

YOUTH WELLNESS

The percentage of children in Franklin County who live in low-income families (\$35,206 for a family of four) is the fourth highest in Maine, 47%. Several health indicators are also of concern. Even though youth smoking has decreased at the state and national levels, there is still a high prevalence of smoking and drug use at the high school level. One out of four 12th graders in Franklin County currently smokes and 36% of 11th graders report current marijuana use, compared to 26% for the nation. Seventy-nine percent of Franklin County high school students believe it is “easy” or “very easy” to obtain marijuana, easier than alcohol or tobacco. In Maine, more youth are admitted for inpatient treatment for marijuana than for alcohol. In 2001, approximately 600 adolescents were admitted for treatment for marijuana, compared to 400 for alcohol. There has also been an increase in mental health diagnoses. In 2002, 25% of all hospitalizations for Maine youth were for mental health and substance abuse problems, and in Franklin County 12% of high school students reported that they have seriously considered suicide in the past year.

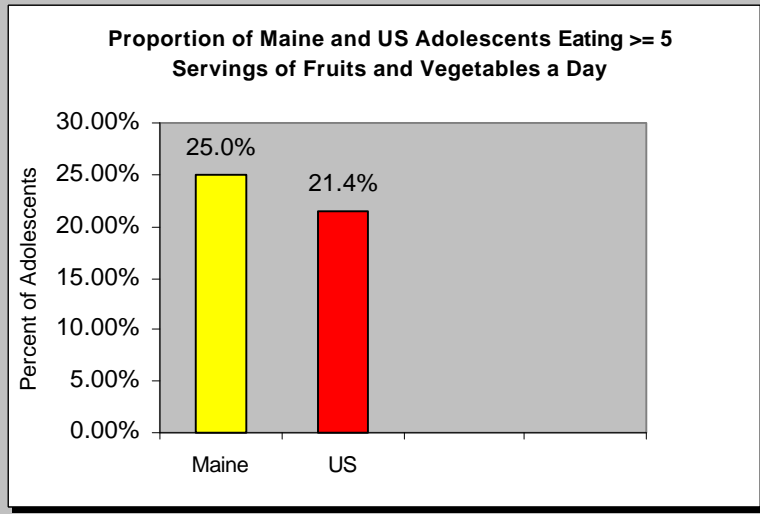
Another troubling statistic for Franklin County is the percent of 11th graders who attended school drunk or high ten or more times in the past year (8%). Thirty-four percent of 11th graders also reported binge drinking in the past two weeks. Besides substance abuse, the majority of high school students are not eating nutritiously and not engaging in physical activity. Both poor nutrition and lack of exercise contribute to the high prevalence of severely overweight or obese youth in Maine, 15%.

The good news is that youth are becoming more involved in the community, and in the HCC Service Area 48% of 10th graders in 2002 reported that they had community opportunities for positive involvement, up from 44% in 2000. Youth to Youth is an HCC program where area teens contribute to the school and community, and in turn improve their own emotional and physical health. Franklin County also showed reductions in tobacco use among all youth. In 2002, 16% of youths in grades 6-12 smoked cigarettes in the past month, compared to 20% in 2000.

❖ Sources: Maine Office of Substance Abuse 2001 Data Report; MYDAUS 2002; HCC Farmington Fair Survey, 2001; Maine Kids Count 2003 Data Book

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Fruit and Vegetable Consumption

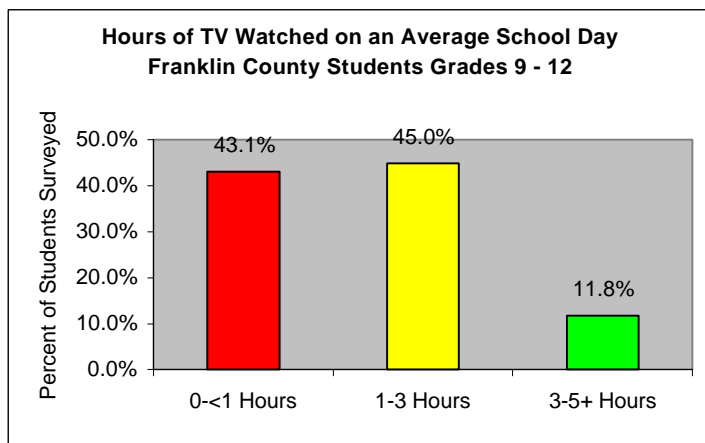


- Only 25% of adolescents in Maine eat the recommended 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day.

