



# Behavioral Health Profile for Dent County



July 1, 2011

## About Dent County:

Located in Southeast Missouri, Dent County has a population of 15,657. Among Missouri's 114 counties plus the city of St. Louis, Dent County ranks 67th in terms of population. Dent County's unemployment rate in 2010 was 9.53%. This was lower than the statewide unemployment rate of 9.60%. In 2009, the poverty rate for Dent County was 20.4%. This was higher than the statewide poverty rate of 14.6%. Dent County is not considered a primary healthcare shortage area and is considered a mental health professional shortage area by the Health Resources and Services Administration. Other shortages may exist for low income populations.

## Substance Use and Abuse in Dent 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.

In Dent County, 53.04% of youth believe that it would be easy to get cigarettes and 44.76% have friends who smoke. The Healthy People 2020 has established objectives to reduce tobacco initiation and use by adolescents and adults. An estimated 49.36% youth in Dent County believe that it would be easy to get alcohol and 49.36% have friends who drink alcohol. Youth who use alcohol are at greater risk of developing abuse problems later in life. In Dent County, 26.52% of youth believe that it would be easy to get marijuana and 16.35% of youth believe that it would be easy to get other drugs such as cocaine, methamphetamine, and ecstasy. Missouri youth tend to perceive marijuana as being safer than other illegal drugs and safer than tobacco.

In Southeast Missouri, an estimated 7.08% of residents age 12 and over use illegal drugs and 8.6% are abusing alcohol. Public safety, health care, crime, and public assistance are among the areas impacted by substance abuse. In 2009, Dent County had 23 alcohol-related traffic crashes. This is higher than that for 2008 (21). Of the 2009 alcohol-related crashes, 1 crash resulted in the loss of life. Another 13 resulted in injuries. Alcohol-related crashes are more likely to produce fatalities and injuries compared to non-alcohol-related crashes.

In 2009, Dent County had 97 DUI arrests, 22 liquor law violations, and 91 drug arrests. Dent County had 0 methamphetamine laboratory seizures in 2009. The manufacture of methamphetamine has been particularly problematic for rural Missouri.

## Current Substance Use for Grades 6 through 12\*

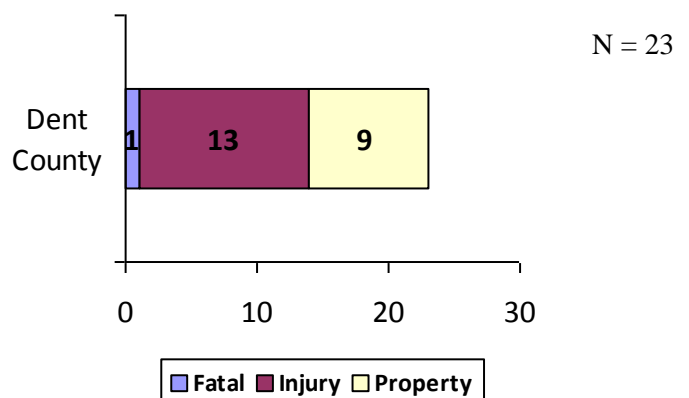
	Dent County	Missouri
Cigarettes	<b>16.45 %</b>	13.70 %
Chewing tobacco	<b>14.29 %</b>	6.10 %
Alcohol	15.26 %	19.80 %
Binge drinking*	8.86 %	11.40 %
Marijuana	6.54 %	9.40 %
Inhalants	2.57 %	3.00 %
Prescription drugs not prescribed for student	<b>7.82 %</b>	6.70 %
Over-the-counter medications for non-medical use	5.18 %	4.80 %

