PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & NUTRITION · TOBACCO · TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION

This **YOUTH HEALTH UPDATE** presents data from the Minnesota Student Survey and summarizes important findings. Learn what you can do to support the health of Richfield youth, and what you can do to help youth avoid behaviors harmful to their health.

HEALTHY YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Youth need useful roles and responsibilities to feel they are valued members of the community. They want to be acknowledged for who they are and what they can offer. These things are important to remember:

- Adults can positively impact young people's choices and what types of behaviors they will develop, by sharing the decision-making process with them rather than doing it for them.
- Even the simple act of waving and saying "hi" gives youth a sense of belonging and self-worth.
- With guidance and understanding, youth can grow up to be competent parents, neighbors, and citizens.

Sources: www.Americaspromise.org;
Your Child and Self-Esteem—by Drew W. Edwards, Compass Labs, Inc., 2000;
Developmental Assets—by Peter C. Scales and Nancy Leffert

TOP 10 THINGS PARENTS & OTHER ADULTS CAN DO

1. Role model the behavior you expect from your teen.
2. Be involved in your teen's life.
3. Be curious about your teen's life.
4. Show your interest by asking questions that need a response other than "yes" or "no", then listen.
5. Get to know you teen's friends.
6. Set clear expectations and rules concerning alcohol and other substance use.
7. Follow through with consequences if rules and expectations are broken.
8. Be active and live a healthy lifestyle. Invite your children to walk, bike, or do other activities with you.
9. Be your teen's excuse not to break the rules. "My parents would be so angry if I...."
10. Eat together as a family 2-3 times a week.

NUTRITION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

As a group, adolescents have poor eating and exercise habits, which may result in nutritional deficiencies, obesity, eating disorders, and harmful long-term effects on their health.

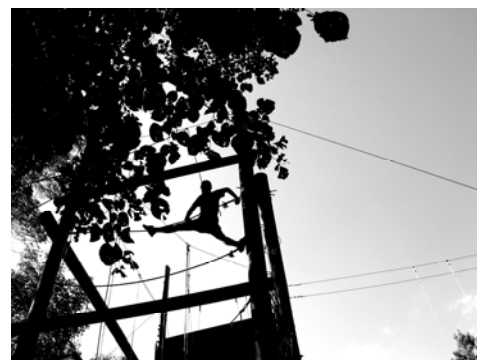
One reason for this situation is adolescents are in an environment that makes it easy to live and be entertained with almost no physical effort.

Teens are also surrounded by cheap, attractive foods high in sugar, fat, and sodium, but low in nutrients. These foods are readily available in places where youth hang out - school, parks, fast food restaurants, concession stands, movie theaters, and malls.

Consequently, adolescents are:

- Drinking more soda
- Eating more greasy potatoes
- Practicing unsafe weight-loss methods
- Not eating enough fruits, vegetables, and calcium-rich foods
- Eating excessive amounts of fat and sodium, resulting in higher cholesterol and increased risk of heart disease
- Watching too much TV and engaging in other sedentary activities

Source: *US Adolescent Food Intake Trends from 1965 to 1996*. *West J Med*. 2000 December; 173(6): 378-383.



TOBACCO

Each day in the United States, approximately 4,000 youth, aged 12-17, try their first cigarette.¹

- Several studies have found nicotine to be addictive in ways similar to heroin, cocaine, and alcohol.²
- Smoking cigarettes may make teens more susceptible to depression, alcohol abuse, and illegal drug abuse.³
- Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States.⁴

1 - *The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 2006*

2 - *Minnesota Department of Health, 2002*

3 - *Columbia University's National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA), 2007*

4 - *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001*

ALCOHOL

Alcohol is the most frequently used drug among adolescents.¹ The earlier teens start drinking, the greater the danger.²

