



HEALTHY KIDS 2021 Results: COLORADO SURVEY Key Takeaways By Topic

The Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKCS) is the state's only comprehensive survey on the health and well-being of young people. The HKCS results help public, private, and community organizations better understand the youth they serve and support youth in making healthy choices. In the fall of 2021, we surveyed 106,799 youth at 340 middle and high schools. The data below, organized by topic with statistically significant changes noted, represent youth who attend Colorado public high schools.

The presence of protective factors—such as trusted adults who can help with problems, clear family rules, and feeling safe and connected at school—are associated with protecting youth from substance use, violence, and poor mental health. Ensuring all youth have access to protective factors can help them thrive. However, research shows that generations of social, economic, and environmental inequities result in some youth experiencing negative health outcomes and have a greater impact than individual choices. Healthy Kids Colorado Survey data are consistent with those findings and illuminate disparities for youth of color and LGBTQ+ youth in Colorado. For more details - including results that are disaggregated by geography, age, grade, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity - visit healthykidscolo.org

Protective Factors

- 73.5% of youth have an adult to go to for help with a serious problem
 - No change from 2019
- 82.4% of youth could ask a parent/guardian for help with a personal problem
 - No change from 2019
- 93.3% of youth feel the rules in their family are clear
 - Increase from 91.7% in 2019
- 59.2% of youth think their teacher notices when they do a good job and lets them know about it
 - Increase from 49.4% in 2019
- 59.6% of youth participate in extracurricular activities at school
 - Decrease from 67.3% in 2019
- 90% of youth report feeling safe at school
 - Increase from 86.2% in 2019
- 64.7% of youth feel like they belong at their school
 - New question in 2021
- 26.2% of youth sleep eight or more hours per night on average school nights
 - No change from 2019
- 29.1% of youth ate breakfast on all of the past seven days
 - No change from 2019



Mental Health

- 54.7% of youth most of the time or always could talk to a friend about their feelings during their life
 - New question in 2021
- 53.2% of youth agree that their stress level is manageable most days
 - New question in 2021
- 39.6% of youth experienced feelings of depression in the past year (reported feeling so sad or hopeless for 2 weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities)
 - Increase from 34.7% in 2019 and 31.4% in 2017
- 17.1% of youth seriously considered suicide in the past year
 - No change from 2019 or 2017
- 7.2% of youth attempted suicide in the past year
 - No change from 2019 or 2017

Consent and Sexual Health

- 58.6% of sexually active youth used a condom during sex the last time
 - No change from 2019
- 11.7% of youth had a sexual experience where they were unsure if they gave their fully-granted consent to the other person
 - New question in 2021
- 2.4% of youth had a sexual experience where they were unsure if they received fully-granted consent from the other person
 - New question in 2021
- 6.7% of youth made sexual comments, jokes, gestures, or looks at someone without consent
 - Decrease from 7.9% in 2019
- 3.1% of youth touched, grabbed or pinched someone in a sexual way without consent
 - Decrease from 4.0% in 2019
- 0.5% of youth forced someone to have sex when it was unwanted
 - New question in 2021

Alcohol Use

- 23.6% of youth used alcohol within the past month
 - Decrease from 29.6% in 2019



Alcohol Use (continued)

- 14.2% of youth binge drank one or more times in the last month
 - No change from 2019
- 53.1% of youth feel it would be easy to get alcohol if they wanted
 - Decrease from 59% in 2019
- 79.9% of youth think daily alcohol use is risky
 - Increase from 69.6% in 2019

Marijuana Use

- 13.3% of youth used marijuana within the past month
 - Decrease from 20.6% in 2019
- 8.8% of youth used THC concentrates, hash oil, or waxes in the past month
 - New question in 2021
- 40.3% of youth feel it would be easy to get marijuana if they wanted
 - Decrease from 51.4% in 2019
- 60.4% of youth think regular marijuana use is risky
 - Increase from 50.1% in 2019

Tobacco Use

- 3.3% of youth smoked cigarettes within the past month
 - Decrease from 5.7% in 2019
- Among youth who smoked in the past month, 33.2% of youth smoked menthol cigarettes
 - No change from 2019
- 16.1% of youth vaped within the past month
 - Decrease from 25.9% in 2019
- Among youth who have used electronic vapor products, 22.3% tried it for the first time before age 13
 - Increase from 13.2% in 2019
- 51.4 % of youth feel it would be easy to get electronic vapor products if they wanted
 - Decrease from 63.2% in 2019
- 79.6% of youth think daily vaping is risky
 - Increase from 73% in 2019



Motor Vehicle Safety

- 31.8% of youth texted or emailed while driving in the past month
 - Decrease from 37.2% in 2019
- 5.5% of youth drove a vehicle after using marijuana in the past month
 - Decrease from 11.2% in 2019
- 4.3% of youth drove a vehicle after using alcohol in the past month
 - Decrease from 4.9% in 2019

Gun Access

- 16.8% of youth think they could easily get a handgun if they wanted
 - Decrease from 20% in 2019
- 19.2% of youth could fire a loaded gun without adult permission in less than an hour
 - New question in 2021

Experiences with Racism (new questions in 2021)

- 5.3% of youth were treated badly or unfairly because of their race or ethnicity in the past year
- 5.7% of youth were watched closely or followed by security guards or store clerks at a store or mall because of their race or ethnicity in the past year
- 6.5% of youth were assumed less intelligent because of their race or ethnicity in the past year
- 9% of youth saw family members treated unfairly because of their race or ethnicity in the past year

Experiences during COVID-19 (new questions in 2021)

- 68.5% of youth experienced poor mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic
- 50.6% of youth felt daily stress more often during the COVID-19 pandemic
- 24.2% of youth had a parent or other adult at home lose their job during the COVID-19 pandemic, among youth whose parents had a job before the pandemic started
- 26.6% of youth were put down, insulted, or sworn at by a parent or other adult in the home during the COVID-19 pandemic
- 3.8% of youth were physically hurt by a parent or other adult in the home during the COVID-19 pandemic
- 7.8% of youth went hungry because there was not enough food in the home during the COVID-19 pandemic