



Illegal Drug & Alcohol Abuse in Anoka County

Priority Health Issue: **ALCOHOL AND PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE AND DEPENDENCY**, tobacco use, and illegal drug use result in health and safety concerns for adolescents, adults, and families.

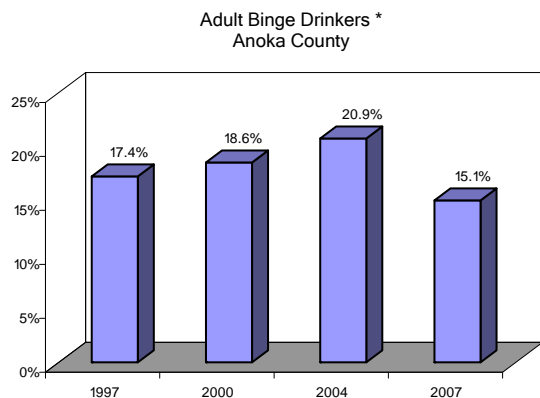
Alcohol abuse/dependency and illegal drug use are costly to individuals, families, and communities.

Lives are lost or shortened and human potential is lost or decreased.

Alcohol and illegal drug use are associated with child and spousal/partner abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, teen pregnancy, school failure, motor vehicle crashes, and low worker productivity.

Alcohol use during pregnancy is known to cause fetal alcohol syndrome, a leading cause of preventable mental retardation.

Binge Drinking

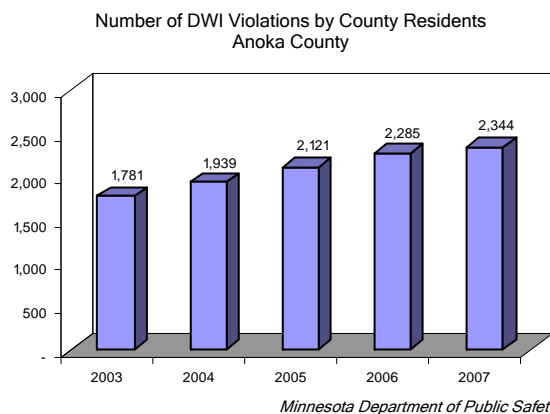


* Binge Drinking: 5 or more on an occasion at least once a month
Minnesota Department of Health

In the Minnesota Department of Health's telephone survey, estimated results show that 15% of those who drink consume five or more drinks at a time, at least once a month. Binge drinking is likely to lead to impairment.

This percentage has declined from 1997 to 2007, but it is still higher than the state average.

Driving While Impaired (DWI)

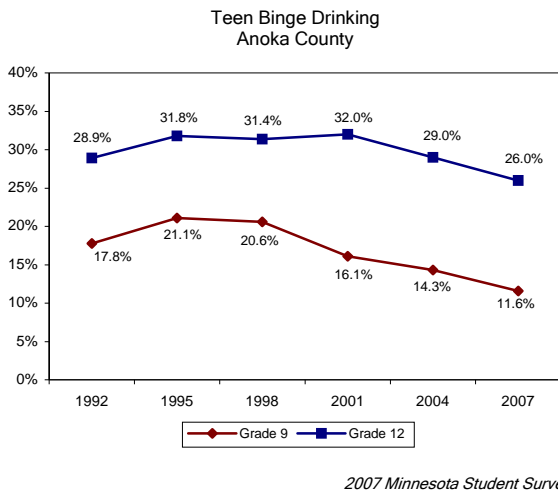


The number of Driving While Impaired (DWI) violations by Anoka County residents is on the increase, as reported by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. It should be noted that there may be differences in the local and state enforcement of DWI's and the resulting data compiled.

There were 2,344 violations in 2007. The number of violations per 10,000 population in the county increased from approximately 57 in 2003, to approximately 72 in 2007.