- Research indicates that the human brain continues to develop into a person's early 20s. Exposing the developing brain to alcohol may have long-lasting effects on intellectual capabilities.³
- People who begin drinking alcohol before age 14 are more than five times as likely to develop alcohol dependence than persons who wait until age 21 or older. They are also at greater risk of developing dependence more quickly and at younger ages.⁴
- Underage alcohol use is associated with health risks as well as traffic fatalities, violence, unsafe sex, suicide, educational failure, and other problem behaviors that diminish the prospects of future success.²

1 - *The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 2004*

2 - *Institute of Medicine, 2004*

3 - *Brown, Tapert, Granholm, Delis, 2000.*

4 - *National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2006*

MARIJUANA

Marijuana is the most widely used illegal drug among America's youth.¹

- People 18 years old and younger who use marijuana have lower achievement, more delinquent behavior and aggression, greater rebelliousness, poorer relationships with parents, and more associations with delinquent and drug-using friends, than non-users.¹
- The marijuana of today is not the marijuana of the 1970s. It is more potent and more dangerous.²
- Marijuana is easy to find. Twenty-one percent of 12 to 17 year-olds can buy marijuana in an hour or less; 40% can buy marijuana within a day.²

1 - *National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Monitoring the Future Study, 2004*

2 - *Columbia University's National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA), 2004*

TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION

It's easy to be misled by movies and television shows into thinking that every teen in America is having sex. The fact is, however, that the percentage of sexually active teens has decreased each year in Minnesota since 1992.¹

Additional findings:

- Eighteen adolescent girls became pregnant each day in Minnesota in 2005.¹
- Although teen pregnancy and birth rates are high among Minnesota populations of color, the greatest total number of teen births is still to white females.¹
- Teens and young adults account for nearly one-half of all sexually transmitted infection (STI) cases each year in the United States.¹
- Nearly seven out of ten teens (69%) agree it would be much easier for them to postpone sexual activity and avoid teen pregnancy if they were able to have more open, honest conversations about these topics with their parents.²
- One out of four teen girls says their parents have discussed sex, love, and relationships with them "not nearly enough."²

1 - *MOAPPP, 2007 Minnesota State Adolescent Sexual Health Report*

2 - *The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy; "With One Voice 2002: America's Adults and Teens Sound Off About Teen Pregnancy"*

Survey responses* from 9th grade students in Richfield		1998	2001	2004	2007	MN '07
Alcohol	Had any alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, wine coolers, or liquor) in the last 30 days.	33%	27%	29%	24%	24%
	Binge drinking (5 or more drinks in a row) in the past 2 weeks.	17%	15%	16%	14%	13%
	Student use of alcohol or drugs is a problem at this school (agree & strongly agree)	71%	66%	61%	62%	58%
	Answered yes to "Do you ever use alcohol or other drugs before school?"	14%	10%	6%	9%	6%
Marijuana & other drugs	Used marijuana in the last 30 days.	21%	18%	12%	18%	10%
	During the last 12 months, has anyone offered, sold, or given you an illegal drug on school property? Percent who answered "yes."	30%	32%	24%	31%	16%
Tobacco	Smoked cigarettes in the last 30 days.	34%	20%	14%	13%	11%
	Of those who used tobacco in the last 30 days, percent who got tobacco from friends.	69%	79%	52%	62%	60%
Healthy youth development	Can talk to your mother about your problems most or some of the time?	80%	81%	72%	73%	80%
	Can talk to your father about your problems most or some of the time?	57%	51%	53%	58%	64%
	How many of your teachers are interested in you as a person? (answered most or all)	42%	48%	36%	39%	38%
	Answered "Yes, almost more than I could take" to the question, "During the last 30 days, have you felt you were under any stress or pressure?"	13%	11%	12%	18%	13%
	Students reporting they feel adults in the community care about them quite a bit or very much.	na	30%	18%	29%	39%
Physical activity	Active 5 or more days of last week for 30 minutes a day (moderate activity).	50%	50%	51%	64%	55%
	Spent 11 or more hours in a typical school week watching TV, DVDs, or videos (not including playing video or computer games).	23%	22%	23%	24%	23%
Nutrition	Had 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables yesterday.	12%	15%	11%	17%	18%
	Had no milk yesterday (girls only).	na	32%	36%	35%	24%
	Students who used unhealthy methods to lose weight (e.g., fasting, cigarettes, diet pills, vomit, laxatives).	34%	30%	24%	25%	28%
	At the present time, do you think you are overweight? Percent who answered "yes."	17%	20%	20%	23%	23%
Sex	Received most of your information about sex from friends or peers.	66%	70%	67%	68%	65%
	Have you ever had sexual intercourse ("had sex")?	22%	24%	24%	27%	19%
Violence	Answered yes to, "Has any adult in your household hit you so hard that you had marks or were afraid of that person?"	12%	10%	15%	17%	11%
	Students who agree or strongly agree that illegal gang activity is a problem at school.	37%	13%	48%	56%	19%
	During the last 12 months, have you been pushed, shoved, or grabbed on school property? Percent who answered "yes."	42%	46%	40%	45%	43%

