

MISSOURI PARTNERS IN PREVENTION, MISSOURI COLLEGE HEALTH BEHAVIOR SURVEY

Partners in Prevention (PIP) has served as the Missouri higher education alcohol prevention consortium since 2000. Consisting of 21 public and private colleges and universities, the members of PIP focus on lowering college student underage and high-risk drinking, impaired driving, and other risky health behaviors. In order to achieve healthier and safer campus communities, lower the high-risk and underage alcohol use rates, campuses implement strategic plans for prevention which include evidence-based strategies. These evidence-based strategies include educational efforts, social norming campaigns, policy review and enforcement, and the implementation of approaches to address the riskiest drinkers on campus. To identify progress of our goals, and to obtain data for program implementation, PIP created the Missouri College Health Behavior Survey (MCHBS). The survey, modeled after the CORE Alcohol and Drug Survey, is an annual, online survey implemented each spring semester since 2007. Questions on the MCHBS assess alcohol and drug prevalence, negative consequences associated with drinking and protective behaviors among college students. In addition, the survey measures other health behaviors such as tobacco use, gambling, and risky driving behaviors along with a measure of mental health concerns.

PARTNERS IN PREVENTION SCHOOLS:

- Columbia College
- Drury University
- Evangel University
- Harris-Stowe State University
- Lincoln University
- Linn State Technical College
- Maryville University
- Missouri University of Science & Technology
- Missouri Southern State University
- Missouri State University
- Missouri Western State University
- Northwest Missouri State University
- Rockhurst University
- Southeast Missouri State University
- Saint Louis University
- Truman State University
- University of Central Missouri
- University of Missouri
- University of Missouri-Kansas City
- University of Missouri-St. Louis
- Westminster College

IMPLEMENTING THE MCHBS

Once Institutional Review Board approval is gained on each campus, a random sample of approximately 25% of student email addresses is obtained based on the most recent enrollment information. Samples are typically requested from the campus Registrar's Office. Research indicates that females are more likely to respond to campus-based surveys, so the samples are stratified, 60% male to 40% female. Exceptions are applied to campuses with a disproportionate male enrollment.

Most campuses implement the survey over a 2-3 week period in February or March. Reminder emails are sent to students who have not yet chosen to participate. Approximately 20% of the students complete the survey for each campus, representing a random sample of roughly 5% of the total student population. Twenty percent (20%) return rates are consistent with national averages of campus-based alcohol prevalence surveys. Research supports that a random selection of 5% of the population is sufficient to provide appropriate reflections of the campus population.

While a 5% return rate may appear low, it is consistent with most national opinion polls. A typical sample size for Gallup is around 1,000 adults from across the country, and their results are generalized (± 4 points) to the country as a whole (over 230 million Americans). As stated by Gallup: "Broadly speaking, the actual number of people that need to be interviewed for a given sample is to some degree less important than the soundness of the fundamental equal probability of selection principle" (Gallup, 2010). Essentially, by randomly selecting students, and conducting the survey with fidelity, the results obtained from 5% of the population are generalizable to the student body. In the 2012 implementation of the MCHBS, the overall response rate for the PIP21 schools was 25%. This indicates that the MCHBS was able to capture over 6% of the student population at our 21 colleges and universities in Missouri.

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