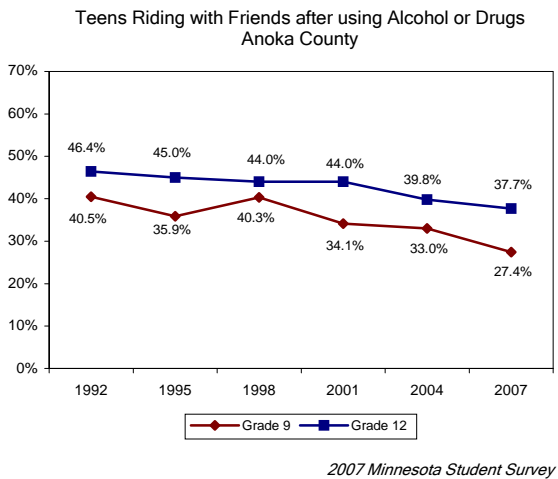
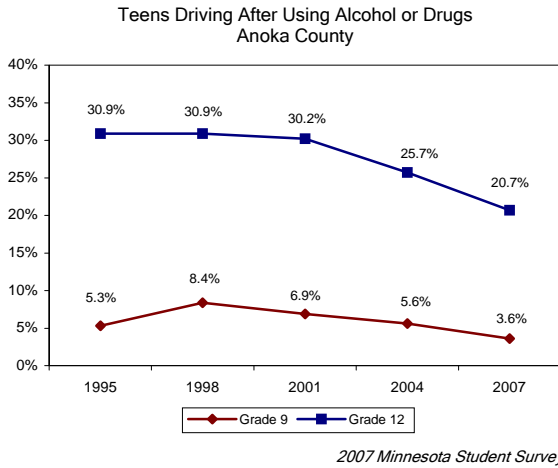
Residents in the 2009 Anoka County Community Health Survey checked drinking and driving as one of the nine top issues they rated as serious. This is consistent with the residents' attitude in both previous community surveys (completed in 1999 and 2002).

Student Drinking

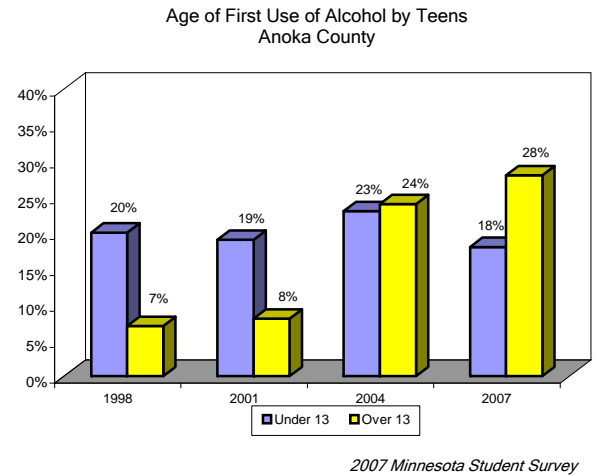


Results from the Minnesota Student Survey show a decline in the percentage of 6th, 9th, and 12th grade students who report their use of alcohol.

The survey also reports that 11.6% of 9th graders and 26% of 12th graders in 2007 said they engaged in consuming five or more drinks in a row in the past two weeks.



There has also been a decline in the number of students who rode with their friends who had been using drugs or alcohol. But 27% of 9th and nearly 38% of 12th graders reported in the 2007 Minnesota Student Survey that they did so.



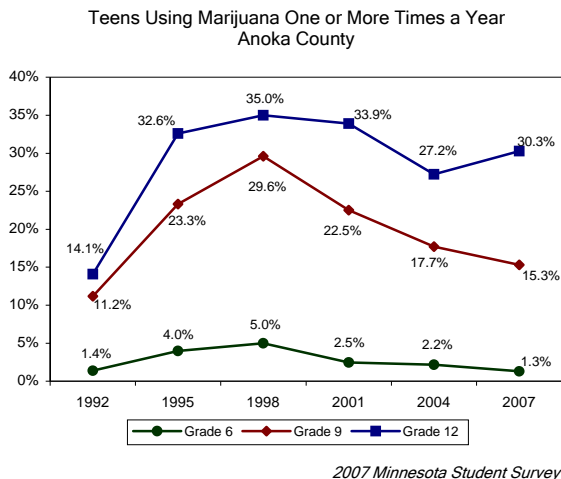
In a 1998 study by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, it noted that the younger a person begins drinking, the greater the chance of developing a clinically defined alcohol disorder.

