



# Behavioral Health Profile

## Howard County

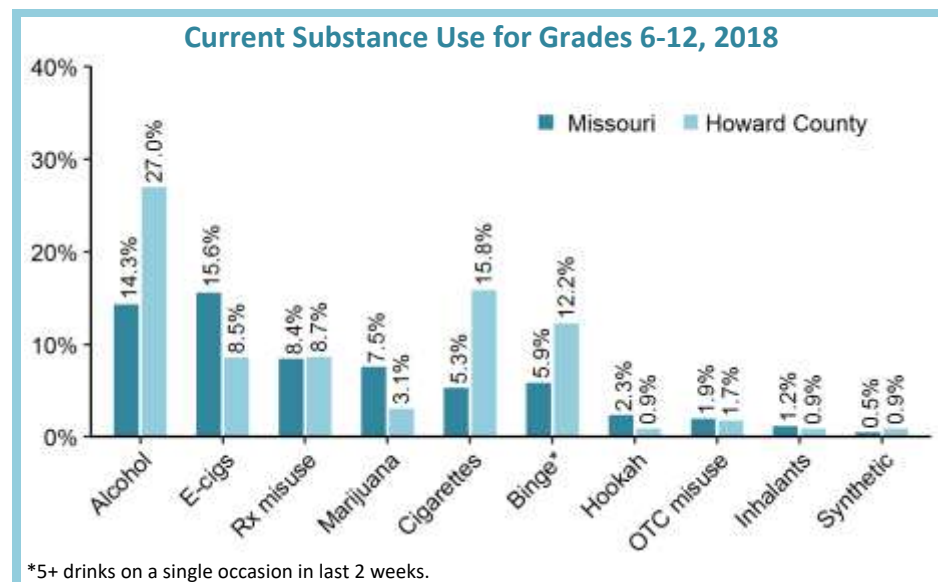
2018



Howard County is located in Central Missouri and had a population of 10,062 in 2016. Howard County ranks 89 in population size among Missouri's 114 counties plus the city of St. Louis. The 2016 unemployment rate in the county was 4.6%. This was lower than the statewide unemployment rate of 6.6%. In 2016, the poverty rate was 15.9% which was higher than the statewide poverty rate of 14.0%. The median income of the county was \$48,518.

### Substance Use in Howard County

The availability of county-level data on substance use is limited. The Missouri Student Survey convenience sample 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. Adult data are available at the regional level from the NSDUH. See page 2 for graph.



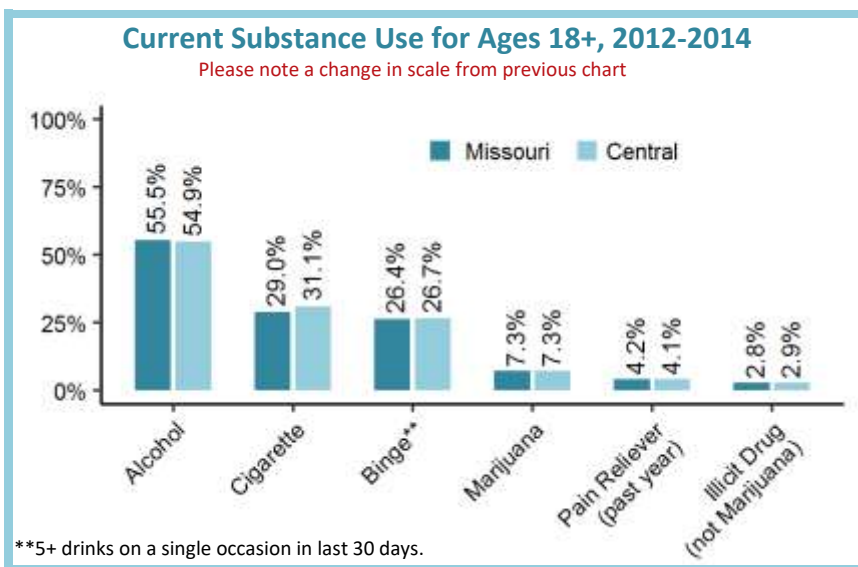
**Alcohol** is one of the most common substances used by Missouri youth. In Howard County, 27.0% youth have used alcohol in the past 30 days. An estimated 45.0% believe that using alcohol presents only 'slight' or 'no risk' of harm. Similarly, approximately 32.5% of youth believe that there is 'slight' or 'no risk' of harm in binge drinking once or twice a week. About 49.4% of youth believe that it would be easy to get alcohol. 52.8% of youth have at least one friend that uses alcohol.

The average age of first alcohol use is 13.8. Among Missouri adults, alcohol is the most commonly used substance. In the Central region, approximately 54.9% of adults currently drink alcohol, and 26.7% have had 5 or more drinks of alcohol on a single occasion in the past 30 days.

