

Health Behaviors of Missouri College Students from Low-income Counties

Partners in Prevention (PIP) is a statewide coalition dedicated to creating healthy and safe college campuses in Missouri. PIP tracks students' high-risk behaviors through the annual implementation of the Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors (MACHB) survey. The student demographic information and responses from students on health behaviors are collected from the 2019 survey. This brief focuses on differences in alcohol use and drug use when comparing students from Missouri's 10 lowest income counties to students from Missouri's 10 highest income counties who attend colleges and universities in Missouri.

Alcohol and Other Drug Use

According to the 2019 MACHB, students from the 10 lowest and the 10 highest income counties (based on median household income) reported significant disparities in health-related behaviors. Students from the 10 highest income counties reported that they are more likely to drink in the past year (77%) when compared to students from the 10 lowest income counties (67%). Students from high-income counties are also more likely to use marijuana (32%), K2 (3.2%), cocaine (4.3%), heroin (0.2%), and any illegal drugs other than marijuana (11%) when compared to students from the lowest income counties (19%, 2.7%, 0.0%, 0.0%, and 8.1% respectively). High-income counties students are also more likely to use marijuana (32%), K2 (3.2%), cocaine (4.3%), heroin (0.2%), and any illegal drugs other than marijuana (11%) when compared to students from the lowest income counties for use marijuana (19%), K2 (2.7%), cocaine (0.0%), heroin (0.0%), and any illegal drugs other than marijuana (8.1%). In addition, students from the highest income counties are more likely to engage in binge drinking (25%) compared to students from the lowest income counties (16%).

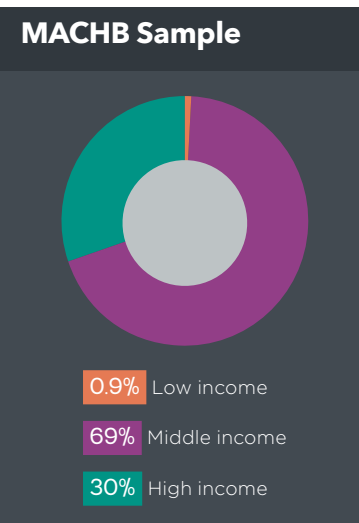
Academics and Sense of Belonging

According to the survey, students from both the highest and lowest income counties reported the same GPAs (high-income county students: 3.40;

low-income county students: 3.40). Moreover, the students from the highest income counties are more likely to agree or strongly agree that they feel a sense of belonging (68%) when compared to students from the lowest income counties (65%).

Demographics

The most significant finding from the survey is the difference in the number of students from Missouri's highest income counties compared to those of Missouri's lowest income counties attending colleges and universities in Missouri. Of the 9,752 students surveyed in the MACHB, only 90 identified as being from the 10 lowest income counties (0.9%) compared to 2950 students identified as being from the 10 highest income counties (30%).



Summary

The 2019 Missouri Assessment of College Health Behavior Survey reveals that more students from

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the 10 highest income counties drank in the past year, used drugs, binged drinking, and experienced a sense of belonging than students from the 10 lowest income counties. Students from either the highest or lowest income counties achieved similar GPAs. Additionally, students from the highest income counties outnumbered those from the lowest income counties in Missouri. Thus, this may have contributed to the students from the 10 lowest income counties reporting less of a sense of belonging in colleges and universities in Missouri.

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1. U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey
5-Year Estimates

Median Household Income in Missouri¹

Highest Income

1. St. Charles County \$78,380
2. Platte County \$74,199
3. Clay County \$65,675
4. Cass County \$65,352
5. St. Louis County \$62,931
6. Jefferson County \$60,765
7. Lincoln County \$58,603
8. Clinton County \$57,591
9. Ray County \$57,270
10. Andrew County \$56,658

Lowest Income

106. Shannon County \$31,202
107. Wright County \$31,290
108. Ozark County \$32,021
109. Oregon County \$32,070
110. Mississippi County \$32,212
111. Dunklin County \$32,348
112. Pemiscot County \$32,468
113. Douglas County \$33,003
114. New Madrid County \$33,84
115. Ripley County \$33,849