Behavioral Health Profile

Howell County

May 2014

Behavioral Health Epidemiology Workgroup

Located in Southeast Missouri, Howell County has a population of 40,393. Among Missouri's 114 counties plus the city of St. Louis, Howell County ranks 28 in terms of population. Howell County's unemployment rate in 2013 was 6.1%. This was lower than the statewide unemployment rate of 6.5%. In 2012, the poverty rate was 21.1% which was higher than the statewide poverty rate of 16.2%. The median income of the county was $32,492.

Substance Use and Abuse in Howell County

The availability of county-level data on substance use and abuse is limited. The Missouri Student Survey can provide estimates for youth in most Missouri counties. This survey is administered in even-numbered years to 6th through 12th grade students in participating school districts.

Healthy People 2020, a set of federal goals, has established objectives to reduce tobacco initiation and use by adolescents and adults. In Howell County, 53.9% of youth believe that it would be easy to get cigarettes and 41.6% have friends who smoke.

Youth who use alcohol are at greater risk of developing abuse problems later in life. An estimated 51.5% of youth in Howell County believe that it would be easy to get alcohol and 50.9% have friends who drink alcohol.

Marijuana use is of increasing concern across the state. In 2012, 29.1% of Howell County youth said that marijuana is easy to get, 22.0% report having at least one friend that uses it and 5.8% said that smoking marijuana is 'no risk at all'.

In Howell County, 17.0% of youth believe that it would be easy to get other drugs such as cocaine, methamphetamine, and ecstasy.

Substance Use Consequences in the County

Health: In 2011, Howell County residents had a total of 276 alcohol-related and 336 drug-related hospitalizations. In addition there were 198 alcohol-related and 199 drug-related ER visits that did not include a hospital stay.

Treatment: In 2012, 25.0% of mothers in Howell County reported smoking during their pregnancy. This is a decrease from 2011 (36.4%).

Current Substance Use for Grades 6 - 12, 2012 data

	30 Day Use County	30 Day Use Missouri	Age of First Use County
Cigarettes	14.6%	10.6%	12.33
Alcohol	16.4%	16.9%	12.33
Binge*	12.8%	9.6%	N/A
Marijuana	2.5%	8.6%	12.66
Inhalants	3.1%	2.3%	12.66
RX Abuse	2.8%	4.7%	unknown
OTC Abuse	2.6%	3.5%	unknown
Synthetic	4.1%	2.9%	unknown

Current Substance Use for Ages 18+ in the Southeast Region, 2008-10 data

	30 Day Use Region	30 Day Use Missouri
Cigarettes	33.5%	28.5%
Alcohol	47.3%	54.2%
Binge**	25.2%	25.3%
Marijuana	4.7%	6.0%
Illicit Drug excluding MJ	2.6%	2.8%

*5+ drinks on a single occasion in last 2 weeks.
**5+ drinks on a single occasion in last 30 days.

Red underlined is higher than state average.

Substance Abuse Treatment in Howell County

Total	292
Alcohol Primary	136
Marijuana Primary	78

Law Enforcement: In 2012, Howell County had 295 DWI arrests, 26 liquor law violations and 348 drug-related arrests. Howell County had 19 methamphetamine laboratory seizures in 2012 and 11 in 2013. The manufacture of methamphetamine has been particularly problematic for rural Missouri. Specifically, labs tend to be clustered primarily in the counties surrounding St. Louis and secondarily in the southwest and southeast areas of the state.

Traffic Crashes in Howell County

Alcohol-related traffic crashes increased in the last year (from 25 in 2011 to 56 in 2012). Alcohol-related crashes are more likely to produce fatalities and injuries compared to non-alcohol-related crashes.

2012 Number of Alcohol-Related Crashes by Severity			
Total Crashes	Fatal Crash	Crash w/ Injury	Crash w/ Property Damage
56	2	26	28

2012 Number of People Injured / Killed in Alcohol and Drug-Related Crashes			
Alcohol Fatalities	Alcohol Injuries	Drug Fatalities	Drug Injuries
2	34	0	7

Mental Health in Howell County

Individuals struggling with serious mental illness are at higher risk for homicide, suicide, and accidents as well as chronic conditions including cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and substance abuse disorders. In state fiscal year 2013, 1208 Howell County residents received treatment for serious mental illness at publicly-funded facilities. See table for details. While there is data on those who receive treatment, data on mental health in the general population is very limited. This is especially true at the local level.

In Southeast Missouri, 21.5% of those 18 and older had a mental illness in the past year with 5.9% having a serious mental illness. Serious mental illness is defined as any of the mental disorders asked about and 'these disorders resulted in substantial impairment in carrying out major life activities'.

Approximately 7.3% of Southeast Missouri residents ages 18+ had at least one major depressive episode in the past year. A major depressive episode is characterized by an extended period of depressed mood, loss of interest or pleasure, and impaired functioning. Typically females are more likely to report having had a major depressive episode.

Students (6th-12th grade) in the county were asked about their mental health. 8.5% had considered suicide in the last year, 8.7% made a plan, and 1.6% actually attempted, resulting in an injury. In 2012, 7 Howell County residents committed suicide. Nationally, males are about four times more likely to commit suicide than females. Older males have higher rates of suicide than younger males.

Comprehensive Psychiatric Services Numbers Served in Howell County

	FY2012	FY2013
Total	971	1208
Adjustment Disorder	45	10
Anxiety Disorder	341	174
Developmental Disorder	*	*
Impulse Control Disorder	91	44
Mood Disorder	565	281
Psychotic Disorder	75	42

These numbers indicate the number of clients seen with each diagnosis per year. An individual client may have more than one admission within a year.
*Counts under 5 suppressed to protect identities

Developed with support from the Missouri Division of Behavioral Health and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
For more information: http://dmh.mo.gov/ada/mobhew