



HEALTHY KIDS COLORADO

2007-2008 Survey Results

INTRODUCTION

The Eagle County Cares Survey (ECCS) and the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKCS) are both adaptations of the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) which is an epidemiologic surveillance system established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to monitor the prevalence of youth behaviors that most influence health.

Both of the surveys used in Eagle County include many of the core questions used nation-wide to monitor risk behaviors in youth. The questions were framed to monitor health risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death, disability and social problems among youth and adults in the United States, Colorado, and Eagle County in particular.

The YRBSS and the Healthy Kids Colorado survey are conducted every two years during the spring semester and provide data representative of 9th through 12th grade in the public schools. The schools in the Eagle Vail area that are surveyed are:

Battle Mountain High School

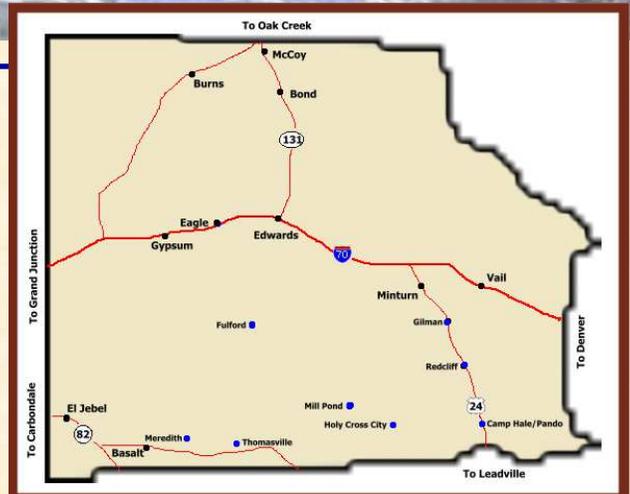
Eagle Valley High School

Red Canyon High School

The surveys focus on tobacco use; alcohol and other drug use; depression and suicide; sexual behaviors; dietary behaviors; and physical activity, and weight related issues. In 2007-2008, the Eagle County Cares Survey was replaced by the Healthy Kids Colorado survey. This report incorporates the 2007 HKCS with past ECCS results.

Results from the past ECCS survey and the current HKCS are used to:

- (1.) monitor how the health-risk behaviors among Eagle County school district students (grades 9-12) increase, decrease, or remain the same over time;
- (2.) evaluate the impact of local efforts to prevent these health-risk behaviors;
- (3.) and to help focus local health and youth programs on the behaviors that contribute most to the leading causes of death, disability, and social problems for youth and their families in Eagle County.



Eagle County map

Year	School totals	Number of Students Surveyed to-tals	Percent of Students surveyed%
2001	1224	405	29.4
2003	1371	771	34.9
2005	1423	765	25
2007	1517	853	54

INTRODUCTION

Reliability of the data:

The data is evaluated for both internal consistency and external reliability. *Internal* inconsistency is when the respondent is inconsistent in answering similar questions. If a respondent is found to be inconsistent that respondent is removed from the data set. There were some inconsistent respondents and they were removed from the data set resulting with a reduction of 853 to 788 valid responses.

External reliability is when one compares the data in the survey to ensure that the responses are similar or in reasonable statistical variance with other data sets measuring the same thing, like other data from the same population over time.

Changes in survey instruments create obstacles in comparing data over time: therefore, where there is comparable data for the ECCS and the HKCS, there will be charts or graphs that highlight the changes over time. In areas that there is no comparative data the most recent data will be displayed. There is a new section in the HKCS that was not in the previous surveys. This is a concentration of school, and school violence data, students' evaluation of teaching, learning, and school atmosphere, some of this data has no match from previous years.

Unfortunately the use of a different survey instrument from prior years create another problem in comparing data. Many of the response choices in the current 2007 survey instrument have created reliability and validity issues. The use of "NO!, no, yes, and YES!" is questionable. Such response choices are susceptible to fine nuances in meaning that cannot be measured, nor can the data be reliable cross culturally. In the case of second language learners, it is very hard to expect such students to understand the nuances of meaning that are culturally ingrained in this type of response and such vernacular is subject to redefinition by various subcultures. Therefore the use of alternative responses makes it difficult to guarantee reliable comparison

Format of each section:

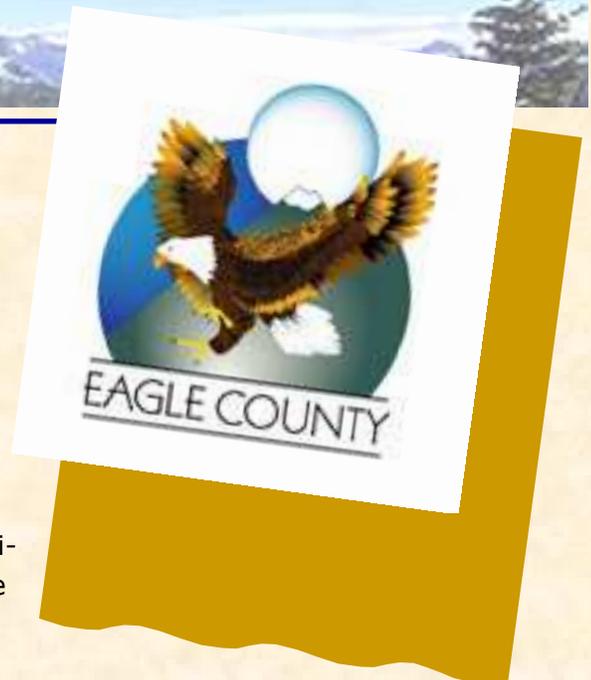
The information is broken out into seven sections or main topic areas, tobacco use, alcohol, Marijuana and other drug use, suicide and depression, sexual behavior, schools, parents and the summary.

Each section is further broken down into six headings.

Introduction: Usually includes what current research says about the topic.

The overall findings: The overall look at what the student self report says about the topic. It may include national and state comparisons.

Gender differences: If there are no big differences this may be a very short section.



INTRODUCTION



Ethnic differences: This is a comparison between the two major ethnic groups in Eagle County, Hispanic and White. The other ethnic groups are not addressed, because they are so few in number that their anonymity would be compromised.

What needs to be addressed: The summary of what has been covered in the topic area; any salient issues are brought out here.

What can be done: this section is where the topic area specialists are addressed. This may include findings of what works, risk and protective factors, or asset building.



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EAGLE COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

To understand the risk behaviors of Eagle River Valley youth, they need to be placed in the larger context of where they live. Often, social data is collected by various agencies and organizations in unrelated areas. Rarely are they looked at in combination and as indicators of the larger social condition of the town, county or state. The use of drugs by adolescents, for example, is reported every two years. But this drug use is rarely couched in the context of poverty, suicide, crime, and child or domestic abuse. Looking at all social indicators would give it context, and enlarge the understanding of the behavior by creating a total picture.



Unfortunately, the current result is whole surveys published with few references to past trends and larger meanings. This lack of coherence frames the way policy or programs are created to remedy situations. Therefore, in attempt to set the stage for understanding youth risk behavior in the context of living in Eagle County some local data is covered.

The source of population data is estimated census data, and the unemployment and wage data is generated by the Colorado Department of Labor. Also included is the cost of living in the Eagle County School district, excluding El Jebel and Basalt. All of this data is available on the Eagle County website at <http://www.eaglecounty.us>

Below is the most recent population information for Eagle County. These figures are for the 1998 - 2008 time period. As you can see, Eagle County has almost doubled in size, which was almost twice the rate of the whole state of Colorado.

Population Year	Eagle County Total	Colorado Total
1998	37,611	4,102,500
2000	43,355	4,338,789
2006	50,924	4,827,394
2008	53,898	5,010,395
% increase 1998-2008	43%	22%

Source: US Census Estimates.

EAGLE COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

2007 Population statistics by town.

Population	Vail	Avon	Edwards	Eagle	Red Cliff	Minturn	Gypsum	El Jebel	Basalt
Population	4,628	6,399	10,521	4,919	307	1,132	5,307	5,500	3,041
Pop. Density	1,021	800	265	2,079	1,335	821	1,445	818	1,584
Pop. Change	2.14%	15.07%	27.42%	62.24%	6.23%	5.99%	45.24%	22.55%	13.43%
Median Age	34.9	30.3	34	34.3	33.2	33.6	32.5	33.4	36.6
Households	2,251	2,185	3,583	1,685	119	434	1,645	1,726	1,189
Household Size	1.97	2.85	2.87	2.92	2.6	2.65	3.25	3.15	2.59

Source Spierling's Best places¹ Population statistics: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey,

ECONOMICS Because Eagle County is home to world renown ski resorts, the largest employment sector in the county, in descending order, is the service areas, construction, and the retail trades. The unemployment rate in 2006 was 4.6 percent, compared to the state as a whole at 4.7 percent. In 2006, the average weekly wage was \$791, compared to statewide average of \$ 877.

Comparing the cost of living in Denver Colorado to Vail, Avon, Eagle-Vail, Edwards, Eagle, and Gypsum, the table below uses a national average, the national average is indicted by 100. Any number above 100 is above the national average, and any number below 100 is below the national average.

Cost of Living Indexes	Denver	Vail	Avon	Eagle-Vail	Edwards	Eagle	Gypsum
Overall	105	403	403	402	345	159	132
Food	114	111	110	110	111	109	111
Housing	99	927	927	927	766	250	176
Utilities	102	102	101	102	101	101	102
Transportation	111	115	116	114	116	115	115
Health	131	118	117	118	118	118	118
Miscellaneous	99	101	102	101	101	101	101

In Denver the overall cost of living is just 5 percent above the national average, and the cost of housing is just under the national average. In the *overall* field for every town in Eagle County, the cost of living is much higher than in Denver and often three times greater than the national average. What is alarming is the average wage for Eagle County is lower than in Denver.

100=national average (Source Spierling's Best places¹)

Economics directly impacts the quality of life of young people and the choices they make. Income inequality has an effect on certain groups of teenagers and the amount of time they have for community activities, as well as intramural and school sports.

¹Spierling's economic data sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index, Consumer Expenditure Survey Medicare and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Energy, Federal Travel Directory, Freddie Mac -Conventional Home Price Mortgage Index, Office of Housing Economic Oversight, National Association of Realtors, National Association of Home Builders, State Association of Realtors .

EAGLE COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

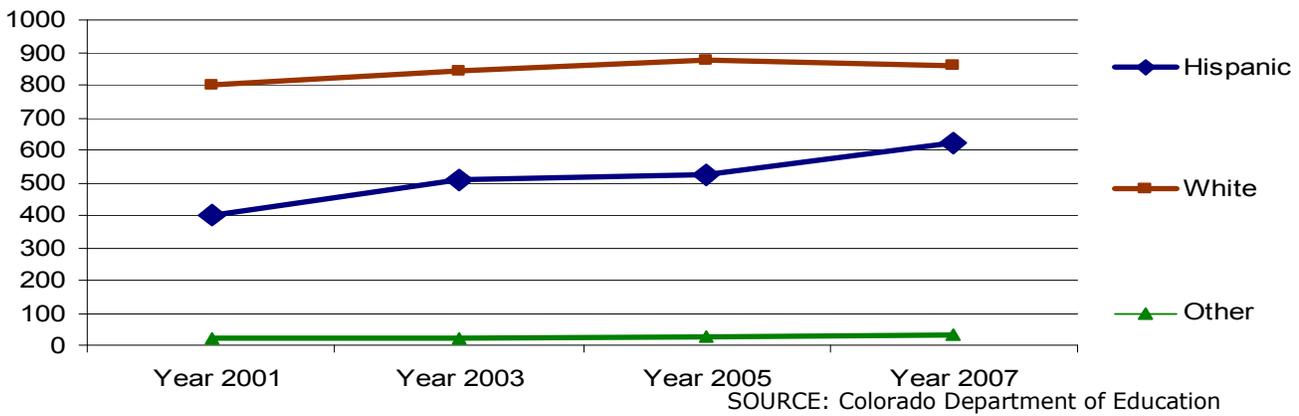
Schools



Eagle County's dramatic population increase was also evident in the public schools. The chart below highlights the population changes experienced by the RE-50 public high schools. The greatest increases are in the freshmen and sophomores years during the 2007 academic year.

Schools

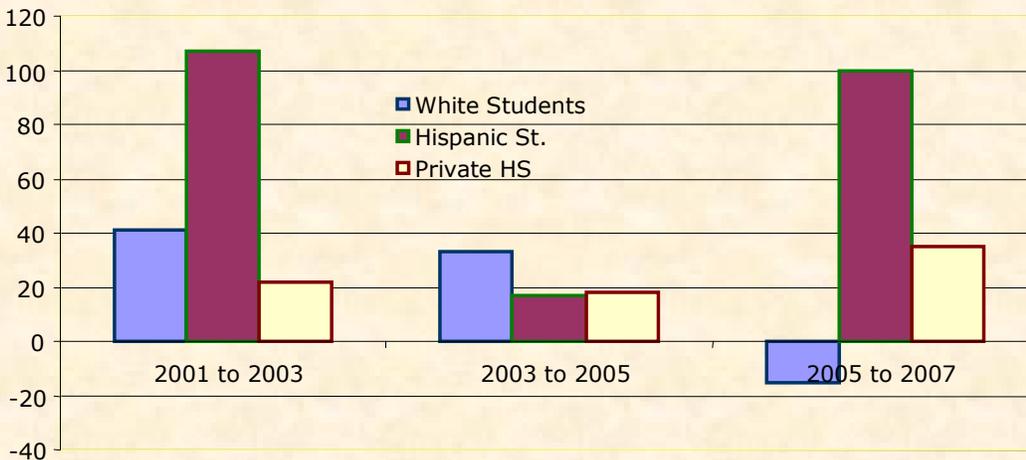
Population Increase in Public High Schools Eagle



The population increase was accompanied by a shift in public school composition; the Hispanic student population is consistently on the rise, and the Non-Hispanic student numbers are dropping. Hispanic numbers jumped dramatically between 2001 and 2003 then again in 2005 to 2007. There was little Hispanic student increase between 2003 and 2005.

The graph below illustrates the shift in population of White and Hispanic students in public school and the rise in enrollment in private schools. This only suggests white flight from the public schools,

there is not enough information to prove it one way or the other. For more demographic information on the public school system see the section on schools.



