

Selected Risk Behaviors in Wyoming Adults and Youth

John Olson

UW Department of Family & Consumer Sciences

student intern

Alcohol Consumption:

- According to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System of the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention 54.9% (53.3-56.5) of Wyoming residents have consumed at least one alcoholic beverage in the last 30 days in 2005.
 - Of those Wyoming residents that replied “Yes” when asked if they have consumed at least one alcoholic beverage in the last 30 days:
 - Gender:
 - Men = 62.2%
 - Women = 47.5%
 - Age:
 - 18 - 24 years = 60.0%
 - 25 - 34 years = 60.9%
 - 35 - 44 years = 58.8%
 - 45 - 54 years = 56.7%
 - 55 - 64 years = 51.7%
 - 65+ years = 40.7%
 -
 - Race:
 - White = 55.0%
 - Hispanic = 58.8%
 - Black, Multiracial, and other provided an underweight sample size and were not included.
 - Income:
 - > \$15,000 = 42.0%
 - \$15,000 - \$24,999 = 48.1%
 - \$25,000 - \$34,999 = 46.2%
 - \$35,000 - \$49,999 = 55.2%
 - \$50,000+ = 65.0%
 - Education:
 - > High School = 35.5%
 - High School or GED = 51.0%
 - Some-post High School = 56.0%
 - College Graduate = 62.3%
- Overview: The results from the 2005 Wyoming alcohol consumption survey indicates that males are more likely to drink compared to women. Those that are in the age category of 25 to 34 years of age show the highest prevalence of alcohol consumption. Also noted, yet perhaps irrelevant the Hispanic population of Wyoming appears to consume alcohol more so than the White population.

Finally, those with greater income and higher education show trends in drinking alcohol.

Source:

<http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/brfss/display.asp?cat=AC&yr=2005&qkey=4411&state=WY>

Underage Alcohol Consumption:

- Underage consumption of alcohol is more likely to be consumed heavily and recklessly when compared to legal drinkers.
 - On average underage drinkers report to consume 4 - 5 alcoholic beverages in one sitting, this amount is defined as “binge drinking”.
- 90% of high school seniors report that it is either “very easy” or “fairly easy” to obtain alcohol.
- According to the results from the 2003 Wyoming Youth Risk Behavior Survey: “Wyoming is first in the nation for drinking alcohol, other than a few sips, before the age of 13. In Wyoming, that rate is about 34.7%, while the national rate is 27.8%.” (Press release from the Office of Governor Dave Freudenthal, April 19th 2005).
- In 2001 Wyoming citizens paid \$132 million dollars to cover the costs of problems arising as a result of underage drinking.
 - This equates to \$2,327 dollars for every youth in the state of Wyoming.
 - This ranks Wyoming 20th in the nation for cost of underage drinking per youth.
 - Violence and traffic accidents are responsible for the majority of the cost.
- In 2002 there were 666 underage drinkers admitted to alcohol treatment programs.
 - This accounts for 20.2% of all individuals in alcohol treatment programs.
- Underage consumption of alcohol results in “tragic health”, social, and economic problems.
- Other serious problems as a result of underage drinking include:
 - Homicide
 - Suicide
 - Traumatic injury
 - Drowning
 - Violent and property crime
 - High risk sex
 - Fetal alcohol syndrome
 - Alcohol poisoning
- In 2003 Governor Dave Freudenthal proclaimed that the week of April 26th through April 30th is Wyoming’s “Reach Out Now Teach-In Week”. This proclamation was instated as a result of alarming underage drinking statistics of 2002:
 - 10.7 million drinkers were underage (12-20) nationwide.
 - 50% of teens reported consuming alcohol by the time they reached the 8th grade, in which 20% reported having been intoxicated.
 - The abuse of alcohol in adolescence is reported to be more fatal than all illegal drugs combined.

- Wyoming is ranked 3rd in the nation for underage drinking, and ranked 6th in alcohol consumption on school property in the last 30 days.

Source: Wyoming response to the Institute of Medicine National Academies of Science Report: “Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility.”
http://www.wfli.org/pdf%20docs/NAS_9_20_Final_Draft.pdf

Underage Tobacco Use:

- 90% of adult smokers state that they began smoking in their teens or earlier.
- In 2003 Wyoming illustrates the following trends in underage tobacco use.
 - Students who have tried cigarettes = 56.1%
 - Students who have smoked one or more times in the past 30 days = 26.0%
 - Students who have smoked 20 of the last 30 days = 13.3%
 - Wyoming smoking initiation = 21.5%
- The good news is that there has been a decline in underage tobacco use in the last decade.
 - The number of Wyoming youths that have reported tobacco use in the last 30 days has declined by 13%.
 - 39.5% in 1995 down to 26.0% in 2003.
 - Wyoming has experienced a 9.4% decrease in the incidence of youths smoking.
 - 30.9% in 1995 down to 21.5% in 2003.
 - Statistics report that Wyoming surpasses the national average of underage tobacco use on school property by 10.2%.
 - Even though there is a decline in trends of underage tobacco use, Wyoming is still higher than the national average for underage tobacco use.
 - Wyoming reports 17.2% underage tobacco use in 2003.
 - The national average reports 14.6% underage tobacco use in 2003.

