

Quick Stats & Facts

The State of Health Behaviors in Colorado

Statistics such as weight, overweight, and amount of physical activity received were not the type of things most health departments mentioned years ago. But all that changed in 1998 when the Surgeon General declared obesity as a national epidemic and a threat to the overall health of our country.

When health experts across the country turned their attention to these “growing” trends of overweight and obesity, the State of Colorado stood out from the rest – due to the lower levels of overweight and obesity found within its borders.

That’s not the case today. While Colorado remains one of the states with the lowest percentages of residents who are overweight and obese, unfortunately, we are starting to catch up with the rest of the country; not a good thing.

Here are a few facts and stats related to health in Colorado that might be of interest and help to you. Feel free to use them in your publications and talking points:

- **Growth of Overweight and Obesity in the United States**

From 1980 to 1999, the proportion of overweight or obese adults in the United States increased from 47 percent (15 percent obese) to 61 percent (27 percent obese)

- **Colorado’s Status for Overweight and Obesity**

Colorado leads the country with the lowest rates of overweight and obesity. According to 2005 data, 36.7 percent of Coloradans are overweight or obese with 17.8 percent of those being obese.

	Obese	Overweight
United States	24.4%	36.7%
Colorado	17.8%	36.7%

United States Total: 61.1%
Colorado’s Total: 54.5%

- **Colorado Residents with NO Leisure Time Physical Activity: 18.7%**

“No leisure time physical activity” is defined as “Did not participate in any physical activities other than regular job in the past month.”

Source: CDC's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS)

- **Colorado Kids Getting Bigger As Well**

In 2003, the rates of overweight and obesity among youth and teens were as follows:

- Grades 9 – 12: 9.5% overweight AND 10.9% at risk for becoming overweight
- Children ages 2 – 14: 14.8% overweight AND 13.8% at risk for becoming overweight

Source:

<http://www.cahs.colostate.edu/fyi/newsletter/V8I1.pdf#search=%22Obesity%20Percentages%20Youth%20in%20Colorado%22>

What's Happening with Kids?

The Colorado Department of Health, working with the Centers for Disease Control, administered a survey called the Youth Risk Behavior Survey to take a look at the behavior of high school students in Colorado on a number of risk behaviors such as tobacco smoking, eating patterns, etc.

There are a number of findings that may be of interest to you in parks and recreation. A few of the results from the 2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey include the following:

- **Physical Activity Patterns**

Percentage of students who...

...participated in physical activity that did <u>NOT</u> make them sweat or breathe hard for 30 minutes or more on five or more of the past seven days	29.5%
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...were physically active for a total of 60 minutes or more per day on five or more of the past seven days	37.2%
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...watched three or more hours per day of TV on an average school day 26.8%

...played on one or more sports teams during the past 12 months 61.2%

- **Teens Weigh In On Weight**

Percentage of students who...

...described themselves as slightly or very overweight 24.0%

...were trying to lose weight 41.0%

...exercised to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight during the past 30 days 64.5%

...ate less food, fewer calories, or foods low in fat to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight during the past 30 days 37.0%

- **Misc. Information Worth Noting**
Sex, Drugs, and...

Percentage of students who...

...were offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property by someone during the past 12 months 21.2%

...had their first drink of alcohol other than a few sips before age 13 years 27.1%

...had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more days of the past 30 days 47.4%

...had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours, on one or more of the past 30 days 30.6%

...used marijuana one or more times during their life 42.4%

...had sexual intercourse with one or more people

during the past three months	29.5%
...were among those who had sexual intercourse during the past three months, the percentage who drank alcohol or used drugs before last sexual intercourse	26.0%

Sad and Feeling Hopeless

Percentage of students who...

...felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities during the past 12 months	25.0%
...seriously considered attempting suicide during the past 12 months	13.6%
...actually attempted suicide one or more times during the past 12 months	10.6%

Violence – Real and Potential

Percentage of students who...

...had property, such as their car, clothing, or books stolen or deliberately damaged on school property one or more times during the past 12 months	30.6%
...were in a physical fight one or more times during the past 12 months	32.2%
...carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on one or more of the past 30 days	17.0%

Source: <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/hs/yrbs/2005COH%20Sample%20Statistics.pdf>