\*Used in the past 30 days

**Red:** Higher than Missouri rate

\*\*Five or more drinks on one occasion

## 2009 Alcohol-related Crashes

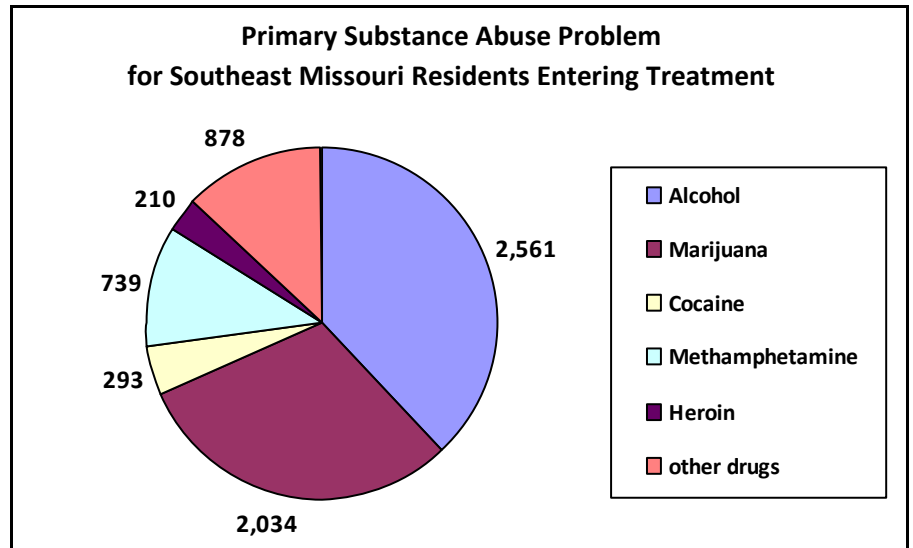


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## Substance Use and Abuse in Dent County: (cont.)

In 2008, Dent County residents had a total of 120 alcohol-related and 127 drug-related hospitalizations and emergency room visits. Statewide, average expenses for an alcohol or drug-related visit to the emergency room was \$4,180.

In state fiscal year 2010, 186 Dent County residents were admitted to substance abuse treatment at publicly-funded facilities. In Southeast Missouri and statewide, alcohol and marijuana were the most common substance abuse problems presenting for treatment. In Southeast Missouri, the next most common drug problem was methamphetamine. Statewide, it was methamphetamine.



## Mental Health in Dent County:

In Southeast Missouri, an estimated 14.66% of residents age 12 and over have had serious psychological distress in the past year. Young adults and females tend to have higher rates of serious psychological distress. Nationwide, about 45 percent of those with serious psychological distress receive mental health services. Approximately 9.04% of Southeast Missouri residents have 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. Females are more likely to report having had a major depressive episode. Mental illness can result from a combination of genetic vulnerabilities and life stressors such as loss of employment or relationships and financial difficulties. Symptoms can include feeling sad, confused thinking, excessive fears, withdrawal from family and friends, problems sleeping, detachment from reality, substance abuse, significant changes in eating habits, excessive anger or violence, and suicidal thinking. Treatment for mental illness can include a combination of counseling and medication. In 2009, 3 Dent County residents committed suicide. The suicide rate for Southeast Missouri was 14.6 per 100,000 persons, which is higher than the state rate (14.3 per 100,000 persons.) Males are about four times more likely to commit suicide than females. Older males have higher rates of suicide than younger males.

In state fiscal year 2010, 216 Dent County residents received treatment for serious mental illness at publicly-funded facilities. In Southeast Missouri and statewide, mood disorders were the most common diagnosis category. Mood disorders include mania, major depression, and bipolar disorder. Anxiety and psychotic disorders were the next most common diagnosis categories. Anxiety disorders include panic, obsessive-compulsive, and post-traumatic stress disorders as well as phobias. Psychotic disorders include schizophrenia and delusional disorders. 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.

	Dent County	Missouri
Were very sad	18.21 %	18.90 %
Were grouchy, irritable, or in a bad mood	23.89 %	24.80 %
Felt hopeless about the future	10.79 %	11.80 %
Felt like not eating or eating more than usual	17.20 %	18.10 %
Slept a lot more or a lot less than usual	21.79 %	25.60 %
Had difficulty concentrating on school work	<b>24.76 %</b>	24.60 %
Seriously considered attempting suicide	<b>13.65 %</b>	11.60 %
Have been bullied on school property	23.72 %	25.00 %

\*In the past 30 days

**Red:** Higher than Missouri rate