❖ Source: Maine Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2001

Graph 25

Sedentary Lifestyles



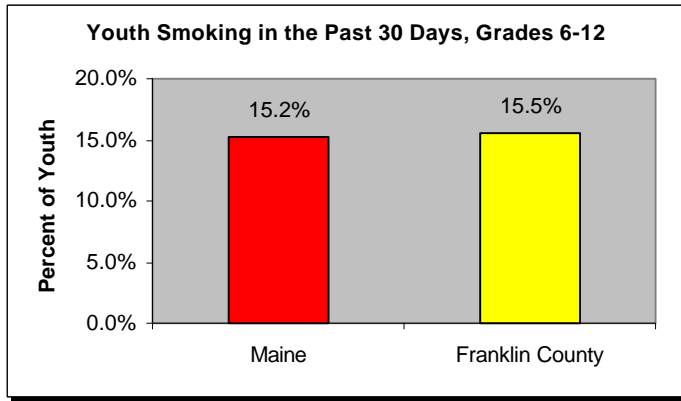
❖ Source: HCC Farmington Fair Survey, 2001

- 57% of Franklin County youth watch 1 to 5+ hrs. of TV a day.
- Sedentary lifestyles contribute to the rise in Maine youth who are severely overweight or obese (15%), an increase of 100% in 20 years.
- 79% of Maine high school students DO NOT engage in vigorous physical activity.

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Graph 26

Youth Smoking Prevalence

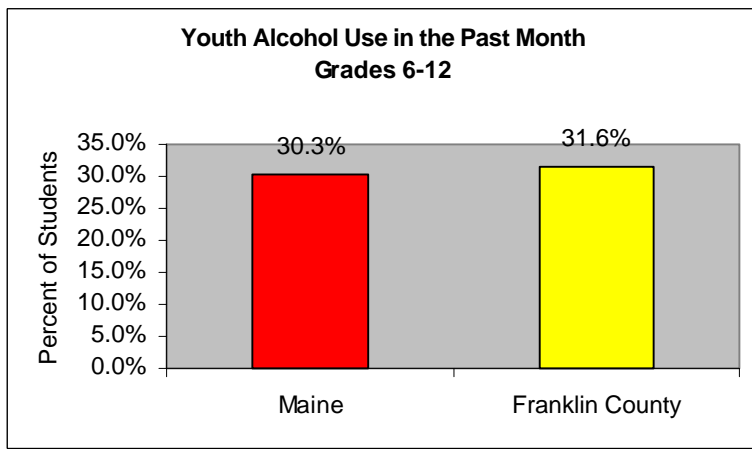


- The percent of youths (grades 6-12) smoking is similar to the state percent of 15%.
- However, the percent of 12th graders in Franklin County currently smoking is 26%, which is the same as the state percent.

❖ Source: Maine Office of Substance Abuse, MYDAUS 2002

Graph 27

Youth Alcohol Use



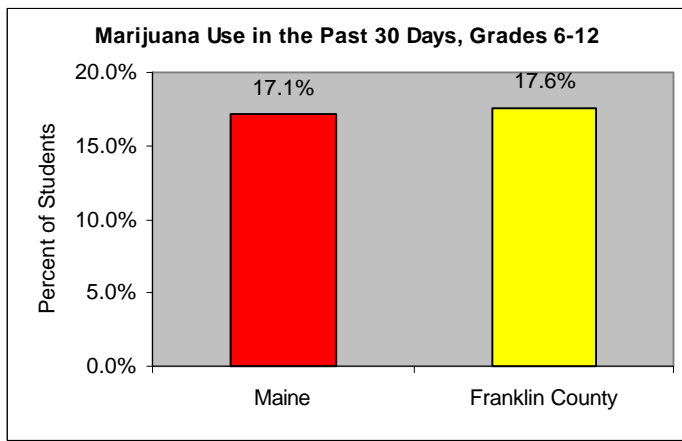
❖ Source: Maine Office of Substance Abuse, MYDAUS, 2002

- The percentage of youths using alcohol for grades 6-12 is 32%.
- However, the percent of 12th graders drinking in the past month is 54%, higher than the percentages for the state and nation. The percent reporting binge drinking in the past 2 weeks is the highest for 11th graders in Franklin County, 34%.

