



Community Health Profile

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG USE

The misuse of alcohol and other drugs are important risk factors for chronic disease, death and disability in the United States. An estimated 140,500 deaths annually in the U.S. can be attributed to excessive alcohol use. Alcohol and illicit drug use are associated with unintentional injuries, violence, risky sexual behavior, and illegal behavior, and can lead to liver disease, cancer, heart disease, and neurological and psychiatric problems. Children exposed to alcohol or other drugs during pregnancy can suffer lifelong physical and mental disabilities. Use of alcohol or illicit drugs can lead to dependence in some people, which increases the risk of harmful consequences.

KEY FACTS

Underage drinking in Dakota County has decreased since 1992; however, in 2022, 30 percent of 11th graders used alcohol at least once in the previous year. Seven percent of 11th graders reported drinking five drinks or more on one occasion in the past month.

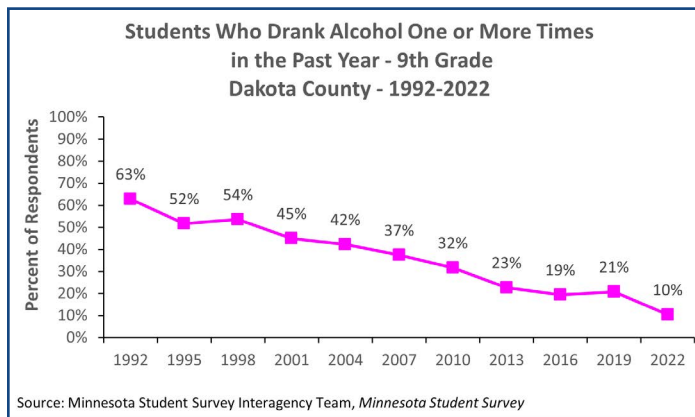
The number of impaired driving incidents in the county decreased from 2018 to 2022, but drinking and driving continues to be a concern.

Marijuana use decreased in 9th graders from 1998 to 2022.

The number of drug overdose deaths increased from 2018 to 2022. This increase was amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Alcohol use by Dakota County youth

- The percent of Dakota County students who reported drinking alcohol one or more times in the previous year generally decreased for 9th graders from 1992 to 2022. In 2022, 10 percent of Dakota County 9th graders and 30 percent of 11th graders reported using alcohol at least once in the previous year, slightly below the state for 9th graders and slightly above the state for 11th graders.



- There was also a decrease in 9th graders who reported frequent drinking (drinking 20 or more times in the past year) from 2004 to 2022. In 2022, Dakota County 9th graders were similar to the state and 11th graders were slightly below the state.
- In 2022, 1.5 percent of Dakota County 9th graders and seven percent of Dakota County 11th graders reported binge drinking (drinking five or more drinks on one occasion) in the past 30 days rates that are slightly below the Minnesota rate for 9th and 11th graders.
- Binge drinking increases by age, peaking between the ages of 21 and 25 for young adults. In 2021, 28 percent of Minnesota college students (aged 18-24) reported binge drinking in the past two weeks.



Dakota County
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Youth access to alcohol in Dakota County

- Seven percent of compliance checks conducted in licensed establishments in Dakota County from 2018 to 2022 resulted in an illegal alcohol sale to an underage person.

Alcohol use by adults

- In 2023, 71 percent of Dakota County adults (25 and older) drank alcohol on at least one day in the previous 30 days, a decrease from 76 percent in 2014.
- In 2023, 10 percent of Dakota County adults were considered heavy drinkers, above Minnesota (eight percent). Heavy drinking is defined as: males who drink more than 14 drinks per week, and females who drink more than seven drinks per week.
- Twenty-four percent of Dakota County adults reported binge drinking in the past 30 days (2023), a decrease from 28 percent in 2019. Binge drinking is defined as: males who drink five or more drinks on one occasion and females who drink four or more drinks on one occasion.

Consequences of alcohol use

- In 2022, there were 1,400 impaired driving incidents reported in Dakota County, down from 1,818 in 2018 and below the five-year average of 1,537. Nine percent of Dakota County residents have a driving while intoxicated (DWI) violation on their record.
- Deaths that were attributable to excessive alcohol use, including alcohol abuse & dependence, alcohol poisoning, and alcoholic liver disease increased in Dakota County from 2016 to 2019. However, the rate in 2019 (8.6 per 100,000) was below the state (11.9 per 100,000).

Marijuana use

- In 2023, an estimated 12.5 percent of Dakota County adults reported marijuana use in the previous month (except for medical reasons). The highest rate was among 35-44 year olds (17 percent).
- The rate of Dakota County students who reported using marijuana during the previous 30 days generally dropped for 9th graders from 2007 to 2022. In 2022, three percent of 8th graders, four percent of 9th graders, and 12 percent of 11th graders used marijuana during the previous 30 days, similar to the state for all grades.
- In 2020, 11 percent of Dakota County residents who were admitted to chemical dependency treatment reported marijuana as their primary substance of abuse.

Use of other drugs

- For Dakota County 9th and 11th graders, the use of drugs other than marijuana and prescription drugs declined or remained stable from 2016 to 2022 (2022: four percent or less for both 9th and 11th graders for each of nine other drugs, including psychedelics, MDMA, heroin, and methamphetamine).
- In 2022, three percent of Dakota County 8th graders, two percent of 9th graders and three percent of 11th graders reported using prescription drugs not prescribed to them in the past 12 months.
- Opioids were reported as the primary substance of abuse in 18 percent and methamphetamine in 16 percent of chemical dependency treatment admissions for Dakota County residents in 2020.
- In 2022, there were a total of 58 deaths due to drug overdose in Dakota County residents. The number of drug overdose deaths increased from 2018 to 2022. The proportion of drug overdose deaths that were opioid-related also increased. Sixty-five percent of drug overdose deaths involved heroin or other opiates in 2021.
- Emergency room visits for non-fatal opioid overdoses also more than doubled from 105 in 2018 to 263 in 2021.

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For more information:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov
- MN Department of Public Safety <https://dps.mn.gov>
- National Institute on Drug Abuse www.drugabuse.gov
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration www.samhsa.gov

The Dakota County Public Health Department is accredited by the national Public Health Accreditation Board.

For more information about the Dakota County community health assessment, email public.health@co.dakota.mn.us or call 651.554.6100.