SOURCE: Colorado Department of Education

EAGLE COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

CRIME RATES

CRIME RATES

Below are the 2007 crime rates for the area. Violent crime is composed of murder, non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Property crime is burglary, larceny, theft, motor vehicle theft and arson, where no force or threat of force is used.

CRIME	Avon	Vail	Eagle	Gypsum	Edwards	Red Cliff	Minturn	United States
Violent Crime	3	4	2	1	2	2	5	3
Property Crime	6	6	4	2	5	5	3	3

Source: Sperling's Best places, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Report

The crime indices range is 1 to 10. A higher number corresponds with more crime. The table indicates that the communities in the Eagle County area, except for Gypsum, have higher crime rates than the average US rate, and property crimes are more likely than violent crime.

From the Eagle County Sheriff's office 2007 annual report is a list of offences and numbers of incidents for 2005, 2006 and 2007, on the following page.

The Sheriff's report reveals that many crimes are on the rise: assault, fights, domestic violence, shooting or shot fired, robbery, and harassment. The less violent crimes and offences that have increased are drugs, DUI's, juvenile problem, runaways, intoxicated parties, and prowlers. Overall the report reveals that 16 categories, or 70 percent of the offences and incidences have increased.

EAGLE COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

CRIME RATES

Crime Rates from the Eagle county sheriffs Office

Offense/Incident	2005	2006	2007
Abandoned Vehicles	188	249	277
Assault	104	121	165
Burglary	48	58	57
Criminal Injury to Property	246	316	272
Disturbance/Fight	251	299	434
Domestic Violence	156	177	233
Drugs	41	71	93
Fraud	66	56	76
Harassment	220	273	289
Intoxicated Party	114	102	156
Juvenile Problem	179	226	239
Citizen/Motorist Assist	4029	5287	3573
Missing/Overdue Party	160	152	189
Noise Complaint	467	519	542
Person with a Gun	22	36	16
Prowler	23	22	33
DUI	339	337	457
Robbery	7	1	16
Runaway	19	22	91
Sexual Assault	15	32	30
Shootings/Shots Fired	55	48	78
Suspicious Occurrence	1558	1919	1807
Theft	694	675	686

Source: Eagle County Sheriff's Office 2007

In summary, Eagle county population has increased twice the rate as the whole state of Colorado between 1996 and 2006. By 2008 Eagle County is estimated to increase 24 percent again. Data from the Eagle County school district helps define that the Hispanic sector has been the fastest growing in the county. The statistics from the Sherriff's office; the number of violent offences like harassment, fights, domestic violence, robberies, sexual assaults, and shootings or shots fired, is evidence of growing social stress in the county. The increase in drugs, DUI's, juvenile problems, and runaways reveal there are growing issues that directly affect the youth in the Eagle River Valley area. Eagle County statistics also show that the wage earners are paid at a lower rate than those in the City of Denver, yet the cost of living in Eagle County is higher. Living in a high risk community, a resort community, not only heightens the prevalence and accessibility of drugs and alcohol, but it normalizes the behavior. Consequently teens are surrounded by a indulgent atmosphere where they often feel pressure to fit in. Knowing this helps identify and link together many of the risk factors that affect the Eagle River Valley's youth.

EAGLE COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

The remainder of the report is the analysis of the Colorado Healthy Kids survey results from 2007-08 (HKCS07-08). This type of surveillance, tracks the risk behaviors of the Eagle River Valley youth as they negotiate the evolution into adulthood, and the social factors that surround them; low wages, high cost of living, rapid population growth, rising crime rates, models of inappropriate behavior, a national financial crisis .and global environmental degradation to name a few.

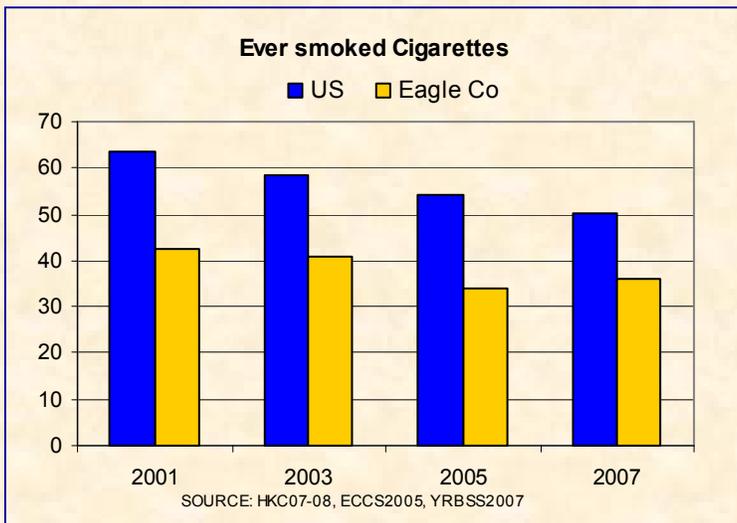
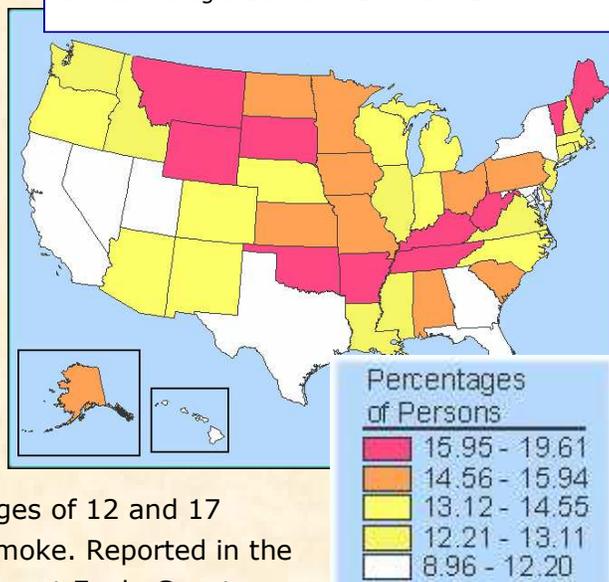


TOBACCO

Introduction: According to the Tobacco-Control Resource Center and the International Union Against Cancer, almost all smokers begin smoking before they are 18 years old. Smoking creates immediate health risks such as respiratory, heart, and circulatory disease. Because smoking hampers the immune system, teens that smoke are absent from school more often than their non-smoking peers.

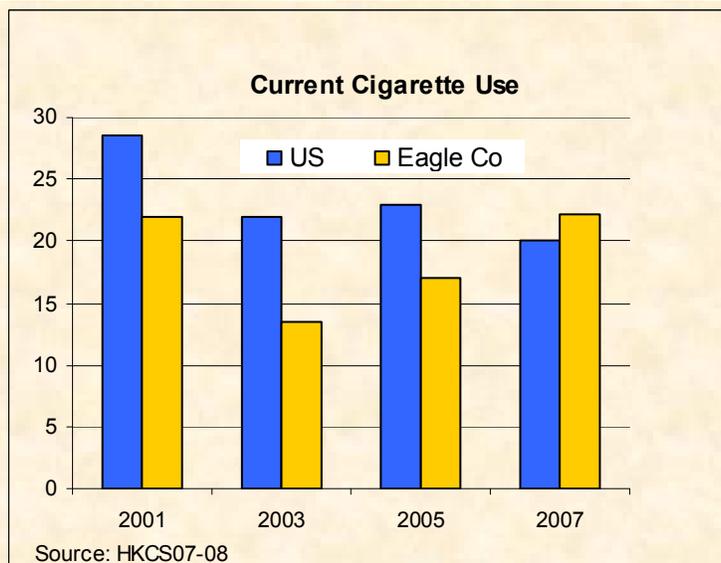
The overall findings: According to the map from the National Surveys on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), between 13 and 15 percent of Colorado youth between the

Tobacco Product Use in Past Month among Youths Aged 12 to 17, by State Percentages, Annual Averages Based on 2005 and 2006



ages of 12 and 17 smoke. Reported in the recent Eagle County Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKC07-08) 22 percent of high school students in district RE-50 currently smoke. This is up from 17 percent in 2005, a 29% percent increase.

The graph at left of reported current smokers reveals a progressive increase in the number of smoker for Eagle County from 2003 to 2007-08 and a reduction of smokers nationwide from 2001 to 2007-08.



As students progress in grade level so does their smoking behavior. The graph to the left illustrates that juniors and seniors smoke most often in a 30 day period.

Sixty-seven percent of the teen smokers acknowledge that their parents think it is wrong for them to smoke, and 74 percent acknowledge risking harm to themselves by smoking. It appears that the knowledge of possible harmful affects is not a deterrent.

Gender differences: According to the 2007 data, more males than females smoke, 25.6 percent to 21.3 percent.

TOBACCO

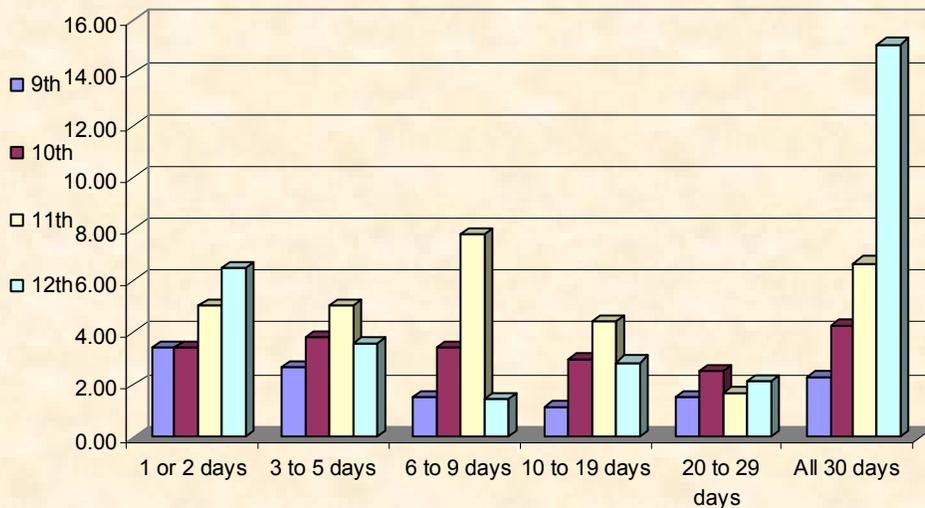
Comparison by Year	Year	Total	Male	Female	9th	10th	11th	12th
Percent: % Ever smoked cigarettes	2007	36	40	33	25	33	46	50
	2005	34	39	31	16	40	44	44
	2003	40.6	44.1	37.1	28	37.1	47	60.4
	2001	42.7	41.3	43.9	20.5	48.7	47	60.3
	2000	30.2	25.6	36.3	22.1	28.3	40.1	

Ethnic differences: Both whites and Hispanics smoke about the same, with Hispanics, at 21.3 percent and Whites at 20.3 percent.

What needs to be addressed: The major influences on teens smoking are advertisements, availability,

and peers. Peers are the strongest influence. It is not so much about peer pressure, but peer bonding or wanting to belong to a group. Often, teens lack the self confidence to refuse a cigarette offered by someone they would like to have as a friend. According to the HKC07-08, 90 percent of Eagle teens who smoke have friends who smoke versus 46 percent of non smokers. Availability is another issue in Eagle County, where 67 percent of the smokers reported that it is *very easy* to obtain cigarettes. Even a third of non

Percent of Students who Smoke by Number of Days Smoked in Past 30 Days by Grade



Source: HKCS0708

smokers reported it was very easy to get cigarettes.

A recent report from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention found that while youth smoking is currently at the lowest level in the past 30 years, the recent substantial declines seen between 1997-2003 came to a stand-still between 2003-2007. According to this report published July 16, 2008, tobacco industries are controlling levels of menthol for the purpose of attracting a new market of young adults and adolescents. According to the report, "tobacco companies discovered that long-term smokers preferred products with higher menthol levels and stronger perceived menthol sensations, while younger smokers preferred milder menthol products." The report went on to describe that "menthol products tend to mask the harshness of smoke inhalation, allowing for nicotine to enter the systems of these new smokers who subsequently become addicted. In response to this information, tobacco companies introduced new menthol brands with lower menthol levels to appeal to younger smokers and to gain a larger

TOBACCO

market share. While cigarette sales in the U.S. declined by 22 percent between 2000 to 2005, the sales of menthol cigarettes remained constant. "

Source: the American Legacy Foundation : New Research Indicates Cigarette Makers Manipulate Menthol Levels to Attract Young Smokers July 16, 2008. <http://www.americanlegacy.org/2592.aspx>

What can be done: Parents are important influences on teen smoking. Children whose parents smoke are twice as likely to become smokers, thus concentrating on reducing adult smoking will influence youth smoking as well

There are also steps a community can take according to the Tobacco-Control Resource Center and the International Union Against Cancer. Communities can pressure local government to ban cigarette advertising. Also, parent groups can lobby for tighter government legislation to prevent cigarette sales to minors.

A recent report by the Center for Disease Control indicates that the most effective youth prevention campaigns —



- Are part of a comprehensive tobacco control program.
- Include ads that provoke strong negative emotions, such as fear and anger.
- Provide new information about health risks to smokers and nonsmokers.
- Engage youth with youth-oriented graphics and testimonials.
- Use multiple strategies and media channels.
- Expose youth to messages over significant periods of time.

Go to, http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/youth/reports/youth_lessonslearned.htm, for more information.



ALCOHOL

Introduction: Risk taking behavior is a natural developmental stage in a young person's life; however, unless they are exposed to healthy risk taking opportunities, they can express their natural tendencies in detrimental ways, such as early alcohol use and abuse.

According to a recent study sponsored by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, "compared to individuals who start drinking at age 21, those who start drinking at age 14 were 2.8 times more likely to drink to intoxication on at least one day each week in the past year." Another recent study by the National Institute of Health reports "those who start drinking at a young age are more likely to develop alcoholism within 10 years of when they first started drinking."