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Graph 28

Youth Marijuana Use

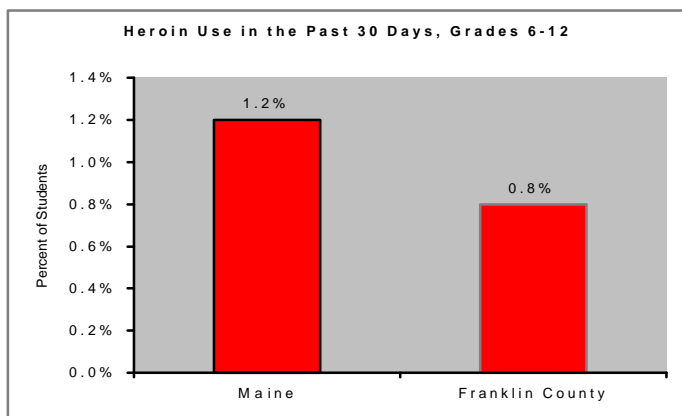


❖ Source: Maine Office of Substance Abuse, MYDAUS 2002

- Marijuana use for grades 6-12 is similar to the state average.
- However, for 11th graders the percent using marijuana in the past 30 days was 36%, compared to 26% for the nation.
- 79% of high school students in Franklin County said it was “sort of easy” or “very easy” to obtain marijuana, compared to 70% for alcohol and 76% for tobacco.

Graph 29

Youth Heroin Use



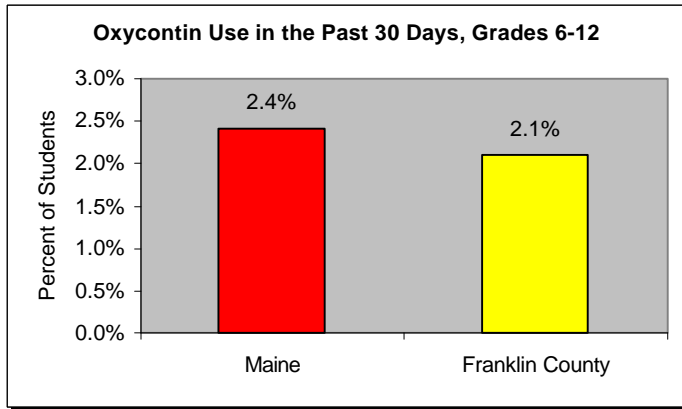
❖ Source: Maine Office of Substance Abuse, MYDAUS 2002

- Heroin use tends to be lower than the state average.
- Heroin use in the past 30 days was the highest for 11th graders in Franklin County, 3%.

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Graph 30

Youth Oxycontin Use

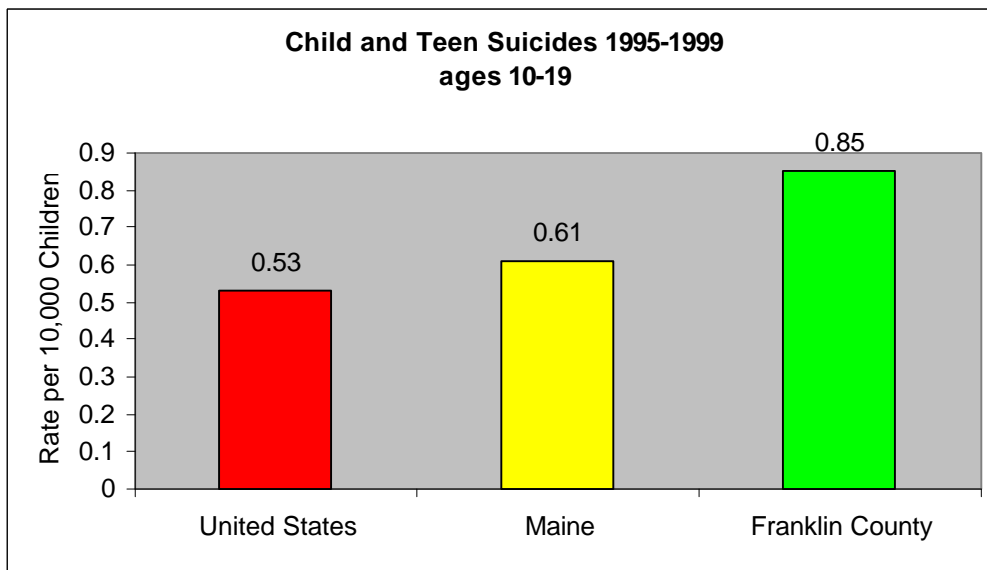


❖ Source: Maine Office of Substance Abuse, MYDAUS 2002

- OxyContin use is comparable to the state average.
- OxyContin use in the past 30 days was the highest for 11th graders in Franklin County, 4%.
- 11th graders in Franklin County also abuse the most prescription drugs (excludes OxyContin), 16%, and they also abuse the most ecstasy--(4%) in the past month.

Graph 31

Child and Teen Suicide Rates



❖ Source: Maine Children's Alliance, Maine Kids Count, 2002

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death for children and teens (age 10-19) in the state of Maine.
- There were 13 child and teen suicides (ages 10-19) from 1996-2000 in Maine.