Young people who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcoholism and two times more likely to develop alcohol abuse as those who begin drinking at age 21 years.

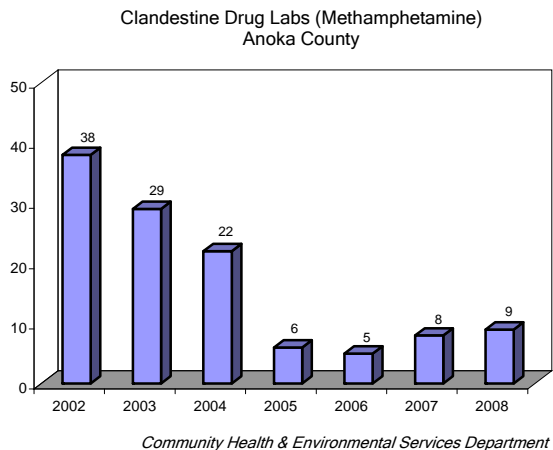
Concerning alcohol use by family members (which has repeatedly caused problems), there has been a fairly consistent reporting in the student survey over the years—from about one-in-five students, to one-in-six students reporting this concern.

Anoka County Social Services reports that 62% of the cases in child protection are alcohol or drug related.

Illegal Drugs



There has been a decline in the last four years in the number of students who report using marijuana. The exception is 12th graders who reported some increase of use between 2004 and 2007.

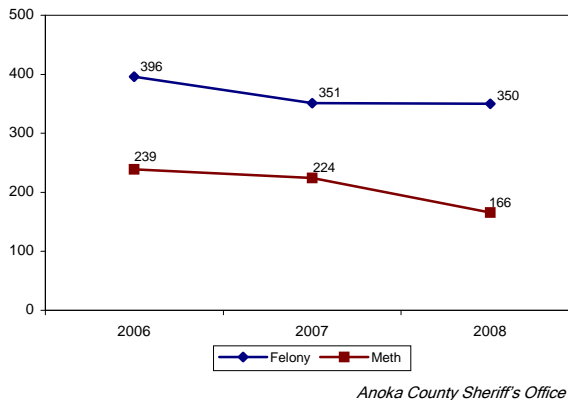


In previous years, the manufacture and use of methamphetamine significantly impacted Anoka County in areas of child protection and child endangerment, law enforcement, community corrections, and public health hazards.

Since 2004, the number of methamphetamine labs identified and seized has significantly been reduced primarily due to legislative restriction on the sale of certain precursor chemicals used in the manufacture of methamphetamine.

There remains a concern about the use of methamphetamine.

Drug Cases
Anoka County



Economic Impact

The cost per capita of alcohol related traffic crashes, fatalities, and injuries was estimated in 2007 to be \$44 per person or \$1,305,000 for the Anoka County residents.

The economic costs of alcohol use was last estimated in 2001 by the Minnesota Department of Health at about \$900 for every Minnesotan.

Using the population estimates for Anoka County at that time, the estimated economic cost would have been \$274,485,600 for Anoka residents. It is not unrealistic to project that the costs today are considerably higher.

Sources

Data for this report was derived from the following sources:

Anoka County Community Health & Environmental Services Department
<http://www.anokacounty.us/>

Anoka County Sheriff's Office
http://www.anokacounty.us/v3_sheriff/index.html

Minnesota Departments of Education, Health, Human Services, & Public Safety, "Minnesota Student Survey 1992-2007 Trends: Behaviors, Attitudes and Perceptions of Minnesota's 6th, 9th, and 12th Graders" (2007)
<http://education.state.mn.us/>

Minnesota Department of Health
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/>

Minnesota Department of Public Safety
<http://www.dps.state.mn.us/>