Smokeless Tobacco Use:

- In recent years there has been a national decline in the rates of high school students using smokeless tobacco or “spit tobacco”.
 - 8.7%
- However, Wyoming does not follow the national trend and has actually indicated an alarming increase of more than twice the national rate.
- The average for male high school students in Wyoming that report using “spit tobacco” in the last 30 days has also doubled that of the national average.
 - 30.6% in Wyoming.
 - 15.1% for the national average.
- When compared to its six bordering states (ID, MT, NE, SD, and UT) Wyoming is second in high school male “spit tobacco” use.
 - 21.1%

- When also compared to the six bordering states Wyoming is ranked 3rd in female high school tobacco use.
 - 5.0%
- Wyoming's cumulative data from 1995 to 2003 indicates that 13.0% of adults use spit tobacco.
 - This is twice the national rate, which is 5.3%

Source: WYSAC: Tobacco Prevention and Control Evaluation.

<http://www.uwyo.edu/wysac/HealthEducation/Tobacco/TobaccoFactSheets.aspx>

Methamphetamines:

- Since 1990 methamphetamines have become a priority for Wyoming's federal, state, and local law enforcement.
- Methamphetamines have been reported as being:
 - "a powerful stimulant that affects the central nervous system and causes behaviors such as anxiety, increase activity, decreased appetite, insomnia, paranoia, hallucinations, mood swings, and delusions."
- In 2004 2,243 Wyoming citizens reported seeking treatment for the addiction of methamphetamines.
- In a survey performed by the Wyoming Division of Family and Community Health there were 1,118 participants recruited from private practices, family planning clinics, and public health clinics, the use of methamphetamines were reported as follows:
 - 14.1% of participants reported the use of methamphetamines at least once in their lifetime.
 - The average age for first time methamphetamine use was 18.6 years.
 - Current users reported using meth. an average 2.6 times in the last 30 days.
 - When asked how many lifetime sexual partners, methamphetamine users reported an average of 17.1 lifetime partners.
 - 50% of those reported using meth. have reported being diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease.
 - In a Natrona County study there were 46 cases of Hepatitis B infections as a result of injection of methamphetamines or having a sexual partner whom has injected methamphetamines.
 - Non meth. Users reported 6.2 lifetime partners.
- In 2004 Wyoming Department of Criminal Investigations (DCI) reported 2,903 arrests for the "unlawful possession, sale, use, growth, and manufacture of narcotic drugs."
 - Methamphetamine related arrests indicated:
 - 27% of arrests in Southeast Wyoming (lowest)
 - 71% of arrests in Northeast Wyoming (highest)
 - Highest incidence occurred in Sweetwater County.
 - 37 cases.
 - The seizure of four meth. labs in Natrona County alone.

- Data from the Wyoming Public Health Lab reported the following composition of those tested for drugs:
 - 70% were adults on probation.
 - 20% were youths submitted by the Department of Family Services and juvenile probation.
 - The remaining 10% were from drug courts, coroners, county juvenile probation, and law entities.
 - 1,997 or 60% of those receiving drug tests tested positive for methamphetamines.
- In a 2003 survey 11.6% of Wyoming students reported the use of methamphetamine at least once in their life time.
 - This places Wyoming above the national average which is 7.6%.
 - Lifetime methamphetamine use by youths can be indicated by region as follows:
 - Laramie County: 8.2% males/6.6% females
 - Albany/Carbon County: 14.5% males/10.6% females
 - Sweetwater/Unita/Lincoln County: 14.7% males/15.3% females
 - Sheridan/Johnson County: 6.7% males/9.7% females
 - Park/Big Horn/Washakie/Hot Springs County: 10.3% males/7.5% females
 - Crook/Campbell/Weston County: 9.9% males/13.2% females
 - Natrona County: 9.3% males/12.1% females
 - Platte/Converse/Goshen/Niobrara County: 10.3% males/9.7% females.
 - Sublette/Fremont/Teton County: 11.7% males/13.3% females.
 - Females indicate greater propensity of methamphetamine use.
 - An average of 12.3% of Wyoming female students report meth. use.
 - An average of 11.0% of Wyoming male students report meth. use.

Source: Wyoming Department of Health: Methamphetamine Planning Study November 2005.

http://wdh.state.wy.us/SAD/Docs/Meth/HB275_12_07_05.pdf

Internet Child Predation:

- 1 in 5 children who report the regular use of the internet have stated that they have received an unwanted sexual solicitation.
- 25% of children report having been exposed to unwanted pornographic material.
- 75% of children report sharing personal information online about themselves and their families in return for services or goods.
- 75% of children that encounter a sexual solicitation or approach do not report it to their parents.
- 1 in 33 children reported that they have received an aggressive sexual solicitation in the past year.

- This meaning that a predator has either:
 - “Asked a youth to meet somewhere”.
 - “Called a youth by phone”.
 - “Sent goods such as money or gifts by the U.S. postal service”.
- In March of 2006 28.8 billion people worldwide have joined Myspace.com.
- Wyoming Governor Dave Freudenthal has recently decided to help protect children from online predators by adding 2 Wyoming Department of Criminal Investigation officers that are solely dedicated to such cases.
 - This makes a total of 7 agents in the field, two of which are federal agents.
- Governor Freudenthal has a no tolerance policy on the matter, “one strike and you’re out”.
 - The penalty for such an offense is a minimum of life in jail.

Wyoming Statistical Analysis of Relevant Issues

John Olson

10/30/06