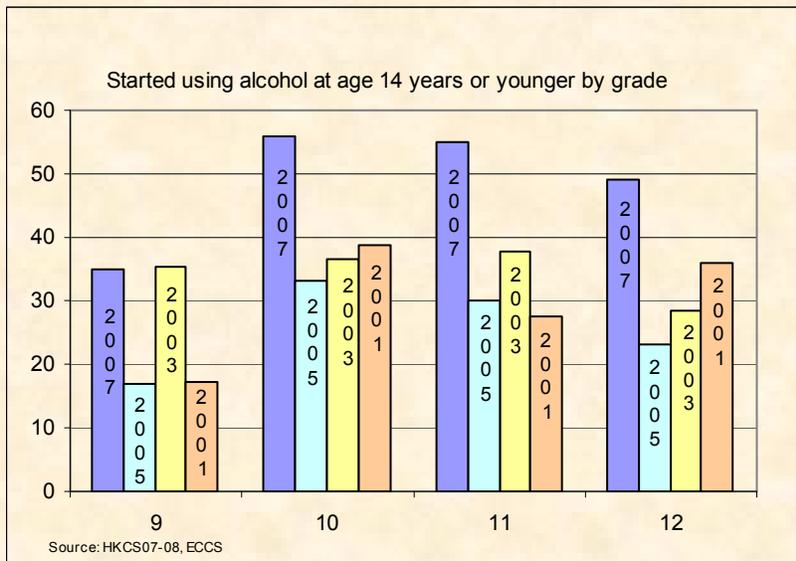
Alcohol Dependence or Abuse in Past Year among Youths Aged 12 to 17, by State: Percentages, Annual Averages Based on 2005 and 2006 NSDUH



The overall find-

ings: The map above on the right indicates Colorado has one of the greatest instances of alcohol dependence or abuse in the 2005-06 year among youths aged 12 to 17. (The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH).

The latest self report data from the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKC07-08), shows a growing trend towards early drinking.



Based upon the survey question

"How many days have you had at least one drink, in your lifetime" there is an increase in the number of students reporting ever having alcohol.

The survey results also show that more students in 2007-08 started drinking at an early age, 14 years old or younger. This has set the rate of early drinking for 2007-08 Eagle River Valley students to 5.6 percent, which is equal to Colorado's rate in 2005, according to previous Colorado YRBS 2005.

The numbers who felt it was wrong to drink at their age went down in number as the grade level went up. In other words, students are less likely to think it is wrong to drink as they get older.

ALCOHOL

Students at all grade levels report knowing that drinking 1 to 2 drinks of alcohol daily poses a risk. The percent of responses ranged between 63 percent and 66 percent who felt it was a great or moderate risk to drink daily. The majority also felt it was harmful to have five or more drinks over the weekend, [61 percent to 59 percent]. Yet the knowledge that drinking is harmful does not

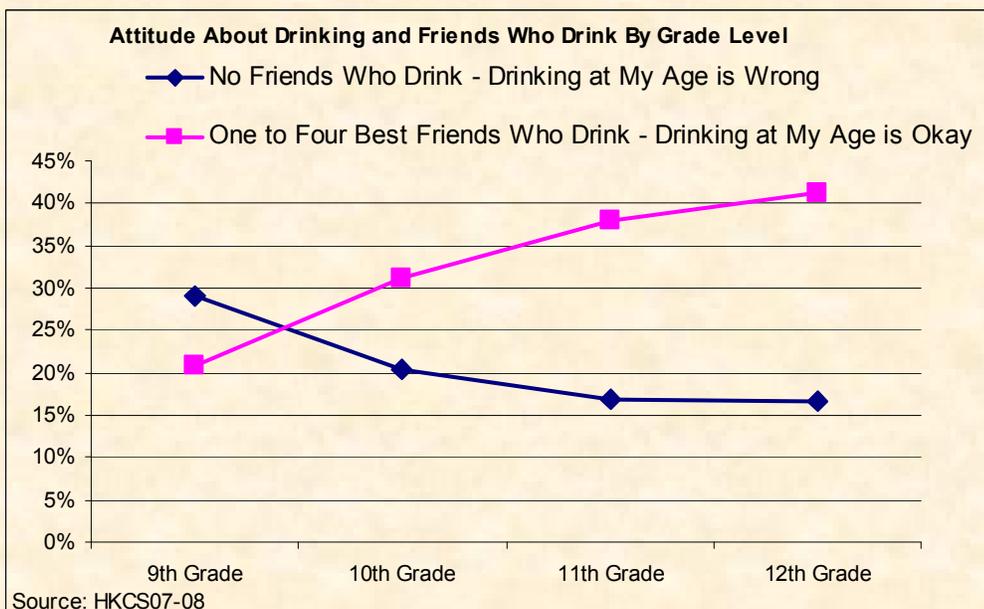
Consumed 5 or more drinks of alcohol at one time/past month (Episodic heavy drinking)							
Eagle CARES Survey & HEALTHY Kids Colorado 2007-08							
Year	Total	Male	Female	9	10	11	12
2007	31	31.2	30.8	19	29	38	44
2005	20	21	19	10	19	33	24
2003	33.1	36.9	29.2	18.5	32.3	44.3	47.2
2001	25	25.1	24.9	6.3	26.1	22	53.8
2000	37.4	43.7	28.7	23.5	45	45.5	
National Comparisons of reported binge drinking from 'Trends in the Prevalence of Alcohol Use National YRBS: 1991-2007'							
	Total	Male	Female	9	10	11	12
US 2007	26	27.8	24.1	17	23.7	29.9	36.5
US 2005	25.5	27.5	23.5	19	24.6	27.6	32.8
US 2003	28.3	29	27.5	19.8	27.4	31.8	37.2
US 2001	29.9	33.5	26.4	24.5	28.2	32.2	36.7
US 2000	31.5	34.9	28.1	21.1	32.2	34	41.6

seem to deter drinking behavior.

Episodic or binge drinking in the Eagle River Valley is reported to be above national averages.

Drinking behavior is strongly correlated with peer influence this is shown in research reports and in this survey data. Freshman students report having few friends who drink, however, students

from the same cohort two years later report having a statistically significant greater numbers of friends who drink. Therefore, as students progress through high school the number of their friends who drink increases. Below is a graph that illustrates the correlation between older students who increasingly think it is not wrong to drink, and the increas-





ALCOHOL

ing number of friends they know who drink.

Gender differences: Drinking behavior between gender groups was not statistically significant, but there are a few subtle differences. Males report drinking more than females, males drink more days in a 30 day period and drink more on those days. Females, though it did not deter their drinking habits, were more likely to report they felt it was wrong to drink at their age [Females - Very Wrong to a Little Wrong, 91%, Males - 85%].

Ethnic differences: Drinking behavior between ethnic groups was not statistically significant, but there were a few subtle differences. White males drank heavier than their Hispanic counterparts. Hispanic parents were reported as being stricter about drinking overall. This had some but not real significant impact on drinking behavior.



What needs to be addressed: Summarizing the self report data from 2007-08, students from the Eagle River Valley reported that they started drinking earlier in life, and that they are drinking more than the national average for teens their age. Eagle River Valley students by far feel it is easy to get alcohol, 65 percent.

Research indicates that underage drinking can impede the development of coping skills. Coping skills are needed for ordinary stresses of everyday life and occasional crisis. If a teen substitutes the mind altering affects of alcohol or drugs, instead of developing these coping skills, their emotional development is impaired.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2002 alcohol-related traffic fatalities constituted almost 37 percent of all fatal youth traffic fatalities. The report states that youths who drive after drinking are more likely to be in an accident than youths who have not had a drink. Also the accidents underage drinkers are involved in tend to be more severe than those of adults, resulting in a greater number of deaths and more serious injury. The majority of students report using their seatbelts, however, they also report that the more they drink the more likely they are to ride in a car driven by someone who has been drinking, or drive themselves.

What can be done: In the past, programs to prevent underage drinking solely focused on preventing teens from having access to alcohol at high school activities, such as prom, sport events, parties, etc., and to keep kids from harm.

Studies have shown that underage drinking and alcohol abuse among teens is part of a bigger substance abuse issue. There are proven links between underage drinking and adult alcoholism, substance abuse, crime, and health problems. With this new emphasis underage drinking prevention has broadened its goals, to prevent harm to the individual drinker and to prevent harm to society.

Below, is some published advice from the surgeon general on what to watch for and what one can do as a parent or family member.

ALCOHOL

While many teens drink alcohol, underage alcohol use is not inevitable. Families are not helpless to prevent it. Focus your efforts on the factors that protect teens from alcohol use. At the same time, you can work to reduce the factors that increase the chance that they will drink.

Be aware of factors that may increase the risk of teen alcohol use.

- Significant social transitions such as graduating to middle or high school, or
- getting a driver's license.
- A history of conduct problems depression and other serious emotional problems
- A family history of alcoholism.
- Contact with peers involved in deviant activities.

Be a positive adult role model.

If you drink yourself, drink responsibly. That means not drinking too much or too often.

Stay away from alcohol in high-risk situations. For example, don't drive or go boating when you've been drinking. Get help if you think you have an alcohol-related problem

Use positive strength based support.

Support your teens and give them space to grow.

Be involved in your teens' lives. Be loving and caring.

Encourage your teens' growing independence, but set appropriate limits.

Make it easy for your teens to share information about their lives.

Know where your teens are, what they're doing, who they're with, and who their friends are.

Find ways for your teens to be involved in family life, such as doing chores or caring for a younger brother or sister.

Work with others.

No matter how close you and your teens are, it may not be enough to prevent them from drinking. It's hard for families to do this alone. It's important to reach out to schools, communities, and government.

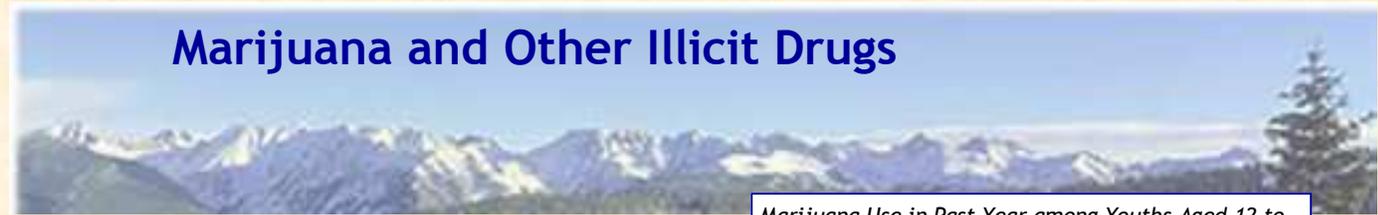
You can help protect teens from underage alcohol use by working to see to it that—

- Schools and the community support and reward young people's decisions not to drink.
- Rules about underage drinking are in place at home, at school, and in your community.
- Penalties for breaking the rules are well known.
- Rules are enforced the same way for everyone.
- All laws about underage alcohol use are well known and enforced.
- Parties and social events at home and elsewhere don't permit underage drinking.

Source: The Surgeon general's call to action <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/underageddrinking/FamilyGuide.pdf>



Marijuana and Other Illicit Drugs

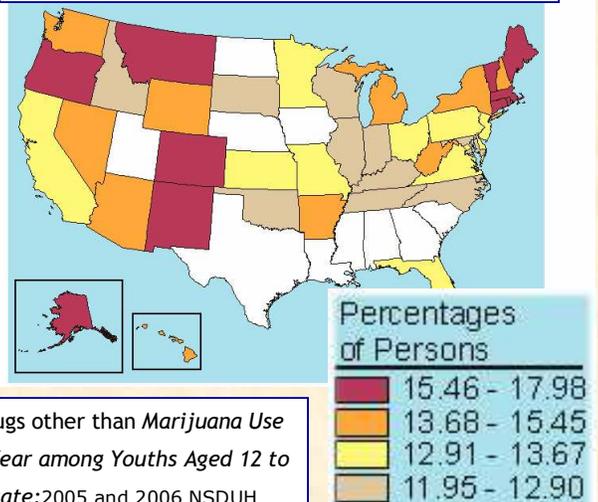


Introduction: According to their report, *Adolescents at Risk: Illicit Drug Use, 2002* by Urvia McDowell, M.S. and Ted G. Futris, Ph.D., "By age 14, 35 percent of youth have engaged in some form of illicit (illegal) drug use. By the end of high school, more than 50 percent will have tried at least one illicit drug. Teens that begin using illicit drugs before the age of 15 are more likely to develop a life-long dependence on illegal substances."

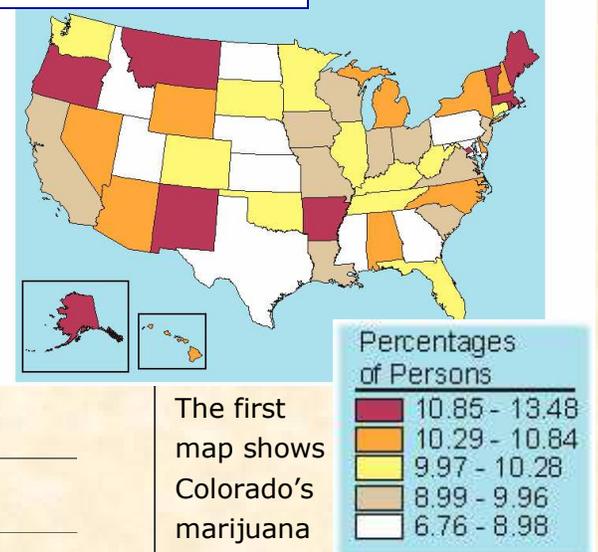
This report lists many of the consequences of illicit drug use including the "development of health problems such as anxiety disorders, phobias, and depression. Drug use is linked to higher tolerance of deviance resulting in criminal behavior. Ultimately drugs increase the likelihood of death resulting from overdose and engagement in other high risk behaviors."

The overall findings: The maps to the right from SAMHSA2005, show marijuana use and other illicit drug use in the past year by those ages 12 to 17.

