

# Key Findings from the 2022 Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors

Partners in Prevention (PIP) is Missouri's higher education substance misuse consortium dedicated to creating healthy and safe college campuses. The coalition is comprised of 24 public and private colleges and universities in the state. The campuses in the coalition work to prevent high-risk behaviors by implementing evidence-based strategies. These strategies include education, social norming campaigns, policy review and enforcement, and more. To measure progress and obtain data needed for the implementation of programs, PIP created the Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors (MACHB) Survey. The MACHB is an annual, online survey that has been implemented each spring since 2007. The survey assesses the roles that alcohol, drugs (illegal and prescription), tobacco/nicotine, interpersonal violence, and mental health concerns have on student health and well-being.

## The following are key findings from the 2022 MACHB survey (N=6,705):

### Alcohol Use

Most Missouri college students (65%) report using alcohol in the past 12 months. Binge-drinking (defined as a pattern of drinking that brings a person's blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08 g/dl or above, which typically means consuming 4+ drinks for women and 5+ drinks for men in a two-hour period at least once in the past two weeks) is a high-risk alcohol use behavior that PIP closely monitors each year. The binge-drinking rate increased to 24% in 2022 from 21% in 2021, one of the first increases in statewide binge-drinking since 2017. However, this is still below the national average of around 33%<sup>1</sup>. Of students who binge-drink, approximately 6.8% engage in frequent binge drinking, defined as binge-drinking 3 or more times in the past two weeks.

### Underage Alcohol Use

Most Missouri college students who have consumed alcohol in their lifetime report that they first started drinking before age 21 (64%). Fifty-five percent (55%) of underage Missouri college students report

consuming alcohol in the past 12 months and 22% of underage students report binge-drinking in the past two weeks (an increase from 18% in 2021). Underage students report that they obtain alcohol in a variety of ways, the most common being from over 21 friends (28%), from parents (8.4%), or from an under 21 friend who has a way to obtain alcohol (7.6%) \*

### Consequences of Alcohol Use

The MACHB tracks consequences and related behaviors of alcohol use experienced at least once in the past 12 months, shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Consequences of Alcohol Use (Past 12 Months)**

Hangover	37%
Vomited	29%
Blackout/memory loss	17%
Missed class	12%
Rode in a car with a driver who had been drinking	12%
Driven after drinking	9.1%
Forced, pressured, or coerced to drink more	7.8%
Hurt/injured	7.5%
Performed poorly on a test/assignment	6.2%
Alcohol poisoning	2.9%

**Hazing in Group Organizations**

84% of Missouri college students are currently involved in campus activities or organizations. The definition of hazing is having to participate in an expected activity as a condition of joining a group, though students are often hesitant to label these activities as ‘hazing’ so this term is not used in the survey questions. While most students (87%) have not had to participate in expected activities as a condition of joining the group, 13% have. The top 3 activities that students report experiencing are ‘singing/chanting alone or with group members in public, not related to an event, game or practice’ (3.7%), ‘participating in a drinking game’ (3.0%), and ‘depriving yourself of sleep’ (2.6%)\* Seventeen percent (17%) of these students considered at least one of the activities to be humiliating, degrading, abusive, or a danger to self/others, regardless of anyone’s willingness to participate in the activities.

**Cannabis Use**

The percentage of students who report using cannabis in the past 12 months remained steady at 27% in 2022 and approximately 12% of students report using cannabis one or more times per week. Of students who report using cannabis, 36% report driving after use at least once in the past 12 months. Related to perceptions of others’ use, though 71% of students have not used cannabis in the past year, only 7.6% of students believe that their peers do not use cannabis. Among students who use cannabis, about one-quarter (26%) have intentions to change the way they use (thinking about, feeling ready, or currently trying to use cannabis less often or quit).

Only about 1 in 10 (9.7%) students report having a medical card/prescription for cannabis in Missouri. Additionally, 15% of Missouri college students have used a CBD (cannabidiol) product in the past year, and while CBD is legal to purchase, it is not well regulated and can contain THC (tetrahydrocannabinol, the psychoactive component in cannabis).

New questions about cannabis were added to the 2022 survey about traveling to obtain cannabis and intentions to use cannabis if it were made legal for

adult/recreational use in Missouri. Sixteen percent (16%) of students say they have traveled to another state to purchase cannabis at least once. Over half (54%) of students say they would not start using cannabis if it were made legal for adult/recreational use, 24% said yes, they would, and 20% said they are unsure.

**Illegal and Prescription Drug Use**

Approximately 5.4% of students report using at least one illegal drug (not including cannabis) in the past 12 months and use rates of various types are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Illegal Drug Use (Past 12 Months)	
Other drugs (ecstasy/MDMA, LSD, PCP, mushrooms, etc.)	4.8%
Cocaine	1.7%
Heroin	0.4%

Approximately 6.3% of Missouri college students report prescription drug use without a doctor’s prescription in the past 12 months. Additionally, 4.9% of students with a valid prescription report using in a manner other than prescribed in the past 12 months. Of students who report misuse of either type, 29% have combined them with alcohol at least once, which can have serious health effects. Rates of misuse both with and without a prescription are shown in table 3.