New questions

Bullying	Answered one or more to "During the last 30 days, how often has another student or group of students made fun of or teased in a hurtful way, or excluded you from friends or activities?"	-	-	-	42%	40%
	Answered one or more to "During the last 30 days, how often have you on your own or as part of a group, made fun of or teased in a hurtful way, or excluded someone from friends or activities?"	-	-	-	52%	50%
Social disapproval	Students think their close friends would disapprove or strongly disapprove if they smoked one or more packs of cigarettes per day.	-	-	-	80%	85%
	Students think their close friends would disapprove or strongly disapprove if they have five or more drinks of an alcoholic beverage once or twice a week.	-	-	-	70%	76%
	Students think their close friends would disapprove or strongly disapprove if they smoked marijuana once or twice a week.	-	-	-	66%	82%
	Students think their close friends would disapprove or strongly disapprove if they used other drugs once or twice a week.	-	-	-	80%	88%
Perception of risk/harm	Students who think there is great risk or moderate risk if they smoke one or more packs of cigarettes per day.	-	-	-	85%	89%
	Students who think there is great risk or moderate risk if they have five or more drinks of an alcoholic beverage once or twice a week.	-	-	-	78%	83%
	Students who think there is great risk or moderate risk if they smoke marijuana once or twice a week.	-	-	-	71%	82%



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WHAT TRI-CITY PARTNERS HAS DONE

Tri-City Partners for Healthy Youth and Communities (TCP) is a collaboration of individuals and various community sectors working together to promote health, reduce risks, and build assets in our youth and communities.

Started in 1995 to work on youth health issues, Tri-City Partners has increased its focus area and membership. TCP has a Steering Committee consisting of Bloomington, Edina, and Richfield community members representing the faith community, parents, law enforcement, youth service organizations, city governments, youth, business, media, school districts, and other citizens.

Examples of the risk reduction initiatives include:

- Updated "Let's Talk Conversation Starter Tins," a communication tool created by TCP, for parents and other adults to begin conversations with youth
- Created the "On the Move" community walking groups program promoting a healthy lifestyle for all ages
- Monitoring overall trends in youth health and risk behaviors
- Policy work in such areas as increasing healthy snack and beverage choices for youth; tobacco-free parks and recreation, restaurants, and bars; and increasing the amount of physical activity within the school day

Youth Health Updates are a publication of Bloomington Public Health, in collaboration with Tri-City Partners for Healthy Youth and Communities. Information in the publication includes data from the 1998, 2001, 2004, and 2007 Minnesota Student Surveys. Data from 1995 is available upon request.

Tri-City Partners for Healthy Youth and Communities focus areas are alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and other drugs, physical activity & nutrition, teen pregnancy prevention, and healthy youth development.

For more information
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