Marijuana Use in Past Year among Youths Aged 12 to 17, by State:2005 and 2006 NSDUH



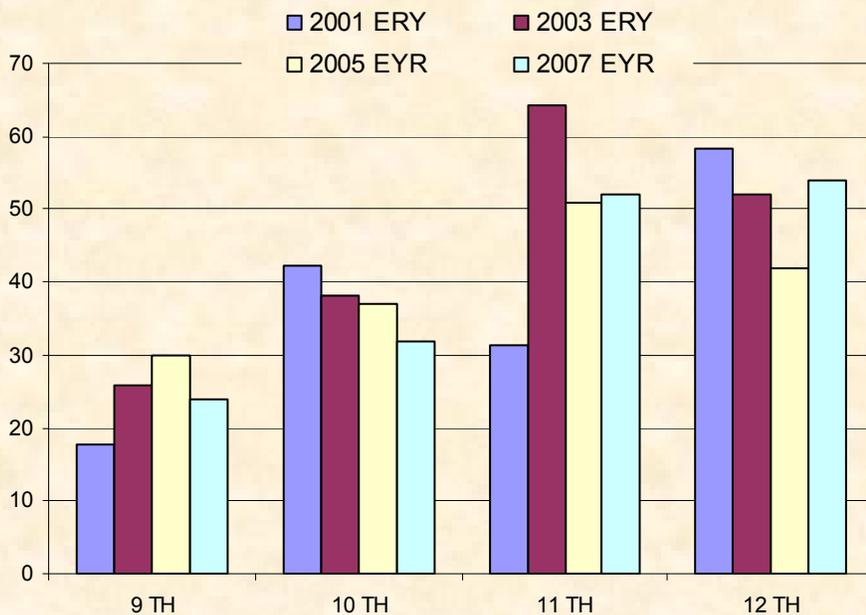
Illicit Drugs other than Marijuana Use in Past Year among Youths Aged 12 to 17, by State:2005 and 2006 NSDUH



The first map shows Colorado's marijuana rate between 15.46 and 17.98 which is one of the highest rates in the nation. The Second map shows the annual usage of other drugs than marijuana, Colorado shows a rate between 9.97 and 10.28.

According to the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey 2007 (HKC07-08) the rate for local Eagle River Valley students currently engaging in mari-

Ever used Marijuana in life time by grade and Survey year



SOURCE: HKC0708, ECC01-05

Marijuana and Other Illicit Drugs

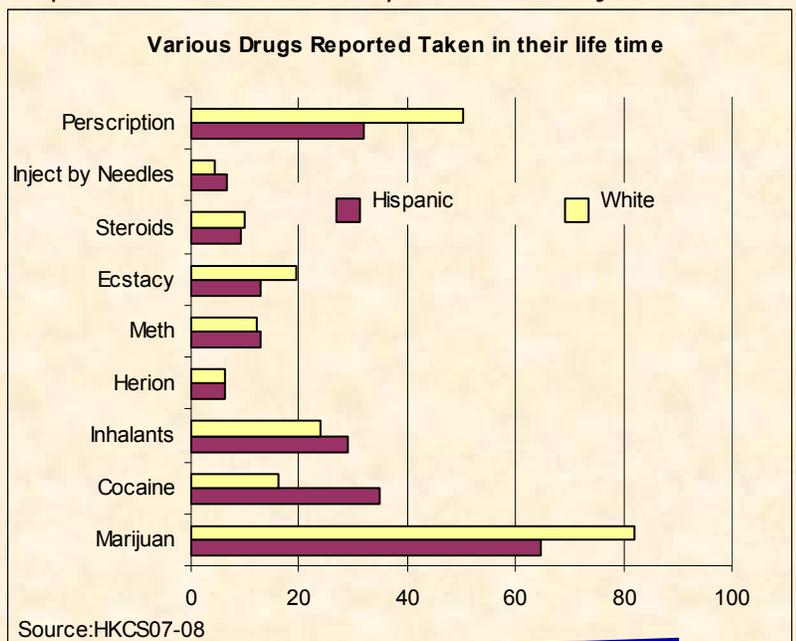
juana use is 19.2, or 151 out of 788 students, which lower overall compared to the 2001 and 2003. When looking at only marijuana use, 34 percent of the students report ever using marijuana. By grade level, the juniors and seniors have the highest rates, 52 and 54 percent respectively. According to the current survey Eagle River Valley youth rates are higher than the national rates in having tried any other drug than marijuana.

Illicit drug use: Any Type	Number	Rate among students HKCS07-08	National Rates source: CDC YRBS:2007
How many times used cocaine - lifetime	103	12%	7.2
How many times used inhalants-lifetime	123	14%	13.3
How many times used heroin - lifetime	45	5.2%	2.3
How many times used meth - lifetime	65	7.6%	4.6
How many times used ecstasy - lifetime	79	9%	4.8
How many times used steroids - lifetime	55	7%	3.9
How many times used prescriptions drugs	182	24.5%	15 *
How many times used needle to inject illegal drug-lifetime	38	5.1%	2.4
How many times used marijuana - past 30 days	151	19%	20.5
How many times used marijuana - lifetime	281	35%	40.4

Marijuana in the Eagle River Valley area seems to be easily accessible. Of those who report doing drugs in their life time 77.3 percent, report that marijuana is very easy or sort of easy to obtain. Of those who reported never doing drugs, 38 percent perceived it was also easy to obtain marijuana.

Gender differences: Males (34.9), in the HKC07-08 report doing drugs more often than females (29.8).

Ethnic differences: There are large differences in current marijuana use between Hispanic and Whites: [Hispanics 15 percent, Whites 25.1 percent]. Those reporting they had ever used marijuana in their lifetime, [Hispanics 30 percent, and Whites 38.8 percent.] To the right is a graph comparing the reported drug use differences. White students reported using marijuana, ecstasy, steroids, and prescription drugs in greater numbers

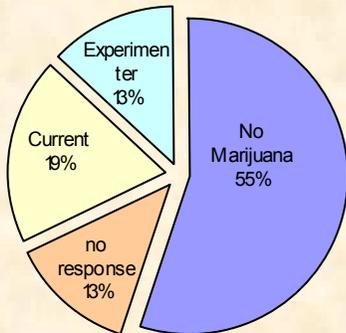


Marijuana and Other Illicit Drugs

than Hispanics. However, Hispanic students reported using Cocaine, Meth and inhalants, and inject drugs in greater number. .

What needs to be addressed: The majority of the students that reported having used drugs, 85 percent, felt that it was wrong or very wrong for someone their age to use illegal drugs or to deal drugs. However, it appears that acknowledging or knowing drug use is wrong does not prevent use. Drug use is associated with a variety of negative consequences, including increased risk of serious drug use later in life.

RAND Health, in their 2007 article³, make a distinction between those who experiment and those who



Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2007
Marijuana

are consistent users of marijuana and other drugs. The report contends that those who do not participate in drugs at all and those who only experimented and discontinued using drugs in their teen years do better in school, have less personal and emotional problems, go to college more often and over all have better success in life than those who are were current users.

What can be done: According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Fact for Families (1998), parents can prevent their children from using drugs by talking to them about drugs, open communication, role modeling responsible behavior, and recognizing and getting help if problems develop.

Warning signs of teenage alcohol and drug abuse may include:

Physical: fatigue, repeated health complaints, red and glazed eyes, and a lasting cough.

Emotional: personality change, sudden mood changes, irritability, irresponsible behavior, low self-esteem, poor judgment, depression, and a general lack of interest.

Family: starting arguments, breaking rules, or withdrawing from the family.

School: decreased interest, negative attitude, drop in grades, many absences, truancy, and discipline problems.

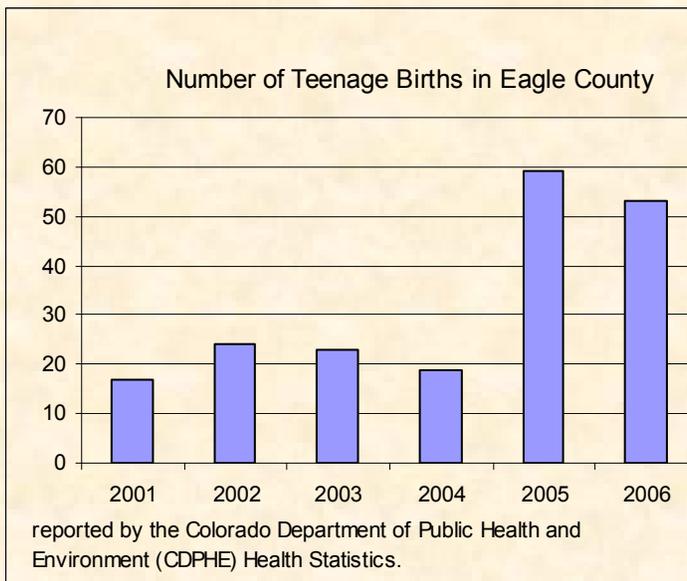
Social problems: new friends who are less interested in standard home and school activities, problems with the law, and changes to less conventional styles in dress and music.

Also see appendix C for risk and protective factors pertaining to drug use.

Sexual Behavior

Introduction: The issues surrounding teen sexual behavior range from abstaining from sex, HIV and other STDs, date rape, and teen pregnancy. Facts from SMSHA 2007 highlight that 14 percent of high school students have had 4 or more sex partners. Multiple partners expose teens to a greater risk of getting HIV or other sexually transmitted diseases.

The overall findings: According to the Eagle County Health and Human services, the number of teenage pregnancies in Eagle County has doubled since 2004.



In the Healthy Kids Colorado 2007 survey, only about a third of the students responded at all to the section on sexual behavior, therefore the data is not reliable (See past year comparisons). The sexual behavior reported does not reflect the rising number in teen births, nor does the number coincide with the number of respondent who reported they were forced to have sex. When looking at the HKC07-08 data conclusions will be sketchy, therefore this section will report the national and state data on teen sexual behavior also.

Eagle CARES Survey Past Year Comparisons					State and National Comparisons			
Sexual Behavior	Year	Total	Male	Female		Total	Male	Female
Ever had intercourse	2007	15%	8%	9%	US	47.8	49.8	45.9
	2005	34%	36%	33	CO	39.3	41.3	37.2
	2001	29%	26.6	31.7	US	45.6	48.5	42.9
	2000	37%	35.5	38.2	US	49.9	52.2	47.7

The table on the following page, illustrates that nationally teen risk behavior is increasing, the percentage of condom use is down and the number of multiple partners is up.

Gender differences According to national data, males report greater rates of high risk sexual behavior than females. Males report having sex earlier, ten percent reported having sex before the age of 13, versus four percent of females. Seventeen percent of males reported having had

Sexual Behavior

National YRBS data	2001	2003	2005	2007
Ever had Sexual intercourse	45.6	46.7	46.8	47.8
Used a condom	57.9	63	62.8	61.5
Had sex with four or more partners	14.2	14.4	14.3	14.9

more than four partners, 11.8 percent of the females reported having multiple partners. Males who reported taking drugs or drinking alcohol before having sex was 27.5 percent versus 17 percent of females.

Ethnic differences: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention² youth who are persons of color, low-income, immigrants, and gay or lesbian, disproportionately experience teen pregnancy and or HIV/STI infection. The HIV/AIDS epidemic is a serious threat to the Hispanic/Latino community. In addition to being a population seriously affected by HIV, Hispanics/Latinos continue to face challenges in accessing health care, prevention services, and HIV treatment. In 2005, HIV/AIDS was the fourth leading cause of death among Hispanic/Latino men and women aged 35 to 44.

What needs to be addressed: Based on the data reported, the areas that need to be addressed are the risk of pregnancy, and STD/HIV infection, especially at a time, as the report says, "when young people are sexually active, and sexually ignorant."

There is a plethora of help and information available on risk and protective factors, developmental assets, and what can be done as an individual, family member, friend or as a community. Below are just a couple ideas related to what works. A more extensive list is available in websites listed in appendix C.

In a list of developmental assets, one is personal power. Personal power is relevant when it comes to sexuality. First teens need a strong understanding of all the risk factors involved around sex; it is no longer just about getting pregnant. Teens need healthy and positive role models to learn what love and relationships are about. Love and support from friends and family can reduce the need to seek love, touch, and human connection in less healthy ways. Helping teenagers to set and attain set goals is a great way to promote the development of a mindset that fosters a sense of the future.

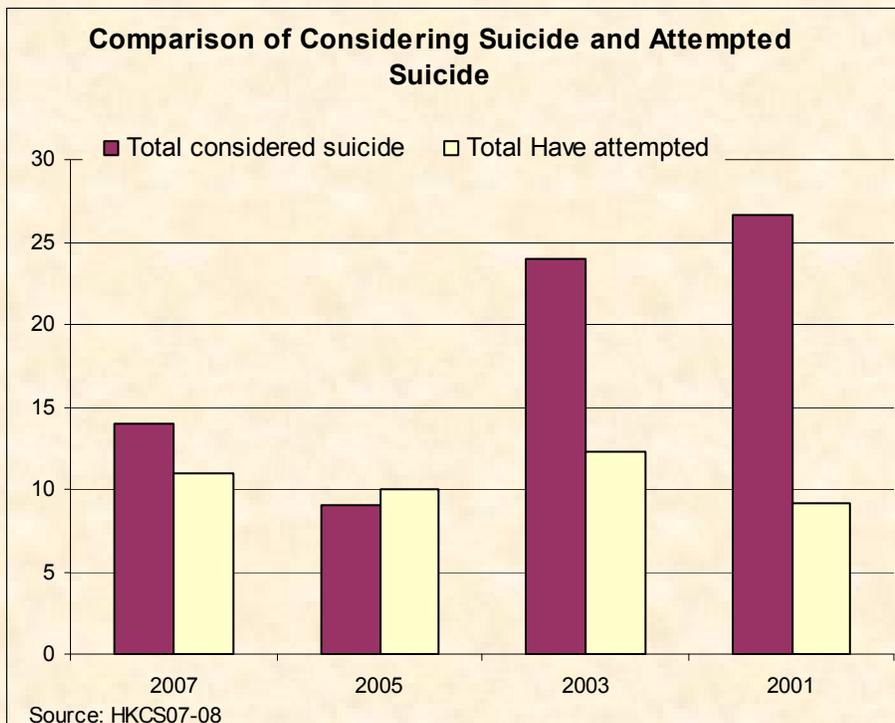
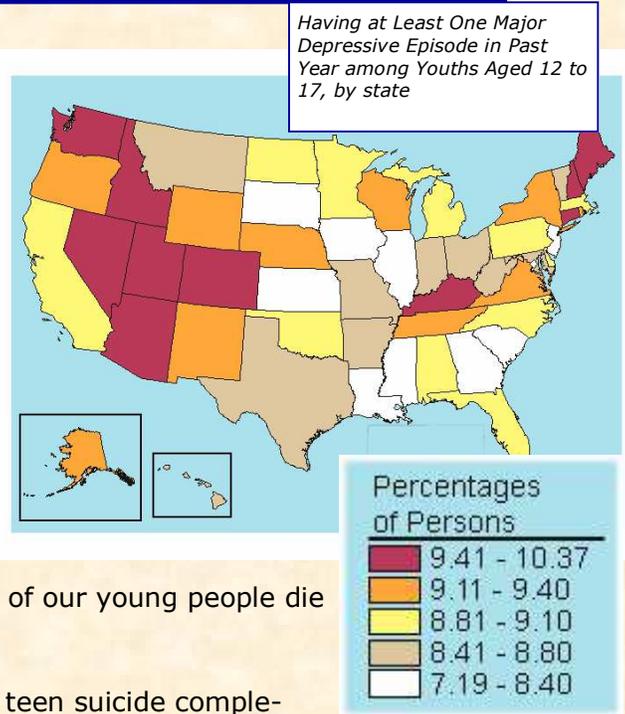
²Thrive Guide: A Survival Manual for Young People Living With HIV Originally by Health Initiatives for Youth. Reviewed & Updated Mar., 2004 and HIV/AIDS among Hispanics/Latinos Updated October 2008

Depression and Suicide

Introduction: Youth suicide is a major public health problem in the United States. According to the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, (SAMHSA), suicide is the third leading cause of death for young people 15 to 19 years old. No reliable statistics exist for suicide attempts, because many are not reported. If a child is treated at the hospital, the incident may not be reported as a self-inflicted injury.

