



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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POSITIVE HAWAII YOUTH DATA SURVEY RESULTS

HONOLULU — The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Education (DOE) today announced the release of data from the Hawaii Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS). A copy of this report is available on the DOH website at www.hawaii.gov/health under publications.

Results from the YRBS show that in 2003, Hawaii youth reported less risk behaviors than did youth nationally in several areas including fighting, drinking alcohol and engaging in sexual activity.

In other areas, Hawaii students reported more risk behavior than students nationally. For example, Hawaii students are less likely to eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables and drink three or more servings of milk as suggested by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). And while fewer high school students in Hawaii reported ever having sexual intercourse, those who have had intercourse were less likely to use a condom during their last sexual experience.

“Data from both surveys show trends that are more positive than negative at both the high school and middle school levels,” said Chiyome Leinaala Fukino, MD, Director of Health. “The reports show that we are making progress in reaching our youth about positive health choices.”

(more)

National YRBS data is not available for middle school students, but the report compares results from the 2001 and 2003 Hawaii surveys. Hawaii middle school students showed improvement when it came to wearing seat belts, feeling safer at school or on their way to or from school and decreasing use of certain illicit drugs.

The YTS report shows that between 2000 and 2003 current cigarette smoking decreased almost 40 percent among high school students and 60 percent among middle school students. During the same time period, current use of any tobacco product decreased 31 percent in high school students and 46 percent in middle school students.

YRBS and YTS are conducted every two to three years in high schools and middle schools statewide to determine the prevalence of behaviors that may lead to health problems or prevent students from being engaged learners or contributing to their school and community. The next surveys will be conducted in the fall of 2005.

“I hope that parents will consider how important the surveys are to DOH, DOE, and our community partners and provide consent if their child is selected to participate in the surveys next fall,” said Patricia Hamamoto, Superintendent of Education. “A high level of student participation is critical in getting the accurate information from the surveys.”

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Youth Risk Behaviors Survey Highlights

Results from the YRBS show that in 2003, Hawaii youth reported less risk behaviors than did youth nationally in several areas.

Activity among HS students	Hawaii	Nationally
Not wearing seat belts	7%	18%
Fighting	26%	33%
Drinking alcohol in the past month	32%	45%
Ever using marijuana	34%	40%
Engaging in sexual activity	33.3%	46.7%

In other areas, Hawaii students reported more risk behavior than students nationally.

Activity among HS students	Hawaii	Nationally
Use condom during intercourse*	48.9%	63%
Eating 5+ fruits and vegetables per day	15%	22%
Drinking 3+ glasses of milk per day	9.8%	17%

*The rate of high school students in Hawaii reporting ever having sexual intercourse is lower than the national rate.

Activity among Middle School students	2001	2003
Don't use seat belts	11%	7%
Property stolen or damaged at school	43%	35%
Feeling unsafe at school or to/from school	38%	32%
Ever used ecstasy	4%	2%

Youth Tobacco Survey Highlights:

Despite the fact that overall tobacco use among youth in Hawaii is declining, cigarette use is still a common and serious problem.

Tobacco related activity	H.S.	Middle School
Students have smoked cigarettes daily	11%	3%
Smokes 6 or more cigarettes per day*	21.8%	10.9%
Have smoked more than 100 cigarettes**	17%	4%

*Of students who smoke

**Among those who have ever tried a cigarette

The equivalent of 5 packs - meet the definition of an adult smoker.