**Cigarette** use, in both standard and electronic forms, is of concern across the state. In Howard County youth, the rate of e-cigarette use is lower than the rate of standard cigarette use. The average age that county youth first use standard cigarettes is 13.5. An estimated 50.9% of youth believe that it would be easy to get standard cigarettes and 40.9% to get e-cigarettes. 38.6% of youth have at least one friend that uses standard cigarettes. An estimated 19.5% of youth believe there is 'slight' or 'no risk' to smoking standard cigarettes, while 41.9% believe there is 'slight' or 'no risk' to smoking e-cigarettes. Most youth obtain cigarettes and e-cigarettes from their friends. In the Central region, 31.1% of adults currently use cigarettes compared to 29% statewide.

**Marijuana** use in Missouri youth continues to be of interest, particularly with recent shifts in legality of adult use across the nation. Around 7.5% of youth and 7.3% of adults report current marijuana use. In Howard County, 3.1% of youth use marijuana. In 2018, 26.4% of youth said that marijuana is easy to get. Around 80.1% believe that smoking marijuana is wrong, and 34.5% report having at least one friend that uses marijuana. The average age of first use is 15.0. The majority of youth obtain marijuana from their friends, a dealer, or a family member. Across the state, around 46.6% of adults believe there is 'slight' or 'no risk' of harm from smoking marijuana once or twice a week. In Howard County youth, approximately 35.7% believe that there is 'slight' or 'no risk' of harm from smoking marijuana once or twice a week.

**Prescription drug** misuse is of growing concern both across the nation and in Missouri. In Howard County, 21.7% of youth believe that it would be easy to get prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them. Most youth report that there is a risk of harm when misusing prescription drugs, but 9.6% of youth believe that there is 'slight' or 'no risk at all'. About 95.6% of youth believe it would be wrong to use prescription drugs not prescribed to them. Most youth get prescription drugs from a friend or family member. Pain medication is the most commonly misused prescription medication, with 28.6% of those misusing prescription drugs in Howard County county saying they misuse pain medication. 4.1% of adults in the Central region reported misuse of prescription pain medication over the past year.



### Substance Use Consequences in the County

**Health:** In 2015, Howard County residents had a total of 3 alcohol-related and 2 drug-related hospitalizations. In addition there were 5 alcohol-related and 7 drug-related ER visits that did not include a hospital stay.

**Treatment:** In 2017, 62 individuals were admitted into Substance Abuse Treatment Programs. A total of 20 were primarily due to alcohol, 13 were primarily due to marijuana, and less than 5 were primarily due to prescription drugs.

**Law Enforcement:** In 2017, Howard County had 28 DWI arrests, 4 liquor law violations and 89 drug-related arrests. There were 0 methamphetamine laboratory seizures in Howard County in 2017.

**Traffic Crashes:** Alcohol-related traffic crashes remained the same in the last year (from 9 in 2015 to 9 in 2016). Alcohol-related crashes are more likely to produce fatalities and injuries compared to non-alcohol-related crashes.

2016 Number of Alcohol-Related Crashes by Severity				2016 Number of People Injured / Killed in Alcohol and Drug-Related Crashes			
Total Crashes	Fatal Crash	Crash w/ Injury	Crash w/ Property Damage	Alcohol Fatalities	Alcohol Injuries	Drug Fatalities	Drug Injuries
9	0	6	3	0	13	0	1



### Mental Health Data for Howard County

Individuals struggling with serious mental illness are at higher risk for homicide, suicide, and accidents, as well as chronic conditions including cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, and substance use disorders. In state fiscal year 2017, 82 Howard County residents received treatment for serious mental illness at publicly-funded facilities. See table for details. While there are 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.

Numbers Served in Howard County		
	FY2016	FY2017
Total	93	82
Adjustment Disorder	*	*
Anxiety Disorder	31	30
Developmental Disorder	*	*
Impulse Control Disorder	10	6
Mood Disorder	55	52
Psychotic Disorder	31	21

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

In Central Missouri, 19.0% of those 18 and older had a mental illness in the past year, and 5.0% had 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 Central 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. 77.3% of students in the county reported feeling grouchy or in a bad mood, 50.4% reported feeling sad, 50.4% had changes in sleep, and 52.2% had difficulty concentrating in school at least sometimes. About 14.1% of youth reported self-harm. The most common method of self-harm was cutting, hitting, or scratching oneself. Females were more likely to report self-harm than males.

Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for ages 10-34 in Missouri. In 2016, 3 Howard County residents died by suicide. Typically, white males are most at risk of suicide. Approximately 9.8% of youth had considered suicide in the last year, 3.9% made a plan, and 0.9% actually attempted, resulting in an injury.

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/>