In the report, Preventing Youth and Adult Suicide By R.J. Fetsch, C.L. and D. Whitney (5/08). Suicide is the leading cause of death by injury for youth and adults in Colorado. Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among children, teenagers, and young adults. Every year 250,000 youth attempt suicide. Everyday close to 11 of our young people die by suicide in the US.

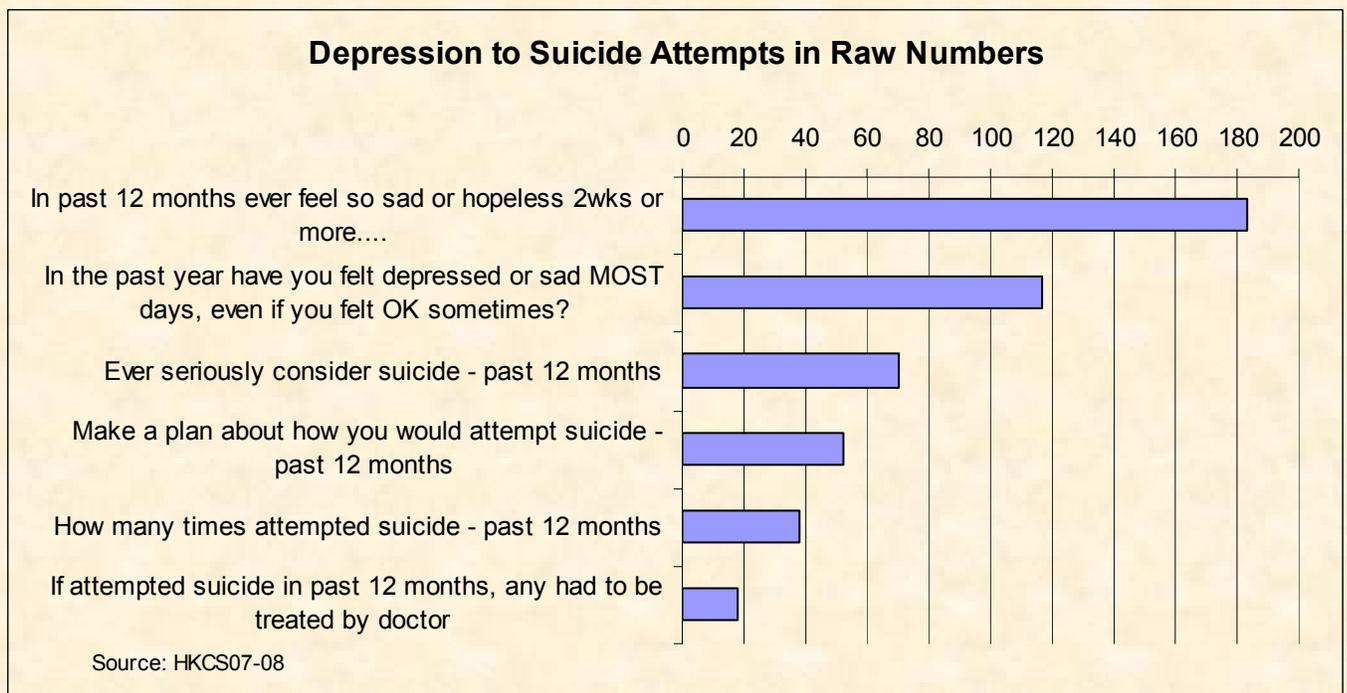
Psychiatric disorders have been identified in 90 percent of teen suicide completions, and mood disorders such as depression are most commonly diagnosed. However, it is important to remember that some adolescents commit suicide without showing signs of depression and many depressed adolescents do not commit suicide.



and those who reported they attempted suicide since 2001. This current survey year 2007-08, a total of 105 reported they considered suicide, and a total of 85 reported they attempted suicide.

Depression and Suicide

To understand what affect depression has on suicide, data from the HKCS07-08 was use to compare depression against suicide attempts. There were 183 students who responded yes to the question: "In the past 12 months did you ever feel so sad or hopeless for 2 weeks or more". These 183 were cross referenced with answers to the questions of whether they seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months; made a plan about how they would attempt suicide in the past 12 months; and how many times they attempted suicide in the past 12 months. As illustrated in the graph the number of to actually attempting suicide and had to be treated by a doctor is 18 total.

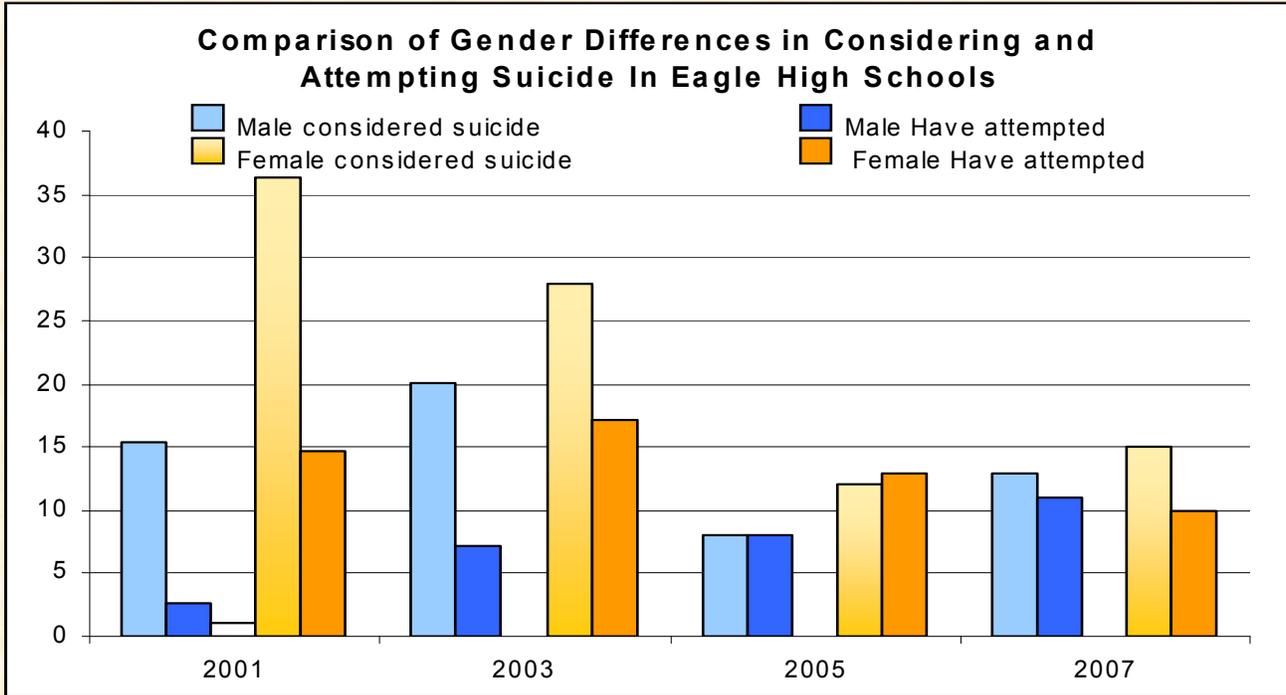
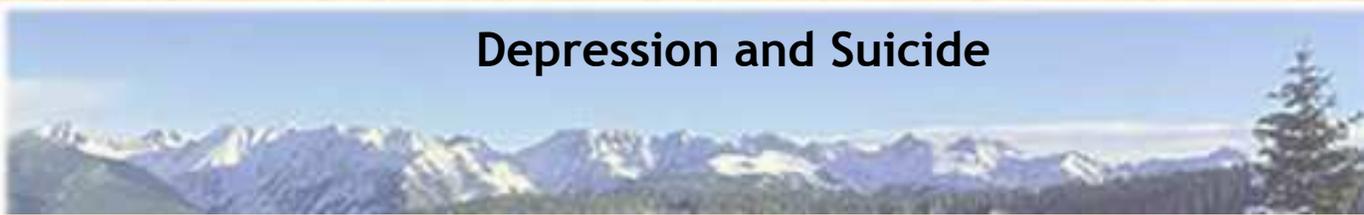


Gender differences: As you can see overall numbers related to suicide appear to be dropping since 2003. However, suicide statistic for males have increased. Research shows that suicide affects groups of students differently. Where females may attempt suicide more often overall then males, more male attempts are fatal. This is because males often use more lethal means such as firearms, hanging, or jumping, whereas females will take poison or cut themselves.

Ethnic differences: The rate for attempted suicide is higher for Hispanics, 11.1 percent, than Whites at 9.1 percent. Which corresponds to national statistics. According to the Center for Disease Prevention, 11 percent of Hispanic students said they had attempted suicide. The data from the HKCS07-08 was did not contain reliable responses to find what correlated with this outcome.

What needs to be addressed: Research indicates that there are specific behaviors associated

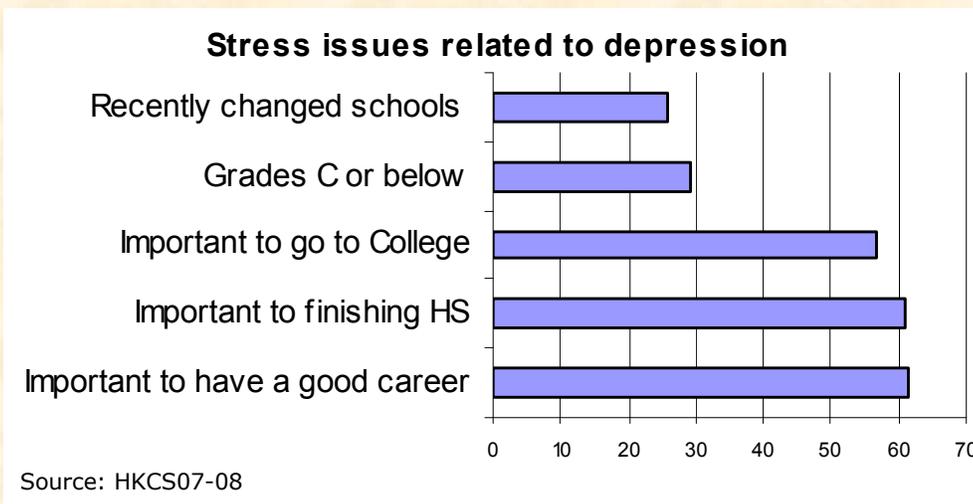
Depression and Suicide



Source: HKCS07-08

with depression, (HKCS07-08). The behaviors reported were substance abuse, violence to themselves or others, getting arrested or suspended from school. Other factors from the HKCS07-08 that affect depression and suicide ideation were stress and pressure to be successful, and alienation from friends and family. Looking at the charts, the stress to finish high school, have a good career, and go to college are big factors with most of the students reporting depression.

There is strong evidence that drugs and alcohol exacerbate a student's depression. Twenty percent of those reporting depression also indicate having all the risk factors and behaviors that point to



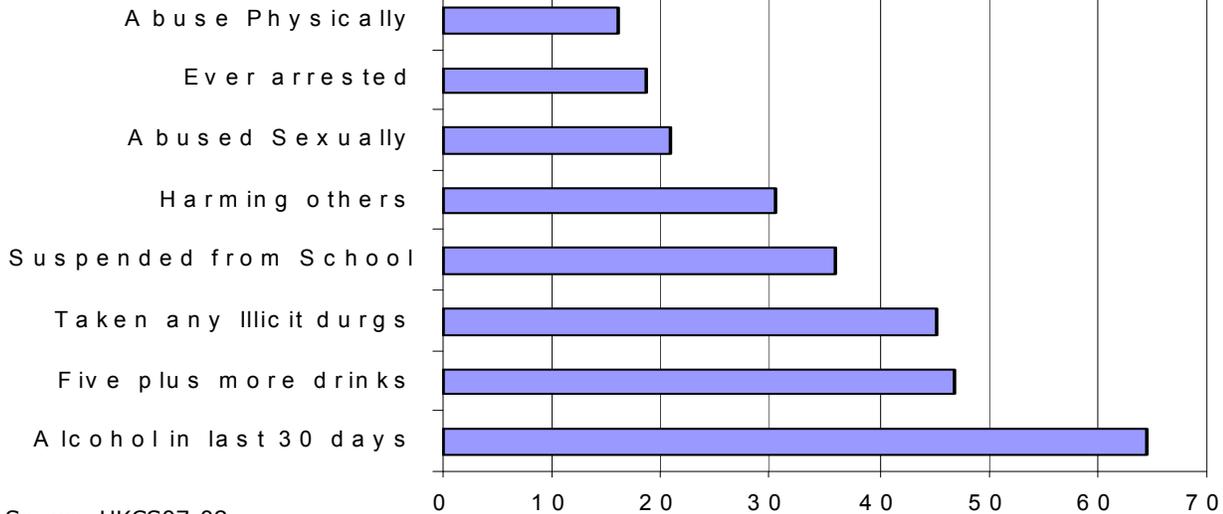
Source: HKCS07-08

deep issues of depression, anti social behaviors, and strong suicide ideation. (HKCS07-08) However, the majority of students who reported feeling depressed, were not likely to attempt suicide because of strong social connections outside their families and most reported not being involved in a large range of anti social behaviors.

