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# TEEN RISK BEHAVIOR DROPS IN WYOMING

## *Latest CDC survey shows decline in smoking, drinking, and fighting*

CHEYENNE - Many dangerous adolescent behaviors are on the decline nationwide according to the 2013 results of the National Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS).

The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released survey results today that tracked trends for risky behavior that includes smoking, drinking, and fighting among middle and high school students.

The YRBS is the only surveillance system that monitors a wide range of priority health risk behavior among youth. It is conducted biennially among representative samples of students in grades 9 through 12 in 43 states, including Wyoming.

Between 2001 to 2013 the percentage of Wyoming middle school students surveyed who have ever tried cigarette smoking steadily decreased from 40.4% to 22.1%. Those who have ever had a drink of alcohol also decreased from 47% to 34.2%. Those who have ever been in a physical fight de-creased from 56.7% to 49.7%.

Between 1995 to 2013 the percentage of Wyoming high school students surveyed who have ever tried cigarette smoking has steadily decreased from 73% to 45.8%. Those who have ever had a drink of alcohol also decreased from 81.1% to 68%. Those who have ever been in a physical fight decreased from 35.6% to 24.3%.

The 2013 survey marks the first year that students were asked about their texting and driving habits. According to the data, the total percentage of Wyoming students who texted or emailed while driving one or more times in the past 30 days was 50.7%.

Other behaviors measured in the YRBS include: seat belt use, weapon carrying, attempted suicide, drug use, sexual behaviors, dietary behaviors, and physical activity.

YRBS data allows school administrators to view trends, determine the severity of behavior, and identify areas of concern. These data also provides administrators and community outreach programs vital information used in evaluating and improving programs focused on these risk behaviors.

The 2013 YRBS surveys were completed by 3,015 students in 52 Wyoming public high schools and 2,702 students in 51 Wyoming public middle schools.

For more information and results from the YRBS survey please visit the [YRBS page on the WDE website](#).

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