



Needs Assessment Results

The **West Virginia Collegiate Initiative to Advance Healthy Campus Communities (WVCIA)** completes an assessment every two years to identify the needs of students in higher education throughout the state. The data gathered from these assessments is used to inform initiatives and evidence-based programming to support WVCIA’s mission to proactively address substance use disorders, violence, and mental health issues among college students.

The **American College Health Association’s National College Health Assessment (ACHA-NCHA)** was administered during the spring semester of 2022 and is a nationally recognized survey that collects data about college students’ health habits, behaviors, and perceptions.



13 member schools participated in the assessment.

Year of schooling responses were split relatively evenly between undergraduate years of college with **6%** indicating they were in their 5th year and **16%** pursuing a graduate degree (Master or Doctoral).

Over **1700** students responded to the survey.

67% of respondents identified as women.

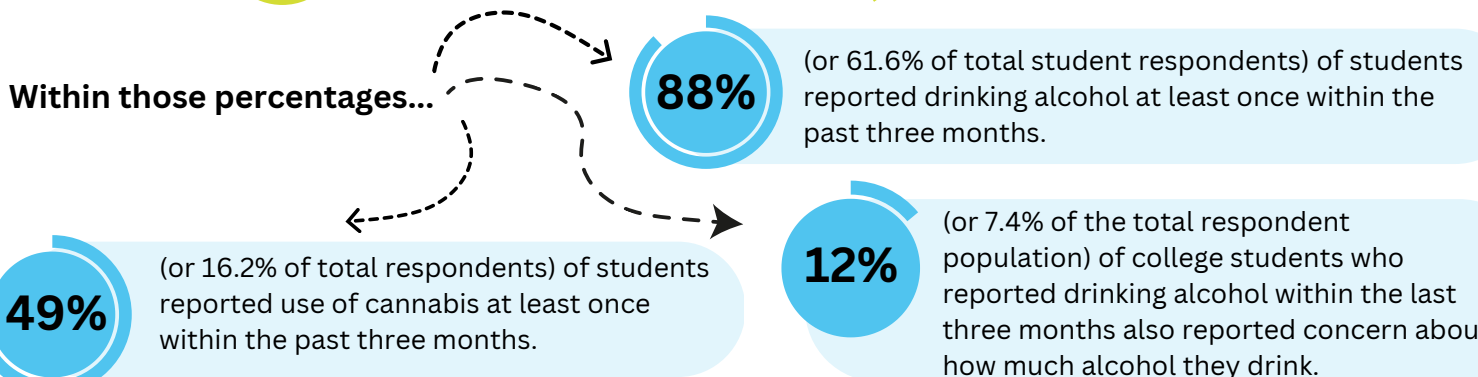
9% reported being a part of a fraternity or sorority.

83% of respondents reported their overall health status as “good” or better.

Students who responded showed concern regarding their consumption of alcohol, cannabis, and tobacco. Overall, **2%** of respondents reported being diagnosed with an alcohol and drug-related addiction or dependency.

70% indicated having ever used alcohol.

38% reported having ever used cannabis.



14%

of students who consumed cannabis within the last three months (2.3% of total respondent population) were concerned with how much cannabis they consumed.

9%

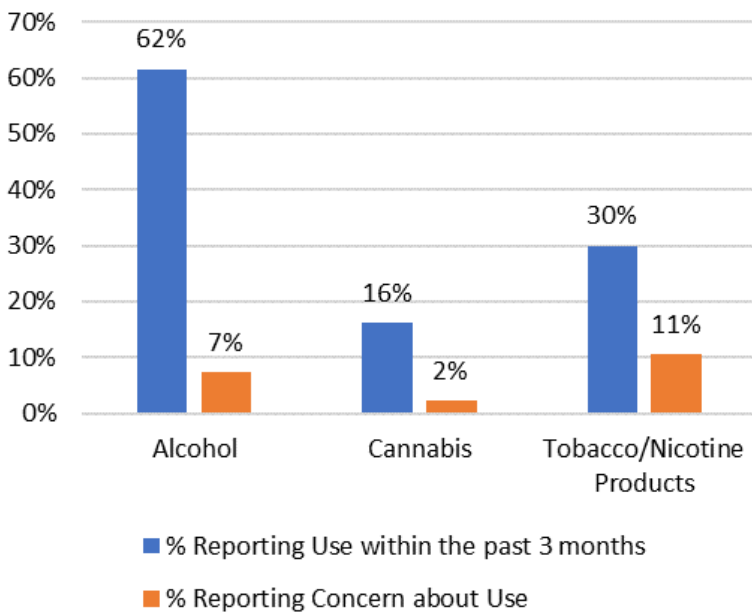
of students who consumed alcohol within the past 3 months reported getting drunk unintentionally the last time they drank.