Depression and Suicide



Experiences Identified with Depression

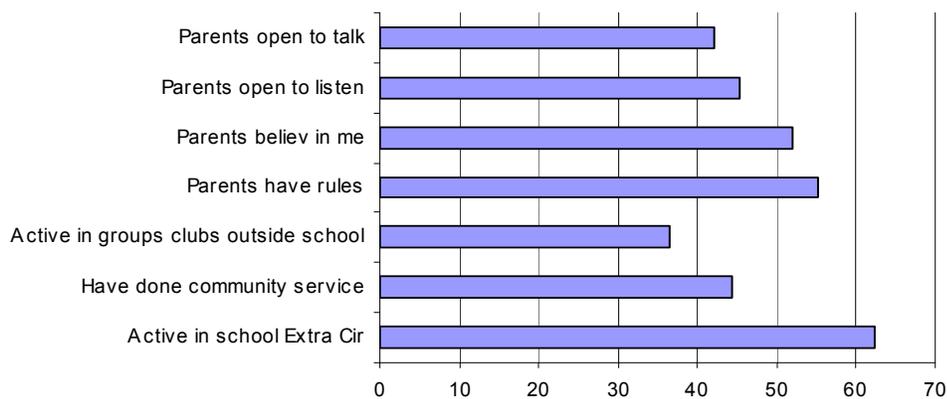


Source: HKCS07-08

What can be done: The survey responses show that a lot is already being done in the Eagle River Valley to help teens cope with depression.

Many of the relationships reported in the survey seem to be positive. As illustrated in this graph, most parents, over 50 percent, believe their teen will be a success and most parents have house rules. Rules and boundaries are stabilizing for adolescents who feel life is not under their control.

Relationship issues Identified with Depression

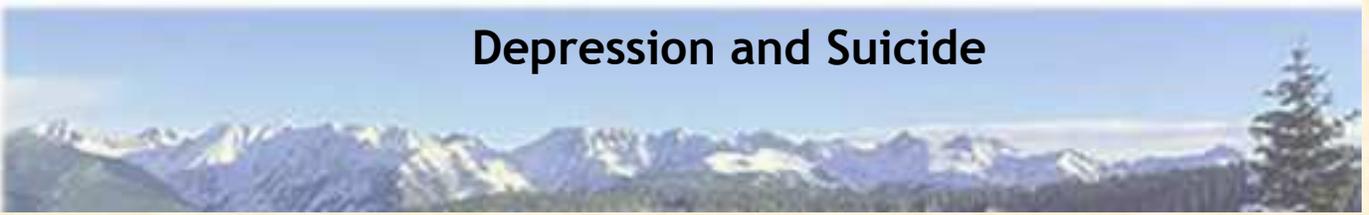


Source: HKCS07-08

The previous graph also indicates that over 60 percent of the students who reported being depressed, are active in extracurricular activities, both in and out of school. This strengthens relationships with the community and peer bonding.

In Appendix C, there are websites, and organizations are listed that give great advice on helping depressed teens.

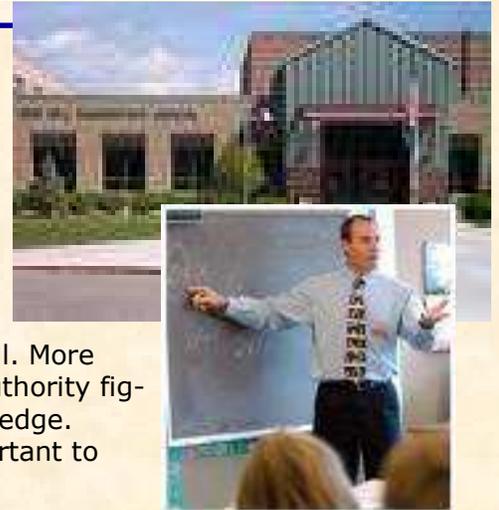
Depression and Suicide



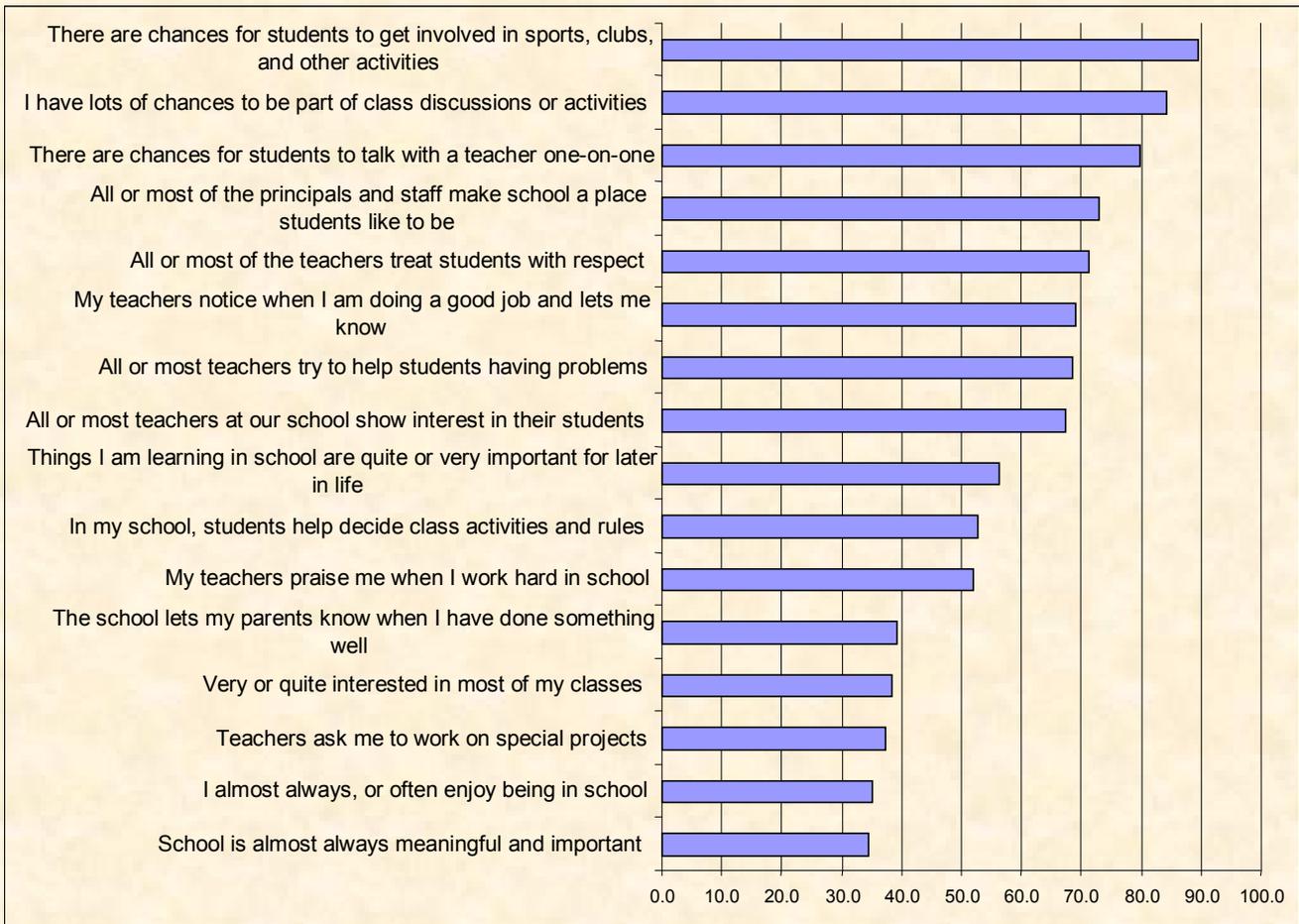
Schools and Violence

Introduction: Education is a doorway to the future. Social advancement, financial security, and career opportunities are all the benefits of a good education. Education benefits the local communities, Colorado, and the nation by creating a workforce that is productive, innovative, and self-sustaining.

According to Kubie, a noted psychoanalyst, educational attainment is a road that encompasses more than just curriculum. Education encompasses emotional and social development as well. More specifically, education includes; relationships with parents and authority figures, group dynamics, interpersonal relationships, and self knowledge. These dynamics are on-going everyday in classrooms. It is important to realize these dynamics when looking at the following statistics.



The overall findings Below are many of the responses from the HKC07-08 survey from questions pertaining to school, interaction with teachers, and classes. The greatest percent of positive responses are at the beginning and recede as the list progresses. Overall most students found school interesting and the teachers interested in the students.



Schools and Violence

Violence is covered in this section because school is a setting where students are all brought together under one roof, and often, it is here that many violent or threats of violence are acted out. The 2007 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey covered violence and safety issues in high schools nationwide and reported the following statistics. For comparison, the statistics are combined with data from the HKC 07-08 survey, and are presented in the text box below.

Weapons

Nationwide, 6 percent carried a weapon, such as a gun, knife, or club, on school property.

The HKC07-08 survey reported 12 percent.

Nationwide, 8 percent had been threatened or injured with a weapon, such as a gun, knife, or club, on school property.

The HKC07-08 also reported 8 percent.

Physical Violence

Nationwide, 36 percent were in a physical fight.

HKC07-08 reported, 29.4 percent.

Nationwide, 12 percent were in a physical fight on school property.

According to the HKC07-08, 14.5 percent of the students reported fighting on school property.

Nationwide, 10 percent were hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend.

The HKC07-08 survey reported 10.9 percent.

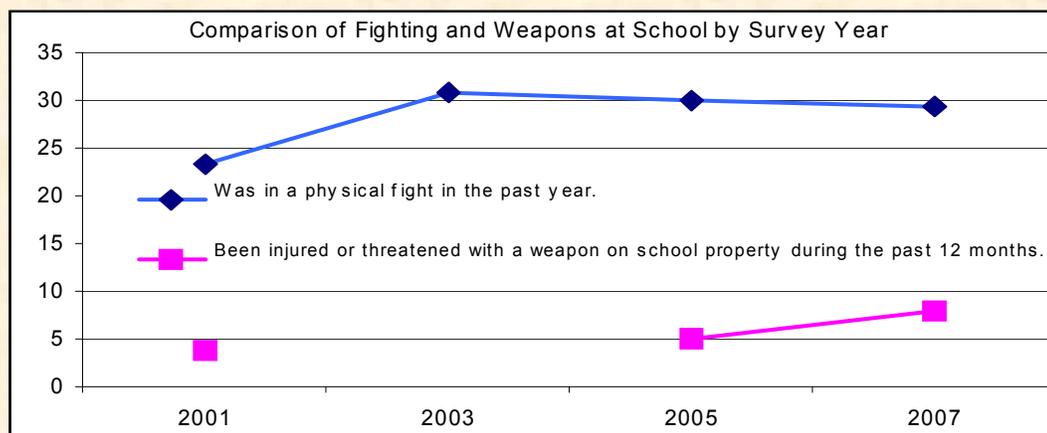
Security

Nationwide, 6 percent did not go to school because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school.

The HKCS07-08 reported 8.6 percent.

Nationwide, 27 percent had property, such as a car, clothing, or books, stolen or deliberately damaged on school property.

The HKCS07-08 reported 35.2 percent of students having their property stolen or damaged.



According to the HKC07-08 survey, in the past year, high school students in the Eagle River Valley reported being as violent, or more violent, than the average number of students, nationwide. Fighting has been in the 30 percent range consistently since 2003, and the numbers reporting weapons at school show an increase between 2005 and 2007.

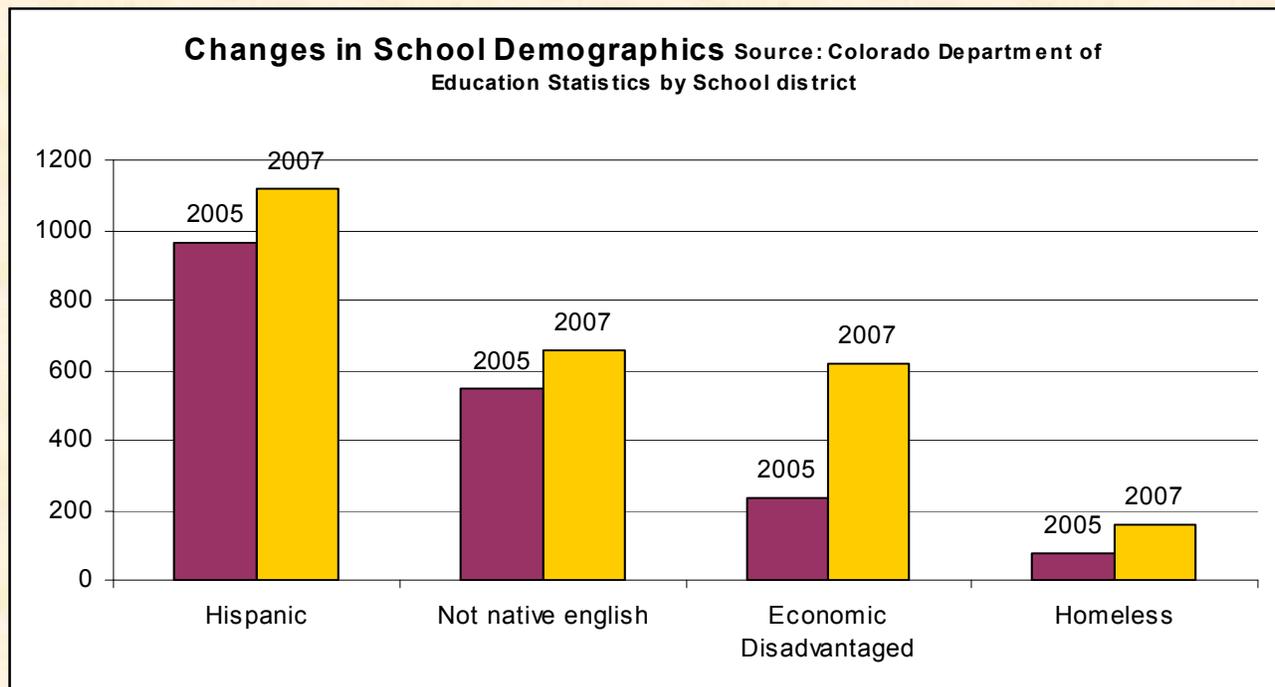
Schools and Violence

Gender differences: A few gender differences exist in the areas of risk behaviors and school involvement and interest. Males got into more fights (M- 40 percent, F-20 percent) and had more security issues than females. Females responded more frequently that they felt all or most teachers respected the students (F-74 percent, M-68 percent). More females reported having more one on one discussions with teachers (F-82 percent M-76 percent) than males. Females felt more confident in making A's and B's than males (F-83.6 percent, M-67.8 percent). On the other hand, more males responded they believed in the importance of what they were learning for later in life than females (M-61.6 percent, F-52.4 percent).

