

# Fact Sheet

## Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors

**Missouri Partners in Prevention (PIP) is a higher education substance misuse consortium dedicated to creating healthy and safe college campuses.**

First implemented in 2007, the Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors (MACHB) survey is designed to understand the roles that alcohol, tobacco, drugs (illegal and prescription), mental health, suicidality, and interpersonal violence have on students' health and well-being. The MACHB also collects demographic information and assesses students' attitudes towards campus policies, perception of other students' behaviors, and willingness to engage in bystander intervention behaviors. The survey is administered online each spring to undergraduate students at the 26 PIP campuses. Several campuses also use the tool to survey graduate students on campus. The PIP research team analyzes the survey data and works with campuses to implement evidence-informed strategies for prevention.

### **The MACHB Examines the Following Health Behaviors**

#### **Alcohol Use**

Questions about alcohol are asked in order to gain information about drinking patterns on campus such as who is engaging in alcohol use, how frequently, where alcohol use is occurring, what problematic alcohol-related behaviors occur, students' perceptions of others' alcohol use, and more. This data helps campuses understand their students' behaviors and implement policies, educational programs, social norms clarification and evidence-based strategies, such as BASICS (Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students), to impact alcohol use and abuse on campus. The alcohol related questions comprise the largest section of the MACHB.

#### **Cannabis Use**

Questions about cannabis use are used to gain information such as age of first use, frequency of use, location of use, reasons for use, consequences of use, and perceptions of others' behaviors. The current version of the survey also includes questions about students' use of different forms of cannabis including smoked cannabis, cannabis edibles, cannabis derivatives (wax, dabs, oils, etc.), vaporized cannabis, and any other forms. This data helps campuses understand trends of use, create educational programs, and implement evidence-based strategies, such as brief motivational interviewing.

#### **Illicit Drug Use and Prescription Drug Misuse**

Questions on the MACHB ask students to self-report illicit drug use and misuse of prescription

drugs (either without a doctor's prescription or taking their own prescription in a manner other than prescribed). These questions help determine which drugs are being used and frequency of use. Students are also asked to report how they obtain prescription drugs without a prescription and from whom. This data helps campuses understand trends of drug use to implement policies and best practices such as promoting resources such as safe storage and disposal of prescription drugs.

### **Tobacco and Nicotine Product Use**

Questions related to tobacco/nicotine product use on the MACHB are asked to gain information on what types of tobacco/nicotine products students use, how frequently, and if/how they have tried quitting. This data has helped campuses implement smoke and tobacco-free policies and implement evidence-based practices like tobacco cessation programs to help students quit using tobacco/nicotine products.

### **Mental Health and Suicidality**

Questions about mental health and suicidality on the MACHB ask students to report stress levels and sources of stress, support systems on and off-campus, experiences (and diagnosis of) mental health concerns such as anxiety, major depression, panic attacks, etc., suicidal thoughts and attempts, and help-seeking behaviors. This data helps campuses understand and support the mental health needs of students and to implement best practices such as suicide prevention recognition and referral skills training and social norms clarification to increase help-seeking and reduce stigma around mental health issues.

### **Interpersonal Violence**

Questions about interpersonal violence focus on students' experiences of non-consensual sexual contact, abusive relationships/controlling behaviors in relationships, stalking, and willingness to engage in bystander interventions to reduce violence. This data provides campuses with knowledge about who is being impacted by violence, where the violence is occurring, and what types of stalking and abuse students are experiencing. Campuses then implement evidence-based strategies such as social norms clarification, victim advocacy and support programs, online training programs, and healthy sexuality and relationship programs.

### **Other**

The MACHB also asks questions about other health and wellness topics, some that are cycled in and out of the survey every other year. Questions about policies on campus related to alcohol, other drugs, and sexual violence are included every year as well as students' beliefs of policy enforcement. Students are also asked a few questions about their sense of belonging on campus, which in literature is tied to student retention. A brief section on driving behaviors (including impaired driving) is also included in the current version of the MACHB.

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

Report prepared by Kayleigh Greenwood, Lead Research Coordinator. Published January 2024.