25%

of respondents indicated having 5 or more drinks the last time they socialized.

Binge drinking: 5 drinks or more at a time for males. 4 drinks or more at a time for females.

Students Substance Use Within the Past 3 Months and Concern



Students also reported engaging in high-risk or concerning behaviors when drinking within the past 12 months:

- 14% Unprotected sex
- 6% Seriously considering suicide
- 6% Intentionally or unintentionally injuring themselves
- 9% Experiencing a blackout
- 17% Experiencing a brownout

42%

of respondents reported having used tobacco or nicotine products at some time. **Of that 42%...**

71%

(or 30% of the total respondents) reported having consumed tobacco or nicotine products at least once within the past three months.

41%

(17.2% of total respondents) reported daily tobacco or nicotine use.

Within the past 12 months, **16%** of students expressed doing something they regret while drinking.



Smaller percentages of failed attempts were also reported for alcohol use (**40%** or 3% of total students) and cannabis use (**41%** or 1% of total population).

Regarding tobacco and nicotine products, **35%** (10.5% of total respondents) of those who reported use in the last three months were concerned about how much they used, and, among those students, **67%** (7% of total respondents) of them reported trying and failing to control their substance use.

3% of students did report being in recovery for substances including alcohol, cannabis, and prescription medications.

Note: Data regarding other types of substances, including cocaine and hallucinogens, was limited by low response rate and invalid for analysis.

Emerging trends in student mental health data were found within the ACHA NCHA survey.

50% of students reported having previously used or accessed psychological or mental health services, with **33%** of students having accessed it within the past year.

57% of students who classified as having moderate or severe psychological distress have previously accessed mental health care, and **40%** have accessed it within the past year.

Note: *Discovered utilizing scores from questions on the Kessler 6 scale[1] included within the survey.*

Nearly **50%** of college students reported feeling *lonely* or *isolated* from peers, with an average UCLA Loneliness Scale[2] score of **5.5 out of 9**.

Almost **57%** of college students reported at least moderate concern with the *COVID-19* pandemic affecting their ability to spend time with the people they care about.

Especially concerning were student's SBQ-R[3] scores, which flagged **29%** of respondents as at risk of *suicidal behavior*.

53% thought that their campus held student health and wellbeing as a priority.

The average score of the *Diener Flourishing Scale*[4] was **44.9 out of 56**, indicating, on average, high perceptions of success among the surveyed college students.

90% nearly 90% of students felt they had a sense of belonging on their campus.

55%

of students who reported having been diagnosed with a mental health condition, accessed mental health services within the past year.

Core Takeaways

One of the core takeaways from this survey is the need for students to have access to mental health and recovery services. To this end, raising interest in students accessing mental health care is critical.

A surprising **77%** of students reported considering seeking professional mental health care in the future.

To capture contributing factors to this high number, and provide insight into what could be done by campus staff and faculty to steer students towards mental health care, a **logistic regression model** [5] was created utilizing some key influencer demographics.

Logistic Regression Model Findings

The findings showed an association between the last use of alcohol and cannabis and the student considering mental healthcare. The key contributing factors to this finding were level of stress. (*A positive association; more stress = more likely to consider mental health care in the future.*) Another key contributing factor to this finding was a perception of openness regarding discussions of student health and wellbeing on campuses. (*A generally positive association.*)

The association between open discussions of student wellbeing and affinity for seeking mental health care can be a strong avenue of pursuit for campus officials concerned with mental health crises on campuses across West Virginia. Campuses are encouraged to develop focused messaging to increase this help seeking behavior.

[1] A tool used to measure psychological distress and risk for serious mental health conditions.

[2] A tool used to measure disconnection from others. Higher scores indicate more loneliness and disconnection.

[3] Suicide Behaviors Questionnaire-Revised. A tool used to help identify individuals at risk for suicidal behaviors.

[4] A tool used to measure self-perceptions of success in key areas. Higher scores indicate higher perceptions of success.

[5] Analysis conducted in SAS 9.4, with a significance value of 0.05.