Ethnic differences: The Hispanic students who responded to questions about learning and interaction with teachers at school thought very highly of their teachers and the school in general. Over 70 percent of this group responded that they felt the teachers showed interest in the students, and they helped students who had problems. These Hispanic students felt that most, or all ,the teachers treated students with respect.

But often with survey data respondents pick and choose what questions they will or will not answer. it is significant when a defined group respondents does this. Frequently such a series of non responses can indicate disaffection or estrangement for the subject. When students were asked about how they felt about the school atmosphere, teachers, class interests, and sports or extracurricular opportunities, more than a third, and sometimes as many as 47 percent of the Hispanic students did not answer.

This non response rate is significant when compared to the 20 to 27 percent non-response rate of white students. For example: The question, 'Do teachers at your school show interest in their students', had a non response rate of 41 percent from Hispanic s and a 21 percent non response rate from White Students. Other questions like, how often you got in a fight on school property, had a 99 percent response rate from Hispanic students so not all school related questions were skipped. This

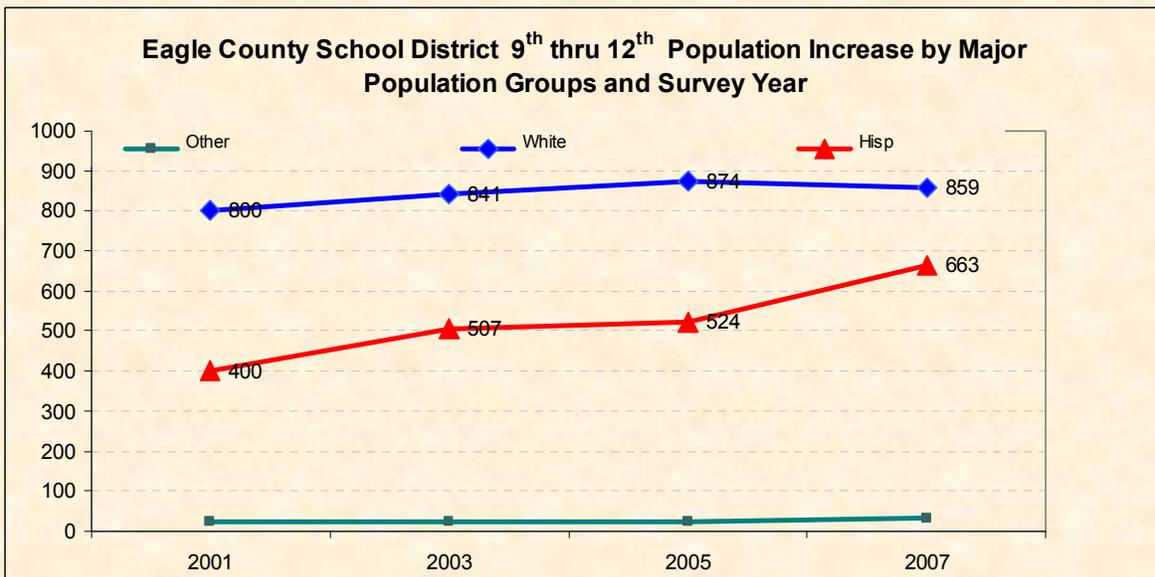


Schools and Violence

presents a question of whether the lack of interest in answering questions about class and school involvement means that many Hispanic students are hostile, unsympathetic, or indifferent towards school in general. By looking at other criteria this evidence of estrangement may be supported or rejected.

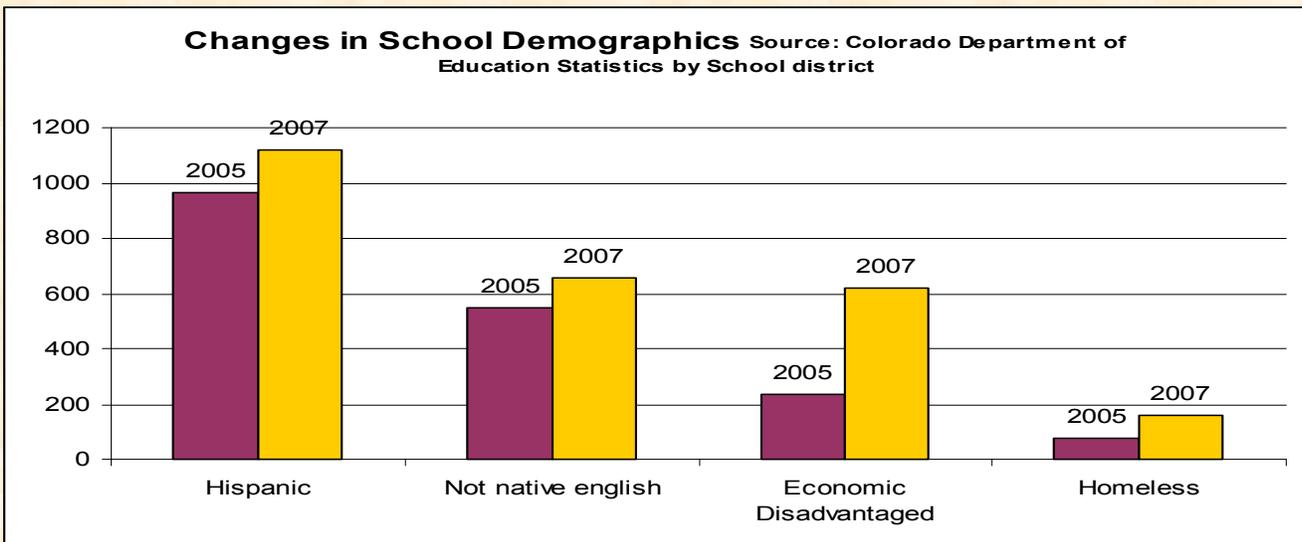
What needs to be addressed: Behavior is acted out in a context; disengagement, hostility, or indifference does not happen without cause. Other social indicators may put the trend of violence, and disaffection in and around school into perspective.

The graph below shows that there has been a tremendous influx of in-migration into the Eagle River Valley since 2001, causing demographic changes in the public schools.



Source : Colorado Department of Education

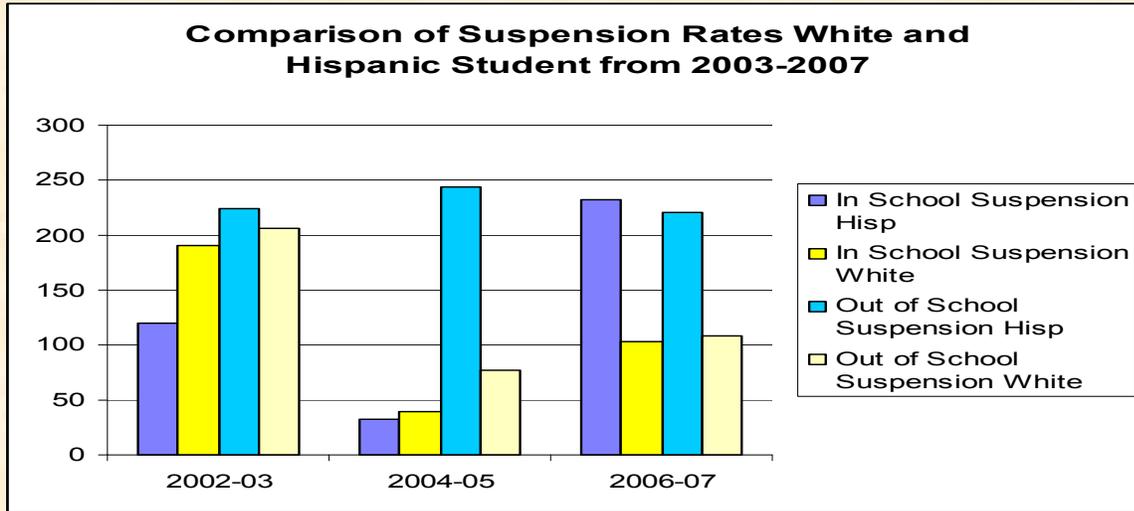
The Colorado Department of Education recently included social indicators on their yearly reports. The graph below demonstrates that along with tremendous growth in population the number of economically disadvantaged and homeless youth has increased in the Eagle school district.



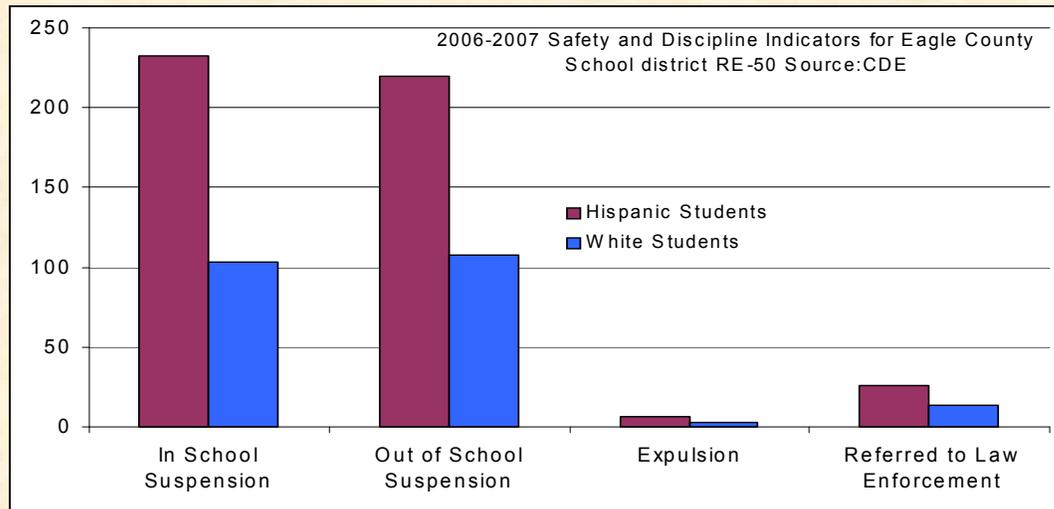
Source : Colorado Department of Education

Schools and Violence

School district disciplinary actions reflect these changes in demographics. In 2002-03 suspension rates were relatively close to the same between Whites and Hispanics, but in 2004-05 there was a significant difference that has continued to the 2006-07 year.



Source: Colorado Department of Education



The dropout rate for Hispanic students in the Eagle County schools is 9.2 percent. This is higher than the state's rate of 7 percent. This rate is reflected in the receding number of Hispanics as they progress through high school, [9th grade, 47%, 10th grade, 37%, 11th grade, 36%, 12th grade 25%]. Perhaps some of the recession is from demographic shifts, but not likely. When looking at persistence from 9th grade until graduation, since 2003 each of the Hispanic cohorts lost over 50 students due to dropping out. Therefore, the graduating class of 2004 and on has lost well over 50 Hispanic students amounting to over 200 dropouts. For White student the highest number lost to dropping

Schools and Violence

out was 21, the total White students lost since the 2003 would be closer to 80.

What can be done: According to survey data (HKCS07-08) it is apparent that school, graduating, going to college, and jobs and careers are important to the majority of students in the Eagle River Valley. School can build upon these factors to help decrease risk behaviors, and reach out to the pockets of students who resist traditional forms of intervention.

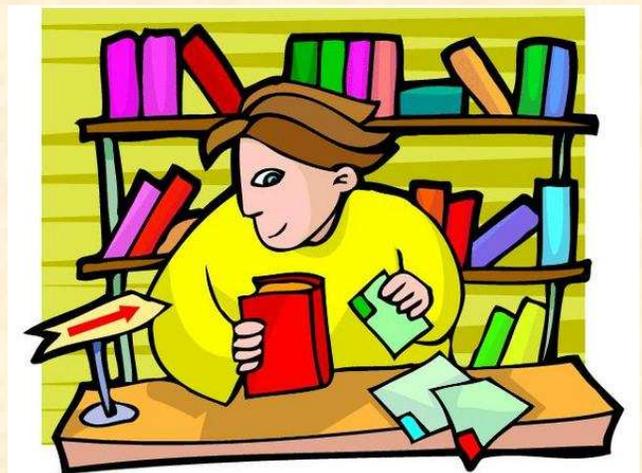
The implementation of programs that increase school protective factors is important. For example, programs or curriculum that create avenues for academic success, reinforces the development and practice of life skills, and drug/alcohol refusal skills have all proven to be successful. Other actions that have outcomes for success are programs that support opportunities for creating strong bonds between the families of newcomers and the school, and actions that build on creative ways to highlight student's achievement and identity. It must be emphasized that creating these protective factors are not up to the school alone.

The whole community must help create successful protective factors. According to the preventive model, one way to deal with teen risk behavior is to strengthen the communities that they live in. Develop neighborhoods where atmosphere, appearance, and safety are important. Inadequate, crowded, or costly housing can pose serious problems to children's well being.

Research into risk and protective factors indicates that strengthening families, improving parenting skills, and helping families to establish strong, and consistent norms about alcohol and other drug use can help prevent violence and other related problems.

