

SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN JOHNSON COUNTY

The consequences of substance abuse permeate communities across the nation, including Johnson County. The person abusing substances—alcohol, illicit or prescription drugs, or tobacco—causes problems for themselves and their families. Community-wide impact of substance abuse is broadly demonstrated from school and job performance, to the criminal justice system and need for health and welfare services.

KEY FACTS

High Binge Drinking Reported by Johnson County Adults

- In 2003, 14.2 percent of adults in Johnson County reported binge drinking, defined as consuming five or more alcoholic beverages at least once in the past 30 days. This was higher than the rate reported in either the Topeka (10.1 percent) or Wichita (10.3 percent) Metropolitan Statistical Area. Binge drinking can indicate unhealthy alcohol use, or an alcohol use disorder.

Substance Abuse Is a Safety Issue

- Driving Under the Influence (DUI) case filings continue to increase. During FY 2002, total Johnson County DUI filings for all municipal and County courts were 2,874. Total cases were up to 3,579 for FY 2004, an increase of 24 percent over two years. During this time, nearly two of five alcohol-related accidents resulted in death or personal injuries.

Youth Smoking Is a Continuing Concern

- The percentage of adolescents reporting use of tobacco in the past 30 days, considered “current users”, continues an overall downward trend for 8th, 10th, and 12th graders. The most dramatic decrease was seen for 10th graders, reporting nearly a one-third decrease in 30 day use from 2001-02 to 2004-05.

| Tobacco Use in Past 30 Days | 8 th Grade | | 10 th Grade | | 12 th Grade | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---------|------------------------|---------|------------------------|---------|
| | 2001-02 | 2004-05 | 2001-02 | 2004-05 | 2001-02 | 2004-05 |
| | 9.3 % | 7.7% | 23.6% | 16.3% | 32.7% | 26.3% |

Kansas Only State to Fail Federal Tobacco Retail Sales Target

The Kansas Department of Social & Rehabilitation Services (SRS) will spend \$2.3 million as a penalty over the next two years rather than risk losing up to \$5 million in federal funds to combat substance abuse. The new program—“It’s Everybody’s Business”—aims to improve compliance rates for retail sales of tobacco products to minors under age 18. Kansas was the only state failing to meet the federal non-compliance target of 20 percent. During FY 2004, 38 percent of Kansas tobacco retailers checked for compliance, sold tobacco to minors under age 18. A higher 57 percent of retailers checked in Johnson County, however, sold tobacco to minors.

Youth Alcohol Consumption Rates Continue to be High

- Alcohol usage within the past 30 days among Johnson County 8th, 10th and 12th graders continues a slow, overall decline. However, 30 day use among 12th graders lacks a steady downward trend, and remains higher than the state average. And, two of five 10th graders, and nearly three of five 12th graders reported consuming alcohol within the past 30 days.
- In 2004, Kansas Legislature imposed criminal penalties when persons 18 years of age or older host minors under age 18 consuming or possessing alcoholic or cereal malt beverages. The new law provides law enforcement with an additional tool to curb underage drinking. “Unlawful hosting” involves intentionally allowing someone under age 18 to consume these beverages at the host’s residence or other areas the host controls. Penalties can apply to the host or a child of the host. K.S. A. 21-3610c (2004)

| Alcohol Use in Past 30 Days | 8 th Grade | | 10 th Grade | | 12 th Grade | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---------|------------------------|---------|------------------------|---------|
| | 2001-02 | 2004-05 | 2001-02 | 2004-05 | 2001-02 | 2004-05 |
| Johnson County | 29.0% | 21.4% | 47.4% | 40.7% | 62.3% | 57.7% |
| Kansas Youth | 27.1% | 24.8% | 45.6% | 42.5% | 57.5% | 54.7% |

Marijuana Use Higher than State Average

- Fewer Johnson County 8th, 10th 12th graders report using marijuana, with usage levels continuing to decline. Tenth graders showed the most improvement—reporting a decrease of nearly one-third over the past four years. Nonetheless, 30 day usage rates for Johnson County 10th and 12th graders has been higher than the state average since 2001-02.

| Marijuana Use in Past 30 Days | 8 th Grade | | 10 th Grade | | 12 th Grade | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---------|------------------------|---------|------------------------|---------|
| | 2001-02 | 2004-05 | 2001-02 | 2004-05 | 2001-02 | 2004-05 |
| Johnson County | 6.7% | 5.5% | 23.4% | 16.5% | 29.2% | 22.8% |
| Kansas Youth | 6.7% | 5.6% | 17.2% | 13.6% | 18.6% | 16.8% |

Substance Abuse Treatment: Marijuana is Increasing as the Primary Problem

- In FY 2004, 314 Johnson County youth (18 years and younger) received substance abuse treatment in SRS-funded programs. Of those, 226 (72 percent) self-reported that marijuana was their primary problem and 20 percent that alcohol was their primary problem. Since FY 1999, alcohol has declined by 10 percent as the primary problem; marijuana has correspondingly increased.
- In FY 2004, 1,199 Johnson County residents (all ages) received substance abuse treatment in SRS-funded programs. Of those, more than two of five (40 percent) self-reported that alcohol was their primary problem, and one in four (25 percent) self-reported that marijuana was their primary problem. Since FY 1999, those reporting alcohol as their primary problem has remained relatively stable, at slightly more than two in five, while marijuana has increased from 20 percent to 25 percent as the primary problem.

Sources: Kansas Department of Health & Environment; National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2003; Kansas Communities That Care Survey, 2001 through 2005; Annual Report of the Kansas Municipal Courts, 2003, 2004; Annual Report of the Courts of Kansas, 2003, 2004; Kansas Department of Transportation; SRS, Addiction and Prevention Services.

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