Table 3: Prescription Drug Misuse (Past 12 Months)		
	Without valid prescription	Own prescription
Stimulants (Adderall, Ritalin, etc.)	3.1%	1.5%
Pain medications (Oxycontin, Vicodin, etc.)	1.5%	1.7%
Benzodiazepines/sedatives (Xanax, Valium, etc.)	1.2%	0.9%
Sleep medications (Ambien, Halcion, etc.)	1.1%	0.9%

**Tobacco and Nicotine Use**

Twenty-four percent (24%) of Missouri college students report using tobacco/nicotine products at least once in the past 12 months. Usage rates for various types

are as follows: e-cigarettes/vaporizers – includes JUUL/ Puff Bar, etc. (20%), cigarettes (9.2%), cigars (3.3%), smokeless tobacco (2.4%), and hookah (2.0%). The MACHB surveys from 2019-2021 included JUUL as a separate product category, but in 2022 was grouped into the e-cigarette/vaporizer category. \*Among students who have used e-cigarettes in the past year, almost half (46%) report using every day.

In 2022, new questions were added to the survey about consequences of tobacco/nicotine use experienced in the past 12 months, the most common being feeling restless when unable to access tobacco/nicotine (17%), feeling irritable/frustrated/angry when unable to access tobacco/nicotine (17%), and needing to take a tobacco/nicotine break to make it through academic events such as class, webinars, etc. (15%).\* Other new questions focused on motivations for wanting to quit using tobacco/nicotine, the top 3 being ‘not wanting to have a habit I will regret’ (54%), the high cost of tobacco products (47%), and the potential for getting sick/developing a lasting disease (46%).\*

**Interpersonal Violence**

Almost one-third (31%) of Missouri college students report experiencing an abusive relationship in their lifetime, and 15% report an abusive relationship in the past 12 months.

Approximately 24% of Missouri college students report experiencing non-consensual sexual contact (NCSC) in their lifetime, and 6.5% report NCSC in the past 12 months. Of all NCSC, 4.9% occurred while the student was attending their current college or university. The majority of NCSC occurred off-campus and not related to university events (42%) or on-campus in residence halls (18%) \*.

Approximately 5.6% of Missouri college students report experiencing stalking in the past 12 months, and the most common tools/methods to make students feel fearful include cell phones (50%), social networks (49%), or showing up in-person outside their residence (25%). \*

**Well-Being**

In 2022, questions about stress levels were included in the survey, and 38% of students report that their stress in the past 2 weeks was overwhelming or unbearable. The most common source of stress is school/academics (89%), followed by financial concerns (52%) and time management (52%) \*.

Other well-being questions related to typical hours of sleep and thriving/flourishing are also included on the survey. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of students report that they get 7 or more hours of sleep on a typical school night. Questions on flourishing related to feelings of purpose, being engaged, and having positive self-esteem were reported highly among students, with the average score on the flourishing scale being 44.66 (on a scale ranging from 7 to 56). [Click here](#) for more information on the flourishing scale from Diener et al.

Finally, questions related to food insecurity in the past 30 days are included on the survey. Students who report sometimes, very often or always experiencing issues with food security are shown in table 4.

Table 4: Food Insecurity (Past 30 Days)	
I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals	28%
I worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more	27%
The food I bought just didn't last and I didn't have money to get more	19%

**Mental Health**

Missouri college students self-report experiencing issues related to mental health in the past 12 months, the most common being anxiety (70%), depression (55%), panic attacks (30%), and chronic sleep issues (28%). \* Students are also asked to report if their mental health concern had been diagnosed by a mental health or medical professional. Half (50%) of those who had experienced a mental health concern had not received a diagnosis, 34% report being diagnosed with an anxiety disorder, and 23% report being diagnosed with major depression. \*

For students who had experienced a mental health concern in the past 12 months, 9.2% did not seek assistance. For those who did seek assistance, their primary source of assistance was friends/family (35%), an off-campus mental health provider (32%), an off-campus medical doctor (29%), or the college/university counseling services (17%).\*\*

### **Suicidality**

Almost half (47%) of Missouri college students report having suicidal thoughts in their lifetime, and 25% of students report suicidal thoughts in the past 12 months. In the past 12 months, 2.1% of students report attempting suicide. For those who had thoughts or attempts in the past 12 months, 37% sought assistance. The most common places students primarily sought assistance were an off-campus mental health center (31%), family/friends (26%), or the college/university counseling services (18%). Additionally, 59% of Missouri college students have been concerned about a friend having suicidal thoughts or exhibiting suicidal behaviors in the past 12 months.

## Summary

Partners in Prevention continues to monitor the critical health behaviors of college students. Data

consistently shows that academic achievement and retention are impacted by the health, safety, and well-being of students. Substance misuse, experiences of interpersonal violence, and mental health concerns are intersectional issues that impact students' ability to succeed and thrive while attending institutions of higher education. Comprehensive and evidence-informed prevention and health promotion practices are an investment in the lives of students and the overall campus environment. For more information about Partners in Prevention and to explore our research, visit [mopip.org](https://mopip.org).

Contact Partners in Prevention at (573) 884-7551.

\*question is select all that apply

\*\*question is select up to 2 choices

Report prepared by Margo Leitschuh, Communications Coordinator. Data prepared by Kayleigh Greenwood and Meg Mottola, Research Coordinators, and Hope Edwards and Emily Kiernan, Research Interns. Published July 2022.

#### Citations

1. SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Statistics and Quality. 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Table 6.21B—Types of Illicit Drug, Tobacco Product, and Alcohol Use in Past Month among Persons Aged 18 to 22, by College Enrollment Status and Gender: Percentages, 2018 and 2019. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt29394/NSDUHDetailedTabs2019/NSDUHDetTabsSect6pe2019.htm#tab6-21b>