Today, many of the most effective prevention programs that are based on the risk and protective factor model may never mention "violence", "alcohol", or "substance abuse". They are designed to offset risk factors and strengthen the protective factors that help to prevent inappropriate risk taking behaviors.

(See the back reference page and Appendix C for more details on preventive and risk factors models.)



PARENTING

Introduction

Research shows that parents who develop a strong supportive relationship with their children continue to have a strong influence in their behavior as they grow into adulthood. Experts encourage parents that their teens still need guidance in the young adult years of growing independence. Even when teens rebel or show disregard for parental guidance, there is strong proof that parents matter when teen are faced with important decisions.

The overall findings: In the 2007 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKCS07-08) students reported their perceptions of parental attitudes about how wrong it is to engage in high risk behaviors, stealing, graffiti, fighting, cigarette smoking, underage drinking, marijuana and heavy drug use.



Source:HKCS07-08

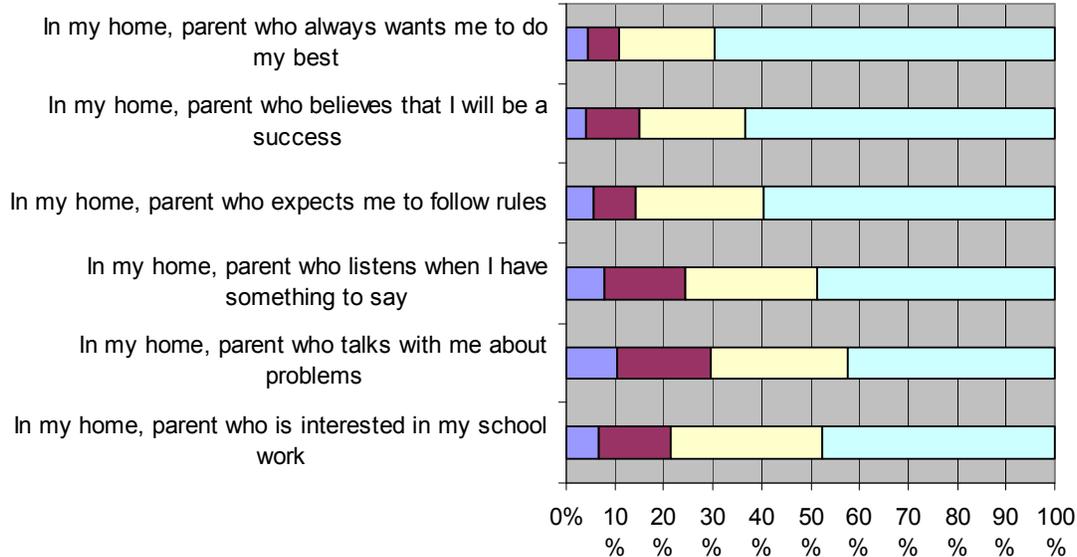
Teens also reported on how they perceived their parent or guardian's participation in certain *good parenting* practices (enumerated below.)

In my home there is a parent or guardian who:
is interested in my school work.
talks with me about problems.
listens when I have something to say.
expects me to follow rules.
who believes that I will be a success.
always wants me to do my best.

PARENTING

Good Parenting Skills

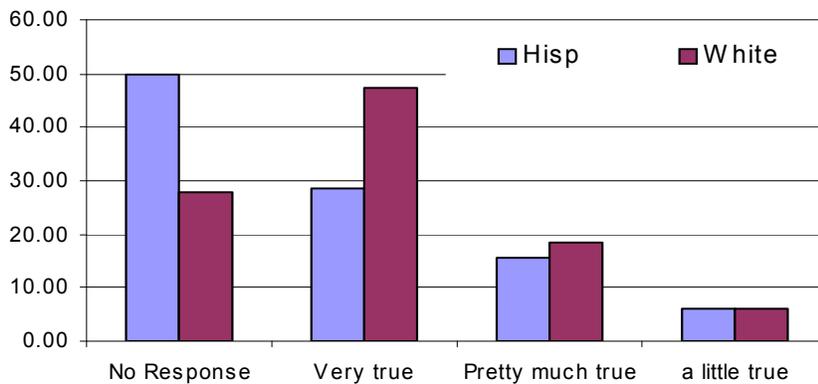
■ Not true
 ■ a little true
 ■ Pretty much true
 ■ Very true



Source:HKCS07-08

Ethnic differences: The biggest differences between Hispanic students and White students reporting about parenting skills was the response rate. A large number of Hispanic students did not respond to many of the questions about the 'good parenting' practices. One reason for this may have been they did not fully understand the questions, or the response choices which were: Very much true, Pretty much true, A little true, and, Not at all true. However, they did respond to the questions about their parents attitudes of how right or wrong it was for teens their age to participate in high risk behaviors.

Aggregate Responses to Good Parenting by Ethnicity



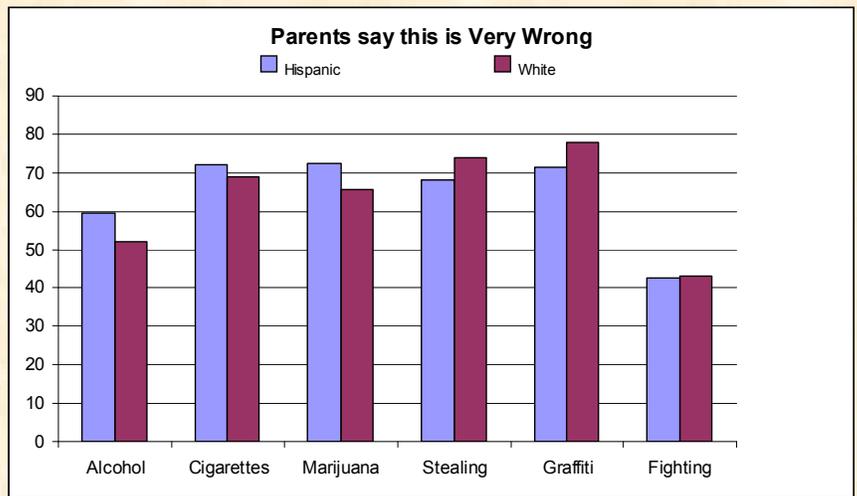
Source:HKCS07-08

Hispanic teens report their parents were more strict than white teen parents. Unfortunately, when looking for strong associations with risk behaviors, it is *not* how the parents feel about the behavior that affects the risk behavior of their teens, it is peers. Statistically it is peers that influence underage drinking, marijuana and drug use more than what parents feel is

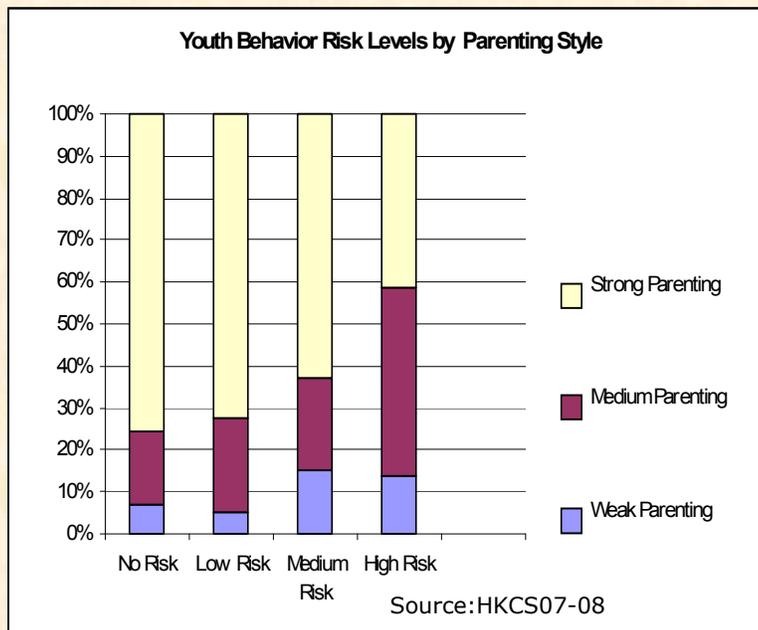
PARENTING

right or wrong.

What can be done: Parents exhibit the greatest influence on teens through the parenting variables. These variables influence the student who suffers from depression. It is because of the effect these variables have that many students valued their future. Such as getting a high school diploma, going to college, and valuing a career or job. Valuing their future had a positive influence on their overall use of drugs and alcohol. Also, the students that reported good parenting behaviors were positive towards the learning environment, the teachers, and the school staff.



Source:HKCS07-08



Source:HKCS07-08

For example, the group of students who reported not doing drugs, drinking alcohol, smoking also had the highest number reporting the positive parenting behaviors. Such as talking with their students, listening, and setting appropriate rules, caring about school work and who believe the best about their teenager. Conversely, the high risk teens, who do a lot of drugs, drinking alcohol, and smoking reported that their parents did little if any of these things.

According to Advocates for Youth out of Washington D.C. strong parenting skills include:

- Being involved with your teen, in the processes of growing up.
- Being a positive role model,
- Remaining connected, giving attention and love to your maturing teenager.
- And promoting a sense of the future.

For more information on parenting go to Appendix C.

Summary



Eagle County has undergone significant population and demographic change since 2001. The cost of living in the area is much higher than most of the United States, and is one of the highest in the State of Colorado. Here are a few general statistics about living in Eagle County. The median household income is **above** the state average. The annual wage is significantly **below** the state average. The median house value is **significantly above** the state average. The unemployed percentage is **significantly below** the state average. The Hispanic race population percentage is **significantly above** the state average. The foreign-born population percentage is **above** the state average. The Median rent for a 2 bedroom house is **above** the state average. The length of stay since moving in is **significantly below** the state average.

According to the Healthy Kids Colorado 2007 survey, the youth risk behavior in the Eagle River Valley is as follows:

Tobacco use is **up** from 2005.

Underage drinking is **up** from 2005.

Binge drinking is **up** from 2005.

Marijuana use is **down** from 2005.

Other illicit drug use is **up**.

Violence is **up**.

Depression is **up** since 2005.

Suicide is **down** for females.

Suicide is **up** for males.

Risk factors seem to outweigh the number of protective factors for a large portion of the population in the Eagle River Valley .

It is evident that the large numbers of people moving into the area has increased the number of teens reporting risk behavior. Because of the low wages and high cost of living, many youth of working age are probably working while attending school. This impedes upon the available time for community and extra curricular programs that they could benefit from. It is also likely that in many families both parents work, and they may be working more than one job. Such a work schedule is not conducive for interacting with their teenager. In many instances parents are working more and rely on siblings to take care of one another. It is in such situations that the community needs to help meet the needs that living in the community has created.

It is a natural part of adolescent development to try risky behaviors. Unfortunately if those behaviors are not channeled into positive experiences like sports, the arts, and other activities the risk impulse can become dangerous to the teen and the whole community. The Eagle River Valley is home to world renown resorts. The vacationing, playground, and party atmosphere that is generated in a resort has many pitfalls for the youth growing up in these areas. Living in a high risk

SUMMARY

community, a resort community, not only heightens the prevalence and accessibility of drugs and alcohol, but it creates a process of social norming. The resort mentality normalizes risk behavior like drinking alcohol and taking drugs. Consequently teens are surrounded by an indulgent atmosphere where they often feel pressure to fit in.

Below is a list of factors⁵ associated with illicit drug use. Compare this list with the reality of many living in the Eagle River Valley.

"Factors associated with increased risk for any type of illicit drug use include at least one or more of the following:

Poor parent-child relations. *Studies show that living in a stressful home environment with relatively little parental support and monitoring places adolescents at greater risk for drug use.*

Family environments that model drug use. *Adolescents are more likely to use drugs if someone in their home uses drugs. For example, parents who use drugs may practice poor parenting which may increase the risk of drug abuse for adolescents. Also, parental or sibling drug use sets a model of acceptable inappropriate behavior for teens, makes it seem like a normal part of life, and may encourage its acceptance by youth.*

Peer drug use. *During adolescence, peers become a major influence because of the increased time spent with them outside of the home. Some teens feel pressured to fit in and do what their friends are doing. Consequently, teens that have friends who use drugs are more likely to use drugs themselves.*

High risk communities. *Living in communities where drug use is widespread not only makes drug accessibility easier, but also normalizes the act of using drugs.*

Low self-esteem. *Adolescents who do not have positive views of themselves, or who lack support and encouragement from others are more likely to use drugs.*

Poor school achievement. *Teens who have negative attitudes toward school and low expectations of academic success are at increased risk of drug use. Also, teens who use drugs typically exhibit declines in grades, and inconsistent attendance at school."*

⁵Copied from <http://ohioline.osu.edu/flm02/FS15.html>, a report cited earlier by Urvia McDowell, M.S., & Ted G. Futris, PhD. *Adolescents at Risk: Illicit Drug Use*, 2002

The greatest increase in population and risk factors, as evidenced by the school data, have come from the Hispanic population. It is clear that the Hispanic population requires more attention. The Hispanic population is not the root problem. Rather problems are rooted in a lack of affordable housing, reasonable wages, a greater range and diversity in activities and sports, more diversity in high school teachers, counselors, and school administrators, just to name a few.

On the following page is a ⁶list of protective factors published on the web from Helping America's Youth (HAY). These factors are good starting places for discussions on effective strategies for community leaders and agencies.

⁶Source: the White House at: <http://guide.helpingamericasyouth.gov/programtool-factors.cfm>

SUMMARY

School

School motivation/positive attitude toward school
Student bonding and connectedness (attachment to teachers, belief, commitment)
Academic achievement/reading ability and mathematics skills
Opportunities and rewards for pro-social school involvement
High-quality schools/clear standards and rules
High expectations of students
Presence and involvement of caring, supportive adults

Community

Economically sustainable/stable communities
Safe and health-promoting environment/supportive law enforcement presence
Positive social norms
Opportunities and rewards for pro-social community involvement/availability of neighborhood resources
High community expectations
Neighborhood/social cohesion

There are many areas that can be improved, with individuals, families, schools, peers and communities. The most important protective factor of all is that all programs must start well before the youth advances into high school. Throughout this report research has pointed out that risk behaviors and outcomes are worse the earlier a teens starts to engage in them. The research on smoking, underage drinking, drug use, and risky sexual behaviors point out that if a person starts early in life the more likely they will continue the behavior into adulthood.
